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EXPLORING WHY STUDENTS STAY IN SCHOOL: INUIT PERCEPTIONS OF  
MODERN GUIDEPOSTS (*NUTAAQ INUKSUIT*) THAT WILL  
HELP STUDENTS STAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

A Dissertation Presented

by

Karen Tyler

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of


The University of Vermont


In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education  
Specializing in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

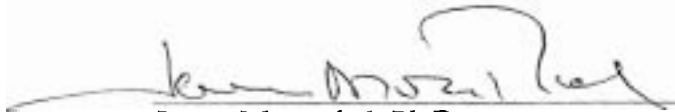
October, 2008

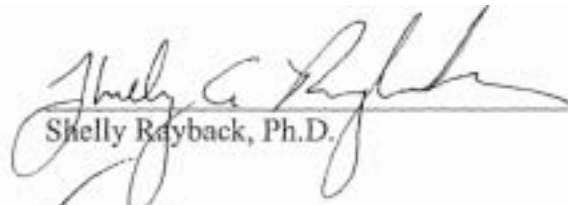
Accepted by the Faculty of the Graduate College, The University of Vermont, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, specializing in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

Dissertation Examination Committee:

  
Charles Rathbone, Ph.D. Advisor

  
Cynthia Gerstl-Pepin, Ph.D.

  
James Mosenthal, Ph.D.

  
Shelly Rayback, Ph.D. Chairperson

  
Frances E. Carr, Ph.D. Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

Date: May 13, 2008

## ABSTRACT

Although the Inuit of Nunavut, Canada gained control of their educational institutions when the territory of Nunavut was formed on April 1, 1999 (Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act, 1993), the high school graduation rates of Inuit students remain very low. Academic deficiencies exist in Nunavut, where from 1999 to 2006 only twenty-five percent of Inuit youths graduated from high school (Nunavut Department of Education, 2006). Inuit who do not remain in school have difficulty obtaining leadership positions in this new territory (Berger, 2006).

This research was designed to answer the question: “What modern guideposts (*nutaaq inuksuit*) do Inuit perceive are needed to help more Inuit students complete high school in Nunavut, Canada?” Qualitative case study methods were used that incorporated Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*Inuit Qaujimagatuaqangit*). Traditionally, Inuit relied on guideposts (*inuksuit*) to help them navigate their way through unfamiliar territory. Conceptually, this study will suggest guideposts which encourage Inuit students to complete school by combining traditional and modern (*nutaaq*) knowledge. Living in the Arctic for fourteen years has made the researcher more aware of the importance of using a culturally sensitive methodology.

In the fall of 2007, sixty-six interviews of Inuit youth, adults, and elders in the communities of Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq were conducted. Interviewees identified what they perceived would help more Inuit students to gain the academic and cultural knowledge they need to graduate from high school. The findings from the interviews are grouped into four themes that individuals viewed as significant to this research: Home, School, Community, and Inuit Culture. Interviewees expressed a belief that these findings are no longer acknowledged in the educational system. However, they are still present in everyday Inuit child-rearing practices as cultural norms. The findings and the cultural norms that are associated with them, were organized into a cultural framework using the four identified themes. It is hoped that each community will develop their own unique guidepost using the cultural framework. A summary of the findings as they relate to each the four themes of Home, School, Community and Inuit Culture are presented below, along with the Inuit phrases indicative of the cultural norms. Interviewees expressed that:

1. In the home, they desired a greater readiness for high school, more parent involvement, and closer home-school partnerships than the rudimentary levels that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Are we prepared and ready to go? (*Atii?*)”
2. In the school, they desired more funded learning opportunities that value relationships and mentoring with elders and other individuals than the rudimentary levels that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Remember I care about you and our relationship? (*Ain?*)”
3. In the community, they desired better communications and networking among government departments, businesses, and local organizations than the rudimentary levels that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Are we in agreement? (*Ii?*)”
4. In relation to the Inuit traditions, they desire more traditional skills to be taught. They also desire that Inuit youths learn from the elders and other individuals how to apply cultural values, like Inuit Traditional Knowledge in the modern world. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Can we go outdoors together? (*Ittaarlu?*)”



## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. H. Richard Tyler, who always stressed the importance and value of obtaining an education. Their ongoing love, encouragement, advice, and support throughout the years have made many things that I dreamed to do possible. I also hope that I am able to be such an excellent role model and inspiration for my own children, as my parents have been for me.

I also dedicate this work to my four children, Jason Jamesie Kilabuk, Tanya Bea Kilabuk Gaul, Nathan Jim Kilabuk, and Elaine Grace Kilabuk – all Nunavut beneficiaries. They have filled my life with love, and continually amazed me as they have grown and succeeded in their different ways to blend traditional cultural values with modern skills. I hope that my children and their respective spouses, Diane Alorut Kilabuk and Matthew Gaul, always remember to believe in and work towards their dreams, even against all odds, just as you have helped me to do.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my grandchildren, Vanessa Annie Alorut Kilabuk, Wayne Ipeelee Alorut Kilabuk, and Andrew Richard Alorut Kilabuk, and other anticipated grandchildren. Their generation represents the potential and future of Nunavut.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this research to the Inuit of Nunavut. I feel honored to have had the opportunity to share in many Arctic adventures where I learned traditional Inuit values and developed relationships based on friendship, mutual respect, care, laughter, and of course, tears. My hope is that this research will make a difference in the educational opportunities made available to Inuit youths, so that their lives will be enriched as mine has been by being exposed to both cultures.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
List of Tables .....	xii
List of Figures.....	xvi
Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	2
Research Questions.....	3
Significance of this Study.....	6
Personal Perspective and Biases of Researcher .....	8
Organization of the Dissertation .....	9
Brief Background of Nunavut’s Features Relevant to this Study.....	10
Definition of Terms.....	24
Photographic Overview .....	28
Chapter Two: Unique Challenges: What Was Different?.....	47
Modifications During the Brainstorming Stage: (1) Obtaining Input from Individuals in Nunavut.....	48
Modifications During the Early Planning Stages: (2) Applying What Was Meaningful to Inuit .....	60
Identification of Guiding Themes.....	61
Different Licensing Procedures .....	61
Conceptual Framework.....	62
Modification During the Data Collection and Data Analysis Stages: (3) Emergent Patterns .....	68
Modification During the Presentation of Research Results: (4) Special Organizational Features .....	69
Wisdom of Elders .....	69
Helping Other People: The Symbol of Guideposts (Inuksuit) Represents Providing Needed Information .....	70
Storytelling That Highlights the Importance of Experiential Learning .....	73
Kim’s Story: One Person Can Make a Difference.....	75
Chapter Three: Literature Review .....	80
Introduction.....	80
Overriding Themes .....	82
First Overriding Theme: Recognizing and Valuing Culture.....	82
The Importance of Valuing and Using Holistic Perspective .....	83
What Culturally Sensitive Strategies can be Applied from Cultural Anthropology .....	85
Summary of the History of Schooling in the Eastern Arctic .....	86

Second Overriding Theme: Educational Equality for all Students .....	96
Third Overriding Theme: Being Educated by Having both Academic and Cultural Knowledge .....	103
Fourth Overriding Theme: Relationships Between the Home, the School, the Community and Inuit Culture .....	104
Review of the Literature Relevant to the Home Theme in Nunavut .....	104
Review of the Literature Relevant to School Theme in Nunavut .....	109
Review of the Literature Relevant to Community Theme in Nunavut .....	113
Review of the Literature Related to Inuit Culture in Nunavut .....	117
Conclusions From the Literature Review .....	127
Kim’s Story: First Impressions .....	132
Chapter Four: Research Methodology .....	135
Introduction .....	135
Rationale for Study .....	135
Rationale for Qualitative Methods .....	135
Rationale for Collective Case Study Approach .....	136
Rationale for Cross Comparison Analysis of Two Collective Case Studies .....	137
Research Sampling .....	137
Sampling Methods .....	137
Final Site Selection and Rationale .....	141
Participant Selection Description and Rationale .....	148
Description of the Participants .....	152
Pangnirtung Participants .....	158
Sanikiluaq Participants .....	160
Data Collections .....	164
Data Sources and Codes .....	164
Culturally Sensitive Strategy to Elders .....	165
Instruments .....	165
Interview Questions .....	166
Data Collection Procedures .....	167
Parent Recruitment and Enrollment .....	169
Teacher Recruitment and Enrollment .....	170
Adult Recruitment and Enrollment .....	170
Data Analysis .....	171
Data Analysis Procedures .....	171
Format of Data Analysis .....	173
Data Verification .....	173
Limitations of Design .....	174
Efforts to Reduce Bias or Errors .....	174
Chapter Five: What do Inuit Perceive to be Modern Guideposts that Will Help More Inuit Students to Stay In School? .....	176
Introduction .....	176
Description of the Participants .....	176
Modifications to the Study .....	177

Comparison of Findings Across Two Communities.....	185
Participants’ Response to the First Research Sub-Question .....	187
Explanation of Which Inuit Cultural Norms are Needed To Build Guideposts .....	196
Kim’s Story: The Importance of Shared Learning .....	199
Chapter Six: Describing the Cultural Framework .....	203
Introduction.....	203
Findings Related to the Home: Are we Prepared and Ready to go? ( <i>Atii?</i> ) .....	204
Current Literacy in the Home .....	205
Education Levels.....	205
Use of Inuktitut at Home.....	210
Use of English at Home .....	214
Importance of Encouragement.....	217
Suggestions Relating to the Home.....	225
Readiness for High School.....	225
Home - School Connection.....	231
Parent Involvement .....	234
Kim’s Story: Are We Prepared and Ready to go? ( <i>Atii?</i> ).....	237
Findings Related to the School: Remember I Care About You and our Relationship? ( <i>Ain?</i> ) .....	240
Current School Environment: Teaching Practices.....	242
How Elders Instruct Others.....	242
Qualities of a Good Teacher .....	244
Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students.....	250
Current School Environment: School Policies .....	254
Homework Assistance .....	254
Degree of Difficulty of Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High School .....	259
Length of Time Spent in Grade Ten .....	262
Difficulty of Grade Ten .....	264
Suggestions Relating to the School Environment.....	267
Inuit Desire Opportunities that Value Mentoring .....	267
Providing Homework and Assistance.....	268
Assisting with Learning English.....	271
Using Assessment .....	272
Inuit Desire Opportunities that Value Relationships .....	275
Improving Teacher – Parent – Student Interactions .....	275
Transitioning to Grade Ten.....	275
Alternatives for Male Students that Hunt .....	276
Day Care Access .....	277
Understanding the Importance of Education .....	278
Do you Know I Care About You and Our Relationship? ( <i>Ain?</i> ).....	280
Findings Related to the Community: Are we in Agreement? ( <i>Ii?</i> ).....	283
Current Community Partnerships .....	285
Participation in Exchange Trips.....	285

Participation in Sports Events.....	293
Combined Experiences with Other Cultures.....	297
Suggestions Relating to Community Partnerships.....	301
Better Communications .....	301
More Networking.....	302
Kim’s Story: Are we in Agreement? ( <i>Ii?</i> ) .....	304
Findings Related to Inuit Culture: Can we go Outdoors Together? ( <i>Ittaarlu?</i> ) ....	311
Current Influence of Inuit Culture .....	313
Providing Cultural Skills in Schools: Shop Classes .....	313
Providing Cultural Skills in Schools: Sewing Classes.....	314
Providing Cultural Skills in Schools: Cooking Classes.....	317
Elder’s Involvement in Schools .....	318
Providing Unique Community Programs in Schools.....	322
Observations on the Influence of Inuit Culture in Schools.....	322
Suggestions Relating to Inuit Culture.....	324
Using Elders to Teach About Inuit Culture in Schools.....	324
Additional Roles of Elders in Schools .....	325
Funding Elder Full-Time in Schools.....	327
Applying Traditional Knowledge and Values to Modern World .....	327
Kim’s Story: Do You Want to go Outside Together? ( <i>Ittaarlu?</i> ).....	333
Chapter Seven: Implementing the Cultural Framework in Two Different	
Communities .....	338
Introduction.....	338
Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	342
Introduction to Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	342
Pangnirtung School Profiles .....	343
Alookie Elementary School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	343
Attoguyuk Illisavik School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	345
Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the Home .....	348
Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the School.....	348
Lack of Challenge in School.....	348
Other School Procedures that Motivated Students .....	353
Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the Community.....	354
Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in Inuit Culture .....	354
Pangnirtung: Observations.....	359
School and Community Activities .....	360
Sanikiluaq, Nunavut.....	361
Introduction to Sanikiluaq, Nunavut.....	361
Sanikiluaq School Profile: Nuiyak School (Grades K-12) .....	362
Sanikiluaq: Differences Related to the Home.....	366
Sanikiluaq: Differences Related to the School, Differences Related to	
the Community, & Differences Related to the Inuit Culture .....	367
Sanikiluaq: Observations .....	373



Sanikiluaq: Parent, School, and Community Relations .....	374
Kim’s Story: Valuing Our Uniqueness .....	377
Chapter Eight: Conclusions, Implications, Insights and Recommendations .....	383
Introduction.....	385
Conclusions and Implications .....	385
Home: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm.....	385
Conclusions.....	385
Implications.....	386
Cultural Norm .....	386
School: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm .....	387
Conclusions.....	387
Implications.....	388
Cultural Norm .....	390
Community: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm .....	390
Conclusions.....	390
Implications.....	390
Cultural Norm .....	391
Inuit Culture: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm.....	392
Conclusions.....	392
Implications.....	392
Cultural Norm .....	393
Insight From Research and my Experiences.....	394
Inuit Culture: Future Elders .....	401
What Happens After this Generation of Elders Passes on? .....	403
Community: A Collective Voice .....	403
Why is an Inuit Curriculum Being Taught by Non-Inuit Teachers? .....	404
Why does Pangnirtung, the Community with the Highest Number of Graduates also have a Higher Number of Suicides and Other Mental Health Issues? .....	405
Why is Sanikiluaq, the Community Most Recognized for Innovative Cultural Activities have the Lowest Number of Graduates? .....	405
School: Knowledge and a Zone Where Inuit Learn Best .....	406
What do Inuit Students Need to Help Them Prepare for High School? .....	408
What Should Schools do to Become More Effective?.....	409
What Should Instruction in School Consist of?.....	410
Why Doesn’t the Nunavut Government Fund Pangnirtung’s Spring Camp and Sanikiluaq’s Innovative Cultural Programs Since They Make Such a Difference to Nunavut Students and Help Preserve Inuit Culture? .....	412
Home: Modern Inuit .....	412
Is it Possible to Straddle two Cultures? .....	414
Recommendations.....	421
Concluding Remarks.....	426
Kim’s Story: The Gift of Appreciation.....	430
References.....	434

Appendices.....	450
Appendix A: IRB Permission July 12, 2007 – July 11, 2008.....	450
Appendix B: IRB Permission June 18, 2008 – June 17, 2009 .....	452
Appendix C: IRB Request For Modification/Amendment To Approved Protocol.....	453
Appendix D: Nunavut License .....	455
Appendix E: Non Technical Project Summary in English.....	457
Appendix F: Non Technical Project Summary in Inuktitut .....	459
Appendix G: Recruitment letter in English .....	461
Appendix H: Recruitment Letter in Inuktitut .....	465
Appendix I: Student Assess/Parent Informed Consent in English.....	471
Appendix J: Student Assess/Parent Informed Consent in Inuktitut .....	477
Appendix K: Professional Informed Consent in English .....	483
Appendix L: Professional Informed Consent in Inuktitut.....	488
Appendix M: Interview Questions for Students.....	493
Appendix N: Interview Questions for Parents.....	495
Appendix O: Interview Questions for Adults.....	497
Appendix P: Interview Questions for Teacher and Specialists.....	499
Appendix Q: Codes for Subthemes .....	501
Appendix R: Pangnirtung Data Sets (Step One) .....	505
Appendix S: Sanikiluaq Data Sets (Step One).....	507
Appendix T: Pangnirtung Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two) ....	509
Appendix U: Sanikiluaq Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two).....	511
Appendix V: Pangnirtung Microsoft Word Tables (Step Three) .....	514
Appendix W: Sanikiluaq Microsoft Word Tables (Step Three).....	516
Appendix X: Pangnirtung Synthesized Charts to Prepare for Excel (Step Four).....	518
Appendix Y: Sanikiluaq Synthesized Charts to Prepare for Excel (Step Four)	519
Appendix Z: Pangnirtung Excel Charts and Graphs (Step Five) .....	520
Appendix AA: Sanikiluaq Excel Charts and Graphs (Step Five).....	522
Appendix BB: Cross Comparison of Data (Step Six).....	524
Appendix CC: Combined Excel Graphs (Step Seven).....	533

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Personal Communication with Individuals Providing Informal Input Government, Education, Professional Development .....51

Table 2: Personal Communication with Individuals Providing Informal Input by Teacher Training .....51

Table 3: Eight Guiding Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Principle .....64

Table 4: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 1 Through Ethical Principle 5 .....65

Table 5: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 6 Through Ethical Principle 13 .....66

Table 6: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 14 Through Ethical Principle 19 .....67

Table 7: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 20 .....68

Table 8: Summary of Data of 13 Communities .....141

Table 9: Potential Site Selection Descriptions .....142

Table 10: Current Inuit FTE Enrollment Data for 2006 - 2007 .....151

Table 11: Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Student Participants .....156

Table 12: Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Adult Participants .....157

Table 13: Participants .....157

Table 14: Pangnirtung Participants: 35 Total Inuit Interviewed .....158

Table 15: Grade Level of Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....159

Table 16: Age of Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....160

Table 17: Sanikiluaq Participants .....161

Table 18: Sanikiluaq Students .....163

Table 19: Age of Sanikiluaq Inuit Student Participants .....164

Table 20: What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School Including Comments From Having Elders in School, Having More Activities, Having Student Exchanges, Having Academic Support, and Having Available Day Care .....189

Table 21: What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School Including Comments From Having Available Housing, Students who Made More Than one Comment, and No Response .....190

Table 22: What Pangnirtung Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School .....191

Table 23:	What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School: Comments Include Having Elders in the School and Having More Activities.....	192
Table 24:	What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School: Comments Include Having Student Exchanges, Learning About Careers, Having Academic Support and Less Distractions, Having Homework, Not Having Bullies, Having a Good Foundations in Inuit Culture, Having Parents Involved, Having Available Day Care, Adults who Made More Than one Comment and No Response.....	193
Table 25:	What Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School .....	195
Table 26:	Locations of Inuit Students’ Mothers’ Education .....	209
Table 27:	Locations of Inuit Students’ Fathers’ Education .....	210
Table 28:	Amount of Inuktitut Spoken in Inuit Students’ Home.....	213
Table 29:	Amount of Inuktitut Print in Inuit Students’ Homes .....	214
Table 30:	Amount of English Spoken in Inuit Students’ Homes.....	215
Table 31:	Availability of English Print in Students’ Homes.....	216
Table 32:	Amount of English Spoken by Inuit Adults’ Homes .....	217
Table 33:	Availability of English Print in Inuit Adults’ Homes .....	217
Table 34:	Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Students .....	223
Table 35:	Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults Including Mother Through Not Encouraged.....	224
Table 36:	Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults Including Gave More Than one Answer to No Response .....	225
Table 37:	Summary of Findings Between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq for the Home .....	236
Table 38;	Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Students’ Opinions) Including Friendly and/or Enthusiastic through Easy to Approach and Readily Available .....	248
Table 39:	Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Students’ Opinions Including Can “Teach” is Helpful, and Good Listener through No Response.....	249
Table 40:	Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Adults’ Opinions) .....	250
Table 41:	Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students .....	253
Table 42:	Individuals who Provided Homework Help to Inuit Students.....	256
Table 43:	Individuals who Provided Homework Support to Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....	257
Table 44:	Individuals who Provided Homework Support to Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	258
Table 45:	Individuals who Provided Homework Support to Inuit Adults When They Went to School.....	259
Table 46;	Degree of Difficulty Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Students.....	261

Table 47:	Degree of Difficulty Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Adults.....	262
Table 48:	Number of Years Spent in Grade Ten by Inuit Students .....	264
Table 49:	Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Students .....	266
Table 50:	Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Adults.....	267
Table 51:	Summary of Findings Between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Related to School .....	279
Table 52:	Summary of findings Between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq for Cultural Exchanges and Sports .....	303
Table 53:	Findings for both Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq .....	304
Table 54:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Students .....	291
Table 55:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Students .....	291
Table 56:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Adults.....	292
Table 57:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults .....	293
Table 58:	Participation in Sports Events by Inuit Students.....	295
Table 59:	Participation in Sports Events by Inuit Adults.....	296
Table 60:	Participation in Combined Experiences by Inuit Students .....	300
Table 61:	Participation in Combined Experiences by Inuit Adults.....	301
Table 62:	Summary of Findings Between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Related to Inuit Culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) .....	332
Table 63:	Findings for the Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Shop Classes Through Unique Community Programs.....	332
Table 64:	Findings for the Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Involvement Of Elders in the Schools through Observation Influences of Culture in the Schools .....	333
Table 65:	Participation in Shop Classes by Sanikiluaq Males .....	314
Table 66:	Participation in Sewing Classes by Females.....	316
Table 67:	Participation in cooking Classes by Inuit Females .....	318
Table 68:	View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Students.....	320
Table 69:	View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults.....	321
Table 70:	Different Implementation of Cultural Framework in Pangnirtung Versus Sanikiluaq Including Home and School .....	341
Table 71:	Different Implementation of Cultural Framework in Pangnirtung Versus Sanikiluaq Including Community and Inuit Culture.....	342
Table 72:	Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....	351
Table 73:	Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Adults .....	352
Table 74:	Comments about Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Students.....	358
Table 75:	Comments About Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Adults.....	359
Table 76:	Participation in Innovative Cultural Programs by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	372
Table 77:	A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Home .....	375

Table 78:	A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including School and Community.....	376
Table 79:	A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Inuit Culture .....	377
Table 80:	Summary of Unseen Obstacles that Inhibit Inuit Students Learning.....	417
Table 81:	Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Inuit Culture: Future Elders.....	418
Table 82:	Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Community: A Collective Voice.....	419
Table 83:	Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes School: Knowledge and a Zone Where Inuit Learn Best.....	420
Table 84:	Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Home: Modern Inuit.....	421
Table 85:	Suggested Initiatives by Inuit That Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order .....	429
Table 86:	Recommended Positions that Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order to Effectively Support Inuit Initiatives Including Inuit Culture .....	429
Table 87:	Recommended Positions that Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order to Effectively Support Inuit Initiatives Including Community, School and Home .....	430

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Location of Nunavut Communities in Canada (Atlas of Canada: Explore North, 1999).....	2
Figure 2:	Inuksuk (Picture taken by Ron Hofman).....	4
Figure 3:	Deceased Pangnirtung Elder Katsu Evic Dressed in Traditional Caribou Clothing.....	4
Figure 4:	Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk with Researcher’s Children.....	5
Figure 5:	Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk.....	5
Figure 6:	Kim’s Children in the Arctic.....	9
Figure 7:	Landscape of Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	28
Figure 8:	Researcher Hiking in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	29
Figure 9:	Photo of the Arctic Circle Crossed on Recent Hiking Trip with Researcher and her Daughter.....	30
Figure 10:	View of Researcher’s Children and Auyittuq National Park from Hill Nearby Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	30
Figure 11:	Landscape of Sanikiluaq, Nunavut.....	31
Figure 12:	Researcher in Sanikiluaq Nunavut.....	31
Figure 13:	Winter in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	32
Figure 14:	Summer in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	32
Figure 15:	Spring Fishing in Motorized Canoes in Nunavut.....	33
Figure 16:	Spring Camping in Nunavut.....	33
Figure 17:	Spring Ice Fishing Near Pangnirtung, Nunavut.....	34
Figure 18:	Researcher’s Son with First Duck.....	34
Figure 19:	Motorized Canoes.....	35
Figure 20:	Elders Made Traditional Broom from Duck Feathers of Son’s First Duck During Summer Camping.....	35
Figure 21:	Son Cutting Seal.....	36
Figure 22:	Seal Meat Being Removed.....	36
Figure 23:	Researcher’s Children with Caribou.....	37
Figure 24:	Researcher’s Son Helping to Skin Caribou.....	37
Figure 25:	Community Members Help with Whale Hunt.....	38
Figure 26:	Researcher’s Son Cuts Piece of Whale Skin, ( <i>Muktuk</i> ) to Share With Others.....	38
Figure 27:	Checking Nets for Arctic Char.....	39
Figure 28:	Daughter with the Arctic Char She Caught.....	39
Figure 29:	Seal Skin Boots, ( <i>Kamiks</i> ).....	39
Figure 30:	Researcher Wearing a Caribou ( <i>Amautik</i> ) With Daughter Inside.....	40
Figure 31:	Researcher’s Daughter with Handmade Caribou Dolls by Deceased Pangnirtung, Nunavut Elder Katsu Evic and Seal Bone Game And Seal Skin Pouch.....	40
Figure 32:	Researcher Wearing Cloth ( <i>Amautik</i> ) With Older Daughter.....	41

Figure 33:	Researcher’s Younger Daughter in ( <i>Amautik</i> ) With Cousin.....	41
Figure 34:	Children in Cloth Parkas Made by Researcher .....	42
Figure 35:	Igloo Building .....	43
Figure 36:	<i>Qullik</i> .....	43
Figure 37:	Researcher’s Son Carving Whales.....	44
Figure 38:	Cycle of the Sea (Artist: Andrew Qappik, Print Maker: Andrew Qappik) .....	44
Figure 39:	Breaking Camp (Artist: Andrew Qappik, Weaver: Kawtysie Kaki.....	45
Figure 40:	Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk Teaching Researcher’s Children Traditional Whale Song .....	45
Figure 41:	Community (Includes Some of the Researcher’s Children and Children’s Relatives .....	46
Figure 42:	Nunavut Regions .....	50
Figure 43:	Inuksuk.....	72
Figure 44:	Nunavut Flag.....	73
Figure 45:	Current Version of Written Symbols of Inuktitut .....	74
Figure 46:	Conclusions from Literature Review .....	131
Figure 47:	Inuksuk.....	131
Figure 48:	Nunavut Regions.....	138
Figure 49:	Estimated Median Rates of Inuit Students’ Persistence in Nunavut.....	140
Figure 50:	Nunavut Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2006/2007 .....	150
Figure 51:	Pangnirtung Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2006/2007 .....	150
Figure 52:	Sanikiluaq Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2006/2007 .....	151
Figure 53:	Grade Level of Pangnirtung Inuit Student Participants .....	159
Figure 54:	Age of Pangnirtung Inuit Students.....	160
Figure 55:	Grade Level of Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	162
Figure 56:	Age of Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	163
Figure 57:	Duck Picture Elaine and Jason.....	184
Figure 58:	Duck Picture with Nathan.....	184
Figure 59:	What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students Stay in High School .....	189
Figure 60:	What Pangnirtung Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School .....	190
Figure 61:	What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School .....	192
Figure 62:	What Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School .....	194
Figure 63:	Inuksuk.....	199
Figure 64:	Inuksuk.....	199
Figure 65:	Inuksuk – Inunnguaq (Which Means “Like a Human Being”).....	203
Figure 66:	Researcher’s Son as a Toddler.....	204



Figure 66:	Researcher’s Son with First Duck.....	204
Figure 67:	Location of Inuit Students’ Mothers’ Education .....	209
Figure 68:	Location of Inuit Students’ Fathers’ Education .....	210
Figure 69:	Amount of Inuktitut Spoken in Inuit Students’ Homes .....	213
Figure 70:	Amount of Inuktitut Print in Inuit Students’ Homes .....	214
Figure 71:	Amount of English Spoken in Inuit Students’ Homes.....	215
Figure 72:	Availability of English Print in Inuit Students’ Homes.....	216
Figure 73:	Amount of English Spoken in Inuit Students’ Homes.....	216
Figure 74:	Availability of English in Inuit Adults’ Homes.....	217
Figure 75:	Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Students .....	223
Figure 76:	Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults .....	224
Figure 77:	Researcher’s Daughter Wearing Glasses dressed in an <i>Amoutik</i> .....	240
Figure 78:	Researcher’s Daughter in an <i>Amoutik</i> .....	240
Figure 79:	Qualities of a Good Teacher (Students’ Opinions).....	248
Figure 80:	Qualities of a Good Teacher (Adults’ Opinions).....	249
Figure 81:	Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students .....	253
Figure 82:	Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Pangnirtung Inuit Students.....	257
Figure 83:	Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Sanikiluaq Inuit Students.....	258
Figure 84:	Degree of Difficulty Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High School for Inuit Students .....	261
Figure 85:	Degree of Difficulty Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High School for Inuit Adults.....	262
Figure 86:	Number of Years Spent in Grade Ten by Inuit Students .....	263
Figure 87:	Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Students.....	266
Figure 88:	Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Adults.....	267
Figure 89:	Researcher’s Daughter in an <i>Amoutik</i> .....	283
Figure 90:	Researcher’s Daughter with a Polar Bear in the Background.....	284
Figure 91:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Students .....	290
Figure 92:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Students.....	291
Figure 93:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Adults.....	292
Figure 94:	Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Adults .....	292
Figure 95:	Participation of Pangnirtung Inuit Students in Sports.....	294
Figure 96:	Participation in Sports by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	295
Figure 97:	Participation in Sports by Pangnirtung Adults.....	296
Figure 98:	Sanikiluaq Adult Participation in Sports.....	296
Figure 99:	Combined Experiences with Different Cultures by Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....	299
Figure 100:	Combined Experiences with Different Cultures by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	299
Figure 101:	Pangnirtung Inuit Adult Experience with Different Cultures .....	300
Figure 102:	Combined Experiences with Different Cultures by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults .....	301

Figure 103: Researcher’s Son with His First Seal Skin .....	311
Figure 104: Poster of the Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ).....	311
Figure 105: Male Participation in Shop Class in Sanikiluaq.....	314
Figure 106: Female Participation in Sewing Class in Sanikiluaq .....	316
Figure 107: Female Participation in Cooking in School in Sanikiluaq.....	318
Figure 108: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Students.....	320
Figure 109: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults.....	321
Figure 110: Photograph of Print from Pangnirtung, Nunavut Showing two Different Inuksuit: In the Winter Camp, Artist: Thomasie Alikatuktuk, Printmaker: Josea Maniapik.....	339
Figure 111: Pangnirtung, Nunavut Alookie Elementary School and the Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School.....	343
Figure 112: Inside Alookie Elementary School Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	343
Figure 113: Foyer of Alookie Elementary School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	344
Figure 114: Inside an Alookie Elementary School Classroom in Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	344
Figure 115: Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	345
Figure 116: Inside of a Classroom of Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	346
Figure 117: Foyer of Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut .....	346
Figure 118: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....	351
Figure 119: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Adults .....	352
Figure 120: Comments about Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Inuit Students .....	358
Figure 121: Comments about Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Inuit Adults .....	359
Figure 122: Sanikiluaq, Nunavut Nuiyak School (Grades K-12).....	362
Figure 123: View Number One of the Inside Foyer of Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq, Nunavut.....	362
Figure 124: View Number Two of the Inside Foyer of Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq, Nunavut.....	363
Figure 125: Participation in Innovative Cultural Programs by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students .....	371
Figure 126: Elder Aichinak Kilabuk Teaching String Games to Researcher’s Children.....	383
Figure 127: Cover of Jason Kilabuk’s Third Grade Report Card Attagoyuk School Pangnirtung, NWT.....	396
Figure 128: Teacher’s Comments on Jason Kilabuk’s Third Grade Report Card Attagoyuk School Pangnirtung, NWT.....	397
Figure 129: Jason Kilabuk Third Grade Entry for 1988 Baffin Divisional Board of Education Writing Competition.....	426

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

My research was conducted to determine what Inuit, the indigenous people<sup>1</sup> of Canada, perceive will guide Inuit students in the Arctic region of Nunavut, Canada to stay in high school and graduate (Figure 1). This introductory chapter outlines the purpose, the significance, the personal bias of the researcher, the organization of the dissertation, and a definition of terms. To help those unfamiliar with the context of this study, basic background information is provided along with a photographic view of Nunavut at the end of this chapter.

As a non-Inuit doing research in the Arctic, I was faced with the unique challenge of incorporating Inuit cultural values into all stages of my study. As a result, certain modifications and special considerations were made that are outlined in chapter two.

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<sup>1</sup> Indigenous people is a more general term that refers to any people that descended from a group that was present in the area before modern states or territories were created that maintain their own cultural identities separate from the mainstream or dominant culture (ADB, 2008). Aboriginal people is a more specific term that refers to the descendents of the original inhabitants in a given area, who have their own distinct heritage, language, culture and spiritual beliefs. Inuit are an indigenous people. Canada also legally recognizes the Inuit as one of the three groups of Aboriginal people in North America (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008).

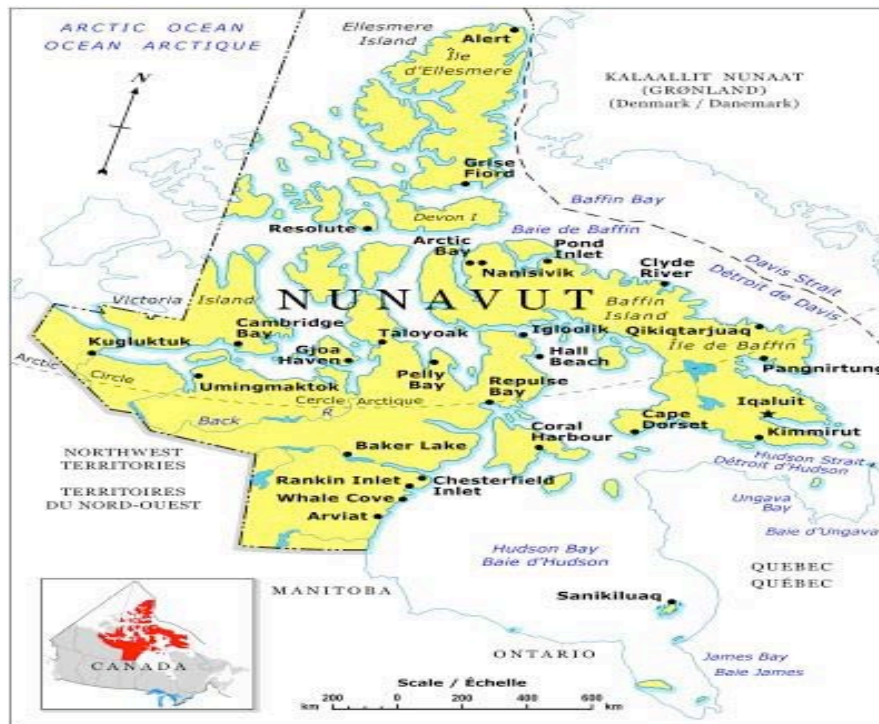


Figure 1: Location of Nunavut Communities in Canada  
(Atlas of Canada: Explore North, 1999)

### *Purpose of the Study*

The number of Inuit graduating from high school in Nunavut is problematic. Nunavut has the lowest high school graduation rate in Canada. In 2003 only 26 percent of students graduated in 2003. Even as recently as 2006, only “25 percent of Inuit children graduated from high school in Nunavut” (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 2006, p. 14). This contrasts sharply with the national average graduation rate for 2006, which was 75 percent (Fulford, 2007). Very few Inuit students remain in high school through graduation, creating an academic gap between Inuit learners and other Canadian students. The purpose of this study is to focus on Inuit perceptions regarding why some Inuit students remain in school. Little is known about why Inuit students remain in school, and this research will enrich that critically needed knowledge base.

## *Research Questions*

This research is designed to answer the question: “What do Inuit perceive to be the guideposts (*Nutaaq Inuksuit*)<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2, see p. 4) that help Inuit students remain in high school in Nunavut, Canada?” The three main questions that guided this research were:

1. What do Inuit perceive will help Inuit students to stay in school?
2. What is the role of Inuit culture?
3. What is the role of the “Inuit Traditional Knowledge” (“*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*,” or *IQ*)<sup>3</sup>

The following factors were examined for each question:

- a. Home life related to gender and age
- b. Teaching practices and school procedures
- c. Interaction between the communities and the schools
- d. Influence of Inuit culture

The data obtained from the research was provided from interviews with Inuit students who had continued their schooling from grades 10 to 12. Other Inuit community members were also interviewed. In particular, “elders” were a valuable resource. “Elders” are elderly Inuit whose families were hunter-gathers and lived a nomadic life. They acquired knowledge of Inuit culture and culture from their ancestors, which they have

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<sup>2</sup> Inuksuit are stone formation that Inuit traditionally built as a land marker to help guide them on the land. Inuksuit is the plural form of Inuksuk.

<sup>3</sup> *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* or Inuit Traditional Knowledge is commonly referred to in most documents as (IQ). In this paper the initials (*IQ*) should not be confused with the commonly used acronym “IQ” used in relation to intelligence. However, the researcher notes that Inuit Traditional Knowledge does reflect the Inuit’s sense of wisdom or intelligence.

passed on to future generations (Figure 3). One elder from each of the communities selected was included in this study (Figures 4 and 5, see pp. 4 and 5)

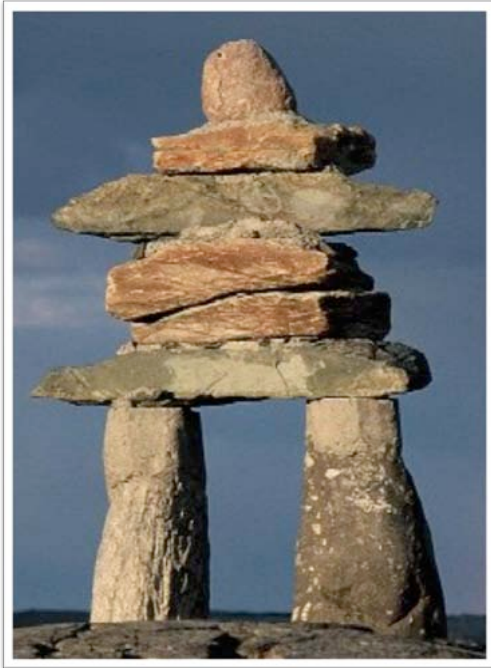


Figure 2: Inuksuk  
Picture taken by Ron Hofman from <http://www.whiterainbowphotography.ca/images/inuksuk.jpg> (Hofman, 2007)



Figure 3: Deceased Pagnirtung Elder Katsu Evic dressed in traditional caribou clothing



Figure 4: Pagnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk with Researcher's Children



Figure 5: Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk  
Sanikiluaq, Nunavut Community Historical Yearbook (2006 p. 278),  
Najuqsivik Production, Part of the  
Community Access Program, Industry Canada

### *Significance of this Study*

The Nunavut government will benefit from this much-needed research because it expands the field of knowledge about what helps Inuit students stay in school in four significant areas:

1. This research was designed to meet a current need identified by individuals in Nunavut as of critical importance to them. The focus on Inuit perceptions is paramount because discussions about ways to solve challenges related to aboriginal people often lack the perspective of the individuals they most affect (Kenny, 2004). An important contribution of this study is to give voice to the Inuit, whose children and the future of their territory are both critically affected by low graduation rates. In addition, the researcher's background knowledge of Inuit culture supported the use of culturally sensitive research methods that promoted Inuit values as part of this systematic and comprehensive research study.
2. Inuit students' perceptions were deliberately obtained from two communities, purposefully selected for comparison. These students' perceptions were further enriched by information from Inuit community members, including elders as well as non-Inuit participants. Therefore, a second contribution of this study was to avoid what happens too often in educational studies, which is the omission of student experiences, even though what they have had to overcome to remain in school could help inform school change (Nieto, 1994). The need to hear Inuit students' perceptions as well as those of Inuit adults, is even more critical in Nunavut because the vast majority of Inuit students do



not graduate from high school. In 2006, only 10 percent of the Inuit in Nunavut over the age of 15 had obtained a high school diploma, and 69 percent of them did not have any diploma, certificate, or degrees (Statistics Canada Aboriginal Population Profiles, 2006).<sup>4</sup>

3. Current negative statistics relating to Nunavut's educational context do not reflect what individuals are experiencing. My systematic, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive qualitative research methods will further explain this phenomena. Based on research conducted in Nunavut, Canada, this study provides rich and descriptive information that has not been documented previously. It is also prevalent and specific enough to be used by the individual communities studied to implement school improvement. It will also supplement other studies in Nunavut related to the current role of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) within a given school (Pulpan, 2006), the use of innovative community partnerships to increase academic success (Fulford, 2007), school change (Tompkins, 1998), students at risk (Iqaluit District of Education, 2006), and larger studies in Nunavut like the Berger report (Berger, 2006), and the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 2006). Other than the few references cited above, current applicable educational research relating to Inuit in the remote and newly formed territory of Nunavut are scarce. Therefore, this research will make a valuable contribution to the knowledge base. In addition, recommendations

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<sup>4</sup> Twenty percent of Inuit had received some certification. Inuit with high school diploma: 1,485; Inuit with other education: 10,655; Inuit over age 15: 15,510. Statistics Canada Aboriginal Population Profiles (2006).

from this research could inform policy making and other educational initiatives that could potentially increase student graduation rates in other Nunavut schools.

4. This research identifies other possible avenues for future research to help Inuit high school students to remain in school. Currently, no assessment of individual success or standardized test measures are used in Nunavut, other than a fourth-grade pilot project (personal communication, Minister of Education, Edward Picco, April, 2007). Baseline data for 2007 was obtained from the Nunavut Department of Education which was used to calculate estimated median rates of Inuit persistence in high school. Themes emerging from this research could be used as a framework for evaluating schools. As well, this study provides a culturally sensitive qualitative research model of data collection and analysis that could be used in other Nunavut communities for future educational research.

#### *Personal Perspective and Biases of Researcher*

My Arctic experiences have given me a personal perspective on Inuit culture. My professional qualifications and background in education are particularly relevant to this study. I spent fourteen years, from 1977 to 1991, living and raising a family in Pangnirtung, a community that is now in Nunavut (Figure 6, see p. 8). My four children are Inuit and are registered as legal Nunavut Beneficiaries of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. I held a Nunavut Teaching Certificate and taught in an elementary school. I was also an instructor and adult educator for Arctic College. (I was surprised to discover that a student I had instructed in an upgrading program became the first, and current,

Premier of Nunavut.) Teaching at Arctic College enabled me to work with various individuals to develop creative and ongoing community programs in both the fisheries industry and in the establishment of a day-care center. By developing new community partnerships with the schools, I aspire to continue to make a difference for the future of Nunavut that is both meaningful and sustainable.



Figure 6: Kim's Children in the Arctic

### *Organization of the Dissertation*

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapter two explains how my research was modified to include conversational input from key individuals in Nunavut about what they thought were important educational aspects and culturally sensitive research strategies. Chapter three reviews the relevant literature according to the four themes identified in informal conversations. Chapter four outlines the design and use of qualitative case study research methods which includes the participants and site selection, data sources, sampling, and data analysis procedures. Chapter five presents an overview of the research findings in terms of common Inuit cultural norms in a framework that

organizes contributing influences that Inuit identified should be present in the educational system in order to help more Inuit stay in school. Chapter six discusses the similarities between the two communities studied that support the organization of similar common cultural norms in this framework. Chapter seven illustrates how the structure and organization of the framework was modified and implemented to reflect local resources in the communities of Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq. Chapter eight discusses the conclusions, implications, and recommendations resulting from my research. The appendixes contain supporting documentation referred to throughout the dissertation.

#### *Brief Background of Nunavut's Features Relevant to this Study*

Nunavut, located in Canada, North America, lies partly within the Arctic Circle (Figure 1). Certain features relating to its Nunavut's population, geography, population, culture, and educational history are included to provide basic background information important to understanding for my research.

Nunavut is an Arctic region that has 26 remote communities, many of which can only be accessed by airplane (Government of Nunavut, 2007) (Figure 1, see p. 1). Two Nunavut communities, participated in this study, Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq (Figure 1, see p. 1).

Most of the land in Nunavut lies above the Arctic Circle and has permafrost that can be more than 2,000 feet thick in some areas.<sup>5</sup> Pangnirtung, located in Baffin Island, near the Arctic Circle had nearby mountainous glacial fiords (Figure 7, 8, 9, and 10, see pp. 29 - 30). In contrast, Sanikiluaq, located in the Belcher Islands, has rolling hillsides covered with tundra (Figure 11 and 12, see p. 31).

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<sup>5</sup> Permafrost is permanently frozen ground that never thaws. In Nunavut, it can be more than 600 meters thick in some areas.

In Nunavut, there is great variation between winter and summer temperatures. In winter, average temperatures can drop from -20 degrees to -35 degrees Fahrenheit (Figure 13, see p. 32). The snow covered regions and vast expanses of flat, treeless tundra<sup>6</sup> contrast with other areas of mountainous fiords and permanent ice caps. Icebergs and sea ice are present even in the summer, as average temperatures range from 36 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit<sup>7</sup> (Figure 14, see p. 32). Even with Nunavut's dry climate,<sup>8</sup> there is a variety of wildlife, including polar bears, caribou, ducks, seals, walrus, whales, and Arctic char (World Book Encyclopedia, 2006). Nunavut covers as much as 21 percent or 808,185 square miles, of Canada's total area, or 3,855,103 square miles.<sup>9</sup> This means that Nunavut has the largest total area of any territory or province in Canada. The remoteness of small Arctic communities is one of the problems in the implementation of any educational initiative because of logistics, expenses of travel, and limited resources available to fund travel.

To survive under fluctuating weather conditions, Inuit have developed certain cultural traditions related to hunting to obtain food and clothing. Today, some of these traditions are still evident among hunters. Families still travel in spring (Figure 15 see p. 33), go camping (Figure 16 see p. 33), and go fishing through the ice in spring (Figure 17, see p. 34). They also go duck hunting (Figure 18, see p. 34), or camping on-land using motorized canoes (Figure 19 see p. 35), and using hand-made canvas tents in the summer (Figure 20, see p. 35). Hunting and preparing animals like seal (Figures 21 and

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<sup>6</sup> Tundra is land covered with moss, low growing shrubs, grasses, herbs and no trees.

<sup>7</sup> Winter temperature range is -29 degrees Celsius to -37 degrees Celsius. Summer temperatures range from 10 degrees Celsius to 2 degrees Celsius.

<sup>8</sup> Nunavut has less than 12 inches of annual precipitation.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian: Nunavut covers 2,093,190 square kilometers of Canada's 9,984,670 square kilometers.

22, see p. 36), caribou (Figures 23 and 24, see p. 37), whale (Figure 25 and 26, see p. 38), as well as fishing (Figures 27 and 28, see p.39) are still part of everyday community life. Inuit still make and enjoy wearing traditional seal skin boots, *kamik*, that can be used in winter, or even in summer (Figure 29, see p. 40). Traditional clothing is made of caribou or seal skins (Figure 30, see p. 40), as are dolls made from caribou and games made from seal bones (Figure 31, see p. 41). A cloth version of a traditional parka, *amautik*, is still used by women to carry babies on their backs (Figures 32 and 33, see pp. 41 - 42). Cloth parkas are still commonly used by adults and children (Figure 34, see p. 42). Other traditions are also less common, like using an igloo (Figure 35, see p. 43), or using a traditional lamp, *qullik*, illuminated by seal blubber and a plant wick (Figure 36, see p. 43). Often, Inuit culture is depicted in their carvings (Figure 37, see p. 44) or art, like prints (Figure 38, see p. 44) and tapestries (Figure 39, see p. 45). Inuit elders (Figure 40, see p. 45), families (Figure 41, see p. 46), and the community would teach Inuit youth about their culture. Many of the cultural values that preserve Inuit culture, like the importance of the elders, the family, and the community have not changed.

Both communities chosen in this study had a majority of Inuit residents according to the 2006 census. Specifically, in Pangnirtung, 1240 of the 1325 residents were Inuit. In Sanikiluaq, 705 of the 744 residents were Inuit (Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006).<sup>10</sup> According to the 2006 census, the median age of 22 years for the Inuit population in Canada is much younger than the median age of 40 years for the non-Aboriginal population. As well, more than 56 percent of Inuit population are 24 years or older as compared to 31 percent of the non-Aboriginal population of the same age. This

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<sup>10</sup> The Statistics Canada Community Profiles (2006) were used as a reference for Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq.

means that the Inuit population is younger, and growing faster than the rest of the Canadian population. An implication is that even more emphasis will have to be placed on increasing the opportunities for schooling at all levels to accommodate these population trends (Statistical Canada Aboriginal Peoples, 2006).

In fact twenty-nine percent of the estimated 100,000 Inuit in the world live in Canada<sup>11</sup> (World Book Encyclopedia, 2006). Forty-nine percent of all Canadian Inuit live in Nunavut<sup>12</sup> (Statistics Canada Aboriginal Peoples, 2006). This concentration of Inuit in the Arctic region enabled them to unite politically as an aboriginal group and seek the right to govern lands that belonged to their ancestors.

It took over 20 years of negotiations for the North West Territories (NWT) residents to be able to vote to establish a new Canadian territory that would be governed by the Inuit. In 1993, the Canadian Parliament passed the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act (NLCA) and the Nunavut Act of 1993 that set the parameters for the formation of this new Inuit territory called Nunavut. By dividing the existing NWT into two parts, Nunavut came into existence on April 1, 1999 (Nunavut Act, 1993). This new lands claim agreement with the Canadian government gave the Inuit, the indigenous people of the region, the right to self-government and control over some of the lands that belonged to their ancestors ("Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act," 1993). They also gained financial compensation – \$1.1 billion dollars – for relinquishing their aboriginal lands claims to other areas that their ancestors had also inhabited (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 1999). The Inuit claim to ancestral lands had been firmly established by current

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<sup>11</sup>Percentages of Inuit worldwide for Greenland, Alaska, and Russia are 36 percent, 34 percent, and 1 percent respectively.

<sup>12</sup>There are 24,635 Inuit in Nunavut and 50,485 Inuit in Canada according to the Statistics Canada Community Profiles (2006).

research that had identified their direct linkage to the Pre-Dorset people who came to Nunavut from Alaska about 1,000 years ago (McGhee, 2005). In fact, *Nunavut* in Inuktitut, the Inuit language, means *our land*.<sup>13</sup>

The creation of Nunavut was the largest aboriginal land claims settlement in Canada,<sup>14</sup> and it also resulted in changes in the country's geographic and political map. It represents a significant landmark for aboriginal people who look to Nunavut as a model for how to gain a recognized government.<sup>15</sup>

Nunavut's creation as a territory enabled and empowered Inuit leaders to attempt to address the local, educational, social, and economic needs of its isolated northern communities. This political act had a huge effect on all government departments, including education. The newly formed Nunavut Department of Education (NDE), instead of the Canadian government, now had control over all existing educational institutions that serviced the Inuit population. These educational institutions included day-care centers, schools, adult education centers, and college outreach centers. This was the first time that the Inuit had the opportunity to define and implement their vision of what constituted a quality education. The NDE articulated this vision in their mission statement: "Education provides the path and guides the life-long learning journey of Nunavummiut<sup>16</sup> by providing excellence in education and training so that Nunavummiut benefit from their past and create their own future for a productive, prosperous society" (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). The mission of the NDE stressed two equally

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<sup>13</sup>Nunavut's creation also noted in (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 1999) and (World Book Encyclopedia, 2006)

<sup>14</sup> Regions in Canada where Inuit have agreements are Inuvialuit in the North West Territories, Nunavut in Arctic Quebec, and James Bay in Labrador. Native Indian tribes in the Yukon and North West Territories also have or are working on agreements.

<sup>15</sup> Some other aboriginal governments in Greenland and regions of Alaska are more formally recognized than those Aboriginal in Australia and Northern Scandinavia.

<sup>16</sup> Nunavummiut are the long-term residents of Nunavut. They are predominately Inuit.



important and distinct ideas. The first is Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), which is passed on from one generation to the next through oral tradition and learned experience, and knowledge the Inuit need to thrive in contemporary society.

Central to the success of educational reform in Nunavut is the fact that it was initiated by the Inuit themselves. Educational reform has been shown to be most successful if, once initiated, consideration is focused on how it is being implemented and sustained (Fullan, 2001). There are limited indicators available to show the implementation of Nunavut's vision, but the statistics clearly show that a gap exists between what was the intended potential for Inuit achievement and their actual attainment. Academic gaps have been noted among other Canadian indigenous groups across Canada (Fulford, 2007). However, it is striking that such a large academic gap exists because Nunavut has the potential to implement the needed educational reforms to reduce it.

Research on educational reforms indicates that, "Twenty-five percent of the solution is having good directional ideas; 75 percent is figuring out how to get there in one local context after another" (Fullan, 2001, p. 268). Since only 25 percent of Inuit students appear to be benefiting from Nunavut's "good directional ideas" that are currently being implemented, the question is what helps them stay in school? To build on and sustain already initiated successes in Nunavut, it is important to gain a clear understanding of which processes are being effectively implemented in the current educational context, and the variations that occur in the different communities.

Available documents and information from a variety of sources were examined to get an initial overview of Nunavut's educational situation prior to speaking with

individuals in Nunavut. These documents included, but were not limited to, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the Education Act, the Berger Report and current statistics.

Training native teachers was one of the first very successful practices implemented by the Canadian government, and continued by the Nunavut government, that addressed the challenge of providing quality education for Nunavut's population. In 1970, the Office of First Nations and Inuit Education was created to provide community-based teacher training and to help with the growing need for Inuktitut-speaking teachers. Inuit-trained teachers would receive a McGill University Certificate of Native and Northern Education, which was valid only in Nunavut and was limited to grades K-6. With this certificate, Inuit teachers could take an additional 60 credit course to obtain a standard Bachelors of Education degree. They also have the option of taking a 30 credit program that leads to certification in middle school in Nunavut.<sup>17</sup>

Native control over the educational systems was another strategy the Inuit implemented to further address the challenge of providing a quality education. When the current Inuit parents were students, some of them had extremely negative school experiences related to horrible living conditions, lack of adequate nourishment, physical abuse, and forced removal from their families and culture. This phenomena was so widespread among Inuit that were sent to residential schools that the Canadian government issued a "Statement of Reconciliation" on January 7, 1998. In that document, the government acknowledged that the residential schools had tried to assimilate Inuit and that their attitude of racial and cultural superiority suppressed and weakened the Inuit

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<sup>17</sup> These same programs are available to other aboriginal groups like the Algonquin, Cree, Mikmaq and Kanilenkehaka (Mohawk) and certification in their respective territories or provinces (McGill University, 2007).

culture. A public policy entitled, "Gathering Strength, Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan" called for respect for aboriginal people. Money was allotted for a healing fund to help victims of the residential schools (International Center for Transitional Justice, 2007). On June 11, 2008, the Canadian government publically apologized to the survivors of residential schools and re-acknowledged the need to respect the Inuit and their culture (Press Release Archives, 2007).

“After a century of curriculum that nullified all things Inuit, educators hoped more Inuit content in schools would help students feel less marginalized by education” (CBC-Archives, 2007).

During the research preparation and data collection stages of my research, Nunavut still used the 1979 Education Act to support their view that education should include learning about the Inuit culture. Clause 45 of this act does indicate the intent to have every student receive a quality education:

1. Every teacher shall, respect the students under his or her care and instruction,
  - a. encourage the students in the pursuit of learning,
  - b. diligently teach students in a manner that promotes their physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual development,
  - c. teach the educational program in accordance to the curriculum,
  - d. implement the educational program and individual education plans in a way that:
    - i. encourages the development of students’ self-respect, dignity, and self-esteem;

- ii. and encourages students to respect other students' cultural and spiritual or religious beliefs and values (1979 Education Act).

The Nunavut Act, Bill 21, became available to the public in April 2008, during the final stages of my research. It is important to include this document in this research because it will be the basis for all future Nunavut Department of Education initiatives and changes. The Nunavut Act supports all that was identified in the 1979 Education Act, Clause 45, mentioned above. This new act also provides more specific information relevant to the Inuit. For example, both acts support the holistic view of an individual. In the Nunavut Act, it also states the importance on focusing on students' "intellectual development, and their physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual well-being... [in support of] life long learning." In addition, the Nunavut Act is more specific in its recognition that:

A high quality education is important for the development of confident, responsible, and capable individuals who can contribute to Nunavut society...that communities should be significantly involved in the education of their children to reflect local needs and values, that parents have special responsibilities and Elders can make important contributions...believing that bilingual education can contribute to the reservation, use and promotion of Inuit language and culture and provide students with multiple opportunities (Nunavut Department of Education, 2008, p. 1).

Furthermore, in the summary remarks (Nunavut Department of Education, 2008, Summary) that identify key principles in this new Nunavut Act, it specifically identifies areas that my research focused on:

- a. the education system should be based on Inuit societal values and the principles and concepts of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit [Inuit Traditional Knowledge];
- b. in Nunavut, children and young adults are entitled to a publically funded education;
- c. students should be given a bilingual education in the Inuit Language and any other official language to enable graduates to use both languages competently;
- d. parents have a key role to play in the education of their children;
- e. the community has a key role to play in the education of their children;
- f. Elders are important resources in the decision making and in instructing young people;
- g. information sharing and collaboration are important elements of student success;
- h. schools are community resources and should be treated as such.

In the Nunavut Act, Bill 21, excellent long term educational initiatives are identified whose intent is to prepare Nunavummiut for a productive future. Some of these initiatives are: continued training of Inuit elementary teachers and native curriculum development. In addition, a bilingual Inuktitut and English educational system K-12 has now been identified officially as a new goal (Berger, 2006). The government's previous goal, prior to Nunavut's formation, of establishing community schools for grades K-12 has been met in most communities (Government of Nunavut, 2007). More culturally relevant curriculum has also been implemented and are still being developed at both the elementary and high school level (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). There has

also been an increase in the number of trained Inuit teachers which means that the curriculum can be taught in Inuktitut, and teachers and students have a similar cultural background and values.

The Canadian government, government of Nunavut, and residents still have a high level of concern about Nunavut's lack of quality education, which is thought to stem from past discriminatory practices denying acknowledgement of Inuit culture in educational institutions. Many Inuit believed this struggle would have been ameliorated with the creation of Nunavut in 1991. A closer examination of Nunavut's educational context reveals the story (Stone, 2002, p. 142) that just continuing to institute educational change without closely examining how it is implemented is not sufficient to get an accurate picture of situation. Even with self-governance, more native teachers, relevant curriculum, and community schools, most Inuit students are not literate and are not graduating from high school.

Substantial improvements in native teacher training and curriculum have occurred, but they have not met the needs and demands of the desired standards. For the 2006-2007 school year, only 28 percent of the teachers hired in Nunavut were Inuit.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, in the Qikiqtani<sup>19</sup> region of Nunavut where this study was focused, only 42 percent of the teachers hired were Inuit<sup>20</sup> (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). This problem is even more prevalent in the high schools in the Qikiqtani region. There are currently no training programs for Inuit to become high school teachers (McGill University, 2007). Although some culturally relevant curriculum exists, the majority of

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<sup>18</sup> Of the 698 teachers hired in Nunavut, 262 were Inuit.

<sup>19</sup> There are three regions in Nunavut: Qikiqtani, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot regions. Qikiqtani has the largest population of the three regions.

<sup>20</sup> Of the 367 teachers hired in this region, 154 were Inuit.

credits needed to currently graduate are not based on this material (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Currently, the majority of Inuit students are taught a curriculum that is not culturally relevant by non-Inuit teachers for the majority of their junior high and high school years. This phenomenon has contributed to factors that have made it difficult for Inuit students to complete high school and graduate.

Especially significant to Nunavut Department of Education, and the future of Nunavut, is that lack of schooling affects Inuit youths' English literacy levels and their ability to gain employment or further their education (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 2006). According to a 2003 Canadian survey, Inuit in Nunavut have the lowest English literacy rates in Canada and 90 percent of them have a lower literacy rate than the minimum level to function in society (Statistics Canada, 2003). The International Adult Literacy Skills Survey (IALSS) defines literacy in terms of four levels: (1) prose literacy, (2) document literacy, (3) numeracy, and (4) problem solving. "According to experts, employers, and government, level 3 is the minimum level required to participate in modern knowledge-based economies" (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 2006, May, p. 54). Levels one through three are described below:

1. requires the ability to read short pieces in order to locate one single piece of information
2. requires the ability to read in order to identify low level inferences, as well as, the ability to compare information and disregard unessential information
3. requires the ability to read in order to integrate information from multiple documents that might be dense, lengthy texts, and do not contain organizational aids such as headings.

The concern is that currently, “72 percent of Inuit in Nunavut have prose literacy scores below level 3, compared to 42 percent Canadians who scored at that level (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., 2006, May, p. 17).

In addition, Article 23.2.1. of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA, 1993), states that “the objective of this Article is to increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level” (Berger, 2006, p. 14). Given that Inuit represent 85 percent of Nunavut’s population, the Nunavut government would like to achieve 85 percent Inuit representation in government positions. Of the 3, 200 available jobs in 2005 in the Nunavut government, Inuit were employed in only 45 percent of those government positions, with the majority, 84 percent of them, being administrative support positions (Berger, pp. 8, 10, 14, 17, 18). As recently as March 2006, the Berger Report requested by the governments of Canada and Nunavut and the Inuit Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. concluded that the lack of appropriate academic and cultural education in Nunavut was a significant problem. The report further noted that low literacy levels and the lack of attainment of high level government positions by Inuit were affecting Nunavut’s capacity for future growth in the interrelated areas of education, employment, and the economy. Berger reports that Nunavut is now facing a crisis in Inuit education and employment that is intensified by issues related to global warming and the challenge of Arctic sovereignty (Berger, 2006).

Berger’s (2006) comments are based on research that focused on the implementation of Article 23 in the NLCAA. His findings were the result of his work as the appointed Conciliator in negotiations between the government of Canada, the government of Nunavut, and the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporation (NTI). NTI



represented the Inuit. The negotiators had not agreed on one item between 2002 and Mr. Berger's appointment in 2005 (Berger, 2006, p. 2). The final report released in March 2006 includes his analysis of the current situation in Nunavut as well as his recommendations for future educational policies. Yet, as Mr. Berger notes, the NLCAA:

Says nothing about improving the primary and secondary education provided to Inuit or about achievement in the schools. Nor does Article 23 say anything about language (apart from instruction in Inuktitut as part of pre-employment training for Inuit) and certainly nothing about Inuktitut as the language of the workplace and as the language in which the people of Nunavut are entitled to receive government services (Berger, 2006, pp. 20-21).

According to Berger's recommendations, the Canadian government must improve education to benefit Nunavut by (1) adapting a bilingual K-12 education system and (2) by paying the cost to do so, in order to fulfill Article 23 in the NLCAA.

A lack of education, literacy, and employment may also contribute to other social problems. Suicide is of particular relevance to this research as it affects Inuit youths. In 2002, the suicide rate for Inuit was quoted as 15 times higher than the Canadian national average, and Inuit under the age of 25 had the highest suicide rate of any racial group in the world (CBC, 2002). The suicide rate has continued to rise since Nunavut became an independent territory (Department of Education, 2003). Between 1999 and 2005, the suicide rate was 77 per 100,000 population, almost six times the national Canadian national rate of 13 per 100,000 population (Inuit Suicide Backgrounder, 2005).

Various interrelated factors contribute to the many challenges facing Nunavut but it is clear that increasing the number of Inuit students who graduate from high school

with the knowledge and skills needed to become productive members in their communities is the most important challenge. While the focus of the NDE has been on establishing long-term educational change, consideration of additional short-term educational initiatives will better enable the NDE to develop educational paths that would guide Nunavummiut toward life-long learning.

Given the current discouraging statistics in Nunavut and the mission of the Department of Education, the researcher's first task was to determine what special considerations and modifications could be done to my research to ensure that it provided Inuit participants' views and other relevant information in a way that Inuit in Nunavut could use to help Inuit youths receive a quality education. This quality education would enable them to finish high school, be culturally knowledgeable, gain employment and/or continue their education.

#### *Definition of Terms*

**Cohort:** This is a group of students who began in the eighth grade in a given school year. The enrollment numbers of these groups of students were then tracked until graduation with the data provided. For example, students who were in eighth grade in 1999 - 2000 would be in twelfth grade in the 2004 - 2005 school year, with the potential to graduate in 2005.

**Elder:** This is an older Inuit, male or female, who has been recognized by general consensus as being knowledgeable in the traditional Inuit culture, having been raised and educated in the traditional ways on the land as their ancestors had. Those Inuit, male or female, who have been educated in a school system would not be considered an elder.

The traditional meaning for elders that is known in Nunavut is used in this dissertation. There are only a few Nunavut elders still alive and their generation will soon be lost.

**Estimated Median Rates of Students Staying in School (EMR):** This rate has been identified for use in this research in the absence of other available student measures.

Measures of graduates and dropout rates have been identified, yet, such available measures do not account for variations in the size of school populations. Larger populated communities have higher numbers of graduates and dropouts than lesser populated communities. EMR was designed to track the class size of students entering grade eight and examined how many students from that original group stayed in high school through graduation. It was calculated on statistical data from 1999 – 2006 for the Qikiqtani region released by the Nunavut Department of Education. It was calculated using a Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS). It is only estimated because personal data was not available to determine actual median rates of students that remained in Nunavut high schools.

**Good Teacher:** This term was used in interviews to have participants identify what would constitute the characteristics of an effective teacher that support their continuation in high school according to their perceptions.

**Inuit:** This is the plural form of Inuk. This refers to the aboriginal people who live in the northern hemisphere, typically in Arctic regions. They are a distinct tribe from Indians, who are also aboriginal people. The term is a word in their own language referring to themselves as “the people.” Eskimo was first used by the missionaries when the Cree Indians referred derogatorily to the northern people as eaters of raw meat. Insulting connotation of “Eskimo” has been documented (World Book Encyclopedia, 2006).

**Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ):** These are six principles that have been identified by Nunavut's prime minister to represent the main cultural focus of the Inuit in Nunavut. In written documents in Nunavut, it is referred to as (*IQ*). In this paper the initials (*IQ*) are not to be confused with the commonly used acronym “IQ” used in relation to intelligence. Even so, the researcher does note that Inuit Traditional Knowledge does reflect the Inuit’s sense of wisdom or intelligence.

**Inuksuit:** This is a stone formation that Inuit traditionally built as a land marker to help guide them on the land. Inuksuit is the plural form of Inuksuk. The structure of the Inuksuk would provide different information about animals, weather, and the terrain to hunters who understood how to read them and build them.

**Inuktitut:** This is the spoken language of the Inuit. Traditionally, Inuktitut was only an oral language. In the early 1800s, missionaries transcribed the sounds they heard using symbols. These symbols are referred to as syllabics. This form is more commonly used in Nunavut. In other regions, Roman Orthography is used as well. This style of Inuktitut uses English letters to represent the Inuktitut sounds (Figure 45, see p. 74).

**Institutional Review Board (IRB):** This is the research licensing board affiliated with the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont. Approval was required for this research prior to its onset (see Appendix A, B, and C).

**Nunavut:** This is a newly formed territory in Canada established on April 1, 1999. Nunavut was created as part of Canadian’s land-claims settlement to enable Inuit the right to some of their ancestral lands and to self-governance.

**Nunavut Department of Education (NDE):** This is the branch of the Nunavut government that is in charge of all educational programs since Nunavut’s creation. It is

operated under the direction of an elected minister and a deputy minister. They are located in Iqaluit, the capital city of Nunavut.

**Nunavummiut:** These are the long-term residents that live in Nunavut, predominately Inuit.

**Nunavut Research Institute (NRI):** This is Nunavut's licensing board whose approval is required prior to any research conducted in Nunavut. The institute promotes research methods that are culturally sensitive to the Inuit. This includes the opportunity for communities involved to have prior knowledge and input into whether proposed research is approved in Nunavut, Canada.

**Prime Minister:** This individual is the political head of Nunavut. In the United States, it would be equivalent to a governor of a state. In Canada, there are separate prime ministers for each of the five provinces and three territories, including Nunavut. They report directly to the Premier of Canada. The Premier is equivalent to the President of the United States.

**Qikiqtani Region:** This is one of the three geographic regions in Nunavut used by the Canadian government for census purposes. It is important to note that there is only one central government for Nunavut. In addition, communities in all regions of Nunavut are isolated and remote geographically. This means that the main access to and from the communities is dependent on air travel. This research project occurred in this region.

**Struggling or at-Risk Students:** These are students who are at risk of not passing their grade in the current school year in high school and/or who potentially might drop out. This would include students who are repeating a grade in high school.

**Youth:** These are individuals who are between 16 and 17 years of age were identified by the IRB as youth, needing parental approval to participate in this study. Adults were considered to be 18 years and older.

*Photographic Overview<sup>21</sup>*

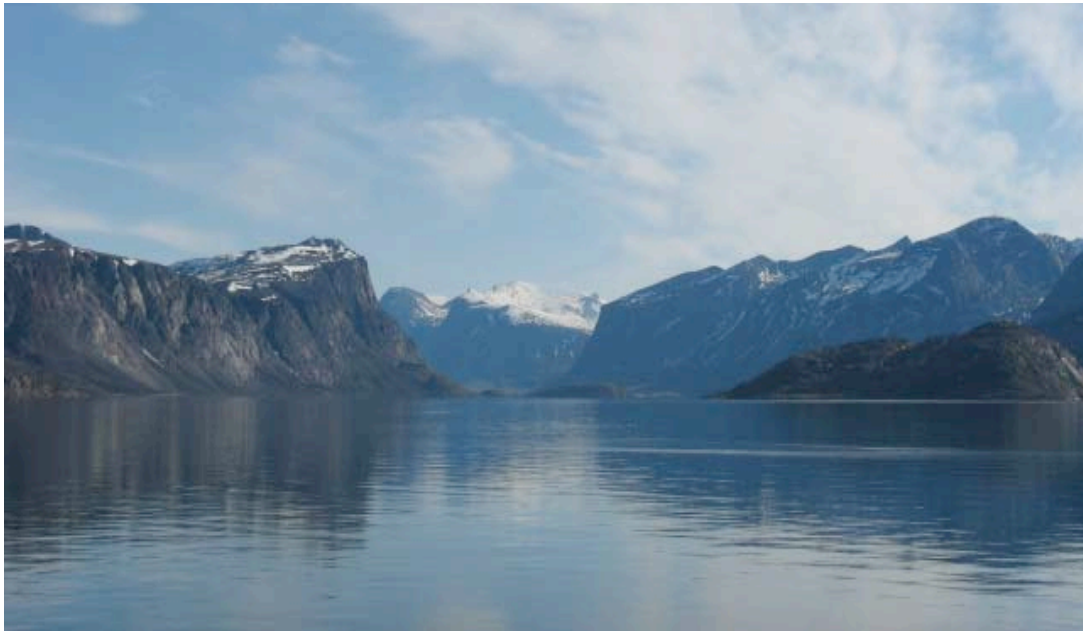


Figure 7: Landscape of Pangnirtung, Nunavut

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<sup>21</sup> All photographs taken by the researcher unless indicated otherwise.



Figure 8: Researcher Hiking in Pangnirtung, Nunavut

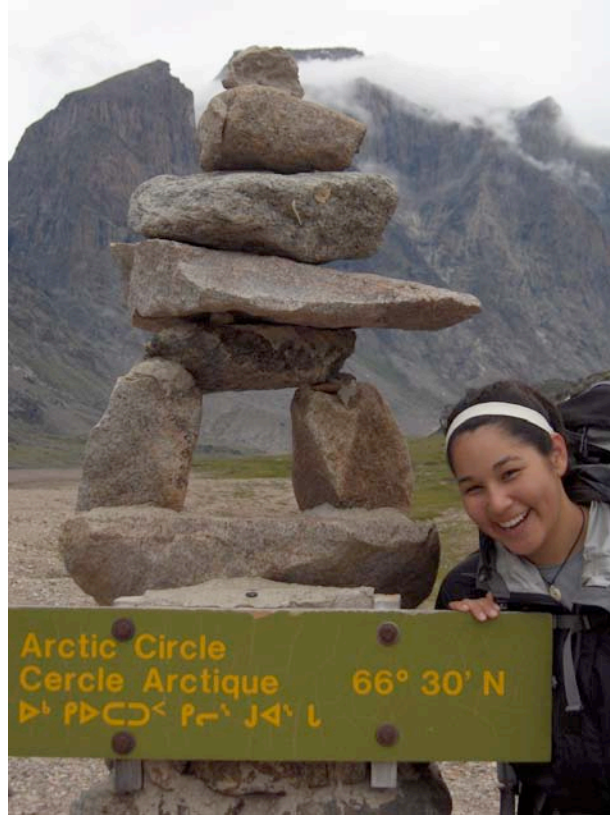


Figure 9: Photo of the Arctic Circle Crossed on Recent Hiking Trip with Researcher and Her Daughter

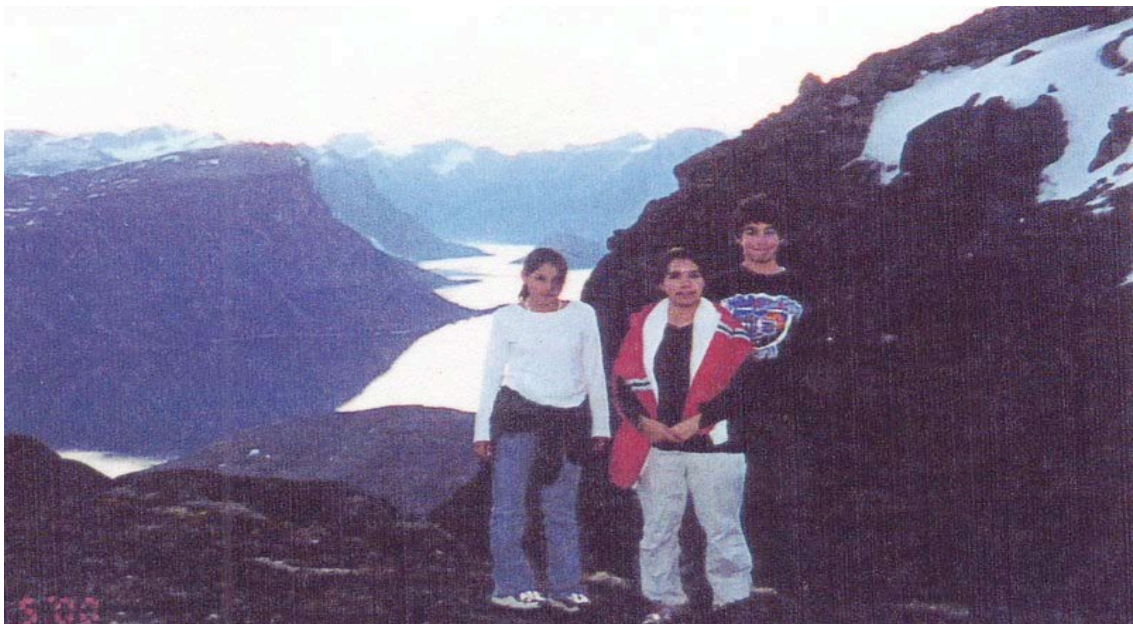


Figure 10: View of Researcher's Children and Auyittuq National Park from Hill Nearby Pangnirtung, Nunavut



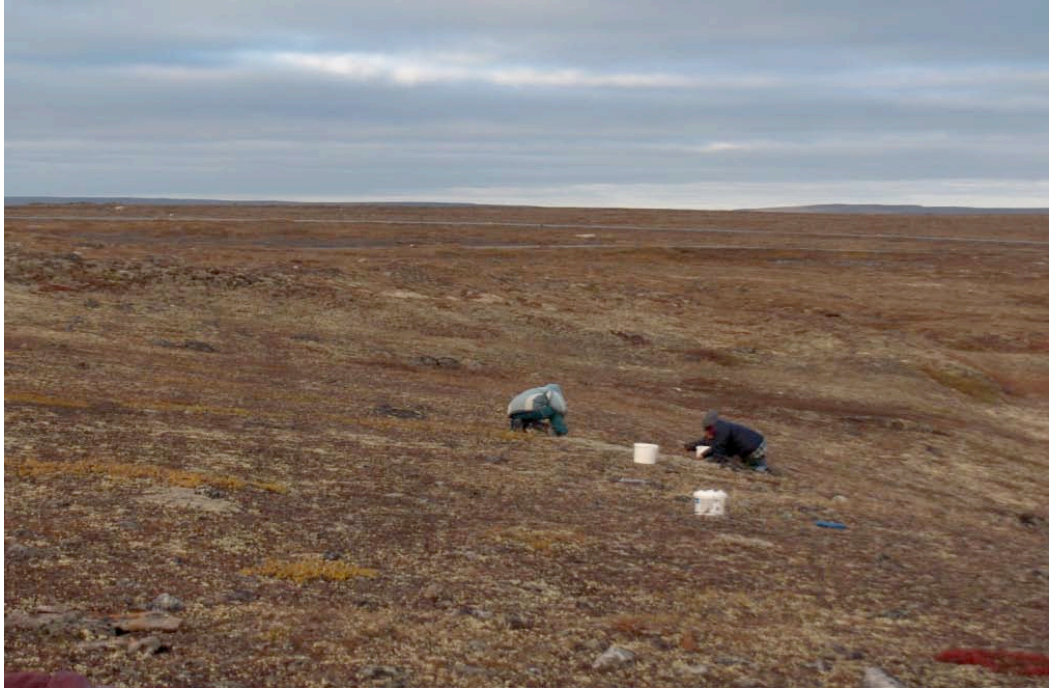


Figure 11: Landscape of Sanikiluaq, Nunavut



Figure 12: Researcher in Sanikiluaq, Nunavut



Figure 13: Winter in Pangnirtung, Nunavut



Figure 14: Summer in Pangnirtung, Nunavut





Figure 15: Spring Fishing in Motorized Canoes in Nunavut

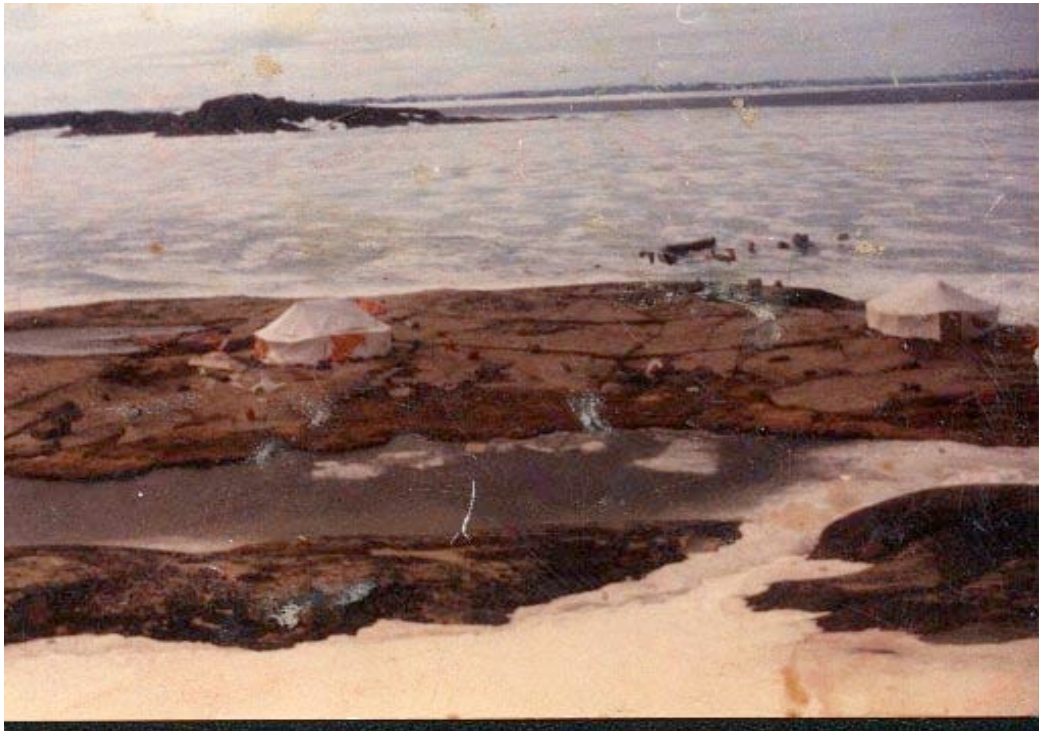


Figure 16: Spring Camping in Nunavut



Figure 17: Spring Ice Fishing Near Pangnirtung, Nunavut

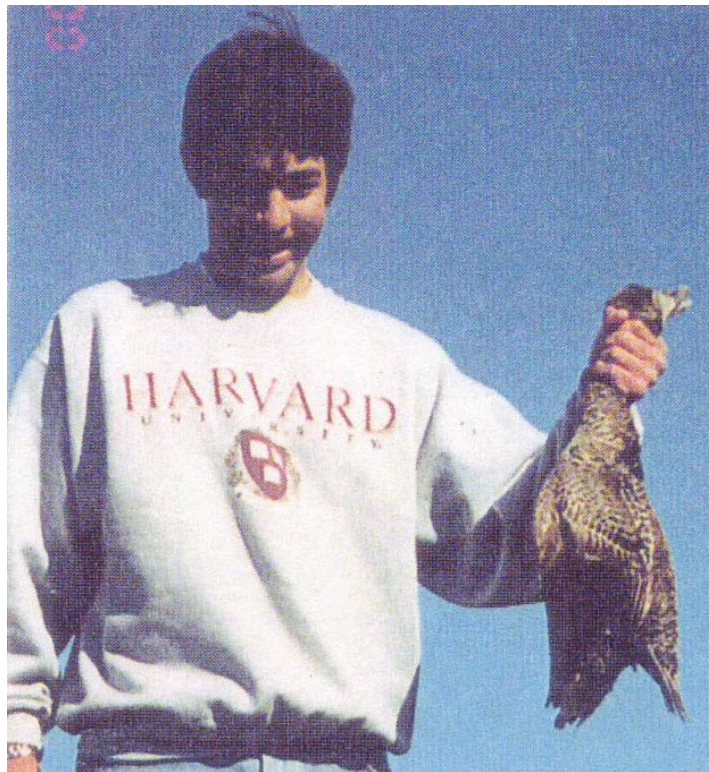


Figure 18: Researcher's Son with First Duck





Figure 19: Motorized Canoes



Figure 20: Elders Made Traditional Broom from Duck Feathers' of Son's First Duck During Summer Camping



Figure 21: Son Cutting Seal



Figure 22: Seal Meat Being Removed





Figure 23: Researcher's Children with Caribou



Figure 24: Researcher's Son Helping to Skin Caribou



Figure 25: Community Members Help with Whale Hunt

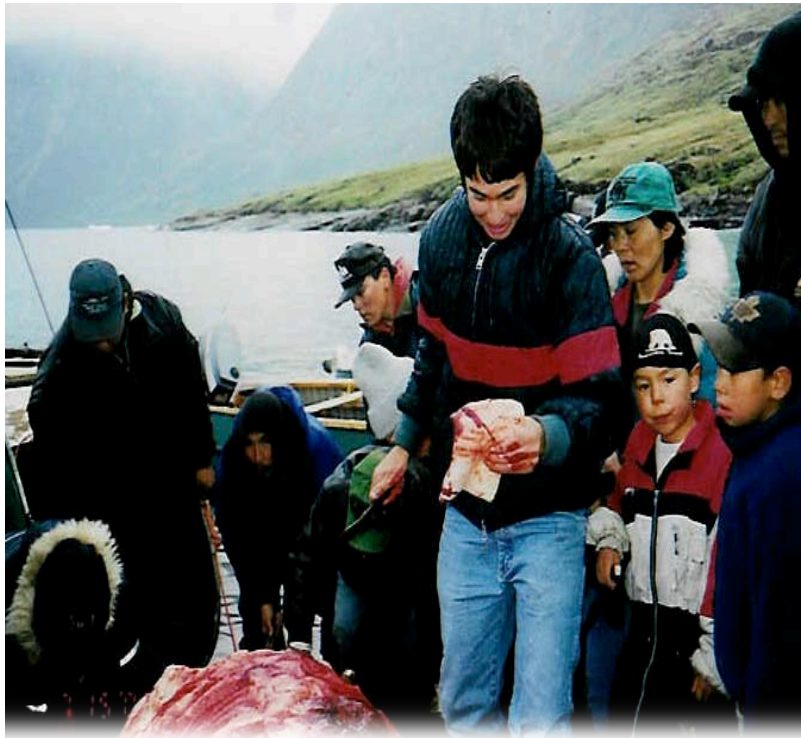


Figure 26: Researcher's Son Cuts Piece of Whale Skin, (*Muktuk*), to Share With Others





Figure 27: Checking Nets for Arctic Char



Figure 28: Daughter with the Arctic Char She Caught



Figure 29: Seal Skin Boots, (*Kamiks*)



Figure 30: Researcher Wearing a Caribou (*Amautik*)  
With Daughter Inside



Figure 31: Researcher's Daughter with Handmade Caribou Dolls by Deceased Pagnirtung, Nunavut Elder Katsu Evic and Seal Bone Game and Seal Skin Pouch

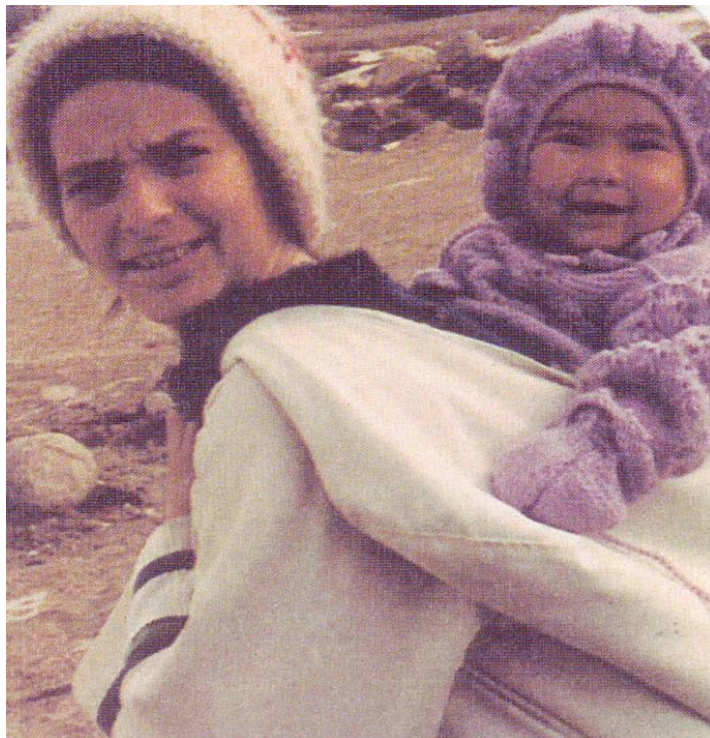


Figure 32: Researcher Wearing Cloth (*Amautik*) With Older Daughter





Figure 33: Researcher's Younger Daughter in  
(*Amaulik*) with Cousin

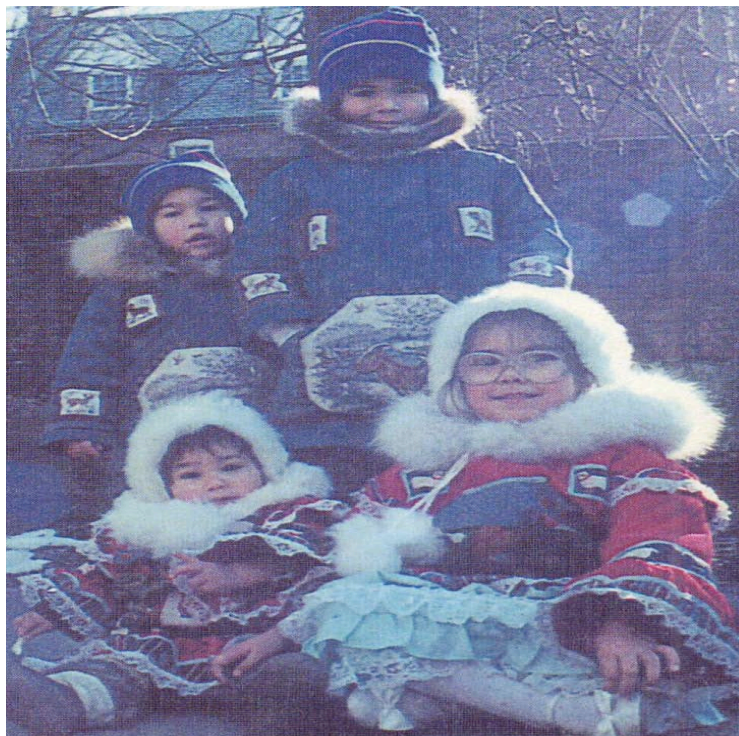


Figure 34: Children in Cloth Parkas Made by Researcher



Figure 35: Igloo Building

[http://www.cbc.ca/sevenwonders/images/pic\\_wonder\\_igloo\\_1g.jpg](http://www.cbc.ca/sevenwonders/images/pic_wonder_igloo_1g.jpg)



Figure 36: Qullik



Figure 37: Researcher's Son Carving Whales



Figure 38: Cycle of the Sea  
Artist: Andrew Qappik, Printmaker: Andrew Qappik  
2000 Pangnirtung, Nunavut Print Collection





Figure 39: BREAKING CAMP  
Artist: Andrew Qappik, Weaver: Kawtysie Kaki  
1999 Pangnirtung, Nunavut Tapestry Collection, #450



Figure 40: Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk Teaching  
Researcher's Children Traditional Whale Song



Figure 41: Community (Includes Some of Researchers Children and Children's Relatives)



## CHAPTER TWO

### Unique Challenges: What Was Different?

Various stages of my study had to be modified because of the unique challenges of doing research in the Arctic. The modifications were necessary to create the opportunity for dialogue with individuals in Nunavut, and to utilize their input in the research. The modifications were also necessary to incorporate Inuit values and culturally sensitive strategies throughout the research.

All researchers in Nunavut are encouraged to provide opportunities for community input during all phases of this research (Nunavut Research Institute & Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, 1998). This decision-making process, described as making choices by consensus and discussion, has been identified in a speech by Premier Paul Okalik as the fourth guiding principle of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) (Premier Paul Okalik Speech, 2003, April 23). The principle stresses the importance of using dialogue to come to a shared agreement. Past research shows that dialogue has been effectively used with adults to create meaningful change that responds to local needs. Examples of educational initiatives that have used dialogue successfully as a strategy to promote change have been documented in research relating to different cultures (Vella, 1994).

The modifications necessary throughout the research includes changes in three key areas: First, changes were necessary to the brainstorming stage of the study. The identification of the research focus and the selection of potential participants were modified after informal conversations with key informants in Nunavut. Second, changes were necessary to the early planning stages. The conceptual framework and literature review were modified to incorporate Inuit values and themes that emerged

after the informal conversations. Third, changes were made during the data collection and data analysis stages. Emergent patterns were taken into consideration. Furthermore the final stages of preparing this study's results and conclusions, were modified to include: the creation this chapter the addition of my insights and recommendations in chapter eight and the inclusion of special organizational features in this document that acknowledged and respected Inuit values. One of these features was to highlight the important roles of the elders and the wisdom of their words. Another was to use the traditional symbol of a guidepost (*inuksuk*) to convey the benefits of helping others and contributing to one's community. An additional feature was to include *Kim's Stories* to emphasize the value of knowledge that can be gained from experiential learning and/or from the oral tradition of story telling.

*Modifications During the Brainstorming Stage:*

*(1) Obtaining Input from Individuals in Nunavut*

During the brainstorming stage, I conducted an informal needs assessment to become knowledgeable about the current educational situation in Nunavut and identify potential areas of research. Background information relating to Nunavut was reviewed prior to contacting the residents of Nunavut. This information was necessary to understand the context in which this research is situated. A brief summary of the information is discussed in chapter one. I was originally interested in research topics relating to elementary schools but I also wanted to learn the type of research residents in Nunavut thought was most needed.

Brief telephone dialogues were determined to be the best means of obtaining informal input from individuals in Nunavut because of the expense of traveling to the

Arctic prior to an approved data collection period. These informal conversations were used to clarify what relevant research and background information was available and to also determine what topics might need further study and potential research sites.

The location and identification of key individuals in Nunavut used to inform this study through casual conversation were purposefully selected (Patton, 2002). Nunavut consists of three regions and the Qikiqtani<sup>22</sup> region is the largest of the three regions (Figure 42). This region contains thirteen of twenty-six communities of Nunavut. It also contains 52 percent, or ten out of nineteen possible electoral districts. This means that educational decisions and policies made in the Qikiqtani region have a significant influence and large effect on Nunavut (Legislative Assembly, 2007). Furthermore, the majority of individuals that represent different levels of the government and organizational involvement in education worked in the capital city of Iqaluit, which is located in this region. Therefore, the Qikiqtani region was chosen as the main area for selecting key informants. One individual, who did not live in Iqaluit, but worked closely with other individuals interviewed, was also included.

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<sup>22</sup> The Qikiqtani region is also referred to as the Qikiqtaaluk or Baffin region.

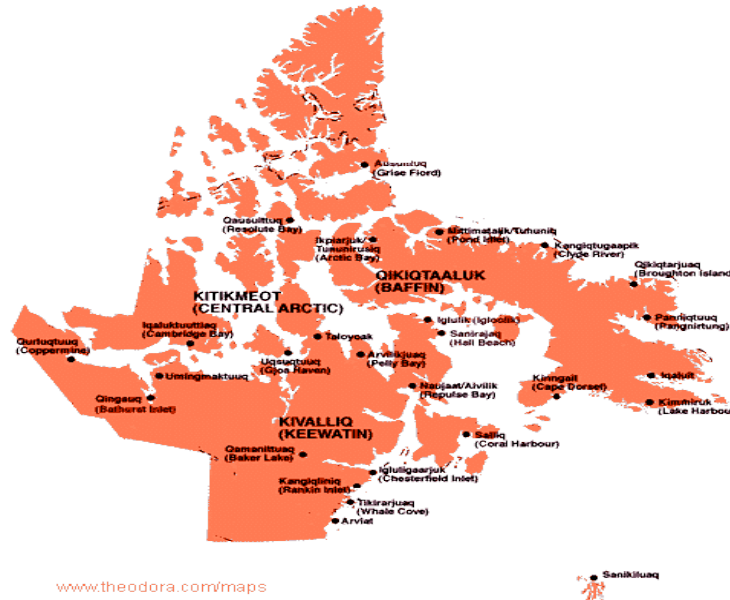


Figure 42: Nunavut Regions  
 "Source: www.geographic.org, used with permission."

The following categories were identified as being influencing Nunavut’s educational institutions: government, education, professional development, and teacher training. A list of potential interviewees and their contact information were compiled. If an individual was not available, then a different person within that department was selected. An individual’s ability to speak English was also a deciding factor in the process, since all informal conversations were conducted in English. A total of eight individuals were contacted, three of whom were Inuit,<sup>23</sup> for their appraisal of Nunavut’s current educational situation.

During the telephone conversations, if I asked for permission to quote an individual, I would then read back the exact words I had written to ensure accuracy of the quote. Other than the specific quotes, the reference information for the personal communication is summarized and cited in Tables 1 and 2, see p.51. I am grateful for

<sup>23</sup> An \* after a person’s name indicates that the individual is Inuk.

input from the Commissioner of Nunavut, the Minister of Education and heads of the following organizations: Arctic College, Nunavut Research Institute, Inuit Teacher Training Program, First Nations and Inuit Education at McGill University, Nunavut Teachers Union, and the Iqaluit District Education Authority.

Table 1: Personal Communication with Individuals Providing Informal Input by Government, Education, Professional Development

Area	Role	Name	Date
Government	Commissioner of Nunavut	Ann Meekitjuk Hanson*	3/5/07
Government	Minister of Education	Edward Picco	4/4/07
Education	Executive Director Nunavut Research Institute	Mary Ellen Thomas	3/30/07
Education	Chairperson of the Iqaluit District of Education (IDEA)	Christa Kunuk*	3/2/07
Professional Development	President of Nunavut Teacher's Association	James Jacquard	3/2/07

Table 2: Personal Communication with Individuals Providing Informal Input by Teacher Training

Area	Role	Name	Date
Teacher training	Head of First Nations and Education at McGill University	Donna Lee-Smith	3/2/07
Teacher training	Head of Nunavut Teachers' Education Program	Ooloota Maatiusi*	3/2/07 & 4/9/07
Teacher training	President of Arctic College	Mac Clendenning	3/2/07

At the beginning of the informal conversations, I provided information about myself. I stated my credentials as a doctoral candidate from the University of Vermont and that I was interested in making exploratory contacts for future research in Nunavut. I also mentioned that my interest in Nunavut stemmed from living in that region for fourteen years and identified my family connections in Nunavut. In addition, I inquired

about available funding opportunities that would sponsor my anticipated research in the Arctic.<sup>24</sup>

During the conversations I expressed an interest in understanding more about the concern raised in Berger's recent report that Inuit youths were having difficulty in obtaining an education (Berger, 2006). All individuals were asked one basic question relating to their work: "What do you think are the strengths and areas that need growth in your field?"

The information obtained from the conversations were limited because they were brief, ranging from ten to twenty minutes. I thought it was important to include this oral input and analyze it with relevant documents, using inductive reasoning to identify relevant themes or patterns that emerged and/or categories that might arise from the data (Leddy & Ormond, 2005; Miles, 1994; Straus, 1988). The successes that individuals mentioned in their informal telephone conversations related to the development of more culturally relevant curriculum and an increase in Inuit teachers.

The Minister of Education, the executive director of the Nunavut Research Institute, the Commissioner of Nunavut and Chairman of the Iqaluit District of Education, all mentioned that the development and implementation of culturally relevant curriculum is ongoing. The Minister of Education also said that current curriculum information was available on the Nunavut Department of Education's website.<sup>25</sup> A culturally-based curriculum, *Piniaqtavut* used from kindergarten through ninth grade integrates science, language and Inuit culture into one different themes

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<sup>24</sup> I was not able to obtain funding from an outside source to support this research.

<sup>25</sup> NDE's website is <http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/>

(Jamieson, 2002). Furthermore, other relevant information relating to local archaeology, environmental science, and land claims issues were being incorporated into the *Nunavusiutit* curriculum<sup>26</sup> being taught in junior high and high school (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Various Inuktitut language courses are also taught in high school (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). The Nunavut Teaching and Learning Center, cited on this webpage, provided materials and books in Inuktitut for schools (Nunavut Teaching and Learning Center, 2007).

The Minister of Education and the executive director of the Nunavut Research Institute mentioned that the Nuiyuk School in Sanikilauq had received national recognition for its innovative cultural programs. In addition, individuals suggested I refer to the Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North<sup>27</sup> which outlines culturally sensitive strategies for researchers.

The head of the First Nations and Inuit Education at McGill University and the head of the Nunavut Teachers' Program both stated that there had been an ongoing increase in the number of Inuit trained teachers in the elementary schools. Having more Inuit trained teachers mean that more students receive an education from teachers who speak their language and have the same cultural values. She stated, "One of the strengths of their school program is the sensitivity to indigenous language and culture and the community based delivery" (personal communication, Smith, D. L., 2007, March 2). All four years of teaching are done in the students' communities, and during that time, they complete courses that are divided into units. Students also have certain

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<sup>26</sup> Local archeology is incorporated in grades 7-9 curriculum, while local environmental science and land claims issues are incorporated in grades 10-12 curriculum.

<sup>27</sup> This document is described in detail under the conceptual framework section of this chapter.

times in the year when they do a practicum in the classroom. She suggested that one reason Inuit teachers may choose to remain at the elementary level is the fact that the curriculum is more indigenous and they can make a better connection to it. In addition, Inuktitut is the main language of instruction from Kindergarten through third grade in most Nunavut schools. She also pointed out that Nunavut did not currently have any Inuit who were certified to teach at the high school level, or any training programs that would enable them to do so.

Graduation rates for Nunavut students indicate that Inuit trained teachers and the culturally developed curriculum are making a difference. In 1988, the Canadian graduation rate was 72 percent. Between 1987 and 1998, prior to Nunavut's formation, there was only a 28 percent increase in Northwest Territory (NWT) and Qikiqtani region graduation rates.<sup>28</sup> Since Nunavut's creation, the number of Inuit graduates increased by 63 percent between 1999 and 2006.<sup>29</sup> There were 995 Inuit in Nunavut that graduated between 1999 and 2006 as compared to only 450 students graduating, Inuit or non-Inuit, in the eight-year period prior to Nunavut's creation (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

The Iqaluit District of Education Chairperson also stated that, "One growing success in the school is the communities are growing stronger in decision making and policy [My concerns are that] the same rights for grades K-12 for bilingual resource [should also be emphasized] in grades 9-12, and how to keep [the ninth grade Inuit] population [continuing] in school" (personal communication, Kunuk, C., 2007,

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<sup>28</sup> Prior to Nunavut's formation, the land was part of NWT. This statistic is based on the fact that 25 NWT students graduated in 1987 and 91 NWT students graduated in 1988.

<sup>29</sup> This rate is based on records that show 104 Inuit graduated in 1999 as compared to 164 Inuit that graduated in 2006.



March 2). Educational successes also mentioned included the availability of teachers' workshops and adult educators in most communities.

The Nunavut Teachers' Association President mentioned that Nunavut had one of the best professional development programs in Canada. Nunavut teachers had five funded days of professional improvement. The local communities choose the topics of these workshops and so the programs fit the needs of the particular schools. Non-Inuit teachers are also given a Nunavut orientation packet and information about Nunavut. This information can be found online at [www.nta.nu.ca](http://www.nta.nu.ca).

The President of Arctic College indicated that, "One of the key things that has contributed to the success of Arctic College is that most communities have learning centers with either full-time or part-time adult educators" (personal communication, Clendenning, M., 2007, March 2). He also noted that there are a variety of vocational training programs that have been offered at a central location. Specifically, a program for lawyers has been offered at least once, and on-going programs for teachers and nurses.

The Minister of Education, the Commissioner, the executive director of the Nunavut Research Institute and the chairperson of the Iqaluit District of Education all mentioned that despite the increasing percentage in the number of graduates, they are also aware of other startling statistics that provided a different prospective on the educational situation in Nunavut. The Minister of Education indicated that their enrollment data, which he provided to me<sup>30</sup> demonstrated a critical concern was that a

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<sup>30</sup> This data was used to calculate mean estimated rates of persistence described in chapter four, methodology.

very low percentage of Inuit students who begin school in kindergarten continue on to grade twelve and graduate. The Iqaluit District Education Council issued a report indicates that 75 percent of students in Iqaluit dropped out of grade nine during the 2005 – 2006 school year (Iqaluit District of Education Authority, 2006). This was not an anomaly because it was supported by other reports for the following school year that indicated that 75 percent of all Inuit students in Nunavut did not graduate (Nunavut Tunngavik, 2006, p. 14). The president of Arctic College indicated that one issue for them Arctic College was addressing the low academic level of the young adults who wanted to enter into their programs, and the need for coordination of services like housing and financial aid.

The conversational input revealed that in most Nunavut elementary schools, there was a strong Inuktitut language focus, culturally relevant curriculum, and some certified Inuit teachers. In addition, I learned that there was a critical need to understand what was occurring in the schools at the high school level because the majority of Inuit students do not continue through high school and graduate.

The Commissioner of Nunavut suggested that one influence in the large number of drop outs might be related to the home environment because Inuit were still learning how to go to school. The Chairman of the Iqaluit District of Education mentioned that one area of concern is the fact that the majority of parents were educated in residential schools and some of those parents have a negative view of education. She also indicated that children were probably not told about the importance of education before because some of the children had elderly parents who had never been to school. When the Commissioner herself started school, her parents did not tell her about the value of

an education and her community school stopped at grade 5. When women of her generation had children, the importance of education started to be valued. The Commissioner believed that Inuit are now learning how crucial it is to encourage their children to complete their education. She stated, “One of my most important roles when I visit all the schools in the communities is praising and encouraging the young people to stay in school and get an education” (personal communication, Hanson, A. M., Commissioner. 2007, April 5).

The conversational input revealed that parents and the home environment can still be important influences on a child’s education. This was true for Inuit parents even if their language and values differ from those used in the school.

The Iqaluit District of Education Chairperson mentioned the important influence of community partnerships that support the school. For example, she said that there were two non-Inuit individuals who received funding to work on discipline with youths in one of the elementary schools in Iqaluit. Other funding sources have been used in conjunction with school programs relating to crime prevention and in association with the Canadian government. The Head of First Nations and Inuit Education at McGill University stated that one of the reasons for the success of their aboriginal teacher training programs was the different partnerships that the college forms with communities in the North. The Commissioner also noted the influence of partnerships with community businesses that support education by doing their part to praising and honoring young students. For example, she mentioned businesses promoting model students on posters and in the newspapers, and offering airline incentives for students who perform well in school. The conversational input revealed

that the influence of community partnerships is important. These included businesses, various funding agencies, and community resources.

The Commission highlighted the importance of the elders in the community who are more active in encouraging the use of Inuktitut<sup>31</sup> and teaching traditional ways. She was also looking forward to the opening of a community cultural center<sup>32</sup> in Nunavut.

The Minister of Education and the executive director of the Nunavut Research Institute both highlighted the importance of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) that were developed and incorporated by the Nunavut Department of Education (NDE). The head of the Nunavut Research Institute also provided a copy of the high school classroom resource; Introducing Inuit Landskills and Wayfinding (*Anijaarniq*), a CD-ROM that integrated Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to aid in this research (Nunavut Research Institute, 2006).

The conversational input revealed that the influence of Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) are important Inuit cultural traditions and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) were often taught by the elders.

During the informal conversations, it became apparent to that while the intent of the government policy is clear but the implementation of the policies had not yet been fully achieved at the community level. Many educational reforms have had difficulty in achieving success because attention has not been given to implementation (Fullan, 2001). In fact, the conversational input revealed that research is urgently

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<sup>31</sup> Inuktitut is the native language of Inuit.

<sup>32</sup> This cultural center would be a community resource that is not part of the K-12 school system.

needed in Nunavut that addresses the critical problem of implementing in the short term the type of quality education that is needed by a large percentage of the population. This includes modern skills needed for the future as well as stressing the inclusion and importance of the Inuit culture.

Initially, I thought a study concerning elementary schools in Nunavut that explores the different ways of having students with varying abilities work cooperatively together in groups would be beneficial. During the brainstorming phase of my research, the conversational input and related information resulted in the first modification of my study. Even though my prior interest focused on elementary education, it became evident that there was a need for research that focused on high school students. Research in this area seems of critical importance considering the overall graduation rates, other related literacy and suicide statistics, and the lack of current and potential Inuit high school teachers. I was interested in determining the factors that helped those few Inuit students in grades 10 through 12 stay in school. The informal dialogues helped me to choose this research topic that is of urgent concern to Nunavut.

The decision-making process helped me realize the value of listening to a variety of individuals' perceptions to get a clearer understanding of the issues. As a result, I wanted to capture this type of descriptive information in the formal research process and focus on a qualitative research study that would give voice to Inuit

perceptions. Due to research protocols,<sup>33</sup> I did not include any of the individuals spoken to in the informal conversations in the actual research study.

I would like to acknowledge and express appreciation to those individuals listed in Table 8 who helped focus this research. It is hoped that this research will make a meaningful contribution by providing needed information that will help more Inuit students in Nunavut to graduate.

*Modifications During the Early Planning Stages:*

*(2) Applying What Was Meaningful to Inuit*

During the early planning stages, it was important to incorporate what was meaningful to the Inuit. I modified the research to support their cultural belief that knowledge is gained from viewing a phenomenon holistically from a variety of viewpoints. It has been recommended that research should take the same approach (Kenny, 2004). Using this approach, I examined the input from the informal telephone dialogues cited above. Four themes relevant to Nunavut emerged from the informal conversations that I was then able to use to guide my research. This holistic perspective also helped me to make accommodations to my research to comply with very different licensing procedures in the United States and Canada. In addition, this holistic perspective also enabled me to organize the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and cultural sensitive research strategies that were recommended in the informal conversations into a conceptual framework that further supported my study.

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<sup>33</sup> These are described in more detail in the next section.

### *Identification of Guiding Themes*

Four themes home, school, community, and the Inuit culture emerged from the informal conversations with key individuals in Nunavut. These four interrelated themes were used holistically to guide the literature review which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three, and in the design of the research explained in chapter four.

### *Different Licensing Procedures*

Complying with both the research requirements of the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) and the University of Vermont Institutional Review Board (IRB) was challenging because each board had different requirements. I had to modify my study concerning the site selection and the potential participants so I could be in compliance with both the NRI and the IRB.

In Nunavut, the NRI license (Appendix D) was required before the onset of this research study. An important principle identified by the Ethical Principles for Conduct in Research in the North (EPCRN) is consultation with communities. Therefore researchers are required to obtain and document local, informal input from potential communities involved in the study and submit that information as part of the licensing process. Before research is given a final approval, the communities and native organizations are given an opportunity to review the application and they are also included in the final decision-making process.

In contrast, research done in conjunction with the University of Vermont, requires approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before any individuals can be contacted. In addition, translated forms must also be submitted for IRB approval (Appendix E, F, G, H, I, J, K, and L) Furthermore, the IRB requires that written

consent be obtained from individuals before their input is requested. In order to satisfy the requirements of both the NRI and the IRB the informal conversational input from key individuals in Nunavut is acknowledged in this research but the conversations are not included as a data source in this study. Only Inuit students and community members from the two communities chosen who signed written consent forms were used as data sources in this study.

### *Conceptual Framework*

Culturally sensitive research strategies for indigenous people need to be used by non-Inuit researchers, like myself, who are not native to the area. One strategy is to respect the indigenous cultures' values (Kenny, 2004). My respect for the Inuit culture has been demonstrated by incorporating the Nunavut government's conceptual framework, referred to as Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), into my research. It has been described by Nunavut's Premier as a theory of knowledge that has been passed down through generations, and used to interpret the world. The principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) emphasize the importance of learning through observation, participation and experience. He further describes it as a "holistic, dynamic and cumulative approach to knowledge, teaching and learning" (Government of Nunavut, 2003, April 23, p. 2).

The principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) are important to this research because their influence is evident in all levels of the Nunavut government, and they are included in the Department of Education's policies and actions. They are cultural norms or dispositions that Inuit identify as characteristic of their culture. Therefore, Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) is envisioned to play a key role in schools



in the education of Inuit youth. In the government of Nunavut's plan, *Pinasuaqtavut 2004-2009*, eight guiding principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) are identified:<sup>34</sup>

1. Respecting others and relationships (*Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*)
2. Being open and inclusive (*Tunnganarniq*)
3. Serving family and community (*Pijitsirniq*)
4. Decision-making using consensus and discussion (*Aajiiqatigiinni*)
5. Skill development (*Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq*)
6. Working together for a common goal (*Pilriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtiigiinni*)
7. Being resourceful and innovative (*Qanuqtuurniq*)
8. Respect for and care of animals and environment (*Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq*)

All of these principles are connected to each other. Often these principles are reflected in what has been identified as culturally sensitive strategies that benefit any indigenous group (Kenny, 2004). The method in which the eight principles are used in this research study is summarized in Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7, see pp. 64 – 68.

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<sup>34</sup> For detailed explanations or guiding principles, refer to: Government of Nunavut. (2002). *Pinasuaqtavut 2004-2009*.

Table 3: Eight Guiding Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Principle

Principle	English (Inuktitut) Term for Principle	Evidence of Incorporation in this Research Study
1.	Respecting others and relationships ( <i>Inuuqatigiitsiarniq</i> )	“ <i>IQ</i> ” principles, culturally sensitive strategies, knowledge gained from the oral tradition of storytelling, identifying elders’ names. The use of Inuktitut terms, and the symbol of <i>nutaaq inuksuit</i> in this research. Stories from the researcher’s experience were also included at the end of some sections.
2.	Being open and inclusive ( <i>Tunnganarniq</i> )	Special considerations and modifications to the research were made; interpreters and translations were used as needed.
3.	Serving family and community ( <i>Pijitsirniq</i> )	This principle motivated me to do research that would benefit the community.
4.	Decision-making using consensus and discussion ( <i>Aajiiqatigiinniq</i> )	My decision-making process which identified the focus of this study as described in chapter two.
5.	Skill development ( <i>Pilimmaksarniq/ Pijariuqsarniq</i> )	This principle is identified in NDE’s mission statement and my focus on what will help more youths acquire needed skills.
6.	Working together for a common goal ( <i>Pilriqatigiinniq/ Ikajuqtigiinniq</i> )	This principle is evident in Inuit working together to sustain Nunavut’s vision and the NDE’s mission statement. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the common goals Inuit have identified.
7.	Being resourceful and innovative ( <i>Qanuqtuurniq</i> )	I have used this principle throughout the research process by balancing the two different cultural value systems in a meaningful way.
8.	Respect for and care of animals and environment ( <i>Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq</i> )	This was one factor in Nunavut’s Land Claim Agreement. It is also a strong, continuing focus of Inuit culture.

Many of the eight Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) principles are reflected in the EPCRN. Examples of how these ethical principles relate to the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) principles in this research are summarized in Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7, see pp. 64 – 68.

Table 4: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North<sup>35</sup> and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 1 Through Ethical Principle 5

	Ethical Principle	Listing of Evidence of Incorporation	Correlation with Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) Principles
1.	Abide by local laws and customs	Obtained Nunavut license	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (4) Decision making using consensus & discussion
2.	Consult communities in all aspects of research	See Chapter 2: decision making, Nunavut licensing processes, snowball sampling, unique format of research	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (4) Decision making using consensus & discussion
3.	Mutual respect is important in creating successful partnerships	See Chapter 2: decision making, Nunavut licensing processes, snowball sampling, unique format of research	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (4) Decision making using consensus & discussion
4.	Respect privacy and dignity of people by familiarizing oneself with the culture	Fourteen years prior Arctic experience	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (4) Decision making using consensus & discussion
5.	Research takes into account the knowledge and experience of the people	Inclusion of the oral tradition of respecting the wisdom of elders' words, giving voice to the perceptions of Inuit youths and adults, and including stories of the researcher's Arctic experience	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (4) Decision making using consensus & discussion (7) Being resourceful & innovative

<sup>35</sup> For full details refer to: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, (2003), Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North, <http://www.acuns.ca/caEthicsEnglishmarch2003.pdf>, retrieved 3/26/07.

Table 5: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North<sup>36</sup> and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 6 Through Ethical Principle 13

	Ethical Principle	Listing of Evidence of Incorporation	Correlation with Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) Principles
6.	Results in benefits to the community	Findings will help community schools	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community
7.	Researcher in charge is responsible for making all decisions.	Researcher was the primary investigator	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
8.	Obtain informed written consent from all involved, or from a legal guardian	Translated IRB informed written consent obtained for all participants	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
9.	Identify sponsors, purpose, sources of financial support and primary investigators	Indicated on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
10.	Explain potential benefits and harm of consent	Indicated on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
11.	Consent needed for any type of information gathering, such as photographs, videos, etc.	Separate consent obtained for pictures and/or taping of interviews on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
12.	Obtain informed consent from participants; inform them if confidentiality cannot be guaranteed	Indicated on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive
13.	No undue pressure to be used to gain consent	Participants chose to participate if desired, indicated on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive

<sup>36</sup> For full details refer to: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, (2003), Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North, <http://www.acuns.ca/caEthicsEnglishmarch2003.pdf>, retrieved 3/26/07.

Table 6: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North<sup>37</sup> and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 14 Through Ethical Principle 19

	Ethical Principle	Listing of Evidence of Incorporation	Correlation with Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) Principles
14.	An individual or community has right to withdraw from the study at any time	Indicated on translated IRB informed consent forms	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community
15.	Ongoing explanations of research objectives, methods, findings, and their interpretation should be made available to the communities	Indicated on translated Project Summary	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (5) Skill development (6) Working together towards a common goal (7) Being resourceful & innovative
16.	Subject to confidentiality, descriptions of data should be left in communities where it was gathered	Upon completion of study, data descriptions will be left in the communities	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (6) Working together towards a common goals
17.	Research summaries and research reports in the local language should be made available to the communities involved	Upon completion of study, translated copies of reports will be made available to the communities and the Department of Education	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (5) Skill development (6) Working together towards a common goal
18.	All research publications should refer to informed consent and community participation	Indicated on IRB informed consent forms and Nunavut licensing application	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (3) Serving family and community (6) Working together towards a common goal
19.	Subject to confidentiality, publications should give appropriate credit to everyone who contributes to the research	Appropriate credit given	(1) Respecting others & relationships (2) Being open & inclusive (6) Working together towards a common goal

<sup>37</sup> For full details refer to: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, (2003), Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North, <http://www.acuns.ca/caEthicsEnglishmarch2003.pdf>, retrieved 3/26/07.

Table 7: The Use of Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North<sup>38</sup> and Their Correlation to the Principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) Ethical Principle 19 Through Ethical Principle 20

	Ethical Principle	Listing of Evidence of Incorporation	Correlation with Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) Principles
20.	Greater consideration should be given to physical, psychological, proprietary, humane, and cultural values than to the potential contribution to knowledge	Greater consideration always given to physical, psychological, proprietary, humane, and cultural values	(1) Respecting others & relationships (6) Working together towards a common goal (8) Respect for & care of animals and environment

*Modifications During the Data Collection and Data Analysis Stages:*

*(3) Emergent Patterns*

The four themes evident from the informal conversations were used to frame the data analysis described in the methodology in chapter four. During the data collection process additional patterns emerged from the Inuit participants' responses to the original sub-questions in both communities. For example, in one of the original research sub-questions, I had grouped Inuit culture with Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). During the data collection process, this sub-question was modified to reflect the fact that the participants' discussed these two topics separately. While adults referred to what they knew about the Inuit culture, the elders were considered the only ones knowledgeable enough to comment about Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). Rather than having two main sub-questions, I used the three main sub-questions outlined in chapter one.

<sup>38</sup> For full details refer to: Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, (2003), Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North, <http://www.acuns.ca/caEthicsEnglishmarch2003.pdf>, retrieved 3/26/07.

The number of participant in the research also was modified. The original proposed study was to include a minimum of ten Inuit students and possibly five community members from each community selected. The study included more than thirty Inuit students and adults. Furthermore, elders were interviewed from each of the selected communities. These specific modifications are discussed in greater detail in the *Modifications to Research Sub-Questions and Data Sources* section of chapter four describing the research methodology.

*Modifications During the Presentation of Research Results:*

*(4) Special Organizational Features*

Three special organizational features were added to the research to incorporate certain Inuit cultural values. First, the research was modified to acknowledge the value of elders' wisdom. Second, the symbol of the guidepost (*inuksuit*) was added to the research to help convey the rewards of helping others and contributing to one's community. Third, *Kim's Stories* were added to the research because of the value of knowledge gained through experiential learning and/or the Inuit oral tradition of storytelling.

In this research, information is presented through charts and graphs so that the written report will be reader friendly to both educators and the indigenous group it is intended to help. These considerations support the visual learning style of the Inuit and aid in the translation of portions of this research into Inuktitut.

*The Wisdom of Elders*

Elders are particularly respected for the wisdom and knowledge they have gained through lived experiences. Their role in the community is to pass on their

expertise of Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to future generations. Modifications to this research were made to honor the wisdom of the elders' words. For example, the comments of the two elders who participated in this study were reviewed on their own, and not summarized along with the responses from other Inuit adults. In addition, the two elders gave permission to have their comments be identified with their names. These modifications are significant because the responses from all other Inuit student and adult participants were coded and grouped together to protect their identity. The elder from Sanikiluaq requested I identify her comments because she felt that this study was important. Specifically, she stated:

I feel that that this [research] is the most [urgent thing, like an] emergency because I see the future of the young people [and something needs to be done to improve it]. [I] thought [this research] was important so [I] really want you to mention [my] name [with my comments] (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

The elder from Pangnirtung emphasized the important contribution that insight of the elders can provide. Specifically, she believed that “because Nunavut is still in its infancy [having formed just eight years ago], people don't know as much as the elders have noticed or know (Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

### *Helping Other People: The Symbol of Guideposts (Inuksuit) Represents Providing Needed Information*

The central symbol chosen for Nunavut's flag is a guidepost, an *inuksuk*<sup>39</sup> (Figure 43, see p. 72). This shows the importance of this symbol to the Inuit people.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Inuksuk* is the singular form of the plural word *Inuksuit*.

<sup>40</sup> Even though *Inuksuit* may vary in appearance, their importance does not change.



*Inuksuit*<sup>41</sup> are stone structures or “things that can act in the place of a human being” (Wallace, 1999, p. 7). *Inuksuit* are significant within the Inuit culture because elders built them to provide specific information which enabled hunters to make choices based on their abilities and local conditions (Wallace, 1999). The *inuksuk* on Nunavut’s flag (Figure 44, see p. 73) also represents the government’s desire to have native culture act as a guiding influence in its future.

Schools have only been introduced in the last 50 years among the Inuit (Pulpan, 2006). Compared to a thousand years of Inuit traditional learning (McGhee, 2005) the school environment is relatively new to the Inuit. The term *nutaaq* which was also used in the title and throughout this research means “something new,” and it has the connotation of being modern.

Over the last fifty years, tension has developed in Nunavut’s school system over which traditional and modern skills students need to graduate. The Nunavut Department of Education has addressed this problem by introducing long-term initiatives like training native teachers, providing a culturally relevant curriculum, and plans for a bilingual curriculum for grades K-12. The few Inuit youths who are now graduating are often only the first or second generation Inuit to have attended school. They have not been able to benefit fully from those long-term initiatives that are still being developed, nor because of the very nature would Inuit students benefit in the near future. In addition, Inuit youths are no longer able to learn all the cultural skills and

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<sup>41</sup> For more information about *Inuksuit*, see: Wallace, M. (1999). *The Inuksuk Book*. Toronto, Ontario: Owl Books.

knowledge the way their ancestors did because they, like other Canadian youths, are required to attend school during the week.

The focus of education must include short-term goals because the future of Nunavut is dependent on the guidance and participation of both Inuit elders and those Inuit graduates. The image of the *inuksuk* was chosen because it symbolizes the researcher's intent to identify the factors that can contribute to encouraging more students to persist in school. Inuit now need new (*nutaaq*) conceptual guideposts (*inuksuit*) so there will be sustainable increase in the number of Inuit youth who graduate with cultural and academic skills. This research can provide needed information that can be used to develop short-term initiatives that will enable more Inuit students in Nunavut to compete with other Canadians for a better future in a global, changing world.



Figure 43: Inuksuk

<http://www.filibustercartoons.com/New%20Canada%20Guide/content/territories/inuk.jpg>

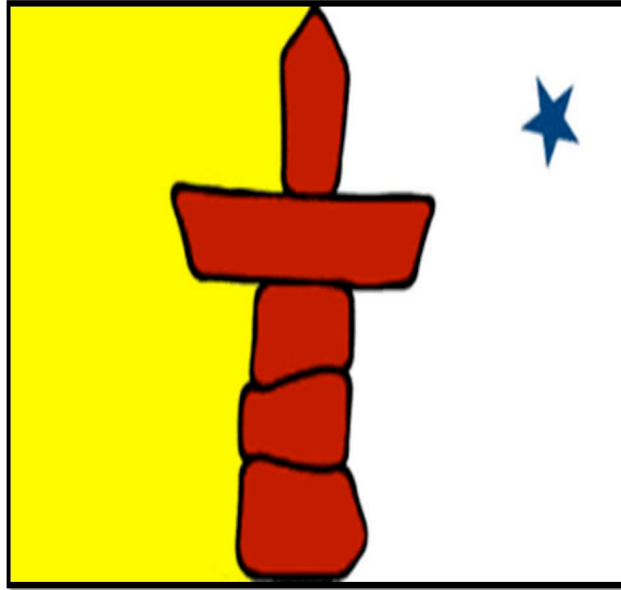


Figure 44: Nunavut Flag  
Picture of Nunavut flag (Government of Nunavut, 2007)

### *Storytelling That Highlights the Importance of Experiential Learning*

The majority of information about Inuit culture is not recorded. Inuit have a vast store of cultural knowledge, which is quite different from what can be learned through formal schooling (Kenny, 2004; Nunavut Research Institute & Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, 1998). Traditionally this cultural knowledge has formed a shared knowledge base that enabled the Inuit to live and prosper for hundreds of years in remote settings. In the Inuit culture, history and knowledge is passed down through oral storytelling and through experiences learned while living on the land. In Nunavut, these traditions, including *Inuktitut*, the language spoken by the Inuit, have been traced back to the Pre-Dorset people that migrated from Alaska a thousand

years ago.<sup>42</sup> Inuktitut did not become a written language until the early 1900s (Figure 45). An Anglican minister, Reverend Edmund J. Peck, spread the use of writing symbols which were originally used by the Cree Indians and later modified for the Inuit.<sup>43</sup> He translated the Bible into Inuktitut, and wrote an Eskimo<sup>44</sup> Grammar and an Eskimo to English Dictionary (Harper, 1983). As a consequence, there are few written materials produced by Inuit themselves.

Δ	i	▷	u	◁	a	ḥ
Λ	pi	>	pu	<	pa	<
∩	ti	∩	tu	C	ta	c
P	ki	∩	ku	b	ka	b
∩	gi	∩	gu	l	ga	l
∩	mi	∩	mu	L	ma	L
∩	ni	∩	nu	a	na	a
∩	si	∩	su	h	sa	h
c	li	∩	lu	c	la	c
▷	ji	<	ju	h	ja	h
Δ	vi	>	vu	<	va	e
∩	ri	∩	ru	∩	ra	c
∩	qi	∩	qu	∩	qa	b
∩	ngi	∩	ngu	∩	nga	b
∩	&i	∩	&u	∩	&a	c

Figure 45: Current Version of Written Symbols of Inuktitut  
<http://www.najuqsivik.com/gateway/inuktitut/standardized.htm>

<sup>42</sup> Research supports that Inuit ancestors lived about 1,000 years ago in the Nunavut region, which establishes the Inuit as indigenous people in Nunavut. For more details, refer to: McGhee, R. (2005). *The last imaginary place: A human history of the Arctic world*. New York: Oxford University.

<sup>43</sup> John Horden and E. A. Watkins were English missionaries who modified the writing system used by the Cree Indians for the Inuit. For more details, see: Harper, Ken. (1983). "Writing in Inuktitut: A Historical Perspective. 53. (September) 13.

<sup>44</sup> Eskimo is a derogatory word derived from the Cree Indians meaning "eaters of raw meat." The indigenous people of Nunavut prefer the term "Inuit" meaning "the people" in Inuktitut language. Inuk is the singular form of Inuit.

Research on the Inuit relies mostly on learning and understanding gained through accessing their oral traditions. To acknowledge the Inuit culture of valuing experiential learning taught by family and community members, the research was modified to include stories derived from the researcher's fourteen years of living in an Inuit community. In the Arctic, I was known as "Kim". *Kim's Stories* provide additional insight into understanding some of the underlying Inuit values that affect what and how Inuit students learn which are not evident from the Inuit quotations, presentation of data of Inuit perceptions, or relevant documentation to individuals unfamiliar with the Inuit culture. These stories are presented at the end of certain sections where a particular experience provides additional insight. My Arctic experiences are not considered part of the "factual body of research" because they are just "stories." These experiences are also not part of the Inuit culture because I am not Inuk. The telling of these stories supports the Inuit value that much knowledge can be learned and passed on to others by sharing experiences through storytelling.

#### Kim's Story: One Person Can Make a Difference

I was a senior in college majoring in geology when I was informed that there might be a one in a million chance for an undergraduate to work in the summer in the eastern Arctic as part of a grant with a Research Institute affiliated with a local university. My love of adventure, enjoyment of different cultures, college experiences hiking in the mountains of Alaska, and high school experiences on a year-long exchange to Rennes, France motivated me to take that chance to see what a professor's passion for the Arctic research was all about. So I volunteered on a research project under the direction of a university professor, who was studying how the land rose as

the glaciers receded. The samples were taken from Baffin Island, located in Arctic Canada, because that area was considered to be an early indicator of global climate change.

That summer, 33 years ago, traveling by myself on multiple flights to a northern community in Baffin Island, I was too excited to even imagine how a white teenage female who grew up in Boston, MA. was going to survive, let alone make a contribution to the Inuit of the Arctic. The fact that I was a vegetarian at the time did not matter until one day, when I was assisting on a research project, the boat we traveled on got unexpectedly stuck in the floating ice. Shivering and being without food or warm clothing during a sudden, freezing temperature drop, or the day delay in the middle of the summer, I decided that I would literally not survive that hypothermic ordeal unless I tried some of the fresh, raw seal meat that the Inuit guides had just hunted and offered me while they were eating it themselves. I do not remember what it tasted like then as I was probably delirious, though I have since acquired the taste for this Inuit delicacy. However, I do remember how it warmed me up. Seeing the value of knowledge gained on the land, nourished me back to my senses that day.

On that trip we had set up a weather station to monitor the glaciers' progress. The site had been thoroughly researched by our team, but we ignored the warnings about its unsuitability from the Inuit community. We were told about how difficult it was to access this site due to floating ice which we encountered and the frequency of polar bear activity in that area I realized. Nevertheless we went ahead with our plans. Polar bears later destroyed our weather station. Though the researchers I was with had graduate degrees, that form of education was not beneficial in this instance since we

could not get safely to and from the research site. To do that required using knowledge that was not found in books but passed on to Inuit guides through their cultural traditions.

After that summer, I went to visit an Inuk teacher who was just starting to teach in another community in Baffin Island, south of where I was. She had remarked that she thought I would enjoy seeing the nearby spectacular mountains and fiords. She was more accustomed, as many Inuit are, to the rolling hills and/or flat expanses of land which were more commonly found near communities.

That visit lasted for 14 years. I decided to stay, marry and raise my family in that community. An Inuk elder, it turned out later, became the great grandmother of my children. She once asked me what had brought me back to the Arctic. I had no idea how to explain the concept of research, let alone how the sample of shells dating back thousands of years that were found on local cliffs related to the concept of global warming. All I could do was say in broken Inuktitut was “that ice moves a little bit in a long time” (*taanna siku aulasuuq akunialuk*). She looked at me and asked in Inuktitut “Who does this help?” (*Una kia ikajurtanga?*) I was at a loss for words. The best I could do was shrug my shoulders, and avoid visiting her for the next week or so. In the meantime, the elder encouraged people to mention to me that she had heard how I had helped someone in the store or at the nursing station who did not speak English, etc. Eventually I did go back and visit. In fact, a few years later my visits became a daily routine to honor the fact that my first-born son, was named after her husband, who I had met.

So I knew that my work helped others, I trained to be an elementary school teacher. I taught for two years in Pangnirtung, prior to working for a local college outreach center there.

Since I worked full time, when my children finished school their grandmother took care of them. She would make sure they visited an elder (their great grandmother) everyday as is their custom. When my children visited the elder, she would always ask them, as she had once asked me, “Who did you help?”

In the town of Pangnirtung, one can walk to everything within that community, but four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles are used in summer and snowmobiles are used in winter. In addition, all work places and businesses, as well as the schools, are closed during the noon hour so that individuals can go home for lunch. This situation provides the community with the unique opportunity for family interaction at lunchtime. I knew that my children would be visiting an elder every day in the afternoon, before I saw them again after my work was finished. As a result, when my children came home for lunch, I would try to prepare them for their visit by asking them, “Who did they help or who were they planning on helping?”

My family and I left that community in 1991, unable to return for a visit until ten years later when Nunavut celebrated its first anniversary. I found it very difficult at first, when I was not able to see my children during the lunch hour as I had in the Arctic. In addition, we were unable to do most of the Inuit cultural activities because these related directly to being in the Arctic environment. So what I tried to do was keep some of the Inuit values alive in my family. In the evening, during supper time, I kept up the tradition of asking my children who they had helped that day to remind them of



the elder that they used to enjoy visiting each day. Interesting enough, the wisdom of the elder's few simple words has effected two generations. Each of my four children has chosen a career path where they will be able to help others. My eldest son flies and fixes helicopters that help people get in and out of remote areas. My oldest daughter is a lawyer. My youngest son works for a non-profit business building houses for individuals in need. My youngest daughter is working in the medical field. When I returned to the Arctic to do this research, some people mentioned to me that they can see now what global warming means. Along with other noticeable factors, they commented that the sea ice that never used to thaw until mid July when I lived there is now gone in June.

I could not be more grateful for the rewards I have experienced from a career in education that has enabled me to help others. Luckily for me, Inuit elders are respected for their insight and wisdom that can be valuable across different cultures. Fortunately for me, experiences learned from living in the Arctic helped me to appreciate the universal value of listening to those most knowledgeable in their setting. From them, I learned that input often shared through casual conversations and developing relationships can make a profound difference in the questions we ask and the decisions we make that affect our own lives and those of others around us. Indeed, I was lucky to learn that one person can make a difference. With that in mind, this research provides Nunavut with the information they need to make the kind of choices that will be meaningful to the Inuit and their future.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Literature Review

#### *Introduction*

Conversational input from residents of Nunavut (chapter two) resulted in the identification of emergent ideas that clustered around these topics: indigenous people,<sup>45</sup> family, school, community and Inuit culture. Two basic questions guided the examination of the literature and the investigation of these topics in relation to Nunavut.

1. What can be further understood in the literature about research on indigenous people within Nunavut's educational context?
2. What can be identified in the literature that related to the relationships between Nunavut students' ability to remain in high school and their home, school, community, and Inuit culture.

For the purpose of this study, aspects of each question were limited to exploring those sub-topics that would support or promote the educational goals of the Nunavut government or the cultural principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) described in chapter one. As a result, the focus of the two questions, stated above, was narrowed. In response to the first question, the sub-topics of studying indigenous people within the

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<sup>45</sup> Indigenous people is a more general term that refers to any people that descended from a group that was present in the area before modern states or territories were created that maintain their own cultural identities separate from the mainstream or dominant culture (ADB, 2008). Aboriginal people is a more specific term that refers to the descendents of the original inhabitants in a given area, who have their own distinct heritage, language, culture and spiritual beliefs. Inuit are an indigenous people. Canada also legally recognizes the Inuit as one of the three groups of Aboriginal people in North America (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008).

context of cultural anthropology and the history of schooling in the Arctic emerged. In response to the second question, four related sub-topics emerged:

1. Home-school relationships and readiness of the home environment for school
2. Instructional practices, school policies, and school reform
3. Community partnerships in school programming
4. Inuit cultural skills and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)

Four overriding themes emerged that were persuasive throughout the literature review. These themes will be discussed first, prior to outlining the specific findings that were identified in the literature that could help Inuit students remain in school, and the subsequent clarification of limitations of this literature review. The overriding themes were:

1. The need for educators to recognize and value different cultures
2. The importance of all students experiencing educational equality
3. The importance of an education that includes both academic and cultural skills
4. The relationships between the home, school (including school reform), community, and Inuit culture.

The first three themes are prevalent throughout this study because they apply to all indigenous people. This research focused in greater depth on the fourth theme as an organizational format because it most closely related to information that emerged from the conversational input from Nunavummiut.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Nunavummiut are residents of Nunavut.

## *Overriding Themes*

### *First Overriding Theme: Recognizing and Valuing Culture*

There is a need for all individuals, researchers, government officials, and educators who work with indigenous people to acknowledge their culture and value it. “The importance of ethnic and cultural diversity in shaping lifestyles, social experiences, personal identities and educational opportunities of individuals, groups and nations” was identified (Gay, 2004, p. 33). The formation of Nunavut has created the potential for Inuit to have more educational opportunities.

Researchers, like myself, who value the indigenous people they are studying, can provide valuable information to educators and government officials about different types of educational opportunities. Researchers are considered more venerable when they are influenced by and affect whom they observe (Behar, 1996):

Insider researchers have to have ways of thinking critically about their processes, their relationships, and the quality and richness of their data and analysis. So too do outsiders, but the main difference is that insiders have to live with the consequences of their processes on a day-to day basis for ever more, and so do their families and communities (L. T. Smith, 2004, p. 137).

My perspective as an outsider is supported by my experience living in the Nunavut region in an Inuit community and raising a family there. Indigenous researchers stress the importance to other researchers of utilizing culturally sensitive strategies (Brayboy and Deyhle, 2000). Two significant findings emerged from the literature review that related to Inuit in Nunavut and this research. The first was the perspective that indigenous people culturally value and view everything holistically. The second is that

culturally sensitive strategies used by cultural anthropologists support this holistic viewpoint and can be applied to research in Nunavut.

*The importance of valuing and using a holistic perspective.*

Understanding the connections and relationships between factors and people holistically is valued as a basic belief to Inuit. To respect this belief, in the organization of this dissertation, and even in this literature review, findings were examined and presented thematically, rather than as separate responses to the two guiding questions.

A “Holistic Framework for Aboriginal Policy Research” can be used to value the cultural beliefs of any indigenous people because it incorporates research strategies that are culturally sensitive. This framework focuses on the three cultural aspects that should be considered and valued when doing aboriginal research. These aspects, which can be diagramed using four interconnected circles, are: Aboriginal research; honoring the spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental aspects of human beings; honoring the interconnectedness of all things; and honoring the past, present, and future (Kenny, 2004).

“Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit, and Metis<sup>47</sup> Learning Report” by the Canadian Council on Learning is a more detailed holistic framework that is specific to education. This framework suggests factors that could be assessed in monitoring life-long learning for indigenous people. Connecting the past with the future in order to develop the well-being of the community socially, emotionally, physically, economically, and environmentally is central to this framework and is diagramed by a circular blanket. In keeping with these facts, this study took into account

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<sup>47</sup> Metis is a term for an Indian who has one parent that is a native Indian.

the well-being of the Inuit by focusing on their perceptions of the factors that might help more Inuit graduate, an aspect which has not yet been researched. In addition, this study also honors the historical influences of the past on the present by including participants from different generations that can describe cultural changes over time.

The holistic framework specific to education has three domains of knowledge: culture, people, and sila (life force). Each of these has sub-domains: family, community, elders, land, and the environment. In addition, this framework has identified the places where learning occurs as the home, school, community, land, and workplace. The stages of life-long learning are identified for infant and children, youth, young adults, adults, and elders.

Even though key individuals in Nunavut did not refer to this specific rubric, four topics that were mentioned above: home, the community, the elders, and the Inuit cultural traditions (related to the land and the environment) were noted by them as being of special importance. In addition, innovative community programming that had a cultural focus or work orientation programming were highlighted in informal conversations cited in chapter two. A unique feature of my research is that data was collected relating to young adults, adults, and elders to determine what specific factors would help more students to graduate.

In “Decolonizing Methodologies,” L.T. Smith, further supports doing research on indigenous people by providing a more historically focused holistic framework. Her framework depicts four phases as a community moves from decolonization through healing, mobilization, and finally into transformation. According to L.T. Smith (2002), the four phases are association “tides”: survival, recovery, development, and self-

determination affect the community's movement in subjective terms (L.T. Smith, 2002). While the government may have reached self-determination and gained the right to self-governance, research, like mine, is needed to determine what "tide" the school system is currently in. Another important aspect of my research is that Inuit from different generations participated in this study.

*What culturally sensitive strategies can be applied from cultural anthropology.*

The second significant finding from the literature review was that cultural anthropology is a contemporary perspective that further supports studying indigenous people in a holistic and connected way by being culturally sensitive. Studies with indigenous people have highlighted the different ways that researchers can use culturally sensitive strategies when, as Lucy Mair, a British cultural anthropologist claims, we are "talking about people" (Haviland, 2002).

Franz Boas' work as a cultural anthropologist with American Indians stressed that research should be inductive, and examine the psychological meanings that cultures gave to structures (Magi, 2001). In my research, Inuit perceptions were given a central focus. Another example of a cultural anthropologist's work is Bronislaw Malinowski's research with the Trobriand people which enabled him to describe in detail behaviors he saw and participated in (Magi, 2001). His work with narrative folklore stressed looking at culture in terms of its interrelationships and influences (Bascom, 1983). The cultural learning I achieved through relationships with Inuit and shared experiences with my children, are included in this research as "*Kim's Stories.*"

Margaret Mead, another anthropologist, noted the difference she saw in the upbringing of Samoan children versus children from her own culture because the Samoan

children were treated as little adults who lacked experience, had responsibilities, and learned through observations (Mead, 1928). Her work highlights the need to examine a topic holistically. While many of those qualities are similar for Inuit children, others are unique to Inuit. For example, Inuit have physical signs and expression in Inuktitut specific to their child-rearing practices. This encourages Inuit infants to have early input with adults even before they can speak. Samoan adults do not seek input from their children.

Another cultural anthropologist, Alfred Kroeber, in studies with American Indians stressed the importance of their history in understanding the culture (Magi, 2001). One way to understand the Inuit culture is to recognize that the current educational situation needs to be viewed within its historical context. Therefore, I interviewed a wide variety of participants to determine if the historical framework influenced their current views towards education. As a result, a brief outline of the history of schooling in the Arctic is included below.

*Summary of the history of schooling in the eastern Arctic.*

Traditionally, education of the Inuit was the extended family unit's responsibility. Many of us can only marvel at the unique knowledge, adaptability, ingenuity, and strong sense of family ties and relationships that enabled them to survive as a culture in the frigid remoteness of the Canadian Arctic for thousands of years.

Before formalized education, Inuit culture was taught in an informal, spontaneous manner, aimed at a sound understanding of values, belief systems, and life skills which enabled students to accept responsible adult roles in their communities. Children learned by listening, watching, and doing (Schofield, 1998, p. 12).



Aspects of the Inuit's traditional way of life began to change as a result of contact with non-Inuit people, starting in the early 1700s with European whalers and continuing throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Pulpan's (2006)<sup>48</sup> research in Sanikiluaq succinctly highlighted the events in the history of schooling in the Arctic that impacted the Inuit and their culture in Nunavut. These are briefly outlined in this section. Pulpan's research found that the innovative programs in the Nuiyak School also helped renew the disconnect between youth and elders. My research will contribute further by exploring if Inuit perceive that this type of innovative programming will also help more Inuit to stay in school and graduate. In Pulpan's study (2006), he summarized the history of schooling in the Arctic over the four periods that were identified by Darnell (Darnell, 1987).

Darnell's first historical period discussed by Pulpan (Pulpan, 2006), from approximately 1860 to 1939, included contact with missionaries and the introduction of mission schools. Sovereign governments and zealous missionaries desiring the indigenous culture to assimilate and to become "educated" into the ways of the dominant culture have been well documented to have disastrous effects (L. T. Smith, 2002). The Canadian Arctic was no different. The first recorded school in eastern Canadian Arctic was started in 1861 by the Anglican Church. It was built at Blacklead Island (MacPherson, 1991),<sup>49</sup> which is approximately 20 miles from the current Pangnirtung community. That mission school was directed by Anglican or Catholic missionaries.

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<sup>48</sup> For more detailed historical information related to Darnell's historical periods, see: Pulpan, A. (2006). "The Relationship of School, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Elders in the Education of Youth Within a Nunavut Community," Masters Thesis, York University, Toronto, Canada.

<sup>49</sup> For further information, see Macpherson, N.J. (1991). *Dreams and Visions: Education in the Northwest Territories from Early Days to 1984*. Yellowknife: Department of Education of Northwest Territories.

They focused on teaching the three “R’s”: reading, writing, and religion as well as attempt to “civilize them”. Inuit had to speak English and read the Bible. There was no curriculum and instructors had to teach what they could (Viki-Westgate, 2002).<sup>50</sup> By 1944, there were five Anglican, two Roman Catholic, and two federal schools across Northwest Territories. In the eastern Arctic, there was only one school near Pangnirtung (Duffy, 1988). The elders from both communities in this study were members of the few original families. These families settled in the area of the current communities, that often began with a church, a Hudson Bay store, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police outpost. The elders’ knowledge and experiences span all four historical generations.

The second phase of Darnell’s historical periods, highlighted by Pulpan (2006), is the period of federal intervention, which was approximately between 1940 and 1959. During this time, the Second World War brought attention to Canada’s need for northern sovereignty. In 1942, army bases were established in Nunavut, including a town now known as Iqaluit. Between 1954 and 1957, the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW Line) was built. The DEW Line was an integrated set of radar and communication stations set up from Northwest coast of Alaska to the eastern coast of Baffin Island to prevent attacks on North America by Soviet Russia (Harris, 2008). During this period of the Cold War, the Canadian Government declared Inuit to be Canadian citizens and guaranteed them the same services as other Canadians in order to assure their sovereignty and loyalty (Zaslow, 1971).<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> For further information, see Vick-Westgate, A. (2002). *Nunavik: Inuit Controlled Education in Arctic Quebec*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

<sup>51</sup> For more information, see Zaslow, M. (1971). *The Opening of Canada’s North*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited.

By 1946, the need to educate the native population so that they could carry on transactions coincided with an increase in the fur trade and a decline in the whaling industry (Duffy, 1988). The RCMP and Hudson Bay managers believed that a little more schooling was necessary in order to help Inuit make better trades and transactions. Yet, they also believed that Inuit education should be limited because too much education would discourage them and make them dissatisfied (Duffy, 1988). Since the 1940's, schools served as agents of colonization. Colonization in Nunavut resulted in separating youth from their families, communities, culture, language, and traditional knowledge (Tompkins, 1998).

In 1952, the Assembly of Eskimo Affairs was created to assist Inuit in confronting their depressing economic, health, and growing dependency issues (Marcus, 1992). A year later, the Department of Resources and Development (DRD) developed a classification for Inuit with three categories that they believed would facilitate their progress towards this goal. Inuit were classified based on their location near anticipated natural resources and their current settlement location in relation to existing trading posts.

Category one meant there were enough natural resources nearby to sustain the individuals if they were left alone. Category two stated that those near an outpost should be formally educated in schools to help them better adopt a southern influence. Category three meant that resources were not optimal and those Inuit needed to be relocated to areas in the north (Marcus, 1992).<sup>52</sup> In 1952, supported by DRD and RCMP, seven families from Pond Inlet and Port Harrison were moved to Grise Fiord on Elsmere Island

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<sup>52</sup> For further information, see Marcus, A. R. (1992). *Out in the Cold: the Legacy of Canada Inuit Relocation Experiment in the High Arctic*. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs

and Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island for better hunting (Marcus, 1995).<sup>53</sup> This relocation effort was done in spite of the failure of a previous relocation project in 1934 when the Department of Interior moved Inuit from the Quebec coast to North Baffin and then later returned them to their original location. Ironically, there were no studies conducted on wildlife prior to consideration of these categories or relocations of individuals (Marcus, 1992).

By 1950, without any input from the Inuit, the Canadian government, by an act of Parliament, took over the responsibility of educating Inuit children. As a result, Inuit parents who were classified in category two were forced to live in one area, which was near schools for their younger children. The government also required their high school age children to attend special residential public schools that they opened just for Inuit students. Initially, Inuit felt compelled to follow the Canadian government's educational requirement. Then, Inuit parents saw the negative impact that occurred when their children attended residential schools. Their children were separated from them, and their children were forbidden to learn about their own culture in the schools. Often their children were also neglected and abused while attending residential school (CBC-Archives, 2007). Inuit in many Nunavut communities were dramatically affected by this government action. It was anticipated that some of the Inuit students' parents would have been affected by these events. By 1953, only 5% of the Inuit received an education from federal residential schools because there were not enough Inuit people for community based schools at that time (Viki-Westgate, 2000). In spite of the small Inuit population,

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<sup>53</sup> For more information, see Marcus, A.R. (1995). *Relocating Eden: The image and politics of Inuit exile in the Canadian Arctic*. London: University Press of New England.

the Canadian government opened a federal day school in Iqaluit in 1955 because they had begun to realize that it was undesirable to take children away from their Inuit families for long periods of time (Duffy, 1988).<sup>54</sup> Increasing lifestyle changes among Inuit were occurring as more Inuit moved closer to trading posts and hunted more for fur bearing animals rather than for food (Dryzek & Young, 1985).<sup>55</sup> In 1954, the Canadian government responded to the increase in the number of localized Inuit by mandating that all Inuit education in the NWT be under the supervision of Department of North Affairs and Natural Resources rather than by different religious organizations as it had previously been. By 1959, in addition to the school in Blacklead Island near Pangnirtung, there were 52 other Inuit schools, many of which were also in the eastern Arctic, as compared to only three Inuit schools in 1949 (Viki-Westgate, 2002). The first school in the Belcher Islands was opened in 1960, which is near Sanikiluaq. However, as late as 1968, there were still nine large residential schools in the NWT where students spent ten months out of a year (Wattie, 1998).<sup>56</sup>

According to Puplan, Darnell's<sup>57</sup> third general historical period was the need for community input and traditional knowledge (Pulpan, 2006).<sup>58</sup> During this time, there was

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<sup>54</sup> For further information see Duffy, R.Q. (1988). *The road to Nunavut: The progress of the eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War*. Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queens's University Press.

<sup>55</sup> For more information, see Dryzek, J., & Young, O. (1985). *Internal Colonialism in the Circumpolar North: The Case of Alaska Development and Change*, 16, 123-145.

<sup>56</sup> For more information, see Wattie, D. K. (1968). *Education in the Canadian Arctic Polar Record (Great Britain)*, 14 (90) 293-304.

<sup>57</sup> For further explanation of historical trends, see Darnell, F. (1987). *Education and the Circumpolar Nativistic Movement: Twenty Years of Change for the Better*. In M. Farrwo & D. Wilman (eds.), *Self-Determination in the Circumpolar North: Proceedings of the Seminar Inuit Control of Inuit Education* (pp. 24-43). Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, Canada, June-July 1, 1987. Yellowknife: Government of the North West Territories.

<sup>58</sup> For historical information in more depth, see: Pulpan, A. (2006). *The relationship of school, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and elders in the education of youth within a Nunavut community*, Masters Thesis, York University, Toronto, Canada.

a growing trend among non-Inuit and Inuit to use more culturally relevant materials in the curriculum and increase local community control of the schools (Tompkins, 2004). In the late 1960's, Canadian magazines such as "The Northian," "North of 60," and "The Musk-Ox," became available as resources for northern teachers of native students. In 1969, when the Federal government moved from Ottawa to Yellowknife, it gave some autonomy and input on decision making to eight larger eastern Arctic communities (Duffy, 1988).

During this time, Canadian native organizations, like the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITK), fought for Inuit rights and traditional values. Soon, pressure for independence started to grow. In 1970, the ITK signed an agreement to form a new territory. Another native organization, The Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN), was specifically formed to continue with these negotiations. A brief outline of the history of schooling in the Arctic is included below.

The problem of very few Inuit students graduating with enough skills to pursue a higher education was evident almost 30 years ago. In 1971, NWT legislators allowed schools to teach in Inuktituk for the first four grades (GNWT, 1977). Yet in 1980, only 192 of 12,000 students enrolled in schools in the NWT<sup>59</sup> were able to graduate from high school. Of those students, only four qualified to enter university (Cram, 1986).<sup>60</sup> Local educational advisory committees were also established in the NWT at this time, but unfortunately these committees had no political power to effect any changes they recommended. Consequently, public hearings were held to provide information to a

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<sup>59</sup> In 1991, Nunavut was formed by dividing what was then the Northwest Territory into two new territories.

<sup>60</sup> For more information, see Cram, J.M. (1986). Native education programs in the Canadian North. *Etudes/Inuit/Studies* (Canada) 12, 47-53.

special committee on NWT education. Inuit wanted quality education that reflected the language and culture of their people. They also wanted to establish a college system to train native teachers and continue to enable more local control of education in communities (Colburn, 1987).<sup>61</sup> By 1987, seven Inuit were able to teach in Inuit schools with a certificate in Native and Northern education from McGill University when they completed a teacher training program in Iqaluit, NWT.

In 1985, local input into the schooling process was achieved by creating eight divisional boards across the NWT which let local school boards establish their own goals. It was predicted that by establishing secondary schools in each community instead of boarding schools that graduation rates would increase and more parents would support their children in school. By establishing this study, it would help the Nunavut government determine what Inuit believe will help more Inuit students stay in school and graduate.

In 1985, the Baffin Regional Board of Education (BRBE), one of the divisional boards created for Nunavut, took major steps in separating from the rest of NWT. They focused on high quality programs in all Inuktitut areas, emphasized programs on survival in the Arctic, and developed classes in English as a second language. By 1980, most communities had schools to grade 8, but high school students had to attend school and live in dormitories in Iqaluit. As a result, most Inuit did not attend school past grade 9 because they did not want to leave their families (Colburn, 1987).

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<sup>61</sup> For further details see, Colburn, E. (1987). Introduction to the Baffin Divisional Board. In M. Farrow & D. Wilman (Eds.). *Self-determination in Native Education in the circumpolar north: Proceedings of the seminar Inuit control of Inuit education* (pp. 64-70). Iqaluit, North West Territories, Canada. June - July 1, 1987. Yellowknife: Government of the North West Territories.

In addition, Inuit youth began to experience the detrimental effects of drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, and teenage pregnancies. The BRBE tried to address these issues by working with parents more and increasing the percentage of Inuit teachers<sup>62</sup> (Colburn, 1987). Just having Inuit teachers in their schools was not enough. Therefore, Inuit elders lobbied before the 30<sup>th</sup> Commission for UNESCO<sup>63</sup> for the inclusion of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and cultural traditions in the schools (Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, 1991). It was anticipated that some of the parents of students interviewed would have been affected by these events.

Darnell's<sup>64</sup> fourth general historical period was the creation of Nunavut (Pulpan, 2006).<sup>65</sup> After 20 years of negotiations, the 1999 Pinasuaqtavut: The Bathurst Operate, a document that outlined the terms of Nunavut's formation, was signed (Government, 1999). On April 1, 1999, those terms took effect and the territory of Nunavut was created, which gave Inuit control of their own education and institutions through self-government.

The historical context of Nunavut's formation supports the urgent need to have research that explores Inuit people's perspective on what helps Inuit students to stay in school until graduation. Inuit have had a long history of being coerced to attend schools

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<sup>62</sup> In 1987, there was approximately 30 percent Inuit teachers (Colburne, 1987).

<sup>63</sup> UNESCO refers to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. For more information about their organization see: [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=3328&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3328&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>64</sup> For further explanation of historical trends, see Darnell, F. (1987). Education and the circumpolar Nativistic movement; Twenty years of change for the better. In M. Farrwo & D. Wilman (Eds.). *Self Determination in the Circumpolar North: Proceedings of the Seminar Inuit Control of Inuit Education* ( pp. 24-43). Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, Canada, June-July 1, 1987. Yellowknife: Government of the North West Territories.

<sup>65</sup> For historical information in more depth, see: Pulpan, A. (2006). *The relationship of school, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and elders in the education of youth within a Nunavut community*. Masters Thesis, York University, Toronto, Canada.



that acted as agents of colonization and required them to repress their culture (Darnell, 1987; Pulpan, 2006; Tompkins, 1998). Influences from the school were shown to have varying effects on the aspirations of rural high school students (Marineau, 2008).

In addition, schools have made it difficult for Inuit people to pass on their traditional knowledge to the youth and it has made it more important to have Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) in the schools (Pulpan, 2006). “The relationship between youth and elders has undergone consideration change. Inuit youth today are educated in classrooms, watch WWF wrestling and the latest sitcoms, and listen to Spice Girls and Marilyn Mason. Their grasp of the Inuktitut language has faded, and has limited their ability to communicate with the elders, who are the source of the traditional knowledge” (Qitsualik, 1999, p.64). In Sanikiluaq, innovative cultural programs have been one way that students can have the opportunity to pass on their knowledge to students. “Delving into prehistory is one method which allows activities to be extracted which spur scientific investigations, promote literacy, and yet allow a cultural appreciation to be developed by students (Jamieson, 1994, p.496).

Canadian Indians were also forced to send their children away to residential schools between 1840 and 1980. In fact, many of the government policies related to the First Nations people were directed at both the Canadian Indians and Canadian Inuit. These indigenous people were denied the right to their language and culture and often abused in the residential school setting (Thomas, 2003). Historically, American Indians also experienced varying stages of colonization like the Inuit. For example, American Indian children were taken away from their parents by the government in 1885 and sent to boarding schools that existed in fifteen different states. Between 1945 and 1968, the

government began to allow the American Indians more self-determination and local control of their education. American Indians also encountered the difficulty of “whether or not schools will be able to turn out Indian graduates who are self-assured, employable, and able to provide leadership in making reservations and urban Indian communities self-sufficient” (Reyhner, 1988, p.58).

It was anticipated that some of the Inuit students in Nunavut might still be possibly affected by the effects of decolonization even during the period since Nunavut’s formation. While historically, Inuit have experienced the detrimental effects of colonization that attempted to educate the Inuit without any regard for their culture (CBC-Archives, 2007), using culturally sensitive research methodologies now ensures that the research process does not further colonize the indigenous people it intends to benefit (L. T. Smith, 2004).

*Second Overriding Theme: Educational Equality for all Students*

Just initiating programs and strategies that value culture is not enough to make school reform successful. It is anticipated that what would also need to occur in Nunavut is school reform that enables “students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social class groups to experience educational equality” (J. A. Banks, 2004, p. 3). The academic gap that Inuit high school youths experienced in relation to other Canadian youths would indicate that this is not occurring (Fulford, 2007). Educational researchers elsewhere have used a systems approach to examining school reform (J. A. Banks, 2004). In this approach, the school itself can also be considered to be a social system that is larger than the sum of its parts and functions as its own entity. This holistic approach is used specifically in relation to school reform because it focuses on examining different variables and their interaction

that make school reform more effective or successful. The importance of viewing variables related to school reform within an interactive and interdependent context was consistently noted in the research (J. A. Banks, 2004; Donahue, 1997; Epstein, 1997; Fullan, 1997). To further study these variables, exceptionally effective and/or successful schools are often studied.

“The existence of unusually effective schools is an important question for educational policy. If exceptional schools do exist, they may be replicable elsewhere; if they do not, we may need to consider radical changes in the educational system” (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March, p. 4). In their research on how to identify effective schools they refer to previous large regression studies as focusing on the average effects of policies in various schools. Their study looked at the outliers or exceptional schools and concluded that for “policy and research purposes, exceptions to the rule may be more important” (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March, p. 72).

In addition, Klitgaard and Hall (1973) refer to discussions about effective schools that resulted from one of the earlier large regression studies that were described in the influential *Coleman Report*.<sup>66</sup> These discussions are still issues that are applicable to the Nunavut context. Some educators thought the report provided evidence that models of effective schools in which educational policies could increase educational achievement might not exist. Other educators concluded that the report indicated that the measure of standardized testing used in that study might not be the only measure of educational

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<sup>66</sup> Reference to: Coleman, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld, & York. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, as cited in (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March).

effectiveness (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March). In terms of Nunavut and my study, it is anticipated that exemplary schools and other than standardized measures of school effectiveness should be considered.

As indicated in chapter two, the Minister of Education in Nunavut, through informal conversations, had indicated that there currently is no measure of school or student success in Nunavut. Standardized testing was stopped in 1999 when Nunavut was created, as it was felt that it was not appropriate for the aboriginal population. Currently, student assessments are being piloted in one community in a grade four class. The research into assessment in Nunavut continues to develop (Picco, 2007, April 4). So while it may be clear that educational policies alone have not resulted in achievement, research is needed in Nunavut to identify factors that are found in effective schools. While different studies may not be similar enough to generate applicable generalizations, insight into what areas might be further researched can be gained from studies done in the United States related to effective and successful schools. Such studies in Canada related to indigenous people, especially the Inuit, are very limited.

In the United States, Bullard and Taylor's (1993) research highlighted some of the variables found in effective schools that encouraged school reform and improved academic achievement. These factors include: a safe environment, a vision for the school's future, strong leadership, staff development, frequent monitoring of students and teacher performance, high expectations for all students, mutual respect between home and school, and staff working together towards the same goals.

Efforts to implement research and theories on effective schools into practice to help low-income schools improve their achievement began on a national level in the

United States in 1999. The school change framework for improving literacy that was used in that project at the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) continue to build on work done in “beat the odds” schools<sup>67</sup> that had high academic success on tests with students from low socioeconomic areas. Langer’s (2001) work further supported research based on the CIERA school change framework by showing that improving literacy at the local level involved similar variables to those found in effective or successful schools studies.<sup>68</sup> In Langer’s studies in middle and high schools, she highlighted as effective the importance of collaborative classrooms, multiple opportunities to learn skills, assessment to inform instruction, strategies for thinking, and connections across content. This study and other studies on successful schools focus on school variables within the context of professional development, long-term school improvement and sustained change (Mosenthal, J., Lipson, M., Torncello, S., Russ, B., & Mekkelsen, J., 2004). Mosenthal and his colleagues found four success factors common across all schools regardless of their socioeconomic status. These factors were identified as teacher expertise, opportunities to read, a school community that collaboratively worked towards a shared vision that all children can learn, and the school’s long-term commitment to literacy (Mosenthal, J., Lipson, M., Torncello, S., Russ, B., & Mekkelsen, J., 2004). “Their work further establishes the importance of defining success within the

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<sup>67</sup> Refer further to “beat the odds” school studies: Synder, S. (1999). *Beating the odds over time: One district’s perspective*. Albany, NY: CELA/SUNY-Albany: CELA Report # 12004. Taylor, B.M., Pearson, P.D, Peterson, D.S., Clark, K.F., & Walpole, S. (2000). Effective schools and accomplished teachers: Lessons about primary grade reading instruction in low-income schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 101(2), 121-165.

<sup>68</sup> Refer to additional study: Taylor, B.M., Pearson, P.D, Peterson, D.S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (2005). The CIERA school change framework: An evidence-based approach to professional development and school reading improvement. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40 (1), p.40-69.

local context of the school. Defining success as high performance on tests trivializes the real success of these schools. Their success resides in the dynamic institutional community they created and maintain” (Mosenthal, J Lipson, M., Torncello, S., Russ, B., & Mekkelsen, J., 2004, p. 111). Research done by Au (2005) with native Hawaiians in elementary schools also showed similarities in the findings related to school change and literacy improvement for aboriginal populations. Au identified a standards-based change process (SBCP) model to increase literacy achievement that included the following nine steps: developing a school philosophy; identifying outcomes for excellent readers; identifying benchmarks; using easily understandable language; collecting evidence of progress; having procedures to collect data; using rubrics; displaying data on graphs; and designing lessons for improvement. McLaughlin and Talbert show how even high school teachers could successfully have communities of practice that collaborated to invent new practices that resulted in improved academic student performance.<sup>69</sup>

Some assets that students, regardless of their background, could have to be successful in school have been identified in Benson and Galbraith’s (1995) nationwide survey covering over 46,000 students. Having more of these “developmental assets” increased the students’ ability to do well in school. Some of the key assets identified in their study include: achievement, motivation, educational aspirations, school performance, global concern, empathy, decision making, friendship making, self-esteem, and hope.

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<sup>69</sup> Reference to: McLaughlin, M. W. (1987). Learning from experience: Lessons from policy implementation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 9 (2), 171-178 as cited in (Fullan, 2001).

Students without diplomas, or dropouts, have often been the focus of research because not having a high school diploma is now considered to be a departure from the norm. Richard Condon's (1993) work with Inuit youths in Holman Island concluded that "for both adolescent boys and girls, significant adjustments in behaviors, values and aspirations will be required to deal with the North's newly emerging social order" (R. S. Condon, P., 1993, Dec., p. 413). In fact, "poor literacy skills cause increasing problems at successive transition points in school, resulting in high dropout rates and thus impeding entry into the workforce" (Snow, 1991, pp. 179-180). "Those without a high school degree today face a severe disadvantage when they apply for jobs" (Dorn, 1993, p. 193). In fact, "what distinguishes the situation today is not the rate of dropping out, but the consequences of being denied a high school diploma. Today these consequences are far more substantial, economically, and socially, than in the past" (Fine, 1991, p.31).

Two studies related to Inuit dropouts were conducted prior to Nunavut's creation in 1999. The first study indicated that high school dropouts among Inuit were associated with muddled role perceptions, lack of acceptable role models, and the difference between school and cultural values (Nash, 1978). The second study found that dropout literature did not help predict dropout rates among the Inuit. Variables related to school, personal, or family, issues were better predictors of dropout behavior than self-esteem, cultural estrangement or alienation (Schofield, 1998). "It is not possible to come to any definite conclusion with the Inuit drop out phenomenon without knowing the high school graduate phenomenon" (Schofield, 1998, p. 101). My research proposes to do just that.

Fullan's (2001) work on school change can provide insight into the question of how successful school literature is when it is based on research from different areas and

on different populations. This can help school reform in Nunavut. A “fundamental conclusion is that it is not so much the product of reforms that worked elsewhere that needs to be replicated, but the conditions under which the reforms worked” (Fullan, 2001, p. 191).

Aboriginal schools in Canada that showed tangible evidence of trying to bridge this persistent academic achievement gap between aboriginal learners and their Canadian counterparts<sup>70</sup> were identified by the Canadian Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. Their 2007 report: “Sharing Our Success: More Case Studies in Aboriginal Schooling” highlighted the Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq. This was the first school in Nunavut to get recognized in this study as an exemplary, national model school. Its original nomination for consideration in this study was made by the Nunavut Department of Education, based on the school’s creative programming which involves collaboration among the school staff, the community, and business partners (Fulford, 2007). Key success factors, similar to those identified in the above mentioned studies in the United States, were: strong leadership, tenured governance, staff development, open climates for children and families, assessment linked to instruction, and community partnerships and alliances (Fulford, 2007). It was anticipated that Inuit might identify these and/or other factors that they thought would help more Inuit high school students to complete school.

*Third Overriding Theme: Being Educated by Having Both Academic and Cultural Knowledge*

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<sup>70</sup> Summary finding of research as cited in: (Fulford, 2007).



For indigenous people, the goal of education must value and include their culture in their schools so that cultural knowledge and experiences are included along with academic skills and opportunities. This type of education values their culture and holistic perspective.

The Nunavut Department of Education's mission statement, discussed in chapter two, has ensured "that democratic dispositions and cultural competency be included in the major goals of schooling and that the purpose of schooling should be determined through public deliberations within diverse communities" (Edgar, 2002, p. 231). This is important because Nunavut's future growth depends on its ability to educate its youth with modern and cultural knowledge and skills that will prepare them to participate in a rapid, changing global context (Berger, 2006, March). Other key success factors, that related to the quality of education specifically in successful aboriginal schools, were identified by Fulford (2007) that support this type of quality education. These were: multiple programs and support available, language and cultural programs, respect for aboriginal traditions, culturally relevant learning, and aboriginal teachers (Fulford, 2007). The development of cultural programs and curriculum development that emphasizes community involvement, as noted in the Nunavut school of Sanikiluaq, is another example of the need to combine culture and academics. It is also notable that this school took the initiative and responsibility to come up with innovative school programs that provide a quality education. Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), an Inuit-run native organization, was particularly interested that my research will explore how Inuit perceive how the influence of culture will help more Inuit students to graduate (NTI, 2007).

*Fourth Overriding Theme: Relationships Between the Home, the School, the Community, and Inuit Culture*

This fourth overriding theme, the importance of relationships between the home, the school, the community, and Inuit traditions originally emerged from conversational input with Nunavummiut as broad influences they thought were important in helping more Inuit students to graduate. The fact that the literature also supported the importance of these influences resulted in my research using these influences as themes to organize the data collection and findings. The fourth theme showed a value for Inuit culture by using broad themes to examine information and their interconnections holistically. This supports the Inuit vision of a quality education that supports life-long cultural and academic learning. My research will provide needed insight into how Inuit perceive that these influences can more specifically help more Inuit students to complete high school. For organizational purposes, the relevant aspects to the Inuit in Nunavut of each of these broad influences, as identified earlier in relation to the second question that guided this literature review, were examined and subsequently discussed separately.

*Review of the literature relevant to the home theme in Nunavut.*

Inuit traditionally taught their children by focusing on learning through observation, guided practice and mentoring. The benefits of these practices in schools are supported by educational research. In particular, Albert Bandura's social learning theory, Catherine Snow's work on unfulfilled expectations, and Lev Vygotsky's work with the zone of proximal development were particularly relevant to Nunavut. As well, Joyce Epstein's (1997) research on the relationships between the school, family and community identifies specific ways to encourage parent involvement.

Bandura's work on social learning theory focused on the importance of learning by observing others. He differed from behaviorists because he identified a difference between what an individual knows and how an individual might perform or behave. His later work expanded the social learning theory to include aspects of cognitive learning like beliefs, self-perceptions and expectations, and was referred to as the socio-cognitive theory of learning. This work emphasizes the mutual effect that individuals and environment had on each other.<sup>71</sup> Bandura's later theory also identified a difference between learning by doing and learning by observing others (Woolfolk, 2004). This is relevant to Nunavut as Inuit traditionally learn both by observing what is modeled and then by doing. Inuit children are discouraged from asking questions and looked down upon for doing so because it is better for them to observe<sup>72</sup> (N. Kilabuk, 2007, April). The importance of beliefs, perceptions and expectations, and self-efficacy<sup>73</sup> is central to this research as it focuses on understanding Inuit youth's perceptions of what helps them to remain in school. Lack of potential work aspirations and positive expectations promoted by one's home culture has been documented to negatively affect achievement in high school (Ogbu, 1987). Richard Richardson's research (1992) on first generation minority college students included African-American, Hispanic and Native American baccalaureate recipients. Personal, educational, and societal influences on decisions to continue in school and graduate were examined and the common problem of low expectations by teachers was emphasized.

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<sup>71</sup> This interaction is referred to as reciprocal determination (Woolfolk, 2004).

<sup>72</sup> Nathan Kilabuk is an Inuk who grew up and attended kindergarten in Nunavut.

<sup>73</sup> Self-efficacy has been researched by Bandura as it refers to an individual's sense of whether he or she are able to do a task effectively or not (Woolfolk, 2004).

The phrase “unfulfilled expectations” used by Catherine Snow and her colleagues (1991) in their research could aptly be used to describe the majority of Inuit youths that have yet to become literate. Their study illustrates the variety of home factors that can explain differences in achievement even among students from the same socioeconomic background. Factors noted in their study include the uses of literacy, the routine in the homes, social networks, ability to deal with different kinds of stress, and parents’ attitudes, and communication with the schools. It was significant that their research indicated that consistent and solid literacy teaching over several elementary grades could help compensate for any early literacy deficiencies that resulted from students’ home environment. In the Nunavut context, examining literacy even across grades in high school could prove to be insightful.

The Commissioner of Nunavut noted that she felt that one of her primary roles was to help Inuit parents see the importance and value of education in the schools so they might encourage their children to stay in school longer (Commissioner Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, 2007, April 5). Research done by The Harvard Family Project supported that parents are one of the first and most important teachers in their child’s life. In addition, their work supported that children do better when their parents are involved (Chavkin, 2005). Valuing differences in the home and school cultures and the need for better communication and relationships between the home and school were seen as strategies for improving academic achievement (Chavkin, 2005; Snow, 1991). Crawford’s research (1993) suggests how to schools can support cultural values by: making parents partners in education, developing programs with other agencies; examining daily class routines and curricula; using interdisciplinary themes, fostering cooperative learning; helping students

to develop questioning strategies; emphasizing multicultural schools; and having assessment match the content being taught (Crawford, 1993). Furthermore, “Parents and primary caretakers of children from diverse cultures are key to the success for their children in school. Their world view, views about the status of literacy, the amount of interactive demonstration of literacy in their home, as well as the relevance, functionality, and meaningfulness of literacy modeled and demonstrated for the child can establish a learning course for the child in the school” (Crawford, 1993, p. 25).

Recognizing the importance of culture in learning, and determining how individuals view the world is key to the Nunavut context. This belief has been attributed to Lev Vygotsky and referred to as the socio-cultural theory. It focuses on the central role of dialogue and interactions between knowledgeable adults and children that enables children to learn how to think and behave in ways that reflect their culture. Vygotsky’s (1989) views emphasize that social interactions are essential to developing cognitive thinking structures and processes. He describes knowledge as first being co-constructed between individuals, and then later internalized. In addition, he identifies the use of cultural tools to support higher-order thinking, especially reasoning and problem solving. These cultural tools include abstract symbols, such as language, as well as physical items like computers (Woolfolk, 2004). Traditionally, Inuit parents and elders who led a nomadic, hunting lifestyle relied on such interactions and oral storytelling to pass on knowledge. Inuit in Nunavut did not acquire a written language until the late 1800s when Anglican Missionary Edmund Peck adopted written syllabic symbols to the sounds that were spoken. Differences between learning in the home and school have been noted to effect academic performance in other cultures (Apple, 1995).

Vygotsky's beliefs (1989) are part of his larger theory of learning referred to as social constructivism because of his emphasis on knowledge being socially constructed. While views on constructivism all see the learner as having an active role in understanding and creating knowledge, Vygotsky is seen as part of the later or second wave of constructivists who also felt that cultural and social sources had more influence than individual or psychological sources. Vygotsky's theories include the concept of the zone of proximal development as a stage where learning occurs because a child can solve a problem with help or scaffolding from a peer or an adult (Woolfolk, 2004). Exploring what Inuit report helps them to stay in school might reveal more about the kinds of learning opportunities that could potentially increase learning for others. Of particular relevance to Inuit values would be the theory of "inquiry learning" attributed to John Dewey. This type of learning encourages solving problems by hypothesizing, collecting data, drawing conclusions, and reflecting. Traditionally, Inuit youths would have encountered problems in the real world and be expected to use these types of skills to solve them (Woolfolk, 2004).

Joyce Epstein's research (1997) on the relationships between the school, family and community also places a central focus on students and "inquiry learning." She has developed a framework for six types of involvement drawn from research in elementary, middle, and high schools: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating. At each level of involvement, activities for teachers, students and parents are indicated. Even though achievement scores were not found to be affected by increased partnerships, other benefits to student achievement were noted. My research supports the identification of an exemplary school in Nunavut that has many of

community partnerships even if its graduation rates are low (Fulford, 2007). It also highlights the need to find out what other factors contribute to students' ability to succeed and stay in school that might be measured.

*Review of the literature relevant to school theme in Nunavut.*

The issue of reform is central to improving schools in Nunavut. Modifying the teaching methods used in a school is one way to facilitate academic achievement of all students with a variety of teaching styles for a variety of learners (J. A. Banks, 2004). In particular, two important teaching practices are prejudice reduction and cooperative groups. If implemented, they could further Nunavut's cultural values and educational mission. Prejudice-reduction methods show how teachers can change their attitudes to encourage more equitable learning opportunities. Cooperative grouping methods enable students equal access to enriching learning activities, and can potentially broaden their attitudes towards their peers. Other aspects related to the topic of schools include curriculum development and learning traditional knowledge. Both these topics are described respectively under the areas of community and government, where their emphasis lies.

One effective method that is being used in the elementary schools in Nunavut is improving teaching instruction by utilizing native teachers discussed in chapter two. There are not enough Inuit teachers to fill the need for teachers in Nunavut.<sup>74</sup> The impact of increased numbers of native teachers in the elementary grades is a clear strength and is beneficial. Little is known about their impact in the upper grades in K-12 schools. Since

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<sup>74</sup> Telephone conversations occurred on March 2, 2007 (D. L. Smith, 2007, March 2) and April 9, 2007 (Maatiusi, 2007, April 9) respectively. These informal conversations are discussed in chapter two.

the focus in Nunavut is on training and replenishing the native elementary teachers who are retiring (Maatiusi, 2007, April 9), certification for Inuit high school teachers could be developed.

High school teachers, like many others, might find the different contexts that describe Nunavut and the Arctic landscape as foreign. What is more likely to be commonplace to many individuals is the backdrop of inaccuracies that form the stereotypes about the people who live in this region. The following statements are true. Inuit more commonly use snowmobiles instead of sleds pulled by dog teams. They now use motorboats instead of kyaks or *umiaq*.<sup>75</sup> Currently most Inuit<sup>76</sup> live in wooden houses rather than igloos.

Traditionally, Inuit had a lifestyle that was dependent on nomadic hunting. They had an extended family network that required cooperation and balance with nature. Today Inuit need to survive in an economic world as well as in natural world (World Book Encyclopedia, 2006). They must learn how to survive in communities that require schooling and must also become part of a competitive and more global economy.

One example of modifying teaching methods to facilitate learning with relevance to Nunavut is Kathryn McKenzie's and James Scheurich's (2004) work with equity traps. They define equity traps as "conscious and unconscious thinking patterns and behaviors that trap teachers, administrators and others, preventing them from creating schools that are equitable" (McKenzie, 2004, p. 601). The study on equity traps concluded that the

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<sup>75</sup> Umiaq is a boat made out of an animal skin.

<sup>76</sup> There are still a few Inuit families in Nunavut that choose to live year round in outpost camps rather than in communities.



most effective way to remove inequity caused by attitudes and change was through the principal (McKenzie, 2004).

The attitudes identified as barriers for teachers' equity traps have historic parallels to some education paradigms or group of ideas that guided action and policies.<sup>77</sup> The cultural deprivation or culturally disadvantaged paradigm that grew out of ideas in the 1960's related to a culture of poverty.<sup>78</sup> Lack of socialization experiences in the home and the community were seen as the reason some students did not attain the needed academic skills to succeed, as middle-class white children could.<sup>79</sup> The equity trap, referred as a deficit view, was expressed by teachers who felt they could not be taught if students came to school unmotivated to learn, or if parents did not value education. This has been noted as a need by the Commissioner of Education in Nunavut<sup>80</sup>. Strategies suggested to overcome this equity trap include visiting parents in their homes, three-way conferencing and gathering oral histories to dignify the culture. The Nunavut Research Institute has documented a multitude of these projects in which elders have related their oral history.<sup>81</sup> Of particular interest to the Nunavut context is the concept that students come with "funds of knowledge"<sup>82</sup> that need to be recognized and valued. Moll's and Gonzalez' work stresses the importance of using the "funds of knowledge" approach to

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<sup>77</sup> Refer to Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, as cited in (J. A. Banks, 2004).

<sup>78</sup> Refer to Lewis, O. (1965). *La vida: A Puerto Rican family in the culture of poverty-San Juan and New York*. New York: Random House, as cited in (J. A. Banks, 2004a).

<sup>79</sup> Refer to the book that popularized this paradigm: Riessman, F. (1962). *The culturally deprived child*. New York: Harper and Row, as cited in (J. A. Banks, 2004).

<sup>80</sup> Refer to informal conversations cited in chapter two.

<sup>81</sup> Refer to Nunavut Research Institute website listing of research.

<sup>82</sup> Refer to Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D. & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31 (2), 132-141, as cited in (McKenzie, 2004).

help “a school, through the work of its teachers, by shaping perceptions and ways of working with diversity” (Moll & Gonzalez, 2004, p. 712).

Shifts in education towards a cultural difference theory in the 1970s occurred because the cultural disadvantaged theory was felt to acknowledge institutional racism and blame the poor as victims.<sup>83</sup> These theories placed value on individual’s background even though doing so might conflict with the school culture. A similar equity trap to this theory was racial erase, identified as a perception by teachers and others that if one was color-blind and ignored race by looking at people as human beings, then differences in social class and poverty would explain academic differences. It is necessary to overcome these prejudices to ensure that every race is encouraged to have their achievement represented by a normal bell curve distribution<sup>84</sup> (McKenzie, 2004). This would be of interest in Nunavut which has Inuit students not achieving at the same level as their counterparts in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2002).

Other teaching practices that focus on prejudice reduction look at how schools can use teaching methods and materials to modify students’ racial attitudes. Cooperative learning has tremendous potential for creating an equitable learning environment. Its design seemed to fit with Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) even though cooperative learning was not identified in non-Inuit curriculum as a learning strategy. Cooperative learning focuses on enabling all students to have equal access to learning opportunities. This type of learning encourages collaborative norms to be taught, group roles to be

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<sup>83</sup> Refer to Baratz, S. S., & Baratz, J. C. (1970). Early childhood intervention: The social science base of institutional racism. *Harvard Educational Review*, 40, 29-50, as cited in (J. A. Banks, 2004).

<sup>84</sup> Refer to Herrnstein, R. J., & Murphy, C. (1995). *The bell curve: Intelligence and class structure in American life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, as cited in (McKenzie, 2004).

followed, and feedback given (Cohen, 1994). Complex Instruction is a specific type of cooperative learning that tries to make the group work more equitable. Using open-ended tasks that require multiple abilities is one treatment needed to change the status in a group. Students must come to see that no one has all the abilities needed but everyone will have some abilities needed to complete the given task. Another treatment needed is assigning competence. When the teacher assigns competence it has to be publicly done and specifically refer to a skill and how it helps the task given. “By considering multiple abilities and recognizing competence, teachers can help students of low academic and peer status gain acceptance into classroom groups and attain appreciation of their intellectual abilities” (E. G. Cohen, & Lotan, R. A., 1994, p. 15). In addition, “the behavior of the teachers, the social organization of the classes, the type of participation structures, and the means of academic assessment need to be carefully analyzed in light of the culture of the students” (Deyhle, 1983, p.83).

*Review of the literature relevant to community theme in Nunavut.*

In the Nunavut context, curriculum is related most directly to the community. Community members with cultural knowledge may not be directly affiliated with the school. To make the curriculum culturally relevant, partnerships with various community agencies and/or organizations are needed. Community involvement was examined in terms of culturally relevant curriculum because partnerships are needed to bring cultural knowledge and information about the local environment into programs adopted from Alberta (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

Historically Canadian educational institutions failed to provide a quality education, since education for Inuit since schooling became mandatory for them in

1950.<sup>85</sup> Nunavut's response to these historical discriminatory practices has been to continually increase the number of Inuit elementary teachers and promote the ongoing development of culturally relevant curriculum. Nunavut curriculum can be related to the four approaches on a developmental continuum that have been identified to promote, integrate, and teach ethnic content into the curriculum frequently used in relation to different cultures (J. Banks, & Tucker, M., 1998).

A brief explanation of the four approaches will clarify where on the continuum Nunavut's different curriculum fits. The first approach is called the contributions approach. The focus is on holidays, heroes, and celebrations. The second level, or additive approach, occurs when some content and theory is included within the existing course structures. The third level, or transformation approach, is when changes in the whole curriculum enable students to see concepts from a different perspective. The last, or most desirable level, is the social action approach. It enables students to make choices and take action on important social issues<sup>86</sup> (J. A. Banks, 2004). Nunavut has begun to create new curriculum that is not only specific to their cultural values and local geographical context but also reflects the transformational and the social action approaches.

One example of a transformational curriculum is *Anijaarniq*. It is an interactive CD ROM and Teacher's Resource Manual for high school students. It was piloted in Igloolik in 2005-2006 with success. It uses Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). It also has four holistic curricular strands and six cross-curricular strands of values and social

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<sup>85</sup> See Brief Background of Nunavut's Features Relevant to this Study, chapter one, for more details on the history of schooling in Nunavut.

competencies. Utilizing research on Multiple Intelligences and Bloom's Taxonomy, 48 activities vary in interest and complexity (MacDonald, 2006). Examples of the transformational approach were noted in the high school curriculum.

*Anijaarniq* for grades 10-12, is part of *the Wellness curriculum (Aulajaaqtut)* transformational curriculum, aimed at developing life-long learners who are self-directed and community directed. Having a sense of direction and the stamina to keep pressing on towards the desired goal are important concepts developed through this curriculum (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, pp. 1-2). Inuktitut language instruction is another example of curriculum relevant to the Inuit. It is offered in grades 10 and 11 and it is being developed for grade 12. Other new culturally relevant courses are being developed for high school. The Nunavut Studies and Environmental Science curriculum (*Nunavusiutit*) has students learn about local archeology in grades 7-9 as well as local environmental science and land claims issues in grades 10-12 (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). There is an Innovation and Technology curriculum (*Iqqaqqaukkaringniq*) and a Communication and Literacy curriculum (*Uqausiliriniq*) that have also been developed for the high schools that are culturally relevant (Approved Nunavut Teaching Resources, 2008).<sup>87</sup> There is also a Nunavut Teaching and Learning Center and website whose focus is to provide materials and books in Inuktitut that can be used by the schools (Nunavut Teaching and Learning Center, 2007).

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<sup>87</sup> For more information, see: [http://www.ntanu.ca/assets/docs/Handout-Nunavut%20Approved%20Teachiing%20Resources%20Version%20\(5\).pdf](http://www.ntanu.ca/assets/docs/Handout-Nunavut%20Approved%20Teachiing%20Resources%20Version%20(5).pdf)

An example of the social action approach would be the *Nunavut Sivuniksavut* training program<sup>88</sup> in Ottawa, Canada. This is also a good example of how culturally relevant curriculum in the Nunavut context involves direct interaction with the community. It has been effective in enabling Inuit youths who have graduated from high school to learn leadership skills and help work on implementing the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Between 1997 and 2002, this eight-month program had an 85 percent rate of completion and 85 percent of the graduates during this time were employed or furthering their education. One factor noted for the program's success was the importance of acknowledging all of the students' needs. "These needs may be emotional, social, financial and material, as well as academic. Failure to have any one of these needs met is the primary reason why students drop out" (Inuit Circumpolar Conference Canada, 2002, p. 3). Other factors identified to support the success of the program related to building relationships, allowing for flexibility, using relevant curriculum and integrating skill development with content. "Educational institutions typically measure success on the basis of strict academic performance [yet] as long as students are actively engaged in a stimulating and relevant program, important learning will occur" (Inuit Circumpolar Conference Canada, 2002, p. 5).

Another program demonstrating social action is called *Road Scholars: Inuit Adventures in Africa*. It is a TV documentary that follows six Inuit teenagers who are volunteering at an orphan care center in Botswana, Africa (Road Scholars, 2007).

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<sup>88</sup> All information and statistics cited subsequently are referenced from: Inuit Circumpolar Conference (Canada, 2002). *Nunavut Sivuniksavut: Preparing Inuit youth for the world. Inuit in Global Issues, 11*, 1-10, as cited in this document. (Inuit Circumpolar Conference (Canada), 2002).

The Commissioner of Nunavut mentioned that the development and implementation of new culturally relevant curriculum is ongoing. She also states that she was looking forward to the cultural school that was being planned in the Nunavut community of Clyde River. In this new school Inuktitut would be the language of instruction and all the curriculum would be relevant to the Inuit (Commissioner Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, 2007, April 5). The cultural school would not replace the current elementary schools but would be a resource for youths, young adults and community members (Thomas, 2006, March 30).

While the strength of the community is in its participation in these select curriculum initiatives, an area of growth would be to have community involvement become more ongoing and participatory.

*Review of the literature related to Inuit culture in Nunavut.*

Inuit ancestors traditionally passed on their cultural knowledge and traditions through shared experiences while living a nomadic, hunting life style. Those carriers of knowledge were identified within the community as “elders” (Pauktuutit Inuit Women’s Association, 2002). Since Inuit mostly live in communities and rely on a trading economy, the Nunavut government has become the key agent that promotes Inuit culture and traditions.

While Nunavut is similar in governance to the rest of Canada, some traditional Inuit values were incorporated into the formation and operation of their government. This is important to this research because these values are then promoted in the government’s department of education and ultimately in the schools. Like other territories, Nunavut has a Premier to head the government and an Executive Council that handles the

administration of governments and relations with the Canadian government and other provinces. Nunavut's Legislative Assembly is unique because there are no political parties. This means that each member is elected by his or her constituency on an independent platform. The administrative control of various government departments are decentralized and spread across communities who have local control (Nunavut Act, 1993). This feature of the Nunavut government reflects the Inuit's strong traditional value of community over individual preference and their belief that each individual will do what is best for the community. This belief further supports the interactive nature of these reform variables.

Some of the educational accomplishments that the first Government of Nunavut achieved between April 1999-March 2004 were to increase the numbers of high school and college graduates, create full-time teacher training in the communities, establish a ten-year curriculum and resource strategy establish a nursing program, and law school (Government of Nunavut, 2002). The Government of Nunavut's current goals are outlined in a report (*Pinasuaqtavut 2004-2009*) which will be used to help the government reach what they envision living in Nunavut in 2020 will be like. The Second Legislative Assembly is guided by these four goals:

1. Healthy Living (*Inuuqatigiittiarniq*);
2. Simplicity and Unity (*Pijarnirniqsat Katujuqatigiittiarnirlu*);
3. Self-Reliance: (*Namminiq Makitajunnarniq*);
4. Continuing Learning (*Ilippallianguinnarniq*).



Within each of these main goals, the eight principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)<sup>89</sup> will guide how programs and services are delivered. Guiding values specific to Continuing Learning (*Ilippallianginnarniq*) include valuing life-long learning, learning from all sources, equal opportunity and access, use of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), instruction in their culture and first language, and respect for others in schools and work places. Some of the specific Government of Nunavut's objectives for development between 2004-2009 for Continuing Learning (*Ilippallianginnarniq*) include the development of a Education Act for Nunavut, more relevant K-12 curriculum, teaching of Inuktitut, creating an Nunavut Cultural School, and developing more partnerships in the community (Government of Nunavut, 2002). The interactive relationships of different variables noted earlier is evident here in objectives that highlight what is taught to the students, curriculum of the school, interaction of the community, and the government's encouragement of cultural learning.

Key to the goal of Continuing Learning is the central belief that "it is only by developing a culture of life-long learning that Nunavummiut can reach their full potential" (Government of Nunavut, 2002, p. 15). In addition, one of the specific objectives for 2004-2009 is to "work for a public education system that focuses on graduating bilingual youth who are equipped with the skills and knowledge to succeed in post-secondary studies" (Government of Nunavut, 2002, p. 17).

Both the government's central belief and their objective for public education further justifies the importance of my research because it is problematic if most Inuit youths cannot even remain in high school. Since Inuit youths

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<sup>89</sup> These eight principals were described in the introduction of this proposal.

represents the majority of the population, there is the need to identify possible short term solutions that could promote them to stay in school.

*Aulajaaqtut* is a culturally relevant curriculum that was chosen to be examined and described in further detail because it has many effective elements. It is a curriculum strand as well as an educational philosophy. It is a holistic model that is research-based. This curriculum strives to encompass Inuit traditional knowledge (*IQ*) and the well-being of the individual in order to improve academic success. It is also comprehensive in nature because the background philosophy, materials, lessons, and forms for assessment are provided to make it easier for teachers and communities to use. The *Aulajaaqtut* curriculum lacks only a family engagement component.

The *Aulajaaqtut* curriculum was designed for sixteen-and-seventeen-year old youths in Nunavut, Canada. It has six modules and a project at each level. The first five levels focus on the development of skills that promote how individuals can interact in successful and healthy ways and in a related activity. The sixth level focuses on the development of skills that help individuals contribute to the community and involves them in a community project (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

*Aulajaaqtut* is currently being implemented in every grade eleven in Nunavut. It focuses on eleventh graders because it replaces the previous eleventh grade requirement for graduation that was based on Alberta's Career and Life Management Course (CALM). *Aulajaaqtut's* focus on Inuit values and the practical application of these values to the local community is different than CALM's focus on content. The symbol representing the *Aulajaaqtut* curriculum is

a V-shaped formation of geese. This image encourages leadership by providing the chance to learn with the support of others. The idea of flying represents being able to view events from different perspectives. Being goal-directed and having stamina are key aspects of *Aulajaaqtut* that are “ aimed at developing life-long learners who are self-directed and community directed”(Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 11).

In addition, in *Aulajaaqtut*, process learning is considered more important than content learning because it helps students develop skills to deal with an interdependent world that is constantly changing. This curriculum also recognizes the value of experiential and active learning to motivate students. In addition, it focuses on the process of learning broadly referred to as constructivism, where student input in creating what is learned is a critical part of the content. Active learning used in *Aulajaaqtut* enables students to apply their experiences to new situations. Research based on Perkin’s<sup>90</sup> use of tactile intelligence as well as Maslow’s<sup>91</sup> concept of self- actualization are also incorporated.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is evident in *Aulajaaqtut*. This is significant because often school programs focus on academic achievement, rather than including or examining the benefits SEL has on improving learning (Moles, 2005). *Aulajaaqtut* includes activities where students work with their peers. It also helps students develop their knowledge about themselves and their ability to use that knowledge as it relates to aspects of experiences such as caring, self- esteem, values, reflection, empathy, coping,

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<sup>90</sup> For more information see: Perkins, D.N. (1996) Thinking frames. *Educational Leadership*.43 (8) pp.4-11

<sup>91</sup> For more information, see: Maslow, A.H. (1968). *Towards a psychology of being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co.

and empowerment. *Aulajaaqtut* cites Carr's 1986 research<sup>92</sup> on the positive benefits of peer learning and how students benefit from the use of peer counseling to support adolescents' primary need for respect. This curriculum also implements key ideas cited from Goleman's<sup>93</sup> 1997 work on how students who are emotionally literate do better in school (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 17). The curriculum is based as well on the work of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow who recognized the importance of developing students' capacity in awareness, learning, directedness, responsibility and actualization related to one's self (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 21)

*Aulajaaqtut* also incorporates all aspects of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). It particularly focuses on the sixth ITK principle, *Pijitsirarniq*, that relates to contributing to the common good through service and leadership. *Aulajaaqtut* accomplishes this through a mentoring component that connects youths with Inuit adults in the community. For example, *Aulajaaqtut* focuses on relationship building as a more effective way to help youths at risk than the use of counseling programs which are often limited by individual personalities and restraints of the agencies involved. Community and school relations and interactions are promoted through the use of mentors and service learning projects. As these adolescents prepare to leave high school and become members of their community, they are already recognized, through this curriculum and its activities, as contributors and leaders as this is one of the expectations of the strand.

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<sup>92</sup> For more information see: Carr, R. (1981). Theory and practice of peer counseling. *Educational and Vocational Guidance*.42, 1-10

<sup>93</sup> For more information see: Goleman, S. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books

Though the curriculum is designed for non-Inuit teachers, it is recommended to be taught using a team approach and by an Inuk teacher. The design of *Aulajaaqtut* had input from Inuit and non-Inuit. Eighteen different Nunavut communities were involved in creating this curriculum, ranging from advisory committees to actual teachers that piloted the curriculum. While targeted to help students at risk, the benefits of *Aulajaaqtut* are seen to be important and are required curriculum for all students.

*Aulajaaqtut* uses a framework for second language teaching and learning adapted from Cummin's<sup>94</sup> work that identifies four components. The first is to activate prior knowledge and build background. The second is to use contextual supports. The third is to encourage active language use from prior experiences and develop needed vocabulary. The fourth component is to assess student learning in descriptive ways that encourage strategy development and demonstrate specific skills and competencies on a continuum of mastery (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 32).

*Aulajaaqtut* also cites Taylor's 1997 research<sup>95</sup> that identifies how Inuit have lost a sense of their "collective identity" which results in a sense of lack of power and value often seen in a lack of caring, motivation, or involvement, or academic achievement (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Therefore, Inuit learning styles are used in this curriculum. The first style is *Pilimmaksarniq* that stresses the importance of learning through observation and doing. The second style is *Qanuqtuurunnarniq* that stresses learning through experiences and applying what one learns to new situations.

Characteristics of Inuit learning that are used in *Aulajaaqtut* have been summarized by

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<sup>94</sup> For more information, see Cummins. (1996) *Negotiating identities: Education for empowering in a diverse society*. Ontario, CA: California Association for Bilingual Education

<sup>95</sup> For more information see: Taylor, D.M.(1997).*The quest for identity: The plight of Aboriginal people, ethnic minorities and generation X*. Montreal, QC: PS Presse

Crago, Taylor and Stairs.<sup>96</sup> These include: cooperative group learning; group projects; experiential, interactive, and discovery learning; constructivism; bodily kinesthetic learning as well as visual spatial learning; integrated relevant content; tolerance of various viewpoints; consensus building, linguistic use of analogy and imagery, symbolism; open ended and solution seeking; creative expression; and repetitive activities (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 30). Within the *Auljaaqut*, the characteristics of a classroom that is based on Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and is supported by Rogers and Friberg's 1994 research<sup>97</sup> have been called *Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq* classrooms. Some of these include: shared leadership, intrinsic rewards, and students who facilitate the class. In addition, discipline is not rule based but mostly peer directed and rules developed collaboratively. It also includes shared responsibilities, positive role modeling, a strong sense of belonging, consequences based on individual differences, and community partnerships (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 25).

*Auljaaqut* is also effective because it includes opportunities for reflection and self-assessment that support student learning. This is done by the incorporation of self-assessment checklists, portfolios, and reflective journals (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 26). Since no standardized testing is used in Nunavut, alternate ways of determining student progress need to be identified. It is anticipated that Inuit in the

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<sup>96</sup> For more information, see Crago, M.B. & Eriks-Brophy, A. (1994). Transforming classroom discourse: an Inuit example. *Language and Education*. 8 (3), pp. 105-122; Stairs, A. (1994). The cultural negotiation of Indigenous education: Between microethnography and model building. *Peabody Journal of Education*. 69 (2), pp.154-177; Taylor, D. M. (1977) The quest for identity: The plight of Aboriginal people, ethnic minorities and generation X. Montreal, QC: PS Presse

<sup>97</sup> For more information, see Rogers, C. & Freiberg, J. (1994) Freedom to learn (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). New York: Macmillian College Publishing Co.

research study would be able to respond to the influence of *Aulajaaqtut* in helping more Inuit stay in school to graduate.

Literature was reviewed that related to what would support Inuit youth to stay in high school until graduation and aspects of school reform that related to the home, school, community and Inuit traditions, along with exploring these four aspects of school change in the Nunavut. Two aspects were identified as strengths and two aspects were considered to be areas for growth. The need for short-term considerations that supported existing long-term goals and objectives was also identified.

Nunavut showed strengths in the areas of school reform relating to the community and government. Curriculum development in Nunavut emphasized community partnerships. Though there is still an increasing demand for more curriculum, looking at the quality of the culturally relevant curriculum produced in relation to Bank's (2004) continuum showed that it was highly effective in serving its goals. An emphasis on content integration without a focus on other areas that might improve education involving different cultures is not uncommon. This literature review helped to explore some of those other areas.

Currently, traditions and culture in Nunavut that might affect the youth appear to be strongly promoted from the government goals and operation in the form of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). As Inuit youth spend more time in educational institutions away from elders who passed on culture traditionally through experience while on the land, the top down influence of the government became more critical. In addition, since the government is culturally based, students should have a cultural background to obtain employment in order to succeed in those positions.

Schools trying to improve using the successful schools framework, often show strengths in community involvement and long-term leadership. In the short term, professional development tended to improve areas related to school change like opportunities for literacy, teacher expertise and collaboration within the school (Mosenthal, Lipson, Tyler, Thompson, & Biggam, 2006, April). The lack of native trained high school teachers highlights the need to focus on teaching practices that can be implemented in the short term to create equal learning opportunities for diverse learners in different cultural settings. Schools that view teaching using a systems model will be better able to provide short-term support for Nunavut's long-term objectives. Having high school teachers in Nunavut learn teaching practices related to removing equity traps and using cooperative grouping would increase their expertise and could encourage opportunities for literacy learning that might address a wider diversity of student abilities. In the short term, reducing prejudice and using cooperative groups could help support Nunavut's vision for schools that promote both academic and cultural knowledge.

Areas for growth in Nunavut in relation to school change could benefit from identifying and monitoring what makes their schools successful, using the systems approach. Factors identified as supporting students to remain in school like, those in my research, will help contribute to the identification of variables, other than standardized testing, that Nunavut could use to more appropriately measure student and school success.

Other areas of growth would be to explore the match between learning in the home and learning in school, and expectations and involvement of parents to further encourage students in school. A greater match between how knowledge is created in the



home and in the school could support those staying in school. Increased positive parent involvement with schools might improve student achievement as it has in other cultures.

### *Conclusions From the Literature Review*

The conversational input from the Nunavummiut decision discussed in chapter two resulted in identification of emergent ideas that clustered around these topics: indigenous people, family, school, community, and Inuit culture. These topics were further divided into the sub-topics of studying indigenous people, the family environment, school instruction, community partnerships, and Inuit culture. From these sub-topics two basic questions guided the written literature review. The first question related to what could be further understood about researching Indigenous people within the Nunavut context. The second concern related to what in the literature could be related to the relationship between students' ability to remain in school and their home environment, their instruction in the school, the community partnerships, and the Inuit culture.

Four overriding themes emerged that were persuasive throughout the literature review. The first theme related to the need for educators working with different cultures to recognize and value them (Gay, 2004). The second theme related to the importance of all students experiencing educational equality (J. A. Banks, 2004). The third theme related to the importance of having an education that includes knowledge in both academic and cultural skills (Edgar, 2002, July/August; Nunavut Department of Education, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2002). The fourth theme was the relationships between the home (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Archives, 2007; Chavkin, 2005; Epstein, 1997; Hanson, 2007, April 5; Richardson, 1992, Winter), school (J. Banks, &

Tucker, M., 1998; J. A. Banks, 2004; E. G. Cohen, 1994; E. G. Cohen, & Lotan, R. A., 1994; Freire, 2005; Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March; McDonnell, 1987; Moll, 1992; Nieto, 1994; Road Scholars, 2007; D. L. Smith, 2007, March 2; Snow, 1991; Vygotsky, 1989; Woolfolk, 2004), community (R. Condon, 1987; Fulford, 2007; Tompkins, 1998), government (Berger, 2006, March; "Consolidation of Education Act (Bill 1)," 1996; Government of Nunavut, 2002; "Nunavut Act," 1993; Nunavut Department of Education, 2007; Nunavut Tunngavik, 2006) and school change literature (Au, 2005; Taylor, B.M., Pearson, D.S. Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2005; Fullan, 1997, 2001; Langer, 2001; Mosenthal, J. et al., 2006, April; Mosenthal, J., Lipson, M., Torncello, S., Russ, B., & Mekkelsen, J., 2004). While these topics of home, school, community, and Inuit traditions are discussed separately in this paper for organizational purposes, the importance of viewing them within an interactive and interdependent context was consistently noted in the research (J. A. Banks, 2004; Donahue, 1997; Epstein, 1997; Fullan, 1997).

Literature exploring the relationship of these themes to the Nunavut context was examined. This fourth overriding theme, incorporates the first and third overriding themes of valuing culture and including academic and cultural skills, and supported the conversational input from Nunavummiut. As a result, it was used to form the landscape for my research study in which the influences of home, school, community, and Inuit traditions were examined to increase the equality of opportunities identified in overriding theme two. Overall, the literature review identified conditions that support Inuit students being better able to remain in school. Their importance to Inuit youths remaining in

school is summarized below and was used to define topics for the conversational interviews;

1. Studying Indigenous people should be holistic and connected ;
2. Family values promote education;
3. There are family literacy experiences in English in the home;
4. The delivery of instruction in the school matches the cultural values in the home and the curriculum is culturally relevant;
5. The systems model is used when looking at instructional change;
6. Community partnerships with the schools are encouraged;
7. Community work experiences with the schools are encouraged;
8. Government supports and promotes Inuit culture and knowledge;
9. Government has developed short-term as well as long-term objectives that are implemented as intended.

The literature review identified areas of strengths and growth that informed my study as to what areas the research could probe into further. It also showed the importance of remembering that “each school will have to find its own way because everywhere the talents and possibilities are different” (Donahue, 1997, p. 246).

Determining success within the context of a local school was also highlighted by research using the successful schools framework (Mosenthal, J., Lipson, M., Torncello, S., Russ, B., & Mekkelsen, J., 2004). Nunavut might do well to continue to avoid using high-stakes testing. Instead they might “advocate that democratic dispositions and cultural competency be included in the major goals of schooling and that the purpose of schooling

should be determined through public deliberations within diverse communities” (Edgar, 2002, July/August, p. 231).

Exploring the literature in terms of its relevance to Nunavut also pointed out that the success of any policy or vision may not always be with its intent but with its implementation. Nunavut had to overcome the scars of discriminatory practices that previously denied Inuit acknowledgement of their culture. It also has the challenge of implementing Inuit culture into an existing school. The Inuit in Nunavut are seeking to reform their educational system so that the cultural experiences and knowledge they value will be taught, and their youth have an equal opportunity to succeed academically. Policies that take into consideration local needs as well as input from those that they are being implemented for, often have a greater chance of being successful (McLaughlin, 1987).

Conclusions from the literature review are depicted in the diagram (Figure 46, see p. 131). The resemblance to an *Inuksuk* (Figure 47, see p. 131) was designed to reflect how a cultural tool can be used to organize one’s thinking. Understanding how themes that Inuit youths report relate to the four areas examined in the literature might provide a clearer understanding of these aspects and could guide change within the schools studied and provide implications for research in other schools.

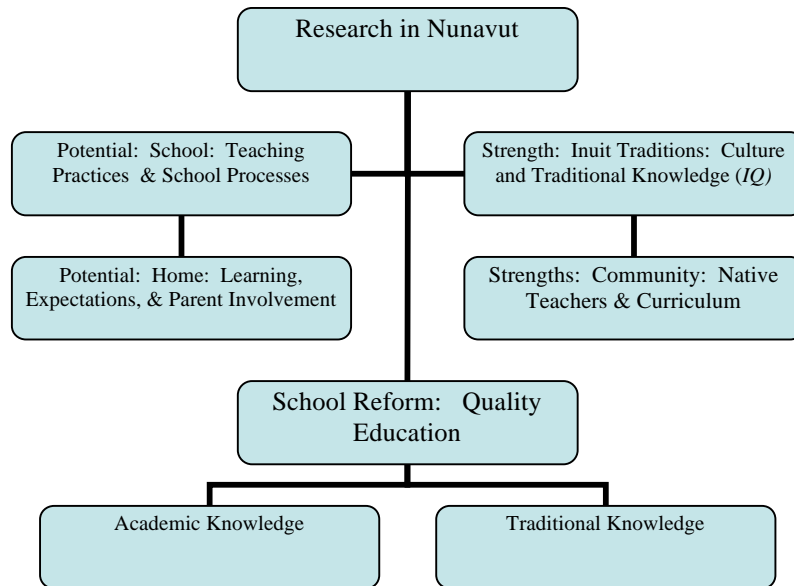


Figure 46: Conclusions from Literature Review

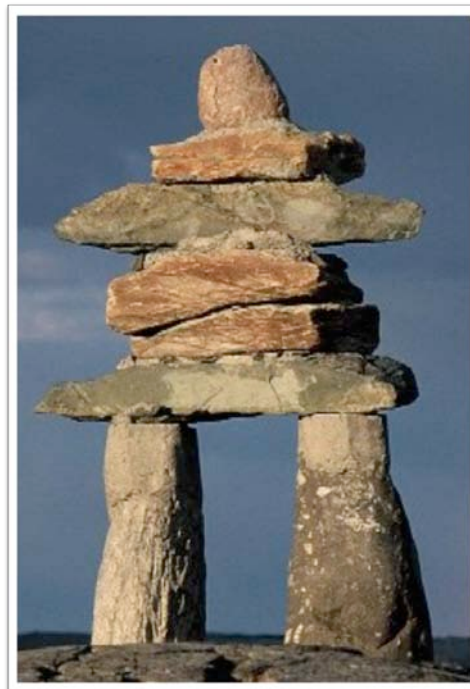


Figure 47: *Inuksuk*

This literature review was limited to looking at those aspects of the Nunavut educational context that were identified by key informants interviewed, or what appeared

in the literature. Searches in ERIC, JSTOR, PSYINFO, and SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS using even broad key words like Inuit, aboriginal, or native and education, high school, school, with or without Nunavut, produced minimal research studies. This may be related to the difficulty of obtaining funds to conduct research in a remote, Arctic area like Nunavut, Canada.

Fullan's (2001) views on school reform guided this research in terms of exploring the four areas of home, school, community, and Inuit traditions. Furthermore he emphasized the important connection between change on higher levels as well as change on a small scale. "The small picture concerns the subjective meaning or lack of meaning for individuals at all levels of the educational system. Neglect of the phenomenology of change; that is, how people actually experience change as distinct from how it might have been intended is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reforms" (Fullan, 2001, p. 8).

My research project will provide information that has not been previously examined in Nunavut. It has at its heart the desire to make a positive difference in school improvement by giving voice to what Inuit students report that helps them stay in school.

#### Kim's Story: First Impressions

I can remember vividly the first day I arrived in the Arctic. It was early summer, and all I could see from a window in the small plane as it hovered over Pangnirtung was how vast the mountains were and how much snow covered the landscape. Inside the plane sat 8 people, their luggage and local mail in a mess bag on the side where two seats had been taken out. The pilot mentioned that we would be landing soon. He had told of the safety features when we took off, and the lack of heat or refreshments available. My

fear of flying was overshadowed by the fact that I was about to spend the summer in a remote Inuit (Eskimo) community of 1, 200 people, most of whom did not speak English, and there were only a handful of white people who did. The only way to get in or out of the community was by plane. I had gotten the opportunity to work as a coordinator for various groups of Arctic researchers through a university grant. I had heard that there was a “house” they had secured for me to stay in and look after.

The plane landed in the early evening. I looked at the various snowdrifts in the distance and asked the pilot if he knew whether one of them might be the camping area that was typically reserved for the university researchers who came there every summer. He laughed and told me to go around to the other side of the plane and ask one of the Inuit standing on the runway to help me find my “lodging.” When I did, I noticed there were a bunch of prefab houses with lights on in the distance. I asked a man wearing jeans, and a winter coat if he knew how I could find someone to show me which igloo I was suppose to lodge in for the summer. He laughed too.

He asked if I was one of the researchers from down south who had come up there to inform the Inuit of knowledge they did not have. I said I was part of a research team. He then asked if I was looking for the kind of Eskimo that was all dressed in animal skins and would instruct me how to stay in my igloo. I very enthusiastically said yes. He seemed to understand exactly what I was expecting. Well, still laughing, he said he could not help me with that, but he could give me a ride in his taxi for the regular two-dollar fee and take me to a prefab house where he was sure someone would be able to help me.

He spoke in a strange language which sounded very guttural, to other individuals at the airport, who were all wearing regular winter clothing. The laughter continued.

When I asked what language they were speaking, he said, “Inuktitut,” meaning our language, the language of the Inuit.

And for the first, but not the last, time, I looked across the windswept Arctic tundra and felt how little college had prepared me to understand this culture and rid myself of stereotypes about the Inuit. How wise these young Inuit, with barely a fourth-grade education, would turn out to be in this world that I was about to enter for the next fourteen years of my life. Often first impressions guide one towards a destination. It is the actual information, gained in context that provides the story that needs to be told.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Research Methodology

#### *Introduction*

This research study was designed to answer the question: “What do Inuit perceive to be the modern guideposts (*nutaaq inuksuit*) that help Inuit students remain in high school in Nunavut, Canada?” To address this main question, my research focused on three topics of inquiry:

1. What do Inuit report helps Inuit students to stay in school?
2. What is the role of Inuit culture?
3. What is the role of Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)?

This chapter will explain how the study was designed and why the particular research methods were chosen.

#### *Rationale for Study*

##### *Rationale for Qualitative Methods*

Qualitative research methodology was chosen for this topic for several reasons. First, this research method provides insight into understanding “what people value and the meanings they attach to experiences, from their own personal and cultural perspectives” (Patton, 2002, p. 147). Secondly, using qualitative research methodology meets the need for research relating to aboriginal people, like the Inuit, to be culturally sensitive (Kenny, 2004). Qualitative researchers are able to do this by collecting “thick descriptions” that emphasize people’s “lived experiences,” and by exposing the “meanings people place on events, processes, and structures of their lives” (Miles, 1994, p. 10). Lastly, using qualitative research methods enables researchers to investigate a

particular “phenomena from the participant’s point of view” (Leddy & Ormond, 2005, p. 94) as it would occur naturally in the participant’s geographic and cultural setting.

Therefore, using qualitative research methodology to conduct research in the Arctic communities was the best way to provide insight into Inuit perceptions about the high school phenomena experienced by Inuit high school students.

#### *Rationale for Collective Case Study Approach*

Case study is one method of qualitative research that enables researchers to learn more about the problems that are not clearly understood or known (Leddy & Ormond, 2005, p. 108). Using case studies can benefit those studied in several ways. First, case studies are particularly valuable in program evaluation when the program is individualized, because the evaluation needs to be attentive to and capture individual differences (Patton, 2002, p. 55). Second, case studies seek to reveal stories that are “‘information rich’ ... [which are] aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population” (Patton, 2002, p. 40). Third, case studies “are of value for refining theory and suggesting complexities for further investigation, as well as helping establish the limits of generalization. Case study can also be a disciplined force in public policy setting and reflection on the human experience” (Stake, 2000, p. 448). Therefore, it seemed qualitative research using case study would enable the Inuit in Nunavut to be able determine what might help them because case study has often been used “to contribute [to] knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena” (Yin, 2003, p. 1).

The unit of analysis is important in case study. In this study, the school is the unit of analysis. Using the school as the unit of analysis would provide more insight into the

educational structures and processes in Nunavut that are supporting students. All interviewees in a given community are analyzed as a collective case study. This enabled the researcher to examine the case studies for similarities and differences that would contribute to the knowledge of the phenomenon in a larger context. Researchers may jointly study a number of cases in order “to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition; I call this collective case study. They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to a better understanding, perhaps better theorizing about a still larger collection of cases” (Stake, 2000, p. 437).

#### *Rationale for Cross Comparison Analysis of Two Collective Case Studies*

In Nunavut, statistics show that Inuit youth across the territory do not remain in high school. This is a critical issue for the Nunavut government. Inuit students need to graduate in sufficient numbers to support the government’s need for informed native self-governance (Berger, 2006, March). Collective case studies from two diverse communities were compared. This will contribute to the knowledge needed to facilitate the development of better informed educational policies that respond to what Inuit high school students perceive they need to stay in school.

#### *Research Sampling*

##### *Sampling Methods*

Qualitative research method “typically focuses on relatively small samples...selected purposefully to permit inquiry into and understanding of a phenomenon in depth” (Patton, 2002, p. 46). Insight can often be obtained from studying one or two case studies in detail (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003; Leddy & Ormond, 2005; Patton, 2002). Using a qualitative research

design enables the selection of a study's location and participants to be flexible enough to accommodate emergent changes that arise in real-life situations. For example, the original objective of this research was to identify successful high school environments in Nunavut from which potential participants might be identified. A problem was encountered with this research objective. Nunavut currently does not have any single measure to judge if a school is successful, according to the Minister of Education in Nunavut, Edward Picco.<sup>98</sup> Nunavut has never used standardized testing because it viewed standardized tests to be culturally insensitive to the Inuit population (Picco, 2007, April 4). Since little current educational was available in Nunavut, attendance data (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007) and a study on nationally recognized schools targeting aboriginal learners (Fulford, 2007) were used as key resources.

#### Site Selection Description and Rationale

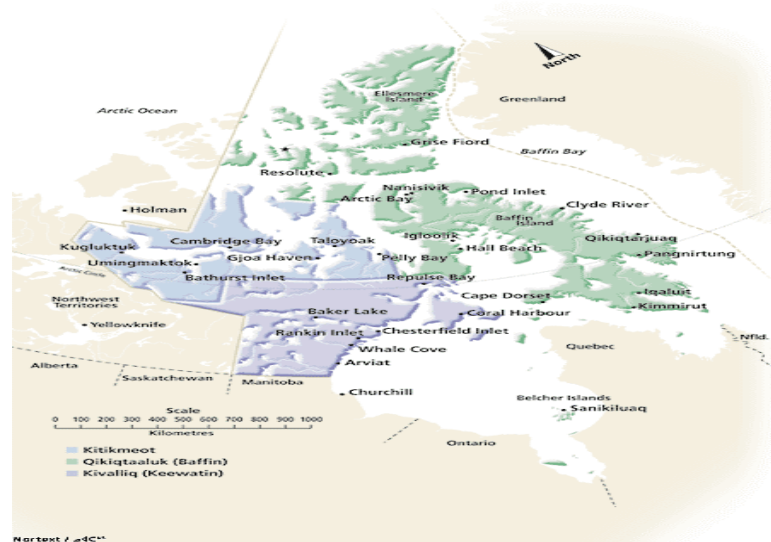


Figure 48: Nunavut Regions

<http://inuitarteskimoart.com/About-History.php>

<sup>98</sup> See chapter two for information obtained from informal conversations.

Nunavut has 26 communities divided into three regions (Figure 48): The Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and Qikiqtani<sup>99</sup> (Qikiqtaaluk). These regions are used mostly for census purposes as they do not have separate governments. Thirteen of the communities in Nunavut (50 percent) are in the Qikiqtani region ("Legislative Assembly of Nunavut", 2007, January 2). This region was chosen for study because it had the most communities of any region, making it the most representative of Nunavut. Sampling was used to determine which of the thirteen communities in the Qikiqtani region should be chosen to participate in this study. Since other measures for successful schools were not available, the selection criterion used was students' estimated median rate of persistence in high school (Figure 49). Nunavut's Department of Education enrollment and graduation data from 1998 to 2007 for Inuit and non-Inuit students in each of the 13 communities of the Qikiqtani region was obtained after discussions with Minister of Education Edward Picco about my research intent (Picco, personal communication, 2007) and analyzed using a Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) computer program (Meyers, April - May, 2007).

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<sup>99</sup> In Pangnirtung dialect, this region is referred to as Qikiqtani.

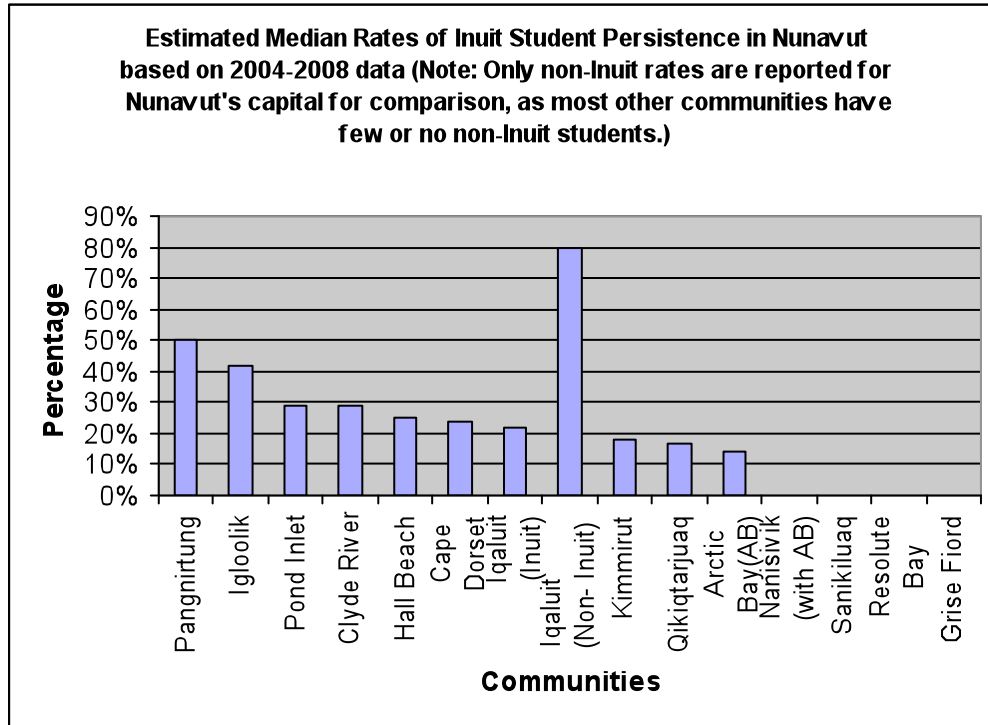


Figure 49: Estimated Median Rates of Inuit Students' Persistence in Nunavut

Cohort tracking was done to establish which schools provided the best groups of students to study. Among the variables used to examine the schools in the thirteen communities were:

1. Estimated median rates of persistence from Nunavut's school enrollment data
2. Current research studies acknowledging specific communities
3. Community size
4. Amount of schools providing community based K-12 education
5. Researcher's prior Arctic experience
6. Cost of research and available support personnel

Table 8 shows summary data for all thirteen communities. Based on an application of the criteria, an analysis of the data, and conversations with key Nunavut

representatives,<sup>100</sup> the schools at Pangnirtung, Iqaluit, and Sanikiluaq with grades 10 through 12 were selected as study sites.

Table 8: Summary Data of 13 Communities<sup>101</sup>

Population (2001 Statistics Canada)	School Structure	Community	Percent%	Rate of persistence	Calculation
1276	K-5, 6-12	Pangnirtung	50%	17/34	50
1286	K-6,7-12	Igloolik	42%	13/31	41.935
1220	K-5,6-12	Pond Inlet	29%	12//41	29.268
785	K-12	Clyde River	29%	6//21	28.571
609	K-12	Hall Beach	25%	4//16	25
1,148	K-6 7-12	Cape Dorset	24%	8//33	24.242
5236	K-5 (3) PreK- 8(French), 6- 7, 8-12	Iqaluit (Inuit)	22%	20/89	22.471
		Iqaluit (non-Inuit)	80%	12//15	80
433	K-12	Kimmirut	18%	2//11	18.18
519	K-12	Qikiqtarjuaq	17%	2//12	16.66
646	K-12	Arctic Bay (AB)	14%	3//22	13.636
		N/A			
77	With AB	Nanisivik	0%	No data	0
684		Sanikiluaq	0%	0//18	0
215		Resolute Bay	0%	0//5	0
163	K-12	Grise Fiord	0%	0//4	0

### *Final Site Selection and Rationale*

Once the communities were identified (Table 9), a request to collect data in Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq, and Iqaluit for this research study were included in Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A, B & C) approval procedures as well as in the Nunavut licensing process (Appendix D). The Minister of Education, the Executive Director, and the three local District Education Authorities and the principals of the high schools targeted in this study were contacted to acknowledge the culturally sensitive research

<sup>100</sup> See chapter two for more information about input from key individuals in Nunavut.

methods and to seek their input through informal phone conversations and email. A non-technical summary report of the research project was made available to them (see Appendix E). After being reviewed by the Nunavut Research Institute, selected communities, and native organizations, Nunavut License No: 0102207N-M was obtained for all three sites beginning August 22, 2008.

Table 9: Potential Site Selection Descriptions<sup>102</sup>

	Nunavut	Pangnirtung	Iqaluit	Sanikiluaq
Population – 2001	26,665	1275	5195	685
Number of Inuit from total above	22,720	1205	3,010	645
Mobility same address over 5 yrs	19,585	1045	2715	555
Population Increase 1999-2001	8.1%	2.7%	24.1%	8.4%
Population density	0.0	169.3	100.0	6.1
% knew aboriginal language and spoken at home	91.1%	97.9%	85%	97.7%
Medium aboriginal income, 15 yrs & older Canada = \$46,116	\$13,190	\$13,232	\$19,979	\$11,530
Aboriginal Unemployment rate	22.9%	25.5%	17.6%	19.4%
Aboriginal Population 25 yrs and older with less than high school certificate	4715/9125	245/490	630/1365	170/270
	51.6%	50%	46.1%	62.9%

Data compiled from (Statistics Canada, 2002)

Iqaluit was not used as a site in this study because the data collection could not be coordinated with the limited time and resources available. Reconsideration of the diverse nature of the sites, limited resources, and the cost to access the communities affected the final site selection of Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq. Furthermore, the study of exemplary

<sup>101</sup> During the early stages of this research, relative size was determined from 2002 statistics, which were the only statistics available at that time.



school sites has been shown to be informative (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973, March). The size, the building structures that provide kindergarten through grade twelve instruction, education of Inuit staff, cultural programming, the geography, the accessibility to tourists, the cultural traditions, the dialect, the estimated median rates of persistence, the number of graduates, national recognition, and the researcher's prior familiarity made these two sites very diverse.

Pangnirtung is a medium-size Nunavut community with 1,325 people, and Sanikiluaq is a small Nunavut community with 744 people (Canada Statistics, 2006). The community size in Nunavut affects how their instructional program is delivered. Sanikiluaq and Pangnirtung had only one to two buildings for K-12 education that focused on Inuktitut and English for the majority of the Inuit residents. Iqaluit was not selected because as the capital and largest city in Nunavut, it had different feeder elementary schools, including those providing French immersion for native and non-native populations (Government of Nunavut, 2007). Of the thirteen Nunavut communities, only Iqaluit had the influence of different feeder schools, other languages, and populations. For the purpose of this study, it was felt that a comparison between communities that reflected the range of other Nunavut communities' dynamics would provide more information. Most Nunavut communities provide instruction similar to either Pangnirtung or Sanikiluaq's instructional models depending on the size of their community. Pangnirtung had an elementary school for kindergarten through grade five. It has another school nearby that provides instruction for grades six through twelve. In

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<sup>102</sup> Statistics from 2002 were used during this phase of the research because statistics from 2006 were not available until the final reporting stages of this study.

contrast, Sanikiluaq has only one school that provides instruction for kindergarten through grade twelve.

In addition, both communities selected also had a native co-principal or a principal and native teachers who have Bachelors of Education degrees. Both communities had Inuit teachers who have completed their Bachelors of Education, and who are currently participating in a community-based Masters Program in conjunction with McGill University. These two communities selected provided the opportunity to examine the influence of culture from trained Inuit elementary teachers in the same building as the high school versus having Inuit elementary teachers in a separate building than the high school. The varying influence of culture in the communities was a difference that was noted to be of interest by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), an Inuit organization that approved this study and asked to be informed of its findings and recommendations (NTI, 2000, correspondence). For example, the two communities selected show a difference in community cultural programming existed in the two communities finally selected. In Pangnirtung, community programs for all students, including high school students, involved traditional skills with modern camping experiences on the land. In Sanikiluaq, community programs for high school students involved traditional and modern skills in innovative ways like making polar-bear rugs, jewelry and T-shirts highlighting Inuit culture, as well as building houses.

Since there is a difference in population size and geographic location between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, comparing the two sites is desirable because cultural differences and traditions are often related to what resources are available to the community. Pangnirtung is located in the northern part of Nunavut. The name means,

“place where bull caribou come,” but bull caribou no longer come near to where the community is located. Pangnirtung is surrounded by mountains and is located at the edge of the mouth of Pangnirtung fiord. Pangnirtung is considered the entry point for Auyuittuq National Park, which is well-known for its spectacular scenery, glacial valleys, streams, and Mt. Asgard. Mt. Asgard is the highest mountain in Nunavut (4,508 feet) and also has the world’s highest vertical face for rock climbing. The community encourages tourism and visitors to the national park.

A man-made gravel sea barrier extends into the fiord and is used to shelter boats. A river on one side of the town provides water for the reservoir is delivered to the inhabitants by trucks. The airport runway divides Pangnirtung into an upper and lower part and both the elementary school and the high school are in the upper part of the community. Houses are one or two stories high and are constructed of wood or metal. Satellite receivers are seen on some houses and most houses have television.

There are three general stores in the community. A hotel serves meals, mostly to guests, and a fast food shop is near the airport. There are also a variety of buildings providing services including: a hamlet office,<sup>103</sup> a housing office, a RCMP station,<sup>104</sup> a nursing station, an Anglican church, a training school for Anglican ministers, a radio station, a post office, a library, an elders’ center and museum, a Parcs Canada office, an Arctic College outreach center, and a day care center. Recreational facilities include an indoor skating rink and a recreational hall.

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<sup>103</sup> A hamlet is a Canadian equivalent for a small town.

<sup>104</sup> RCMP refers to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Pangnirtung is well-known internationally for its Inuit prints and weaving center, both of which attract tourists. A Turbot Fisheries Plant, which processes turbot and sends them world-wide, is the only industry located there. Some Nunavut government offices that service all of Nunavut have been also relocated to Pangnirtung.

Sanikiluaq is the southernmost Nunavut community, and was named after an Inuk<sup>105</sup> known for his strength and speed. It is located off the Quebec coast, in Hudson's Bay, on Belcher's Island. Unlike Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq doesn't attract tourists because of its isolated location. Travel there is difficult and expensive because it can only be reached by air travel from Montreal, Quebec.

Its landscape has flat, rolling hills. There are two main roads and a river that runs through the middle of the community. There is also a man-made sea barrier and it extends into the nearby bay and gives shelter to boats. A nearby fresh water lake provides water that is brought to the community by trucks. Houses, like in Pangnirtung, are one or two story structures made of wood or metal. Satellite receivers are seen on some houses and most have television.

Two general stores serve the community, and there is a small hotel and restaurant. In Sanikiluaq, there are also a variety of buildings providing services that include: a hamlet office,<sup>106</sup> a housing office, a RCMP station,<sup>107</sup> a nursing station, an Anglican church, a post office, an Arctic College outreach center, a recreational hall, and a day care center that also is able to broadcast radio and TV programs. Some craft products made in Sanikiluaq are well-known in Nunavut, but do not have the world-wide acclaim

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<sup>105</sup> Inuk refers to one native person. It is the singular form of the word Inuit.

<sup>106</sup> A hamlet is a Canadian equivalent for a settlement that is smaller than a village, town, or city.

of crafts from Pangnirtung. These include carvings made from argillite (a stone found on the island) and beautiful hand-made reed baskets. Down from elder ducks that nest in the nearby cliffs are used to make mitts, parkas, and comforters. Sanikiluaq is also known for its spiral, pan-fried bread.

Different geographical locations result in different Inuit traditions related to hunting and to the Inuktitut dialect spoken. The traditions and Inuktitut dialect among Nunavut communities in Baffin Island are very similar. The Inuit traditions and the Inuktitut dialect spoken in Sanikiluaq is very different in some ways, and more like the traditions and dialect spoken by Inuit in Northern Quebec. When Nunavut was created, Sanikiluaq voted to become part of Nunavut because they felt that an Inuit-run government would support their interests more than the Quebec government would.

Differences also existed between the communities selected in terms of estimated median rates of persistence for students staying in school, the number of high school graduates, national recognition, and the researcher's prior familiarity. Pangnirtung had the highest estimated median rates of students staying in school and the highest number of graduates. The researcher's pre-existing community relationships also supported study in this community. Sanikiluaq had been nationally recognized as a model school (Fulford, 2007) for the exemplary work of its co-principals (Picco, 2007, April 4), and to understand further how low population numbers might effect its low estimated rates of students staying in school and low number of graduates.

Other factors supported the final selection of sites. Due to time and budget

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<sup>107</sup> RCMP refers to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

constraints, only two sites could be researched between August 22, 2007 and October 8, 2007. The researcher needed to return to the United States by mid-October. This research was funded solely by the researcher so costs of airplane arrangements and board were also a factor in the consideration of sites. Average flight cost to one community ranged from \$2000-\$3000. Travel in and out of Pangnirtung required passing through Iqaluit. Travel in and out of Sanikiluaq required travel through Montreal. Weather and wind conditions increasingly created delays in both communities as fall approached, creating more extreme conditions in the northern-most communities. As a result, Pangnirtung was chosen as the first location to perform research. In Pangnirtung, school started September 8, 2008, so many of the residents, students, teachers, and employees were still out on the land or not in the community until immediately before school started. During the first few days prior to the school's opening, class lists for grades were being finalized. As estimated, data collection took approximately two weeks. Considering all these factors, the researcher chose the two sites for research: Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq. These two communities were identified as rich sites for information and individual case studies.

*Participant Selection, Description, and Rationale*

The focus of this research was to explore Inuit perceptions. Therefore, the majority of the individuals selected to participate were Inuit. To triangulate the data from Inuit participants, knowledgeable individuals, non-Inuit were also purposefully selected.

Since students for the cohort who would have started school in September 1998 would not have been influenced by Nunavut's new government during their high school experience, only the following cohorts were tracked:

1. 2000-2001 cohort that graduated in 2004-2005;
2. 2001-2002 cohort that graduated in 2005-2006;
3. 2002-2003 cohort that graduated in 2006-2007;
4. 2003-2004 cohort that will graduate in 2007-2008

In Nunavut, dropping out of school in grade 9 has been identified as an issue of concern for educators (Iqaluit District of Education Authority, A Status Report on Students at Risk in Iqaluit Schools). Students in grade 10 generally tended to stay in high school and graduate (Kunuk, 2007, March 2; Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). In Nunavut, children must be five by December in order to enter kindergarten, now mandatory. Students who stay in school until grade 10 are likely to be between 15 and 16 years old. Students between the age of 16 or 17 are likely to be in the target grades of 10-12. They were selected for this research study because they would be mature enough to understand the consent form given to their parents prior to inquiry about participation. In addition, data over the past five school years indicates that there is trend to have the majority of students in grade 10, and less students in grade 12. This trend is supported by Nunavut's data from the same school years. Selecting individuals who were 16 years and older also coincided with the expedited IRB<sup>108</sup> protocol involving human subjects for the University of Vermont and the license procedures from the Nunavut Research Institute for the Nunavut Government.

Current Inuit FTE<sup>109</sup> enrollment data for 2006-2007 for Nunavut (Figure 50), Pangnirtung (Figure 51), and Sanikiluaq (Figure 52), as well as for each school (Table 10) were examined to determine the number of potential student participants. For each

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<sup>108</sup> IRB refers to the Institutional Review Board.

<sup>109</sup> FTE refers to Full-Time Equivalents.

school, the study proposed to identify a minimum of six Inuit students, three males and three females who stayed in school throughout grades 10-12.

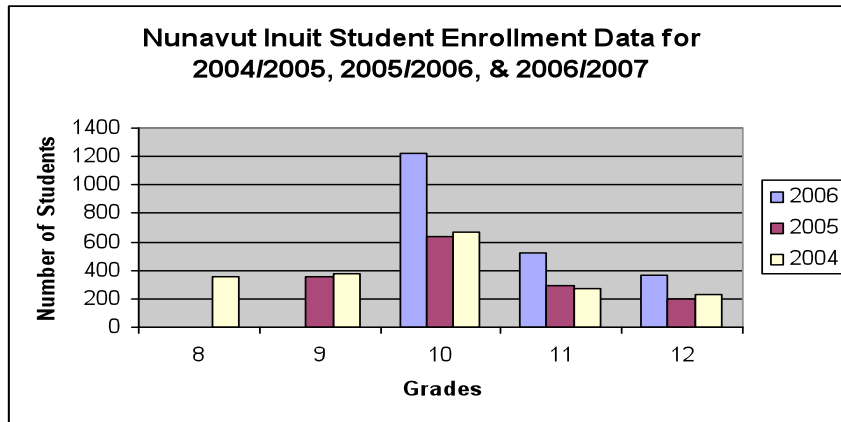


Figure 50: Nunavut Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2006/2007

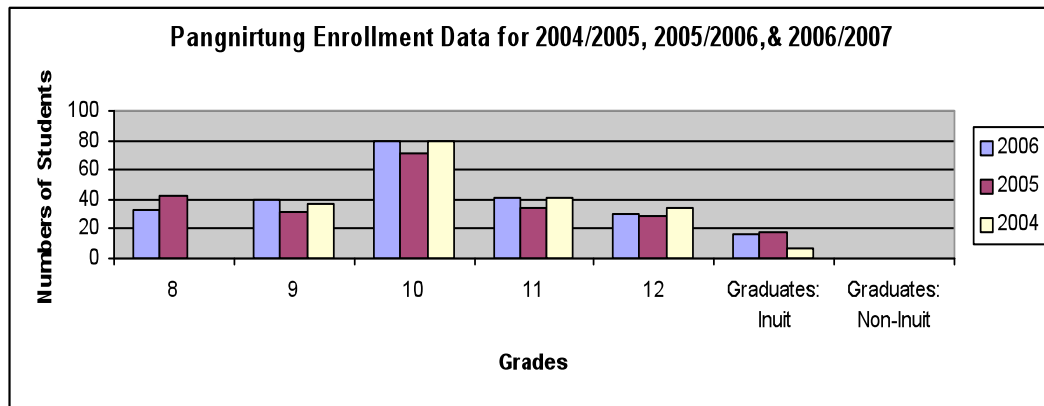


Figure 51: Pangnirtung Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2007/2007



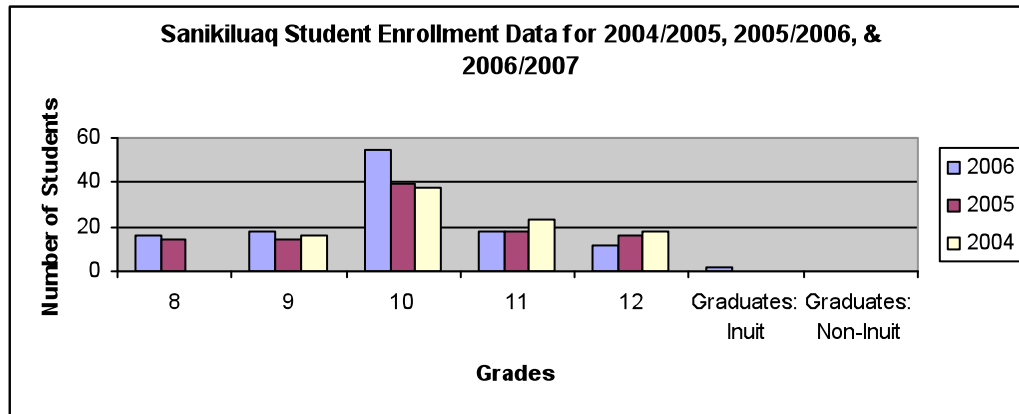


Figure 52: Sanikiluaq Inuit Enrollment Data for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, & 2006/2007

Table 10: Current Inuit FTE Enrollment Data for 2006-2007

	Pangnirtung Attagoyuk Ilisavik	Sanikiluaq Nuiyak School
Grade 10	44 1 non-Inuit	53
Grade 11	22	18
Grade 12	30	12
Total number of Inuit in entire school	210	280.5
Total student population	211	280.5

Key community informants, like members of the education council or principals, and enrollment documents were used to purposefully select participants eligible to take part in this study.<sup>110</sup> Various individuals in the community, such as parents, teachers, students, and elders who work with students, principals, co-principals, vice-principals, aides, and support staff were contacted to identify key informants to show a range of different strengths. Other members of the community and the school were interviewed and/or observed in the classroom based upon information obtained from student interviews, as well by snowball sampling. This type of sampling took into account the

<sup>110</sup> In the final selection, Iqaluit was not included in this study.

principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), that includes a consensus decision-making process because interviewees could identify other individuals that they thought would contribute to the study. School documents were examined to determine if the students selected had persisted throughout high school. Due to low enrollment numbers and difficulty of obtaining permission to participate in this study, students were selected first from grade 12, then grade 11, and then grade 10. Interviews and observations each took approximately one hour. Participants ranged from tenth graders who were 17 years of age to adults who were 77.

#### *Description of the Participants*

Originally, the researcher anticipated interviewing a minimum of twenty participants, or ten individuals per each of the two communities finally selected. These potential participants were to consist of eight high school students and two other adults, such as a teacher, community member, or parent. During the preliminary interviews in Pangnirtung, it became apparent that more Inuit adults should be included in this study because they were able to provide more specific details than the students who spoke in general terms. In Sanikiluaq, the second community visited, more adults than originally anticipated were included for the same reason.

As a result, the researcher listened to the comments of sixty-six Inuit participants between the ages of 17 and 77 years of age. Ten non-Inuit individuals were also interviewed to provide further insight into themes that emerged from the Inuits' responses. In addition, during the researcher's approximately two-week research period in each community, any community member who wanted to participate was encouraged

to do so because the researcher felt that more voices heard would enable the “echo” of what was being said to become clearer.

Inuit student participants’ ages ranged from 16 to 25,<sup>111</sup> with the majority of them being young adults who had stayed in school more than 13 years. Fifty-nine percent of the students interviewed were in grade twelve (Table 11, p. 156). The majority of adult participants were fully employed, and were between the ages of 25 and 49. The elders were females who were from 75 to 77 years of age, and both had an occasional income (Table 12, see p. 156). In Pangnirtung, thirty-five Inuit were interviewed and in Sanikiluaq, thirty-one Inuit were interviewed. These data sets are similar in distribution and summarized at the end of this section (Table 13, see p.157).

Participants in both communities were purposefully selected using snowball sampling, that took into consideration the recommendations of the interviewees. Some potential participants were reluctant to be interviewed because of the complicated consent process which was meant to protect their rights by explaining fully what they were participating in. Other students declined to participate because it was too much trouble to read and/or listen to a four-page consent form in Inuktitut or in English, and then give written consent before a witness. Apparently some people felt that participating in a research project would be as stressful as getting involved in a court hearing, rather than as relaxing as just sharing their opinions over coffee or tea. Paradoxically, being culturally sensitive and having the forms translated into Inuktitut and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) also made potential participants uneasy. Sometimes those who

agreed to participate and signed the IRB consent wondered just how “accurate” my research would be because they had to “tell me again” what they had already explained to me previously in casual conversation. Having to repeat what they said implied that I had not been listening, or did not value what they told me the first time. I had listened and felt it was valuable to include their comments in the study. A possible reason why Inuit were reluctant to participate in research studies was because few researchers had provided feedback to the community.

In a small community there is often only one person who holds a particular position so jobs were not indicated to protect an individual’s anonymity. Anyone who wanted to be interviewed and participate in this study was given the opportunity to do so. The researcher had to reapply for IRB<sup>112</sup> permission to include more than the sixty people originally requested. She was available for interviewing from mid-August to mid-September 2007. Students who had graduated during the 2007-2008 school year were considered to be in grade 12 as they were recent graduates, and this study was focused on learning what helped students stay in school. Students listed as in more than one grade like 11/12 were included in the higher of the two grades.

Some of the high school students in both communities were not technically “youths.” Programs targeted at youths may not be as effective as those geared for young adults. The problem of men missing school because of hunting was stated by some participants interviewed. The issue of pregnancy in high school was not specifically

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<sup>111</sup> Students over the age of 25 were not indicated to protect their identity.

<sup>112</sup> IRB refers to the Institutional Review Board.

identified as a “problem” by any of the participants. The benefits of having a day care center were, however, noted by the participants.

Certainly being pregnant or raising a small child might explain why some females might have a difficulty staying in high school. Three of the 10 female students in their twenties, or 30 percent of the female participants, indicated they had at least one child who was in between preschool and first grade. Three of those female students had two children who lived with them and the third individual gave her child up for adoption. One student indicated that her friends “have been telling me to go back to school because I have no kids. And they can’t go back because they all have kids” (Sanikiluaq female student: SSF8). The difficulty of the course materials and other school factors that would also affect why students might not remain in school will be addressed later in chapter six. Participants’ data from both communities indicated that age was not a predictor of grade. Therefore, this created classrooms where some students might be eight years older than their classmates as is the case in grade 11 for Pangnirtung female students (PSF1) and (PSF3). In Grade 12, there is a six year difference between Pangnirtung male students (PSM2) and (PSM6). In Sanikiluaq, a nine year age difference was noted in grade 11 between male student (SSM4) and female student (SSF5). In grade ten, there is also a seven year difference between Sanikiluaq female students (SSF5) and (SSF9).

The trend of having more female than male graduates is reflected across the Arctic in the graduation data (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Often male students do not attend school regularly during the different hunting seasons and therefore get behind in their class work. When the male students got too far behind, they would have to repeat a class or drop out. “We find that if there’s 15 to 24

students registering for high school from grade 9, not the same amount of numbers are graduating by the end of the year” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8).

However, Pangnirtung is a larger community than Sanikiluaq. Pangnirtung samples represents three percent of the population and the Sanikiluaq samples represent five percent of the population.<sup>113</sup> Pangnirtung students had the higher estimated rates of persistence in high school than in Sanikiluaq. Grade twelve students in Pangnirtung were younger than grade twelve students in Sanikiluaq.

Non-Inuit participants were 25 to 58 years of age in Pangnirtung, and 16 to 65 years of age in Sanikiluaq. All non-Inuit in Pangnirtung were adults, and in Sanikiluaq there were two non-Inuit parents of current high school students as well as a non-Inuit student.

Table 11: Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Student Participants

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
Total Students	15	17
Females	9	10
Males	6	7
Student age range (total)	16-25+	16-25
Female age range	16-25+	17-25
Male age range	17-23	16-20
18 years of age or older	47%	82%
In grade 12 (total)	67%	59%
Females in grade 12	50%	59%
Extra stay in school past age 18	33%	76%

Table 12: Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Adult Participants

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
Total adults (including elders)	20	14
Number of female adults	14	8
Ages of females, including elders	26-77	26-75
Females ages excluding elder	26-65	26-48
Elder's age (female)	77	75
Number of male adults	5	5
Ages of adult males	29-46	28-65
Female adults who were parents of students currently in grade 12	3 PAFP3,PAFP2, PAFP5	2 SAFP2, SAF5
Male adults who were parents of students currently in grade 12	2 PAMP1 PAMP2	1 SAM2
Interpreter used by request for	2 PAF9 PAF11 (elder)	1 SAM4
Adults in Data set (excluding elder)	19	14
Age range of Adults in data set	26-65	26-65
Female adults excluding elder	70%	57%
Male adults	25%	36%

Table 13: Participants

Participant Numbers	Totals	Percent	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
Inuit	66	100%	35	31
Inuit students	32	48%	15	17
Inuit students in grade 12 (includes 11/12 and recent graduates)	19	29% (59% of students)	10	9
Inuit adults	34	52%	20	14
Inuit elders	2	3%	1	1
Inuit females	45	68%	24	19
Inuit males	24	36%	11	13
Non-Inuit	10	N/A	6	4
Non-Inuit females	4	N/A	2	2
Non- Inuit males	6	N/A	4	2
Participants	76	N/A	41	35

Note: The 66 Inuit participants were used as the data set for all data analysis and calculations including this table, unless otherwise indicated. Non-Inuit participants were used for triangulation of the data only. For more detailed breakdown of the Inuit participants by community see Appendix R: Pangnirtung Data Sets, and Appendix S: Sanikiluaq Data Sets.

<sup>113</sup> Calculations based on 2001 Canadian Populations Statistics.

*Pangnirtung participants.*

There were 35 Inuit interviews conducted in Pangnirtung. Twenty-four of them were female and 11 were males. Fifteen Pangnirtung participants or approximately 43 percent of those interviewed there were students (see Table 14). The Pangnirtung Inuit students sampled were primarily in grade 12, with more female than male participants (Figure 53 and Table 15). Pangnirtung student participants ranged in age from 16 to more than 25 years of age, and some were also young adults who had spent more than the 13 years in school that would be normally anticipated if they went from kindergarten through grade 12 (Figure 54 and Table 16).

Most Pangnirtung Inuit adult participants had a full-time income and all adults were between the ages of 26 years of age and 65. One 77 female elder who had an occasional income participated in this study (Figure 55 and Table 17).

Table 14: Pangnirtung Participants: 35 total Inuit interviewed

Inuit Students	Inuit Adults	Inuit Male	Inuit Female
15	20	11	24
43% of 35 Inuit	57% of 35 Inuit	31% of 35 Inuit	60% of 35 Inuit

Participants were interviewed during working hours, during the evenings, during the week, and on weekends. The interviews occurred either at the Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School, Arctic College Center, individual work places, or individual homes.

Pangnirtung students were not used to the idea of being interviewed. Even though I had lived there for fourteen years and was known by community members. Familiarity with me, and knowing that I had made return visits to the community, made some



residents of Pangnirtung more inclined to participate because they knew that feedback from this research study would be made available to them.

Interviews were conducted in English and none of the students requested an interpreter. One female student (PSF8) and one male student (PSM4) recently graduated in 2008 and they were included in this data set as the intent was to learn what helps students graduate.

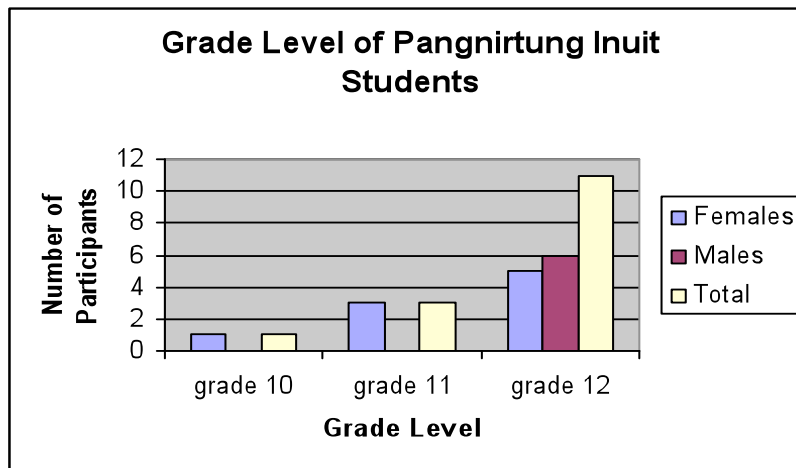


Figure 53: Grade Level of Pangnirtung Student Participants

Table 15: Grade Level of Pangnirtung Inuit Students

	Female	Male	Totals
Grade 10	1	1	13% of 15 students
Grade 11	3	0	20.00 % of 15 students
Grade 12	5	5	67% of 15 students
Adults	5	2	47 % of 15 students
Extra time spent in school past age 18 (19 years or older)	3	2	33 % of 15 students

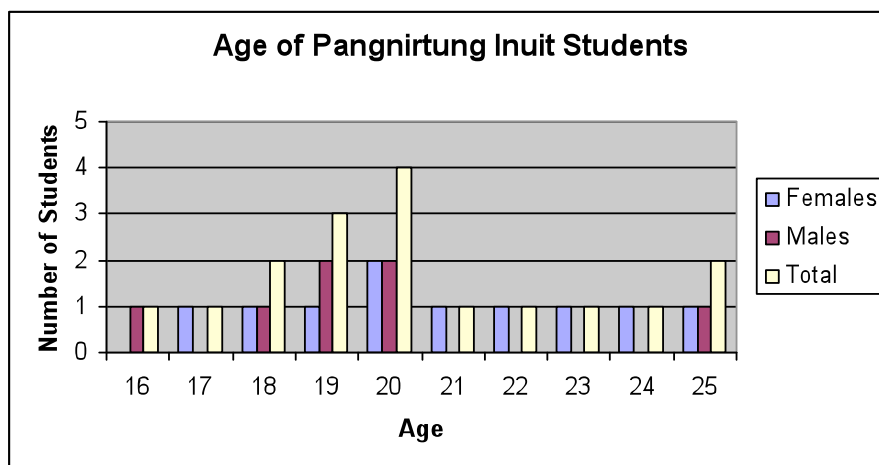


Figure 54: Age of Pangnirtung Inuit Students

Table 16: Age of Pangnirtung Inuit Students

	Females	Males	Total
16	0	1	1
17	1	0	1
18	1	1	2
19	1	2	3
20	2	2	4
21	1	0	1
22	1	0	1
23	1	0	1
24	1	0	1
25	1	1	2

*Sanikiluaq participants.*

There were 31 Inuit interviews conducted in Sanikiluaq, 19 participants were female and 12 participants were male. Seventeen Sanikiluaq participants or 55 percent of the participants were students (Table 17).

The Sanikiluaq Inuit student participants' sample was primarily grade 12 students, with more female than male participants (Figure 55 and Table 18, see p. 162). Sanikiluaq students ranged in age from 16 to 25 years of age (Figure 56 and Table 19, see p. 163),

and most were young adults, whom had spent more than 13 years to reach their present grade.

Fourteen Inuit adults were interviewed. Nine female adult participants were interviewed whose ages ranged from 26 to 47 years of age. Five adult males were interviewed whose ages ranged from 28 to 65 years of age. There were two female adults (SAFP2) and (SAF5) and one male adult (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM2) who were also parents of students who were currently attending in high school. An interpreter was used as requested for one adult male, Sanikiluaq adult: SAM4. Most Inuit adult participants had a full-time income and all were over the age of 25, and under the age of 50. Female Elder Mina Inuktaluk was 75 years old when interviewed and she had occasional employment.

Table 17: Sanikiluaq Participants

Students	Adults	Elders	Males	Females
17	13	1	12	19
54.83 percent	41.93 percent 3.22 percent		38.70 percent	61.29 percent

Participants were interviewed mostly during work hours either at Nuiyak School, Najuqsivik Day Care, or at their place of work. Students in this community had prior experience being interviewed about their innovative school programs by newspaper reporters. While the researcher was there, students were speaking on the telephone to *News North* about building a house for the community as part of a school program. Ironically, they were more leery of being interviewed for this research project because they were unfamiliar with the consent process.

Individuals who chose not to participate casually commented that the consent forms seemed like a bunch of “red tape” that is typically associated with white people, especially bureaucrats, who say they are trying to help but really do not. Luckily, a previous researcher had taken the time to try to get to know and portray accurately the people’s views (Puplan, 2006). I encouraged those who chose to participate to sign the consent forms. I explained that the intent of this research was to provide information to the community that could be used to help more Inuit youth to graduate from high school.

Student interviews were conducted in English and none of the students requested an interpreter. Some of the students asked to have a written version of the questions in front of them during the interview. One male student (SSM1) also asked permission to write his responses down to supplement his oral interview. One female student (SSF1), who recently graduated in 2008, was included in this data as the intent was to learn what helps students graduate. Students who were listed in combined grades, like 11/12, were included in the data for the higher of the two grades.

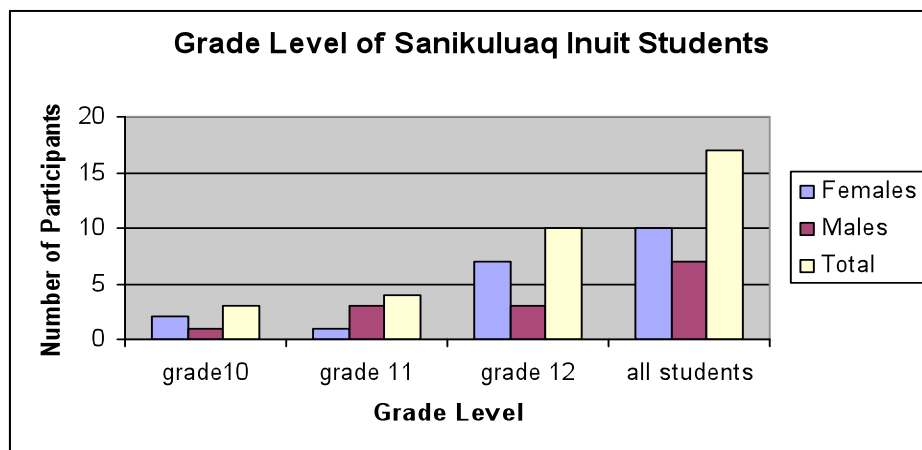


Figure 55: Grade Level of Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 18: Sanikuluq Students

	Female	Male	Totals
Grade 10	2	1	18% of 17 students
Grade 11	1	3	57% of 17 students
Grade 12	1	3	59% of 17 students
Adults	90% of 10 females	86% of 7 males	88% of 17 students
Extended stay past age 18 (19 years or older)	80% of 10 females	71% of 7 males	76% of 17 students

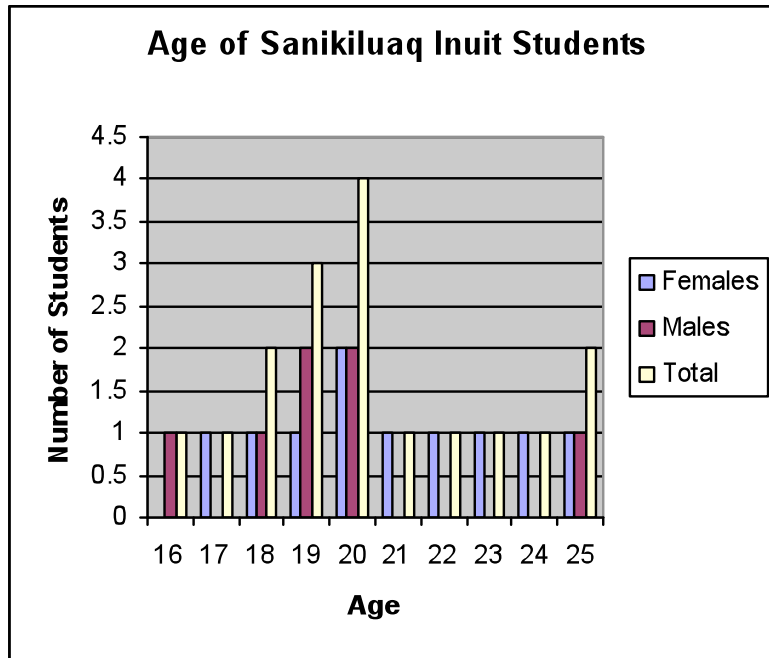


Figure 56: Age of Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 19: Age of Sanikiluaq Inuit Student Participants

	Females	Males	Total
16	0	1	1
17	1	0	1
18	1	1	2
19	1	2	3
20	2	2	4
21	1	0	1
22	1	0	1
23	1	0	1
24	1	0	1
25	1	1	2

### *Data Collections*

#### *Data Sources and Codes*

Data collected consisted of responses to the three sub-questions that guided this research. Data sources were divided into three groups: Inuit students, Inuit adults, and two Inuit elders. Interviews with the groups, as well as field observations and documents, were used to answer all three sub-questions.

To encourage participants to speak freely without fear of reprisal, their identities were coded and remain confidential. Initials were used in the codes to indicate the community, the data group, and gender. For example, PAF was a Pangnirtung Adult Female, while SSM was a Sanikiluaq Student Male. PSF referred to a Pangnirtung Student Female and SAM referred to a Sanikiluaq Adult Male. Additional letter codes like “P” and “N” were used to indicate whether the participant was a parent or non-Inuit. To avoid changing the original taped interviews, codes did not change even if during the interview participants indicated they were a parent of a current high school student. Numbers were assigned to interviews. If individuals needed to reschedule, their number was not used unless they were able to reschedule. This resulted in some gaps in the

coding numbers. The elders from each community were not included in the data sample to respect their honorable place in their culture. The words of an elder are considered to hold more weight than the words of a non-elder. The researcher was honored to have the elders participate in this research project. It emphasized the urgency and importance of this study to the community.

#### *Culturally Sensitive Strategy to Elders*

Data analysis in Sanikiluaq and Pangnirtung was conducted being culturally sensitive to the Inuit belief that Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) is known best by elders. Traditionally, adults and youth would seek the words of an elder as a carrier of traditional wisdom. It was a great honor to have two elders consent to be in this study. Their participation in this research made clear to the community and the government that this was a topic of importance and urgency to the elders as well as the youth. Honoring the request of Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktuluk to have her words identified, permission to have Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk was also obtained.

#### *Instruments*

Data was collected using open-ended interviews, observations, and documents. An open-ended questionnaire was used for the interviews of the students and/or other individuals. Focus-group interviews were conducted for adults other than students.

Participants were asked to take part in an in-person interview that would take 30 to 60 minutes to complete. The interview would take place in their community school, another public building, or home, depending on where they preferred to be interviewed. They might also be observed for approximately one hour in school, or in another learning environment.

A potential benefit of taking part in this study was that the participants will learn what might help more Inuit high school students graduate. Participants were informed that they would be contributing to knowledge that is important because their interview information could guide teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and government officials, and others to help more Inuit youth stay in school and graduate. Furthermore, participants were told this research might also identify areas needing further research relating to schools or educational policy. Participants who did not want to be observed at any time during their school or learning experience were free to make that choice. There were no costs or compensation for the participants provided by this study. Individual community input and protocols from previous research projects were taken into consideration.

Names and other identifying information are not included in the data, except for elders who gave permission for their names to be used. A master list of names and identifying codes was locked and kept separate from the data. Electronic versions of the master-code list can only be accessed by using a secure password and this was only available to the primary investigator. Individuals assisting in this study were required to follow the same rules of confidentiality. While summary results of this investigation will be published, the detailed information obtained during this study will remain confidential.

### *Interview Questions*

Interviews were conducted using a conversational style of semi-structured interviews. Students were encouraged to discuss some of the things they thought helped them stay in school. Additional prompts were used to probe the influence of the home, school, community, and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) on staying in school. The



interview questions used to interview students, parents, adults, teachers and specialists are included in the Appendixes M, N, O, and P. While the questions seek a core set of information, their opened-ended nature and the conversational style of the people interviewed encouraged a range of themes to emerge. Students were asked two basic questions:

1. Since I am interested in learning more about you, can you tell me about yourself?
2. Can you help me to understand some of the reasons you stayed in school?

For each of these questions, students were prompted using sub-questions that related to the four themes--home, school, community, and Inuit culture--that emerged from conversations with Nunammiut. Similar questions were used for parents, adults, teachers, and specialists (See Appendixes M, N, O, and P).

Observations of the classroom included classroom descriptions, teaching materials, teaching procedures, and interactions among students, and the context of the interviews were recorded in field notes. This information was used to triangulate with data coming from the student interviews.

#### *Data Collection Procedures*

Licenses for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) were obtained prior to the start of data collection. Principals were contacted in each community, using the recruitment letter, and student enrollment data to identify potential participants was accessed. Once identified, students were then provided with an Inuit translation of the participant letter. If interested, the Local District Education Council and Hamlet Councils were also contacted to inform them that the

researcher had arrived in the community to begin the research they had previously approved. Requests to introduce myself as a researcher and clarify the research study at their next meeting were made, but a quorum of members was not always available during the time period given for the collection of data. Culturally-sensitive research methods included the opportunity for communities to show their support of this research project in different ways ranging from community announcements on radio and in the school and community posting, depending on whether their local priorities were to engage either student youths or the community members and elders. Community preference also influenced the days, time, and locations when interviews and/or observations were scheduled.

The same recruitment and enrollment procedures for Inuit and non-Inuit as well as for each student/parent/teacher /adult cohort was done in both school sites. A recruitment letter was used to describe the research study and explain the process for recruitment (see Appendixes G and H). Principals, school staff, local District Education Authority (DEA) members, and adult educators assisted with the recruitment. Individuals were informed that the research was being conducted to learn more about what Inuit students say helps Inuit students stay in school through graduation. Explanatory letters relative to this study were discussed with each participant in keeping with the IRB consent protocol. Individuals who preferred to voice their thoughts casually and not respond to the interview questions were unfortunately not able to be included in this study. Consent forms were read and explained to every potential participant.

School records at each site were used to recruit students. Students who were currently enrolled in grade 12 for the 2007-2008 school year and were 16 years of age or

older were chosen first. If fewer than 10 students were identified, students then enrolled in grade 11 for the 2007-2008 school year and who were 16 years or older were selected. If necessary, students enrolled in grade 10 for the 2007 and 2008 school year and who were 16 years or older were considered. If there were more than 10 students in any given grade who met the above criteria where the selection occurred, the following guidelines were used in order to purposefully sample students:

1. An equal number of females and males
2. Students who stayed in the same school for grades 10-12
3. Students recognized for documented strengths or achievement (sports, grades, special programs, honors, awards, etc.)
4. Those students recognized informally by high school teachers
5. Administrators, community education authority, community members, exemplary for their work, participation in projects, and so on

Between four and ten other parents, teachers, or adults with knowledge of students identified above were interviewed or observed. A minimum of two individuals were selected from each area. Additional interviews were selected based on information that emerged from the student interviews.

#### *Parent Recruitment and Enrollment*

Parents of students were interviewed either individually or in a focus group. Observations were carried out of cultural or academic activities that were noted to support students remaining in school. These guidelines were used to purposefully sample parents:

1. An equal number of males and females
2. A range of parents from those with limited school exposure to those parents who had attended school
3. Parents whose role was specifically identified in a student's interview

#### *Teacher Recruitment and Enrollment*

Teachers and other individuals identified by students were selected for an interview and/or observation. Interviews were conducted individually or in a focus group.

These guidelines were used to purposefully sample teachers and other school personnel:

1. A range of non-native and native teachers or teaching personnel
2. A range of males and females
3. A range of teaching and cross-cultural experiences
4. Individuals whose role was specifically identified in student interviews

#### *Adult Recruitment and Enrollment*

Knowledgeable adults identified by students were interviewed individually or in a focus group. Adults were selected using these guidelines:

1. Role related to high school (administration, education council member, community partnership)
2. Familiarity with students selected

The researcher arrived prior to the start of the data collection to further familiarize herself with the Inuit culture, develop mutual partnerships to support this study, and to accommodate travel arrangements. Data collection began on August 22, 2007 when the Nunavut Research License was approved, and continued through October 8, 2008, a 48-day period. Approximately two weeks were spent in each of the two communities to

collect data. The week between the two community visits was used to visit the capital of Nunavut and meet with available government and Department of Education personnel relevant to this study.

## *Data Analysis*

### *Data Analysis Procedures*

“Grounded theories, because they are drawn from the data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action” (Strauss, 1998, p. 12). This is particularly important when studying a different culture. The research method needs to be flexible enough to adapt to new findings that emerge without any pre-determined constraints (Strauss, 1998). This approach permitted the researcher to use a holistic and emergent process and take into account the fact that new variables, themes, and/or categories might arise during data analysis (Leddy & Ormond, 2005). Grounded theory is well suited to analyze the data in this research project. The data was analyzed using inductive reasoning to identify relevant themes or patterns. The data was coded for themes that emerged out of the interviews and observations.

Once data had been collected, it was analyzed in a seven step process:

1. Identify participants in chart form for both communities (Appendix R & S).
2. Code the data using clusters and codes indicating broad themes, sub- themes and emergent themes (Appendix T & U). A summary of the items coded is listed in Appendix O.
3. Microsoft tables were created that organized the participants with the themes for both communities. This took the form of extended text and charts (Appendix V & W).
4. Synthesized charts were then made that indicated participants code and category coded in preparation for excel files (Appendix X & Y).

5. Excel Charts and graphs were created for all the findings for each community (Appendix Z & AA).
6. A cross comparison of the data using the graphs and quotes was done to further synthesized the findings (Appendix BB).
7. This final stage involved the drawing of conclusions and verification of results was done. Combined graphs were created at this stage (Appendix CC).

The extent of the researcher's skill, competence, and rigor in doing the fieldwork also contributes to the validity of the qualitative research (Patton, 2002). The researcher gained experience using this method during a year long independent study involving protocol analysis and school evaluations (Mosenthal, Lipson, Torncello, Russ, & Mekkelsen, 2004). The researcher also assisted in five different program evaluations using qualitative data analysis interviews, observations, and timelines, and self-reported data were analyzed using a similar method. To help examine and synthesize the data further, each individual finding was reported for each school. Participant responses were charted and tallied to facilitate graphing of the findings. To identify emergent trends that were related to gender across the three different data sets (students, adults, and elders) and across schools, this procedure was done with the data from each of the schools. When all three different data sets showed similar findings, results were presented to indicate a unified voice. The charts and graphs of data were helpful in analyzing of data, as well as in reporting the findings in English, and in the Inuktitut.

Constant comparison methodology uses explicit coding and analytic procedures. The idea of being fluid with coding and frequently examining the data in new ways was especially helpful in dealing with data that did not have a pre-determined framework and related to a different culture. Accessing input from local residents and Inuit at all stages

of the research process, including data sampling, collection, confirmation of emergent themes, and reviewing of drafts, supported aboriginal research guidelines, as well as the validity of the study.

#### *Format of Data Analysis*

While the responses of the elders, students, and adults were noted individually, it is their combined voices indicating what helps more Inuit stay in school that is the most significant. Data analysis followed a consistent presentation order: Inuit students, Inuit adults, Inuit elders. Inuit females and males were examined separately as well as collectively within the student and adult data sets. Graphs are included to facilitate the translation and accessibility of this research information for Inuit. Elders' responses were kept separate from the data set and graphs because they were quoted in the appropriate sections.

#### *Data Verification*

Random cross verification of data analysis of both student and adult groups was done for seven sub-areas by an individual with no prior Arctic experience or preconceptions. More topics were cross referenced for Pangnirtung because it was a larger data set. In all, 16 sub-topics were verified in Pangnirtung across four themes.

In Sanikiluaq, a smaller data set, eight topics were cross-checked to maintain consistency. For the topic of home, the education of parents was cross-checked. For the topic of school, transition from elementary to junior high, difficulty in grade 10, exchange trips, and who students consulted if they had trouble with their homework were cross-checked. For community, participation in traditional activities in shop and sewing

were cross-checked. For Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), the topic of elders was cross-checked.

### *Limitations of Design*

This study was limited by the background of the researcher, as well as time and sampling constraints. The principal investigator was non-Inuk. At each school, this study was further limited to approximately hour-long interviews and/or observations with only a small number of students and other individuals who were available and provided IRB consent. Data collection was limited by spending just two weeks in only two schools in two communities due to funding and work restrictions. The study was also limited in its reliance on purposeful sampling for interviews and in the absence of other measures of school success, or student success in school. The estimated median rates of persistence in school, used for school selection, were limited by the lack of available personal data. This would have revealed whether the cohorts were actually the same students, and given insight into the low student numbers in small communities. Results of this research were not generalized to other schools or populations, though implications may direct future research or policies.

### *Efforts to Reduce Bias or Errors*

Those researching other cultures should not impose their beliefs onto the subjects they are researching. Indigenous people often have different concepts of self, family, time, space, and other concepts that can result in misinformed interpretations by outsiders (L. T. Smith, 2004). For aboriginal cultures, a holistic research model should include honoring the spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental aspects of human beings; the interconnectedness of all things and the past, present, and future of events (Kenny, 2004).



Culturally sensitive strategies that respected Inuit concepts, holistic perspective, and values were used in all stages of this research. For example, the principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and the researcher's prior experience were used to develop negotiated research relationships. "A negotiated research relationship is like a business contract where you and the other person discuss and agree on each other's duties and responsibilities" (Nunavut Research Institute & Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, 1998). The incorporation of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and the "Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North" (EPCRN), (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003), and other modifications made to this study were outlined in chapter two. In addition, participants who wanted to respond in their native language of Inuktitut were provided with an interpreter. This research was also reported and written in a straightforward manner with many graphic visuals so that it could be easily submitted for translation into Inuktitut.

As well, in qualitative research, the audience of the research and the purpose are important (Patton, 2002). As mentioned previously, the researcher is non-Inuk, but the researcher has the sensitivity and appreciation for Inuit in Nunavut. Having lived in the Arctic for fourteen years, the researcher's first-hand experiences provide a valuable basis to understand the cultural circumstances within which this research is embedded. In the conclusion to this study, the researcher will share a few insights and recommendations into the situation of Inuit youth in the schools currently and in the near future.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### What Do Inuit Perceive To Be Modern Guideposts That Will Help More Inuit Students to Stay in School?

#### *Introduction*

When you're beside the hill or a mountain, there's usually an echo. Do you know why? "When you shout, you'll hear an echo... [There was a man who] used to shout "ataa."<sup>114</sup> His words went all over the mountains, and that is why" (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

What do Inuit perceive to be modern guideposts that will help more Inuit students to stay in school? Since the response to this question that guided my research was affected by the participants, they are described first. Subsequently, modifications that were made to the organization of this research in respect for Inuit values are discussed. Traditionally, elders like Mina Inuktaluk, would tell stories, as illustrated by the excerpt above, to share what they had learned with others in the community. Therefore, this research uses the cultural framework as a tool that can be shared and used to guide communities and government officials, much like a traditional guidepost (*inuksuk*) would have been used as a reference by hunters. The overview of this framework and how it was uniquely implemented in the two communities is explained at the end of this chapter.

#### *Description of the Participants*

Originally, the researcher anticipated interviewing a minimum total of twenty participants, or ten individuals per each of the communities finally selected. These potential participants were to consist of eight high school students and two other adults,

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<sup>114</sup>*Ataa* is a word in Inuktitut that means to be quiet.

such as a teacher, community member, or parent. During the preliminary interviews in the first community of Pangnirtung, it became apparent that more Inuit adults should be included in the research study because they were able to provide more detail of what the students spoke of in general terms. In the second community visited, Sanikiluaq, more adults than original anticipated were included in this study for the same reason.

As a result, the researcher listened to the stories of sixty-six Inuit who participated in this study. Ten non-Inuit participants were also included in this study to provide further insight into themes that emerged from the Inuit responses. In addition, during the researcher's approximate two-week research period in each community, any community member who wanted to participate was encouraged to do so because the researcher felt that more voices would enable the "echo" of what was being said to become clearer.

#### *Modifications to the Study*

Surprisingly, not only did the Inuit stories emerge, but also an understanding of how rich the learning can be when one is able to view a phenomena, as indigenous people like Inuit do, both holistically as well as from its interconnected parts.

This chapter discusses the four modification made to this study as a result of that understanding and the participants involved in this study that informed the research in different ways.

Analyzing the data with the previous framework and its implementation in mind, resulted in four modifications to this study. While the original research question did not change throughout the study, the first modification was made to the second sub-question.

The original two research sub-questions that began this study were:

1. What do Inuit report helps Inuit students to stay in school?
2. What is the role of Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)?

As the data began to emerge in the first community, Pangnirtung, the second research sub-question was divided into two parts because Inuit perceived them to be different topics. This perception was evident as well when the researcher went to the second community, Sanikiluaq. The research sub-questions for this study, as presented in chapter one, then became:

1. What do Inuit report helps Inuit students to stay in school?
2. What is the role of Inuit culture?
3. What is the role of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)?

This first modification may seem like only a semantic change on paper. Yet, in this study, that difference was striking because it evidenced both the continuation of one Inuit norm as well as a generational loss of a different Inuit cultural norm. Traditionally, Inuit elders were and still are highly respected for the knowledge they learned through experiences living and surviving in their harsh Arctic environment. The researcher noted that implicit in this Inuit cultural norm is that knowledge based on experience is valued. This Inuit value was evident in this research by the fact that interviewees from different age groups responded to different parts of the second sub-question. Subsequent data collected in Sanikiluaq supported the separation of the second sub-question into two distinct parts. The continuation of this value was also noted by the researcher because Inuit would clarify their comments by connecting what they said to an experience that they based their knowledge on. As a result, often Inuit participants only responded to

questions that they felt they had experience with. For example, both elders in this study pointed out they had experience teaching youth in the school.

“[She] had taught sealskin and caribou skin preparation”(Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

She had told the kids this morning...[she went] to take a course in Inuktitut, she was really trying her best, the hardest thing was to leave her kids and husband behind. She used to go to mini-courses because she thought [education] was really important (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Inuit students in both communities spoke of Inuit culture only in general terms like “it helps to learn about your culture” (PSM1), or “I want to learn more about the cultural” (SSM6). What emerged from the preliminary data was that Inuit adult participants were able to provide clearer insight into the specifics of what learning should consist of. The adults referred to cultural skills which needed to be learned in order to hunt, clean skins, sew, cook, and so on. These traditional skills were considered every-day cultural knowledge to the adult participants, so they provided the best data source to respond to these research sub-question relating to Inuit culture.

In both communities, Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) was considered to be separate from Inuit cultural skills. The Nunavut Government identifies Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to be a holistic framework and set of principles (Government of Nunavut, 2002). Culturally, Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) is thought to be the defining characteristics of an “elder,” a person who acquired this knowledge through experiences learned while living on the land. Often this knowledge includes traditional

words not in every-day usage, or information relating to how things used to be done when Inuit lived self-sufficiently on the land. Elderly Inuit who had gone to school even for only a few years would not be considered to have a complete knowledge of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). In both communities, most students and adults referred explicitly to elders and not directly to Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). Inuit participants rarely referred to Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) by name. What became evident in the responses to the researcher was that the elders were now the main carriers of the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). In this study, findings show that currently in these two Inuit communities in Nunavut, youth today were less familiar with Inuit culture and Inuit traditional knowledge (*IQ*), adults were more familiar with Inuit culture and less familiar with Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), and elders are the only ones who were still familiar with both. Therefore, elders were the best data source for the sub-question related to Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). This fact would reflect a generational loss of an Inuit cultural norm because traditionally Inuit culture would have been intertwined with Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and familiar to adults as well as elders.

The second modification also resulted from the emergent interviewees responses in both communities. Within each of those four broad themes, data was then further divided into three participant groups for each theme: an Inuit elder, Inuit students, and Inuit adult. Using this approach, the researcher felt that what was “echoed” in each community would emerge more readily. This second modification began by looking at data from Inuit students’ perceptions of what helps them stay in school to answer the first research sub-question. To answer the second sub-question, data from the Inuit adult

community members was initially used to determine what they perceived to be the role of the Inuit culture in and outside of school. The words of elders were also used to initially answer the third sub-question related to the role of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) within and outside of school. The words of the elders were kept separate from the data analysis of the students and adults, and their words were quoted within the appropriate sections.

The third modification led to an increase in the number of Inuit adult participants, other than Inuit students, and the use of graphs to present findings in order to gain further insight into the research sub-questions. As the researcher began to examine preliminary student data in the field in relation to the first sub-question: What would help more students stay in school?, it became clear that the Inuit students in both communities responded generally rather than specifically to what might help other students. Students who did not respond might not have experienced some of the activities being inquired about in the survey. One adult noted that “some of the students are really quiet” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF2). Limited student responses may also be a cultural trait related to the value Inuit place on respecting each other’s mind set (*isuma*).<sup>115</sup> For example, students would generally comment, “Just stay in school and wake up in the morning (Pangnirtung student: SSF3) or “Just don’t give up, try hard, study more” (Sanikiluaq student: SSM4). In both communities, students sometimes gave a limited response, rather than offer their opinions. For example, when the researcher asked about if having more elders in the school would help students to stay in school, a Pangnirtung

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<sup>115</sup> The concept of Inuit mindset (*isuma*) refers to the respect given for an individual’s inner most feelings and thoughts. This concept is described in more detail in chapter eight.

student responded, “Yes” (Pangnirtung student: PSM6). When the researcher rephrased the question to ask if they would like to see more elders, the student again responded “Yes” (Pangnirtung student: PSM6). In Sanikiluaq, when the researcher asked a student if they would like to see more elders in the school, the student replied, “Yup” (Sanikiluaq student: SSF5).<sup>116</sup> When the researcher rephrased the questions to ask if the student thought it would help to have more elders in the school, the student again replied, “Yup” (Sanikiluaq student: SSF5). This rephrasing was done to be sure that the Inuit students who chose to be interviewed in English, their second language, understood the question. The researcher determined that these short answer responses would provide more insight if they were graphed. Initially graphs were introduced as a means of visually representing students’ and other participants “opinions” about what they would like, but had not experienced or just responded too in a limited fashion. Realizing the ease of accessing the data that the graphs provided, graphs were then selectively used throughout the dissertation where appropriate. During the data collection process in the field this second modification involved increasing the adult participants in the study as described in the previous section on participants.

The fourth modification took into account the Inuit holistic approach. Findings from each of the two community case studies were combined into a framework based on the four broad themes - home, school, community, and Inuit culture. The examples that supports this identified framework across the two communities is presented in chapter six. The way that this framework has been uniquely implemented in each of the

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<sup>116</sup> Another example of a limited student response is provided in Appendix V and Appendix W.



communities is presented in chapter seven. The conclusions, implications, my insight, and my recommendation from the research findings that were organized into a cultural framework are discussed in chapter eight.

While the findings did not change, this fourth modification resulted in altering the draft presentation of the findings that were presented as two community case studies into the theme based format that now appears in this dissertation. This change enabled the stories that were heard as distant and faint echoes beneath a magnitude of data, surface as clear voices supported by that same data. This fourth modification reflected more than just an organizational change. Further data analysis revealed to the researcher that the original research question of “What do Inuit perceive to be modern guideposts (*nutaaq inuksuit*) that help Inuit students to stay in high school in Nunavut, Canada?” unknowingly assumed that Inuit would be likely to tell others what would be best for them, and that such advice would be true for most students. The data did not support this assumption. The data did support viewing responses holistically as well as from the perspective of its interconnected parts in a way that supported the Inuit’s view for how knowledge is learned. Furthermore, the researcher learned that though stone guideposts (*inuksuit*) may look similar to an untrained viewer, traditionally these structures were not built to be all alike or to “tell” hunters where to go. They were built to provide basic information relevant to a particular terrain that could then be interpreted by the hunter in relation to the hunter’s skill and resources (Wallace, 1999). What emerged from the findings were themes that showed similarities as well as differences across the two communities. Therefore, in this research study, findings were not presented as a case

study of each community. Similar findings around the influences that helped Inuit students stay in school were organized into a framework described in chapter six. Findings that indicated how this framework was implemented differently in each community were discussed in chapter seven.

Two photographs of the researcher's children illustrate the interrelationship between establishing similar findings and having some aspects of these findings experienced differently by the two communities (Figure 57 and Figure 58). All three children were exposed to a duck, yet their developmental level effected their reaction to it. My older son felt pride in being able to hunt his first duck. His sister did not want to touch, let alone try taking the feathers off, a duck that was dead. My younger son was just learning how to be gentle with a baby duckling.<sup>117</sup>



Figure 57: Duck Picture Elaine and Jason



Figure 58: Duck Picture with Nathan

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<sup>117</sup>A photograph included in chapter six, shows my younger son, when he returned to Nunavut as a teenager, with the first duck he hunted.

The next two sections, the *Cross Comparison of Findings Across Two Communities* and the *Participants Response to the First Research Sub-Question*, provide the background information used to identify which Inuit cultural norms are needed to build guideposts.

#### *Comparison of Findings Across Two Communities*

Findings from Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq were organized and compared across the four broad themes--home, school, community, and Inuit culture. For each theme, similar findings across the two communities are identified below.

In the home, there were only rudimentary levels of readiness for high school, parent involvement, and a home-school connection in relation to the parents' level of education and literacy in the home. In relation to the home, the majority of the Inuit adults' parents from both communities were educated on the land. The majority of the students' parents from both communities had been educated in a school. Traditional Inuit Knowledge (*IQ*) gained from on-the-land experiences that were passed down from generation to generation was no longer occurring any more in both communities. The keepers of this Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) were the few remaining elders. In both communities, Inuktitut was spoken by the majority of participants in their homes. There was little or no print in most Inuit students' and Inuit adults' homes, and print in English was more prevalent than print in Inuktitut. Some of the parents in both communities have had negative residential school experiences. This phenomenon resulted in more students reporting that their grandparents or parents, who had not been educated in the schools,

were actually the individuals that encouraged them to stay in school, rather than the parents who had themselves been in school.

In school, there were only rudimentary levels of funded learning opportunities that valued relationships and mentoring with elders or other individuals. These learning opportunities did occur in relation to the Inuit culture theme. While these learning opportunities may have been funded by the Nunavut Department of Education at certain times, the majority of the funding needed to operate and sustain these activities came from private sources. In relation to the school and teaching processes, students in both communities felt that a good teacher should be friendly and approachable. The majority of the students in both communities did not know who to go to when they had trouble with their homework. In both communities, female students went for help to more than one source, including their parents. Male students in both communities were more likely to go to only one source, such as the teacher. Some male students in both communities had remained in grade ten for at least four years. Most Inuit adults in both communities did not comment about grade ten, possibly because grade ten was readily available to them.

In the community, there were only rudimentary levels of communications and networking among government departments, businesses, and local organizations. Participation in exchange programs usually required regular attendance and good grades, while participation in sports required athletic ability. Gender differences were noted across the two communities.

In relation to Inuit culture, some traditional skills were taught. Learning from elders and other individuals how to apply cultural values and principles like Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) was minimal. For Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), the majority of student and adult participants in both communities felt that elders should be more involved in the school.

*Participants' Response to the First Research Sub-Question*

In addition to the comparison of findings across the four broad themes, participants in both communities were asked the research sub-question: What they thought would help more Inuit students stay in school? Participants from both communities specifically identified what they thought might be needed academically within the broad themes of school and community. Aspects of the home and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) were identified as supportive to the learning environment.

In responding to this question, there were similarities across the two communities as well as differences. In both communities, Inuit students indicated that school activities, exchange programs, and elders helped them to stay in school. This question further supports the cross comparison findings that students desire elders to be more involved in the school because they believe it would help them to stay in school. The fact that the influence of elders was mentioned as a second or third influence may be related to the holistic view Inuit have of learning that includes one's academic, physical, and spiritual well-being. Students may perceive elders as a contributing influence to their over all well-being, rather than an influence that will academically enable them to pass. While other questions in the cross comparison may have highlighted differences

across the community in terms of the community theme, the responses to this question provided clear indication that students in both communities felt that school activities and exchange programs would help them to stay in school. Different responses in communities reflect the unique context of a community.

In Pangnirtung, most students (Figure 59 and Tables 20 – 21) and adults (Figure 60 and Table 22) did not comment on this question. The lack of student responses may be an indication that most students have not participated in these extracurricular activities, so it would be hard for them to comment as to whether they would help them stay in school or not. Parents may not have responded because of the fact that they may not have had experiences in school that helped them, especially if they had been sent to residential schools.

Of those students who did respond (Figure 59 and Tables 20 –21), female students reported that activities in school and exchange programs helped them to stay in school. Female students then reported that day care and housing would be secondary influences that would help support their stay in school. Of the male students that responded, they felt that elders and having academic support would help them to stay in school.

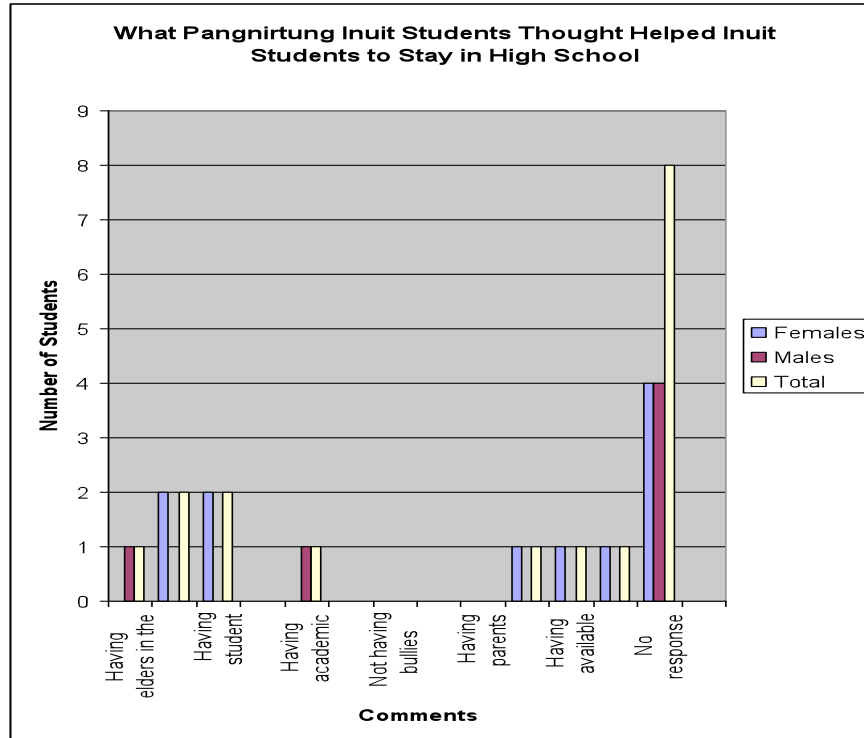


Figure 59: What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students Stay in High School

Table 20: What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School Including Comments From Having Elders in School, Having More Activities, Having Student Exchanges, Having Academic Support, and Having Available Day Care

(Only categories where comments were made are reported.)

Comments	Females (9)	Males (6)	Total (15)
Having elders in the school and learning about Inuit culture	11% of 9 females	0%	7% of 15 students
Having more activities	22% of 9 females	0%	13% of 15 students
Having student exchanges	22% of 9 females	0%	13% of 15 students
Having academic support and less distractions	0%	17% of 6 males	7% of 15 students
Having available day care	11% of 9 females	0%	7% of 15 students

Table 21: What Pangnirtung Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School Including Comments From Having Available Housing, Students who Made More Than one Comment, and No Response

Having available housing	11% of 9 females	0%	7% of 15 students
Students who made more than one comment	11% of 9 females	0%	7% of 15 students
No response	44% of 9 females	67% of 6 males	53% of 15 students

Of the few adults in Pangnirtung that did respond, (Table 21) both a male and a female commented that having a good foundation in the Inuit culture and knowing the long term benefits of education helped Inuit students to stay in high school. Two female adults also commented that having elders in the school to teach about Inuit culture and having activities also helped students to remain in school (Table 22).

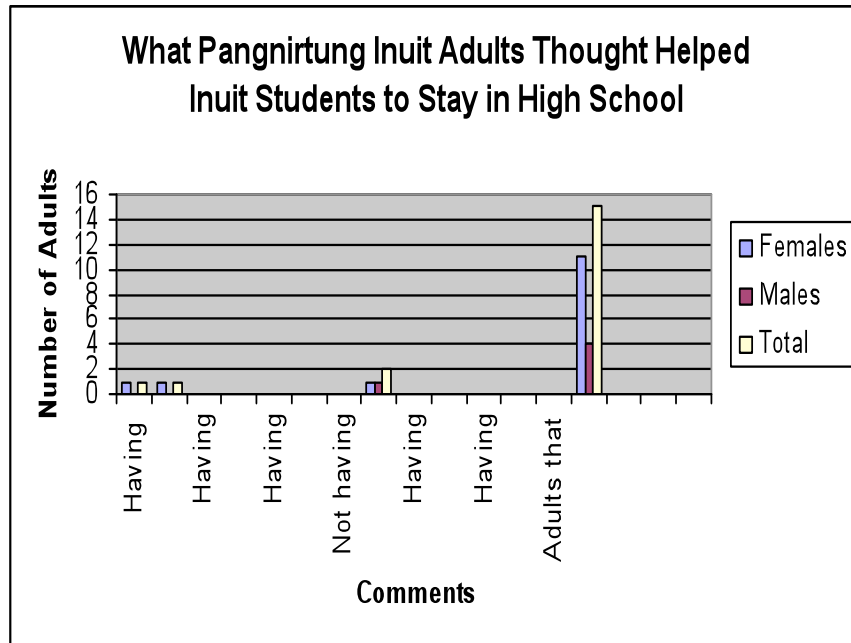


Figure 60: What Pangnirtung Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students Stay in High School



Table 22: What Pangnirtung Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School  
(Only categories where comments were made are reported.)

Comments	Females (14)	Males (5)	Total (19)
Having elders in the school and learning about Inuit culture	7% of 14 females	0%	5% of 19 adults
Having more activities	7% of 14 females	0%	5% Of 19 adults
Having a good foundation in Inuit culture and knowing the long term benefits of an education	7% of 14 females	20% of 5 males	11% of 19 adults
Adults who made more than one comment	0%	0%	0%
No response	73% of 14 females	80% of 5 males	79% of 19 adults

In contrast, in Sanikiluaq, most students (Figure 61 and Tables 23 - 24), and adults (Figures 62 and Table 25) did comment on this question. Students and adults in Sanikiluaq might have felt better able to respond to this question because they had experienced the difference that these programs had made in their community.

Most students in Sanikiluaq commented on this question. Both female and male students felt that what helped them the most to stay in school was having elders in the school to teach about the Inuit culture. The Innovative Cultural Programming in Sanikiluaq which provides elders with numerous ways to interact with students in school strongly supports their opinions. Both female and male students then also felt that having activities, student exchanges, learning about careers, and having parents involved helped them to remain in school. Female students also mentioned that having academic support; homework; a good foundation in Inuit culture and knowing the long term benefits of

education, and a day care contributed further to their being able to stay in high school.

Male students felt that not having bullies contributed further to their being able to stay in high school (Figure 61 and Table 23 – 24)).

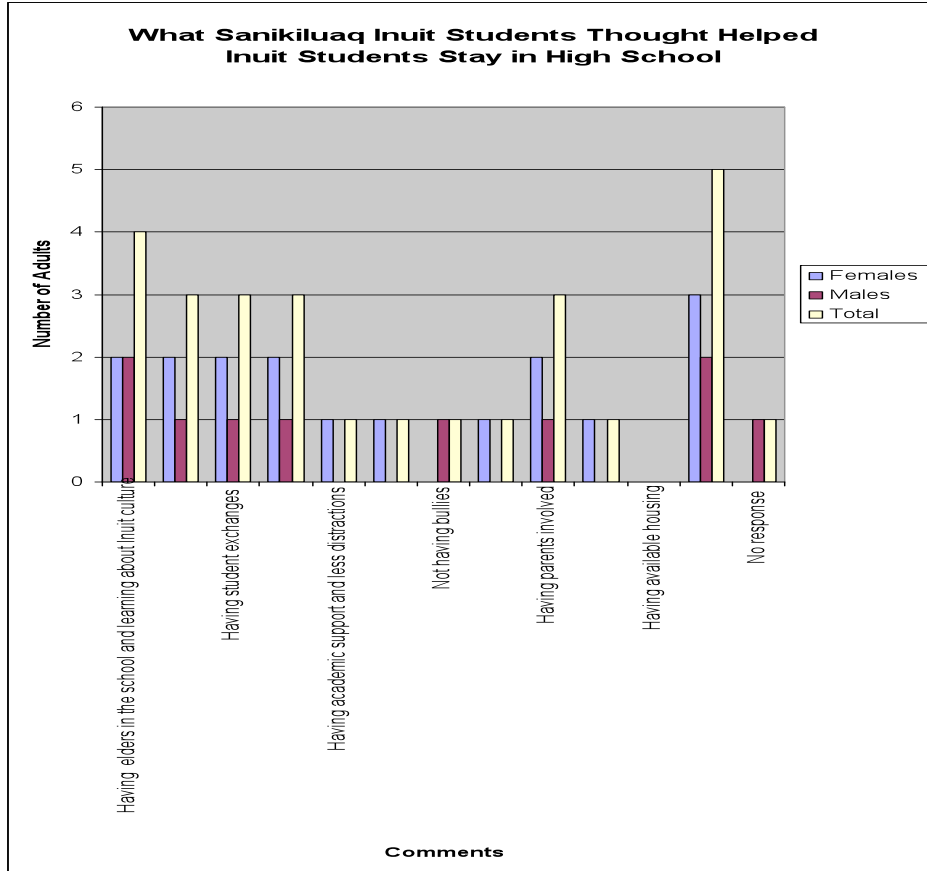


Figure 61: What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School

Table 23: What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School: Comments Include Having Elders in the School and Having More Activities

(Only categories where comments were made are reported.)

Comments	Females (10)	Males (7)	Total (17)
Having elders in the school and learning about Inuit culture	20% of 10 females	29% of 7 males	4/17 23.52% 24% of 17 students
Having more activities	20% of 10 females	14% of 7 males	18% of 17 students

Table 24: What Sanikiluaq Inuit Students Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School: Comments Include Having Student Exchanges, Learning About Careers, Having Academic Support and Less Distractions, Having Homework, Not having Bullies, Having a Good Foundation in Inuit Culture, Having Parents Involved, Having Available Day Care, Adults who Made More than one Comment and No Response

Having student exchanges	20% of 10 females	14% of 7 males	18% of 17 students
Learning about careers	20% of 10 females	14% of 7 males	18% Of 17 students
Having academic support and less distractions	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Having homework	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Not having bullies	0%	14% of 7 males	6% Of 17 students
Having a good foundation in Inuit culture and knowing the long term benefits of an education	10% of 10 females	0%	6% Of 17 students
Having parents involved	20% Of 10 females	14% of 7 males	18% of 17 students
Having available day care	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Adults who made more than one comment	30% of 10 females	29% Of 7 males	29% 17 students
No response	0%	14% of 7 males	6% of 17 students

Both female and male adults in Sanikiluaq indicated that extra- curricular activities helped Inuit students to stay in school. This is not a surprising finding in a school that has received national recognition for its numerous innovative school programs that involve community partnerships for funding and combine modern and traditional skills. Adults were able to say from experience that these types of programs helped Inuit youth. Female adults felt that exchanges would be the second influence that

would help students stay in school and having elders in the school would be the third influence. Male adults also felt that exchange programs would be the second influence that would help students to stay in school along with having a good foundation and knowing the long-term benefits of staying in school. Male adults, like the female adults, felt that elders were the third influence to help Inuit youths to stay in school (Figure 62 and Table 25).

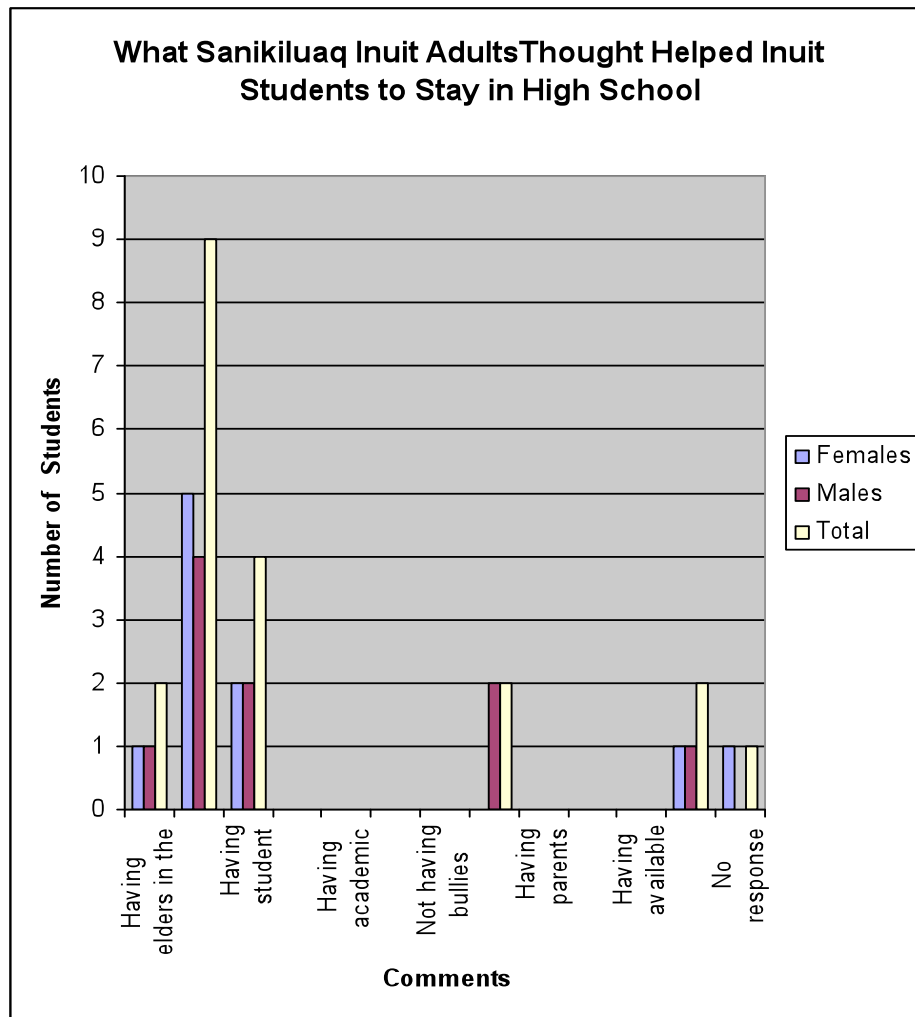


Figure 62: What Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School

Table 25: What Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults Thought Helped Inuit Students to Stay in High School  
(Only categories where comments were made are reported.)

Comments	Females (8)	Males (5)	Total (13)
Having elders in the school and learning about Inuit culture	13% of 8 females	20% of 5 males	15% of 13 adults
Having more activities	63% of 8 females % of 8 females	80% of 5 males	9/13 69.23 69% of 13 adults
Having student exchanges	25% of 8 females	40% of 5 males	31% of 13 adults
Having a good foundation in Inuit culture and knowing the long term benefits of an education	0%	40% of 5 males	15% of 13 adults
Adults who made more than one comment	13% of 8 females	20% of 5 males	15% of 13 adults
No response	13% of 8 females	0%	8% of 13 adults

The differences in responses to this question were supported by the researcher's observations made at the beginning of the school year. In both communities there was an Inuk certified as a principal or co-principal. In both communities many trained Inuit teachers were working in the elementary grades, some of whom had completed their Bachelors of Education degree. Some of those on staff in both communities were also participating in the pilot masters of education degree program.

The difference in the two communities was the physical structure for the delivery of education. In Pangnirtung, the elementary school (K-5) and the high school (6-12)

were in different buildings, and operated as separate entities. The cultural activities occurring in the elementary school did not directly benefit the high school on a day-to-day basis. In the high school, Inuit teachers do not have college degrees, but they have relevant experience to function as instructors of Inuktitut language, sewing, or shop, providing student support, and administrative help. Occasionally, common activities are planned between the two schools. The researcher attended one such activity, a school picnic to introduce parents to their children's teachers.

In contrast, in Sanikiluaq, there is only one school building (K-12). The expertise of the Inuit staff and their cultural backgrounds directly affect the entire school on a day-to-day basis. The cultural influence from the certified Inuit elementary teachers and staff was stronger in the high school, even though there were not any certified Inuit high school teachers for the standard academic subjects. The foyer of the school in Sanikiluaq is designed as a museum. Older students, community members, and elders work together in activities to develop the artifacts and displays that become part of the museum.

There is a positive indirect influence on the high school students when the high school is in the same building as the elementary school that has certified and involved Inuit teachers such as in Sanikiluaq. When this occurs, high school students are exposed to more intergenerational school-wide cultural activities, which they say helps them stay in school.

*Explanation of Which Cultural Norms are Needed to Build Guideposts*

“[The stories are] the same all over the communities and when they tell them, they're not... [exactly] the same” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk's reference to the stories she tells is applicable to this research and the modifications that resulted from listening to the participants. The similar findings between the two communities provided a cultural framework for what Inuit perceived would help more students graduate. The comparison of these findings identified influences that interviewees perceived would help more Inuit students to stay in high school in order to graduate, and they believe these influences are no longer acknowledged in the educational system.

Implicit to the participants in this study is that the findings or influences they perceived to help Inuit students to stay in school are some of their Inuit cultural norms. While these cultural norms may have been lost in the school system over the generations, the researcher noted that the particular norms identified in this research as contributing to students staying in school are still present in every-day Inuit child-rearing practices. The presence of these particular Inuit cultural norms was noted in *Kim's Stories* involving the researcher's children who were raised by her in the Arctic environment. Viewing the identified cultural norms within a holistic framework enables each of the communities studied to identify the entire set of needed influences and yet develop their own unique conceptual guideposts.

A summary of the research findings related to the cultural norms are presented below along with the associated Inuktitut phrases. Interviewees expressed a desire or need for the following conditions:

1. In the home, they desired a greater readiness for high school, more parent involvement, and closer home-school partnerships than the rudimentary levels

that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Are we prepared and ready to go?” (“*Atii?*”)

2. In the school, they desired more funded learning opportunities that value relationships and mentoring with elders and other individuals than the rudimentary levels that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Remember I care about you and our relationship?” (“*Ain?*”)
3. In the community, they desired better communications and networking among government departments, businesses, and local organizations than the rudimentary levels that exist now. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Are we in agreement?” (“*Ii?*”)
4. In relation to the Inuit culture, they desire more traditional skills to be taught. They also desire that Inuit youths learn from the elders and other individuals how to apply cultural values, like “Inuit Traditional Knowledge,” in the modern world. The Inuktitut phrase is: “Do you want to go outdoors together?” (“*Ittaarlu?*”)

The different findings provided examples of how the same framework was implemented differently in each community. This would be similar to having the same story told with some variation in different communities. Presenting the findings in a framework, rather than as statements, respects the Inuit mind set (*isuma*) to form their own opinions. This framework is more accurate to the image of a guidepost (*nutaaq inuksuk*) because traditionally guideposts did not tell people to keep out or enter, they just provided the information needed for a hunter to decide what he was able to do depending



on his skill level. In keeping with this image, the cultural framework identified in this study would be represented by the types of stones that would be needed to build a guidepost in both communities. The findings that showed differences might vary in its effect, like similar stones of different sizes. The size of these stones would be the result of the community's distinct strengths, needs, and resources. The interrelationships among the four needed conditions, stated above, would be the equivalent of arranging stones differently in each community to build a relevant guidepost (Figures 63 and Figure 64).



Figure 63: Inuksuk



Figure 64: Inuksuk

Inuksuk <http://www.filibustercartoons.com/New%20Canada%20Guide/content/territories/inuk.jpg>  
[http://www.explore.canada.travel/ctc/images/keepexploring/microsite/pure-canada/out-about/out-about-article/inuksuk4\\_big.jpg](http://www.explore.canada.travel/ctc/images/keepexploring/microsite/pure-canada/out-about/out-about-article/inuksuk4_big.jpg)

### Kim's Story: The Importance of Shared Knowledge

I was a newly certified teacher when I arrived in Nunavut, Canada in 1977. I looked forward to the challenge of teaching a combined class of grade one and grade two Inuit students. None of the students spoke English and I did not speak Inuktitut, their

native language. I had a full-time Inuk<sup>118</sup> classroom assistant, who later became a teacher. At that time, she would translate everything I said to the class, and explain it so that the Inuit children would understand what to do and the content of the material to be covered.

I remember the first reporting period when report cards were issued prior to a school vacation. I was particularly pleased that one student in the class asked a lot of questions as compared to his peers who were mostly quiet, watchful students. I wanted to inform his parents that this attribute was beneficial for success in school, so I added a note to that effect on his report card.

During vacation period many Inuit used to go with their children and extended families to camp on the land. This type of adventure was considered a treat, something young and old would look forward to and enjoy as much as other Canadians might relish a trip to Disneyland. Most of the town seemed deserted and everyone appeared to have gone camping. I was surprised that the particular student whose behavior I had complimented was still around. When I asked him why he wasn't camping with his family, he explained that he had to stay behind with relatives because of what I wrote on his report card. I was confused by his comments. I asked other community members to explain why he had been punished. Apparently, Inuit value learning by watching instead learning by asking questions. The word, "*Appiqquit*" is a negative attribute in Inuktitut, meaning, "You ask too many questions." The boy's parents thought the comment I had written meant he was misbehaving, and they were reprimanding him for it. I contacted the parents by radio to explain that their son should be rewarded not reprimanded.

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<sup>118</sup> Inuk is the singular form of the word Inuit.

Unfortunately, my ignorance of Inuit culture caused the misunderstanding. They accepted my explanation and the boy was allowed to go camping.

Even though I thought I finally understood that Inuit learn by observing and doing, not by asking, it was not until a few years later that I also began to gain insight into the importance of the meaning behind what was said. By that time my Inuktitut had slowly improved, and I felt proud that I could usually be understood. I could speak in the same simple phrases that the Inuit used when rearing their children. Some examples of these phrases were: Are we in agreement? (*Ii?*); Are we prepared and ready to go? (*Atii?*); Can we go outside (on the land) together? (*Ittaarlu?*); and to my children, Remember I care about you and our relationship? (*Ain?*) I felt deeply humiliated one day when an elder asked me when I was going to stop speaking “baby talk,” which I had picked up from my children, and start learning more formal Inuktitut. Thereafter, I made a deliberate attempt to listen to how adults spoke to each other.

I wanted to go on a boat ride across the fiord to go fishing. I was told that a particular fisherman went often, and that I should ask him if I could go with him one day. I remember practicing the phrases for a week before I got the courage to ask in Inuktitut, “When can I go fishing with you?” (“*Qanga Iqalliaratta?*”) “How much would it cost?” (“*Qattiraarajanga?*”) His response was, “My large boat is blue.” (“*Umiarpajaara tungurtuq.*”) Even though I could translate every word, I did not understand what he meant. When I repeated my questions in Inuktitut, the fisherman repeated his. Baffled, I went away and asked another Inuk to explain his answer. He just smiled and told me that when I understood what was meant, I would be able to go fishing.

I really, really wanted to go fishing, so I tried to figure out what the fisherman meant that everyone else understood. I had to watch the tides in relation to the fisherman's boat because fishermen can only use their boats when the tide reaches the location where their boats are anchored. Luckily, the fisherman's boat was easy to spot on the tidal area because it was the only large blue boat there. I observed that his boat would be in the water only early in the morning and in the evening. I also learned, through word of mouth, that on certain days the fisherman did not go fishing because he worked part time on a community project and/or had to wait to go fishing until he got a biweekly pay check to help cover gas expenses. About two weeks later, I showed up at his boat with my fishing gear. It was a Saturday morning, after his payday, and the tide had just come in. I had obtained a fishing license, and I had enough money to cover the fee that I had heard he charged tourists. The fisherman smiled when he saw me, and motioned for me to get aboard. He waved aside the money I tried to offer him. This would be a great fishing story if I remembered whether I caught any fish, or if a big one got away; but I don't remember that part at all. I do remember that it was one of the best times I ever had boating, fishing, enjoying the company of others, and stopping for a cup of tea and a snack. It was such an exhilarating feeling to have learned to interpret the concept behind formal Inuktitut words. But most of all, I remember how the day seemed so beautiful because it was first time I felt I was able to understand knowledge which the community shared that was not recorded or explicitly stated.

## CHAPTER SIX: Describing the Cultural Framework

### *Introduction*

This chapter is divided into four sections that discuss the similar findings between Pagnirtung and Sanikiluaq pertaining to home, school, community, and Inuit culture. Within these four areas, certain influences were identified that would help more Inuit to graduate from high school. These influences are not currently utilized by the school system, however they are still apparent in Inuit cultural norms associated with child-rearing practices. Since Inuit think holistically, the researcher organized these areas of influence to form a framework that respects their cultural values. This cultural framework can be used as a guidepost by the two communities to help more Inuit students remain in school. These guideposts would be similar to the stone images used to guide hunters and travelers (Figure 65).



Figure 65: Inuksuk  
Inunnguaq (Which Means “Like a Human Being”), Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, Canada  
Photograph taken by Ansgar Walk, created July 18, 1996

To establish a baseline, participants were asked to identify what was presently occurring. Inuit also suggested what they thought might be needed in the future. Chapter seven explains how each community used the stones that were identified as guideposts, but arranged them differently.

*Findings Related to the Home: Are we Prepared and Ready to go? (Atii?)*

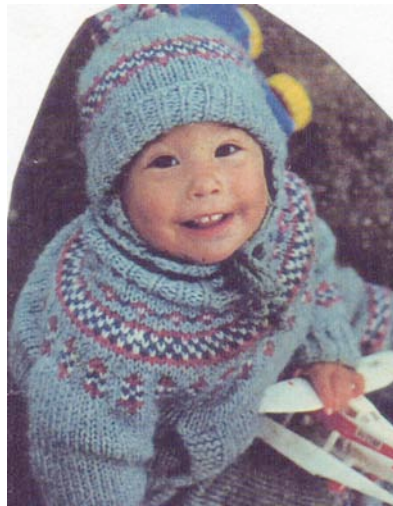


Figure 66: Researcher's Son as a Toddler

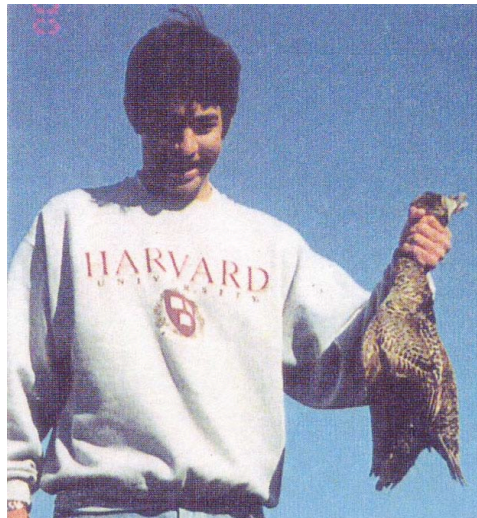


Figure 67: Researcher's Son with First Duck

Family values and literacy experiences in the home were identified in the literature as influences that would encourage more Inuit children to remain in school until graduation. To identify the current literacy environment of the home, data was collected in both communities related to students' and adults' education levels, the use of Inuktitut and English at home, and individuals who encouraged the participants to go to school. Emergent themes in the data revealed that interviewees in both communities expressed a desire to help students achieve a greater readiness for high school, wanted more parent involvement, and a better home-school partnership.

Inuit often ask each other if they are prepared and ready to go by using the expression "Atii?" It is also used in Inuit child-rearing practices by adults when they are raising a toddler. It implies that a toddler has the opportunity to follow someone more knowledgeable who acts as a guide in activities that the toddler would not be able to do on his or her own. This expression applies to the findings related to the home environment, because there is a certain "readiness and preparation" that high school students need that can be supported by better home-school communication and parent involvement.

### *Current Literacy in the Home*

#### *Education levels.*

The education levels of students' parents in the two communities varied. Most students' parents in Pangnirtung were educated in school, whereas most students' parents in Sanikiluaq were educated on the land. In Pangnirtung, most students' mothers had been educated in school, while in Sanikiluaq, most of them were educated on the land.

(Figure 67 and Table 26). In Pangnirtung, most students' fathers had also been educated in school, while in Sanikiluaq, more fathers were educated on the land (Figure 68 and Table 27). However, in both communities, the parents of Inuit adults were educated by living on the land. The participants' education levels were directly influenced by one of the four historic time periods, identified by Darnell (Pulpan, 2005), that were described in chapter three.

The Inuit student participants are in Darnell's fourth historical period, which began with the creation of Nunavut in 1999. They would have had the opportunity to attend school from kindergarten through grade 12 while remaining in their own community. At the time of Nunavut's creation, those students who were in grade 3, would have been in grade twelve when this research was conducted. In fact, this research stipulated that the students selected to participate in this study had to be currently enrolled for the 2007-2008 school year in grades ten, eleven, twelve, or had just completed grade twelve during the 2006-2007 school year.

In both communities, Inuit adult participants in their forties would have been affected by the third historical period, when community schools were first established. Some of these adults went to a local elementary school for a few years and then had the option of going to a residential school away from their home community to complete their high school years. Some adults did not attend school, but continued to be educated on the land. This may be one reason why more students' parents in Sanikiluaq were educated on the land.



Inuit adults in their fifties would have been affected by the second historical period when the Canadian government forced students to attend schools outside of their community. This was a time when some Inuit students were sent to centralized or residential schools according to mandatory government initiatives. More of students' parents in Pangnirtung seem to have been effected by this influence. This may be one reason why more students' parents in Pangnirtung were educated in schools.

Elders and adults participants' parents would have experienced the first historical period which was characterized by contact with missionaries and the establishment of trading posts. The majority of Inuit would have continued to educate their children as their ancestors traditionally had done. This may be one reason why elders, and the parents of the adult participants, in both communities, were educated on the land.

Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk and Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk were daughters of two of the first Inuit families to become wage earners instead of relying on a nomadic hunting life style.

There was no school when she first came [to Pangnirtung]. She first came to work at the hospital when there was a hospital, way before [she had children, she was] living at the hospital... [she was] boarding up there and they were fed up there. [Back then there were only] four families [living] in the different parts of Pangnirtung. There [was] one [family] working for Hudson Bay, one [family] working for the hospital, one [family] for RCMP, they were the main [helpers]. Hardly anyone had igloos, even their ancestors didn't live in igloos... [mostly] kamiks [traditional sod houses] (Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

In 1954, there was a store and the manager's house at the [Belcher] island then... There used to be only one family, her family, and the only neighbors that they had were Cree... [The elder further confirmed that her father had been in the town one of the longest as] he came back in '54 to be the Manager of the Hudson Bay... [Her] father spoke English, Inuktitut, and Cree. (Sanikiluak Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

The varying effects of schooling in these historical periods have produced several generations of Inuit parents who did not gain all the cultural knowledge needed from living on the land. As a result, Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) that would have previously been transmitted from parent to child did not occur. Even in Sanikiluaq, where most students' parents were educated on the land, students did not have the opportunity to participate in on-the-land experiences because they were required to be in school.

One of the most compelling findings of my study was that Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and traditional values were not incorporated into cultural skill programs for Inuit youths. This finding is supported by previous qualitative research done in Sanikiluaq that identified this phenomenon as a cultural discontinuity between the knowledge of the elders and its transmission to the parental generation of the current generation of youths (Pulpan, 2005).

Another striking finding of my study was that Inuit youths did not see the value of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and traditional values in an ever changing, modern global context. The researcher asked students, "Where did your mom learn, on the land or in the school?" To indicate that her mother had not been educated in school, one female

student (SSF9) replied in English, “I think she did not learn.” This was similar to informal comments by other students that showed Inuit youths do not understand the value of being educated on the land in today’s society.

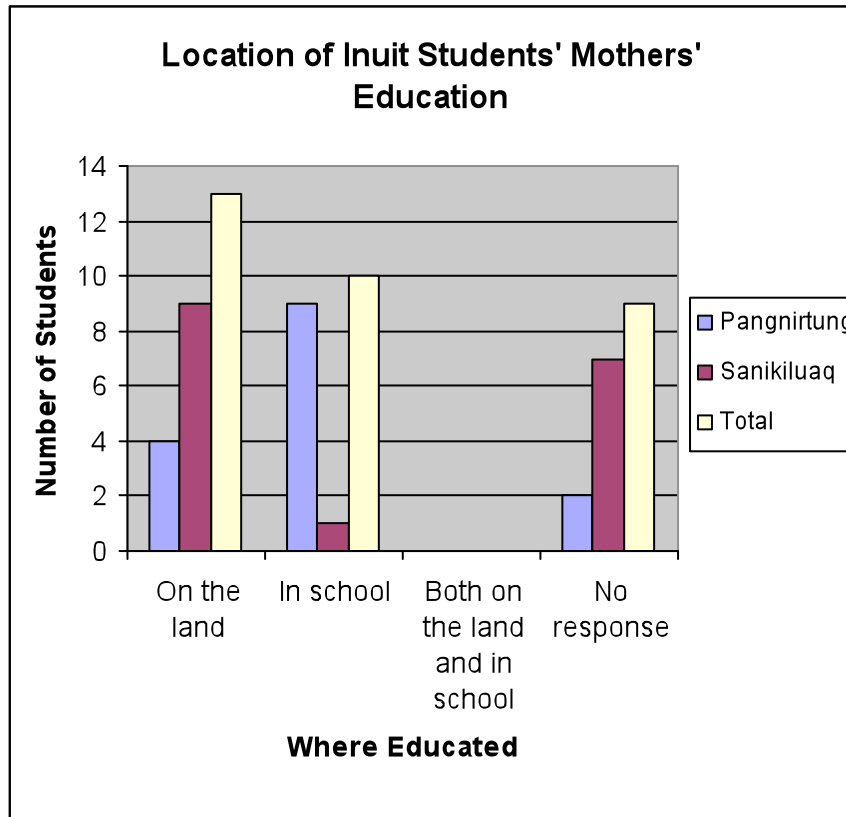


Figure 67: Location of Inuit Students’ Mothers’ Education

Table 26: Locations of Inuit Students’ Mothers’ Education

	Pagnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
On the land	27% of 15 student	53% of 17 student	40% of 32 students
In school	60% of 15 student	6% of 17 student	31% of 32 students
Both on the land and in school	0% of 15 student	0% of 17 student	0% of 32 students
No response	13% of 15 student	41% of 17 student	28% of 32 students

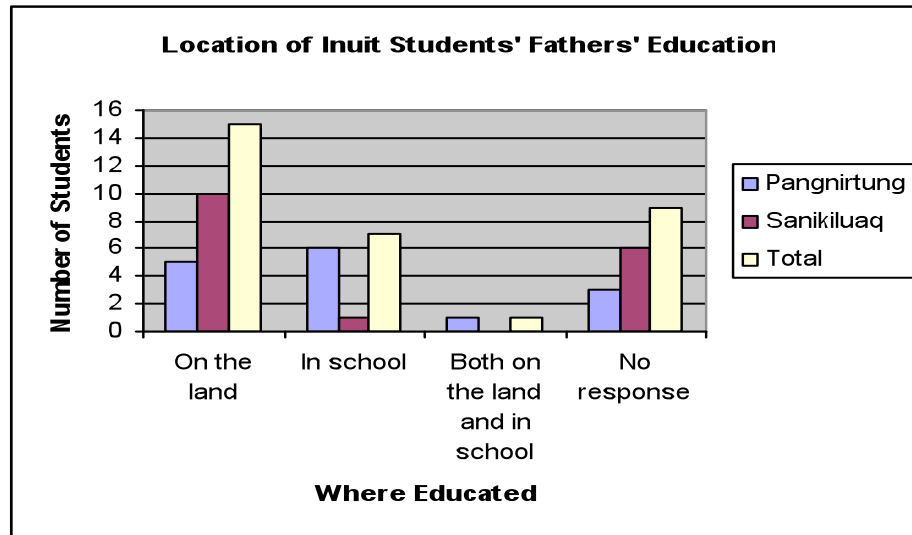


Figure 68: Location of Inuit Students' Fathers' Education

Table 27: Locations of Inuit Students' Fathers' Education

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
On the land	33% of 15 student	59% of 17 student	47% of 32 students
In school	40% of 15 student	6% of 17 student	22% of 32 students
Both on the land and in school	7% of 15 student	0% of 17 student	3% of 32 students
No response	20% of 15 student	35% of 17 student	28% of 32 students

### *Use of Inuktitut at Home*

Findings from both communities were examined in terms of oral and written use of Inuktitut in the home. All of the Inuit student participants reported that mostly Inuktitut was spoken in their homes (Figure 69 and Table 28). Most students in both communities also stated that Inuktitut print was not available in their homes (Figure 70 and Table 29). The category of “some” Inuktitut print referred to magazines, newspapers,

and books. A “no response” option was included in this category because some of the participants could not recall if there had been any print materials or not.

Inuit adults in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq said that Inuktitut was the dominant language spoken in their homes. The majority of Inuit adults did not comment on the availability of Inuktitut print in their homes. A few stated that there was some Inuktitut print was in their homes, like magazines, newspaper, and/or books.

Elder Aichinak Kilabuk and Elder Mina Inuktulak speak only Inuktitut. They did not mention whether there was Inuktitut print in their homes, but when they were growing up, few Inuktitut print materials were available.

It is not surprising that most students and adult participants did not have written Inuktitut materials in their homes. Inuktitut first began to be recorded in the 1950s. Printed materials in both Inuktitut and English became available in Baffin Island<sup>119</sup> around 1970. The findings related to Inuktitut usage are consistent with available statistics from the 2006 Canadian Census indicating that 90 percent of the Nunavut population still speak Inuktitut as their first language. Inuktitut print was not available in many homes since the Inuit were a nomadic people who passed down their history and culture orally, and there were hardly any printed Inuktitut materials available. Reverend Peck, an Anglican missionary, is credited with the spread of the use of Inuktitut symbols when he translated the Bible and wrote an Inuktitut to English dictionary in 1950s. Many of the early Inuktitut books were written only for the schools by native teachers in training. The first publishing company for Inuktitut materials, Nortext, was started in

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<sup>119</sup> Baffin Island was in the Northwest Territories, and it later became part of Nunavut.

1970. Newspapers in Inuktitut and English, like *Nunatsiaq News*, *News of the North* were first published in the 1970s (CBC-Archives, 2007).

While spoken Inuktitut was prevalent in homes, one adult recalls that at one time, it was not allowed in schools. When he went to school, “It was just a little room like this. It was a teacher and books and chalkboard. I don’t know how the students are today because when we [spoke] Inuktitut, they used to hit us, like told us not to speak Inuktitut. So I don’t know what they are doing now and if you misbehaved, you’d stand in the corner” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAM2).

Another adult male commented about the increasing use of Inuktitut materials in schools:

I can see that they are teaching [using] Inuktitut materials... [in elementary school] and that is helping... [students] to read Inuktitut very well, even better than me. When I went to school, we were lucky to get even fifteen minutes of Inuktitut a week... back then it wasn’t really learning, nobody was actually teaching us Inuktitut... It was somebody coming in to read the Bible because that is all there was in Inuktitut, we hardly paid attention anyways.

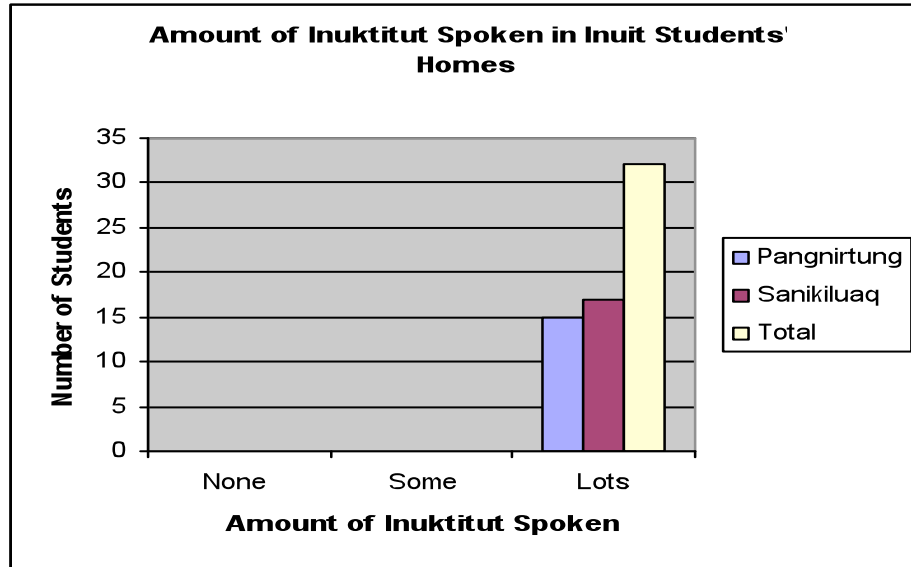


Figure 69: Amount of Inuktitut Spoken in Inuit Students' Homes

Table 28: Amount of Inuktitut Spoken in Inuit Students' Homes

Amount of Inuktitut Spoken in Inuit Students' Homes			
	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Some	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Lots	100% of 15 students	100% of 17 students	100% of 32 students

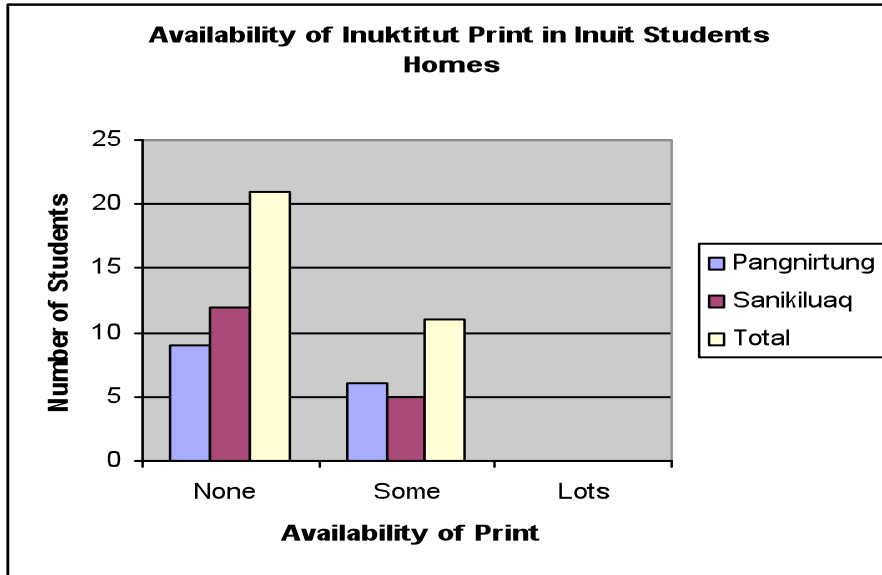


Figure 70: Amount of Inuktitut Print in Inuit Students' Homes

Table 29: Amount of Inuktitut Print in Inuit Students' Home

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	60% of 15 students	71% of 17 students	66% of 32 students
Some	40% of 15 students	29% of 17 students	34% of 32 students
Lots	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students

*Use of English at home.*

Findings from both communities were examined in terms of oral and written use of English at home. The use of English at home is increasing among the younger generations. Most students in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq spoke some English in their homes (Figure 71 and Table 30). One parent indicated that they are now a generation of “mixers” or “trans-language people who speak Inuktitut and English in their homes” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF5).



English print was not available to most of the Pangnirtung students. Some English print was available to most of the Sanikiluaq students (Figure 72 and Table 31). The category of “some” English print referred to magazines, newspapers, books, as well as an English Bible. It was noted that some of the magazines and books in the home were in English and Inuktitut.

In their homes, most Inuit adults in both communities did not speak English (Figure 73 and Table 32) and did not have English print (Figure 74 and Table 33).

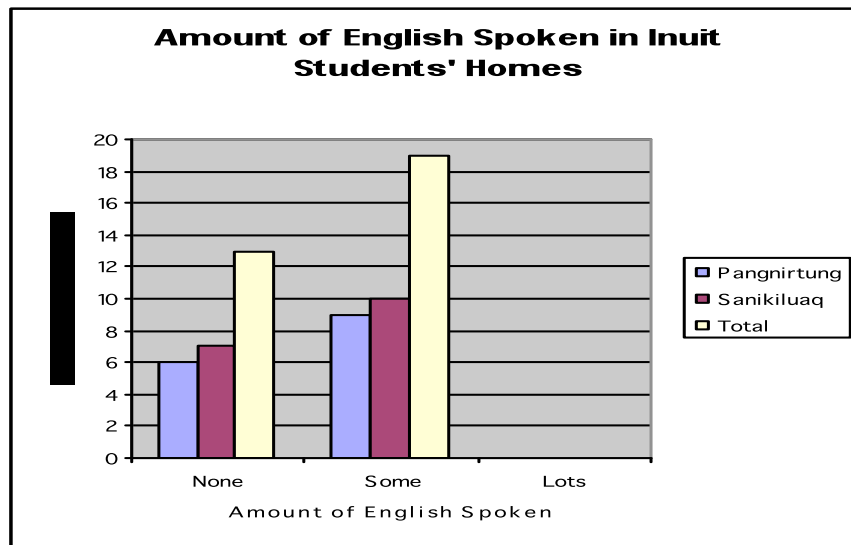


Figure 71: Amount of English Spoken in Inuit Students' Homes

Table 30: Amount of English Spoken in Inuit Students' Homes

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	40% of 15 students	41% of 17 students	40% of 32 students
Some	60% of 15 students	59% of 17 students	59% of 32 students
Lots	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students

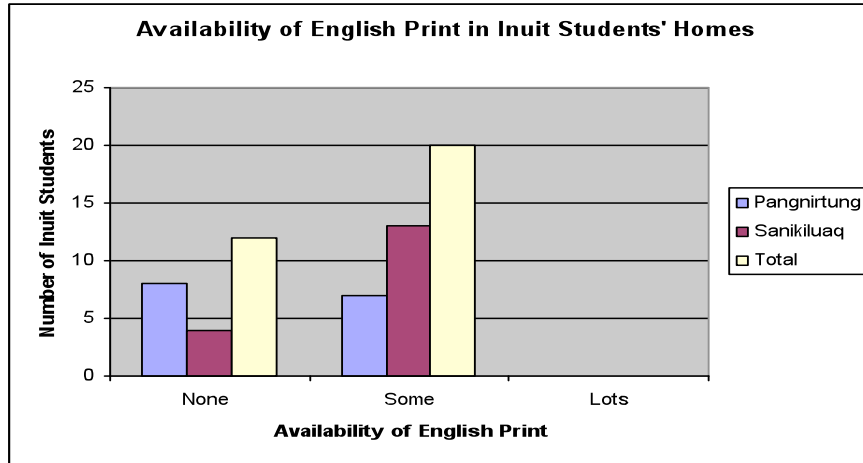


Figure 72: Availability of English Print in Inuit Students' Homes

Table 31: Availability of English Print in Inuit Students' Homes

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	53% of 15 student	24% of 17 students	38% of 32 students
Some	47% of 15 student	76% of 17 students	63% of 32 students
Lots	0% of 15 student	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students

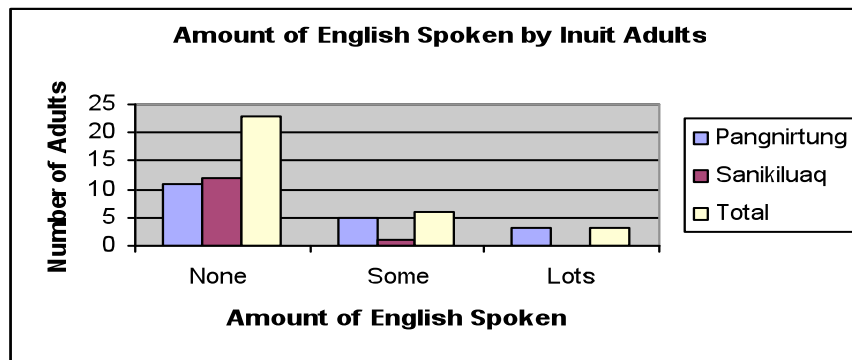


Figure 73: Amount of English Spoken by Inuit Adults' Homes

Table 32: Amount of English Spoken by Inuit Adults' Homes

Amount of English Spoken by Inuit Adults			
	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	58% of 19 students	92% of 13 students	72% of 32 students
Some	26% of 19 students	8% of 13 students	19% of 32 students
Lots	16% of 19 students	0% of 13 students	9% of 32 students

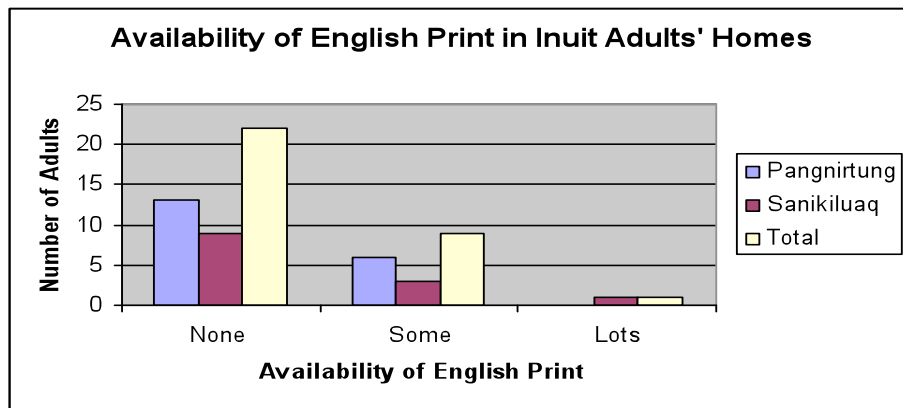


Figure 74: Availability of English in Inuit Adults' Home

Table 33: Availability of English Print in Inuit Adults' Homes

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
None	68% of 19 adults	69% of 13 adults	69% of 32 adults
Some	32% of 19 adults	23% of 13 adults	28% of 32 adults
Lots	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults

*Importance of Encouragement:*

In both communities, most all of the Inuit students (Figure 75 and Table 34) and Inuit adults (Figure 76 and Table 35 and 36) were encouraged by either or both of their

parents to continue in or return back to school (Figures 75, 76 and Tables 34, 35 and 36). In Pangnirtung, students and adults did not mention any other individuals. However, in Sanikiluaq, students were also encouraged by their siblings, friends, grandparents, and teachers. Sanikiluaq adults were also encouraged by grandparents and friends. The following quotes support these findings:

“I was in grade 10 for like 5 years... I dropped out and... my parents always told me to go back and finish” (Pangnirtung student: PSM2).

An adult recalls that her parents “even talked about... [school] daily... [They] talked me into going [back] to school” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF2).

... I just want to encourage more young people to stay in school so they can finish earlier than what I am doing right now because raising kids and being a student is hard and keeping my house... I encouraged myself (Pangnirtung student: PSF1)

“[My dad encouraged me] by talking, waking [me] up in the morning, telling me to go to school, he didn’t want me to miss the school at that time” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF10).

[Both my parents but]... especially my dad... they were big on us having to go to school every day, there were not [any] excuses to miss school. The only... [excuse to miss school] was if I was sick [then] I couldn’t go to school. Being on time too [was important.] (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

[My parents]... played a big role in encouraging me to attend [school] and staying in school during all my school years... Oh, very much, even below high school grades... That is where even more of it needs to be done so that is easier for

students to accept encouragement in the higher grades... Parents really need to come out more with encouragement. They have to understand the importance of school. What the benefits are. If they don't understand that just learning one language will set you for the world, [they] are wrong. Maybe there are other languages and more important things you need to learn, but parents definitely need to be more involved.... now [parents can have] a lot more access to different Inuktitut curriculum and materials, where... [they] can definitely play a bigger role either in interpreting or promoting the use of materials... [In addition, parents need to] understand the importance, the benefits [of education]. Then use those to encourage their children in completing high school. Another thing they can do is setting long-term goals with their children while they are in school.... well first [teachers] should ... motivate the student into completing school, then [parents should] play a monitoring role so that once... [students] have completed high school, they can better advise their children what field of further education they may want to look at as an option in career searching... It has to start with the school, but the school and its programs through services should be promoting more encouragement of the community involvement (Pangnirtung Adult: PAM1).

In Sanikilauq, grandparents were also mentioned by both students and adults as individuals who encouraged education even though they had never been in a school themselves. Elders were not asked this question.

One female student indicated that, “My grandmother and grandfather helped me a lot. To stay in school. That’s the only reason why I came back to school last year” (Sanikiluaq Student: SSF3).

My grandmother told me that when I was a teenager that I have to finish school. She only told me [about] the future, only that graduates will be accepted for jobs and just work, so I understood from her why I should finish (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF3).

Adults mentioned how they now encourage their own children to stay in school:

I tell my children of course they want to stay in school, they will stay in school but always to try their best to take it seriously so they won’t think like I think now. So they won’t say I wish now I was doing better (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

I encourage them so they can have a good job when they grow up, that is what I used to encourage them because I told them when they grow up I am not going to look after them, they have to look after themselves (Pangnirtung adult: PAF10).

One parent said that she tells her children, “that you have to [go to school] and I want every one of you to graduate because I don’t want you guys to be a bum or on welfare. I want you guys to support your family, your future family (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF3).

Another parent remarked, “I guess most people say to encourage the students to stay in school for their own good, for their future” (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

The findings in both communities were significant because they support the role of parents over the past two generations in encouraging their children to complete school. What is even more unusual is that many of those parents who encouraged their children's schooling had not been educated in the school themselves. This dispels the myth that the researcher heard often in the Arctic that only parents who had been to school might be expected to encourage their children to do the same.

Furthermore, some Inuit parents who had been to school, might have had negative educational experiences that would make them less likely to encourage their children to remain in school. This would coincide with the second and third historical periods (Pulpan, 2006), described in chapter three. During that time, some of students' parent might have been forced by the Canadian government to leave their parents behind while they attended residential schools or went to hospitals. Inuit parents were unhappy with these harsh government policies. The detrimental effects on children who were separated from their parents became more apparent and Inuit parents slowly learned to refuse to have their children sent away to school. As time progressed, parents were finally given more choice about schooling when K-12 schools became available in most communities. Participants responses below describe some of these negative school experiences:

When there was a [residential] school... [she was] told that [her two children] had to go... all parents, all they did was worry because they were not updated, they were not updated at all... that was even before we had phones... some parents who are still alive... their children were sent down to residential school and... it

was a worry, and they are not getting compensated... [With her younger children, she ] feels they had more choice, but with... [her] older children [she]... feels they didn't have a choice, or... [parents] weren't given an option (Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

Other adults recall their parents' reaction to residential schools:

Residential school was introduced and they had no choice but to send us to school. But I guess my father had some foresight in him to say, you need to go to school, but then he turned right around and said [that I]... already had... [gone] away to [attend some high] school [grades and that he was]... not sending... [me away again to finish] high school”  
(Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF5).

We had no choice but to go to school when we were younger. Our parents made sure we went to school. I remember one time... for some reason I didn't want to go to school and I was hiding under the bed and my mom found me... I was like 15 and I was half an hour late, and then I got even more scared because I was going to school late. But she made me go to school and I went (Pangnirtung Adult: PAM2).

“Encouraged? I would say no. Only that... [her parents] knew I had to go to school. It was, to them, their understanding I was required to go to school”  
(Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF8).



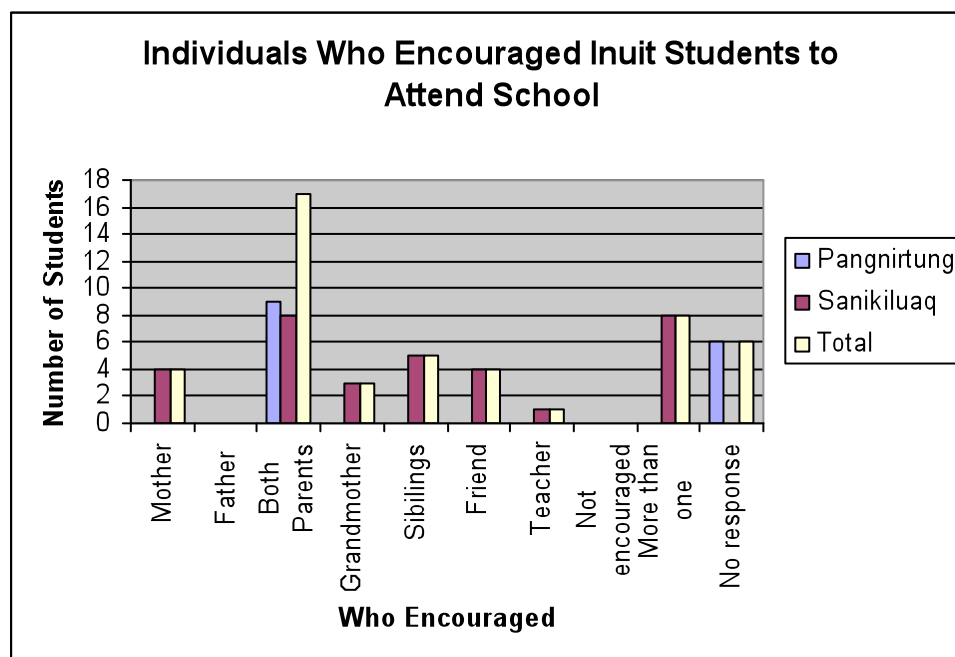


Figure 75: Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Students

Table 34: Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Mother	0% of 15 students	6% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
Father	0% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
Both parents	60% of 15 students	29% of 17 students	44% of 32 students
Grandmother	0% of 15 students	6% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
Sibling	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Friend	0% of 15 students	6% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
Teacher	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Not encouraged as they were required to go to school	0% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
Gave more than one response	0%	47% of 17 students	25% of 32 student
No response	40% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	19% of 32 students

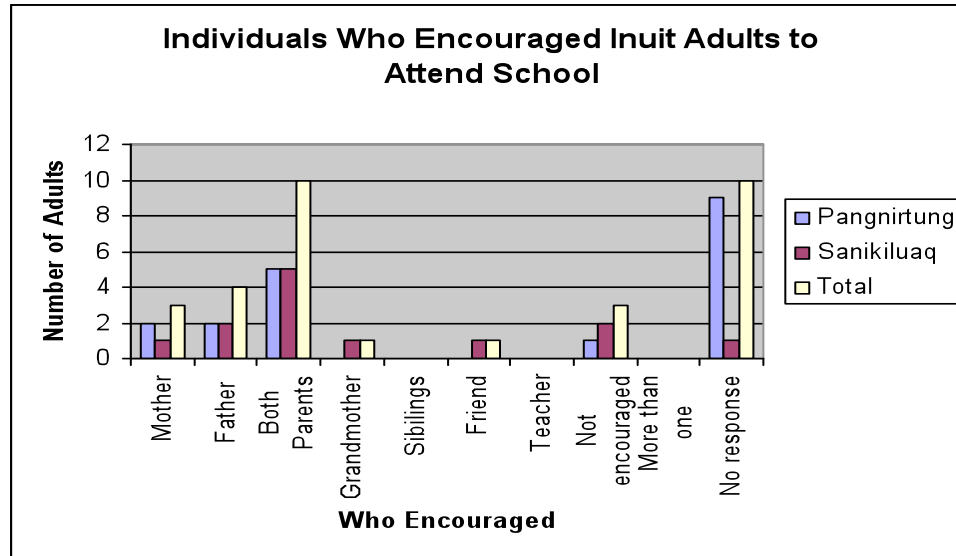


Figure 76: Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults

Table 35: Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults Including Mother through Not Encouraged

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Mother	10% of 19 adults	6% of 13 adults	9% of 32 adults
Father	10% of 19 adults	12% of 13 adults	12% of 32 adults
Both parents	26% of 19 adults	29% of 13 adults	31% of 32 adults
Grandmother	0% of 19 adults	1/13 5.88% 6% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Sibling	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Friend	0% of 19 adults	6% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Teacher	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Not encouraged as they were required to go to school	5% of 19 adults	12% of 13 adults	9% of 32 adults
More than one response	0%	0%	0%

Table 36: Encouragement to Attend School for Inuit Adults Including Gave More Than one Answer to No Response

Gave more than one response	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
No response	53% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	31% of 32 adults

### *Suggestions Relating to the Home*

Interviewees made suggestions that would help more Inuit to stay in school and graduate related to three areas: readiness for high school, improving the home-school connection, and increasing parent involvement (Table 37).

#### *Readiness for High School*

Interviewees suggested that students could prepare for high school in different ways. One way mentioned was to have Inuit students develop a good foundation in Inuit culture and Inuktitut. Participants also felt that early literacy experiences would enable students to do well in elementary school. Doing well in high school would help students be more successful in high school. Interviewees had different opinions as to whether introducing English earlier than the fourth grade would help students prepare better for high school.

To develop a good foundation for school, some participants felt that it was important that children learn traditional values and Inuktitut at home. Having good parental role models and a home environment that supported Inuit cultural values was seen as one way that Inuit students could develop a strong cultural foundation. With this foundation, it was felt that students would be better able to succeed in high school.

However, participants expressed concerns about the quality of Inuktitut that children were learning at home and in school. Currently, many young parents do not know how to speak it properly or know the traditional words that are used. One 17-year-old female student who was in grade 11 highlighted the need for the focus on Inuktitut to continue into high school. “I am like that. I can speak it [Inuktitut] but I can’t write it or anything” (Pangnirtung Student: PSF9).

Therefore, it is necessary for schools to reinforce the teaching of Inuktitut at all levels. Legislation is in process to ensure the preservation of the language by declaring Inuktitut, as well as English, the official language of Nunavut. One adult stressed the importance of having a strong foundation in Inuktitut:

My view is that the students should not lose their Inuktitut learning because there is a need for a second language... grades 4 to grade 12 [ should provide] the foundation for proper Inuktitut learning. [If that foundation] is not there,... you are very unstable, and that is the instability you see in students today. I wish more government departments and people would recognize [the importance of a foundation]... because that is one of the biggest faults, [it’s]... not being recognized as a fault... Nothing should be taken away from English, more should be promoted for [a] foundation for Inuktitut... I am positive that [a good foundation] is a big factor [in helping more Inuit to stay in school. It is] one of the worst, unrecognized factors [relating to the high] number of students dropping out of school (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

Instruction in Inuktitut does not continue with a vigorous curriculum through middle school and high school levels as now occurs developmentally at all elementary levels. One adult commented on the importance of being fluent in Inuktitut:

No matter what, they'll have to teach Inuktitut anyways because the government of Nunavut business plan or plan they are calling for Inuktitut to be a working language in so many years. Maybe it's a good idea but they definitely have to include instruction of Inuktitut in the school in order to prepare the students to mix in or to be able to work with the GN if Inuktitut is going to be the working language... (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

Another adult pointed out, "I feel that the parents need social work because the parents are the guardians of these kids and the kids need a good foundation in order to do well in school" (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF9).

Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk also raised the issue that sometimes Inuktitut might be taught by a young Inuk with a teaching degree who may not have a strong background in the language. Elders who usually have the best knowledge of the language, are not certified to teach it.

The right person that knows the way of teaching Inuktitut should be the one [teaching it] in school, even if they don't speak English, because [students] might forget the way they use to live [if they are not taught the old words. They] should have a teacher that is a pure Inuk in the school to teach the kids [someone] that's not just going to follow the books, but [someone with experience] to teach [traditional knowledge]. That would go for men and women because they [both

have different knowledge from doing different] things (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Some participants felt that, in addition to a strong foundation in Inuit culture and Inuktitut, students who did well in elementary school would be better prepared to be more successful in high school. Snow's research supports that early literacy experiences in the home can help students to perform better in elementary school (Snow, 1991). An Inuk grandparent commented that she now reads to her granddaughter from a bookcase full of materials in both languages that she has been collecting, hoping to prepare her granddaughter for school (SAFP2).

Those students who do not receive literacy help at home could improve their performance in school if literacy activities were provided for them in day-care centers. Day care can prepare children for elementary school because children in day cares often practice the use of activity centers; the Inuktitut names for colors, shapes, numbers; and learning the Inuktitut alphabet.

A parent (SAFP2) commented that her child was able to skip kindergarten and go directly into first grade, where Inuktitut was spoken, because of her day-care experiences in Sanikiluaq. The elder in Sanikiluaq also mentioned that she was aware that this has occurred.

Interviewees varied in their opinions as when English should be introduced into elementary school in order to prepare students for high school where English is the language of instruction. Some participants worried that learning English earlier might interfere or prevent students from learning Inuktitut properly.

Based on her own experiences, another adult spoke at length about why English should not be taught earlier than fourth grade:

[I am] not sure [if] it is a good idea... [to start English early because] we hear so many people speaking English, even in their homes, even if both parents are Inuit, they speak [English] to their children. We want to give [children] a good Inuktitut foundation [that will enable them] to be able to work, have a strong Inuktitut language, [an] understanding... [of] their culture... [that they will] need in order to get [employment in the current] work force (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

The same adult continued by noting that,

[When] we went to kindergarten, we were taught English right away. There was no Inuktitut [spoken in school] because Inuktitut was being used in our homes and there was no English at all in the homes. That is why we are strong in both languages, Inuktitut and English, in our age group... we can speak Inuktitut well and English well. At this time, [she feels that] the English language would dominate the Inuktitut because a lot of the people are talking English even in their homes. [Therefore she feels there is a] need to have... Inuktitut classes. They need to be taught [only] Inuktitut at the kindergarten level. It's a good idea because Inuktitut is not as strong as it used to be..." (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

In contrast, one adult male pointed out how learning English helped his children to do well in school: "For my kids, I made sure they learned a lot of English while they were going to ... [elementary school] either there or computer stuff or reading books. We always try to make sure they have stuff to read" (Pangnirtung adult: PAM2).

Furthermore, young children have demonstrated that they are able to learn more than one language at an early age. The researcher's own experience of raising four children who were bilingual at the age of five confirms this. The ability to be able to effectively learn two languages is also supported by research done in Nunavut that recommends bilingual K-12 education (Berger, 2006).

A very convincing example that introducing English would not prevent the learning of Inuktitut came from an adult male participant. At age three, he developed tuberculosis and was forced to go to a hospital outside of the territory, for two years, without his parents. When he returned home, he could only speak English. He learned to speak Inuktitut, at age five, by interacting with his younger brother (SAM3). Similar incidents relating to tuberculosis are well documented during the 1950s (Grzybowski, 1983), and would also have resulted in other Inuit who spoke only English having to relearn to speak Inuktitut properly.

Adults also commented about the differences between how it was when they went to school and how it is now when students attend school:

Back then when they were children going to school they were very willing [to go to school] because they were already brought up in a solid foundation where there were not too many distractions like today. They were brought up with two parents in the home. Nowadays it's different because they are interacting with so many different people and they are not home all the time, so they don't have a good solid foundation [that would guide them as to] how they are supposed to live... [I] believe that in order for children to be willing to go to school they need a good



foundation... because of so many interactions with the bigger communities, it's harder to try and get children [to go to school]. They are not that willing to go to school now, it's not like before (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

I know there is a difference in our generation. We used to be quite alert or interested in what the school was offering and nowadays kids, I think, need more support in the homes from the parents, having good role models or good environment to support them. I think that needs to be considered (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

### *Home- School Connection*

The need for a stronger home-school connection was mentioned by the participants. They felt that more Inuit students would be influenced to stay in school if communication between parents and teachers was better:

Maybe more communication between teachers and parents, I know the teachers are doing more, the teachers and the DEA are doing their best to keep parents informed of what is going on, that is a real good thing, but I think, I guess maybe some of the parents just have to take school more serious for their children's own good (Pangnirtung Parent: PAMP2).

"I mean like we don't get letters or anything from the school, like if something were going to happen they just announce it through the radio. [I would like] more letters not radio as I hardly listen to the radio" (Pangnirtung Adult: PAF2)

[The school] is... always open to the community, parents know that they are welcome... [it is mostly announced] on local radio that they are welcome to visit their child during the class... if there is a feast going on then the community will use the school (Pangnirtung adult: PAF6).

Parents noted that an education is needed more now. For example, individuals need to have the ability to read English in order to take exams and complete forms to get a driver's license. One adult remarked,

Because if you don't have education you [can't get a] proper job... Before it was okay... for example, if you were tested [to get a driver's license], the RCMP watched you driving with a 4-wheel vehicle or with a motorcycle and they [would] tell you [that you] passed... without an exam on paper. Now [people] have to [take a written exam to learn] whether they have passed the exam [before they are able to] start driving. It's the same thing with the students [in school. In order to graduate [they need to learn to do the] proper work (Pangnirtung adult: PAF6).

While being outdoors usually is not a key factor for academic success in school, it is a crucial consideration in terms of acquiring the wealth of knowledge and traditions that Inuit want their children to learn. Parents noted that children are not outside as much as they were when they were younger. A parent quoted below emphasized that when she was growing up, until she was at child-bearing age, children were playing outside all the time.

“When they were growing up, from children to teenagers, until they had children, they were constantly outside playing...all the time. Nowadays, all the kids are inside, they even play inside the gym” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

Two different views that participants felt needed to be addressed, emerged in this theme relating to the home-school connection. The first view, that education is part of the process of being a life long learner, was felt to help more students to further their education:

I think what parents don't understand is people always need to upgrade... what parents don't understand is education never ends; you never finish educating yourself. The older generation, who I would call my parents' age or grandparents' age, they think once you hit grade 12, that's the end. You don't need to further educate yourself. But I know, and other people know, that you need to upgrade, especially your math, science, English, to be able to get any further in university (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF8).

The second view, that of seeing Inuit and Non- Inuit equally, was suggested as another way help more Inuit to remain in school:

Another male adult pointed out:

Yea, because that age group that we have right now, they all think that kalunak [a white person] is the boss. Powerful man. He's the boss. So the elders are kind of still leaning that way, towards that man or person. He's more powerful than me... But once you realized that I know things he doesn't and he knows things that I don't, so that way we are more equal (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAM5).

### *Parent Involvement*

Becoming more involved as parents was one way that Inuit felt that they could help their children remain in high school to graduate. Inuit adults who interacted with teachers and saw how this helped their children learn, suggested that other adults do the same. Some parents mentioned that other parents could become more involved by visiting their children's classes, meeting frequently with their teacher, and having better parent-teacher communication. The following quotes reflect this: "But I still pretty much drop in and go to the school and check with my children's teacher to see how they are doing... I just want to make sure they are doing good.... [once a month]... if more parents could do that" (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

I think a lot of the parents are not involved enough in the school. They are not making an effort to take part in finding out how their child is doing like when they do their parent-teacher interviews. One of the teachers said that the parents I need to talk to more don't come when we have this time. One of the teachers said usually the good students parents come when they would need to (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

"I think my generation of parents are more involved than what it was like when we were in school because our parents were never in school" (Pangnirtung adult: PAF 3).

"I want to see parents visit the classroom visit their kids, see what is going on. Even like, without telling them, but they have to come here. They should come here themselves, see their kids in the classroom. I'll be really happy to see that" (Pangnirtung adult: PAF 10).

Parents should visit more often. Parents should come and appreciate their children and also meet with the teacher often... because sometimes we don't know whether our kids are behaving well in the classroom or listening or whether they are working well. As a parent, when we go to the class, I myself didn't expect to see one of my sons not behaving well so... the parents should visit more... the parenting was good, but in the school they are different and during that visit... that helped my child behave properly to go visit him (Pangnirtung adult: PAF6).

One student suggested,

Maybe more communication between teachers and parents [would help.] I know the teachers are doing more. The teachers and the DEA [District Education Authority] are doing their best to keep the parents informed of what is going on. That is a real good thing, but I think, I guess, maybe some of the parents have to take school more seriously for their children's own good (Pangnirtung student: PSF1).

Some parents felt that it was important for parents to be interested in their children's schooling, regardless of their own schooling:

The school had begun and that was one of the main reasons they ended up staying here because their children had to go to school because at that time everything was new and at that time they didn't want to miss school even without too much encouragement because it was different, it was new (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

An adult male noted: “We should get the parents to be really involved with education. The parents are the ones that are not encouraging the schooling. They are the ones that should be encouraging their kids” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAM3).

“I think it helps for parents to be interested in what their kids are doing and it also helps to remind them to do homework, to have their meals, to get enough rest, not that they appreciate it, but I think the main thing is to take an interest in their education” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF5).

Table 37: Summary of Findings between Pagnirtung and Sanikiluaq for the Home

Data Sources: Students, adults, and elders	
Suggestions that emerged from participants:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Need for better readiness for high school</li> <li>2. Need for better home-school connection</li> <li>3. Need for better parent involvement</li> </ol>	
Topics	Findings for Pagnirtung and Sanikiluaq
Education of students’ parents	Pagnirtung: Mothers and fathers were mostly educated in school. Sanikiluaq: Mothers and fathers were mostly educated on the land.
Education of adults’ parents	In both communities, parents were educated on the land.
Use of Inuktitut by all interviewees	In both communities, Inuktitut was spoken at home, and some Inuktitut print was available.
Use of English by students	In both communities, some spoke English at home. Pagnirtung: English print was mostly not in homes. Sanikiluaq: Mostly, some English print was there.
Use of English by adults	In both communities, English was not spoken in the home, and English print was not available.
Who encouraged Interviewees	Students and adults in both communities were encouraged mostly by their parents. Pagnirtung: No other individuals were mentioned. Sanikiluaq: Students were also encouraged by siblings, friends, grandparents and teachers. Adults were also encouraged by grandparents and friends.
Who woke interviewees up when they needed to go to school	Not enough data to discuss in the dissertation. Pagnirtung: No data Sanikiluaq: Most students woke up using an alarm clock. Most adults were woken up by their parents.

### Kim's Story: Are We Prepared and Ready to Go? (Atii?)

One of my biggest fears in the Arctic was that my lack of ability and traditional knowledge might result in the injury or death of my children. Every morning in the winter, which lasted for almost nine months, I would get frustrated trying to start my snowmobile in below zero temperatures so I could leave the children at their grandparents' house and then go to work. My five-year-old son was always bundled in a snowsuit, wearing a hat, mitts, and even sealskin boots (*kamiks*). I also wore a special Inuit winter coat for carrying my two-year-old daughter on my back (*amautik*) and she was snuggled inside. Each morning I struggled repeatedly to try to pull the snowmobile cord and not flood the engine from priming it too much. I would think of stories I had heard where people could freeze to death just by being outdoors for ten minutes. Somehow before this happened to me, different people in the community who knew I had a hard time starting the snowmobile would stop to help me.

One day, when I went to the grandparents' house, I was surprised to notice my curling iron on their kitchen counter. I simply took it home and I was slightly annoyed. The second time I noticed it there within the same week, I mentioned to my children's grandfather that he ought to say something to his teenage daughter about taking things without asking. His response was that she did not take it without asking; he had told his son to get it. I was very upset, thinking that he was more concerned with the whims of a teenager more than the possibility of his grandchildren freezing. When I went home, I put the curling iron in a different location, and when my son asked why I did, I told him I wanted to be sure that it was where I could find it in case I needed it. The next day, to

ease the tensions in the small community, I avoided the grandfather by making arrangements for someone to come to my house to babysit. The grandmother, who also spoke only Inuktitut, called me at work to ask if the children were okay. She said that it would help out if her son could borrow my snowmobile. She also mentioned that she would be sure the snowmobile would be back at my house that night, and that she would look forward to seeing the grandchildren the next day. I got a ride home with a friend and the snowmobile was returned later that evening. The next morning, I had a peculiar feeling in the pit in my stomach, knowing I would have to face the grandfather and try to forget about the hair dryer issue. My son was playing on the outside porch while I got my daughter dressed. Just as I was about to go outside, I heard my snowmobile start. I ran out, and I know I had a look of amazement and wonder on my face. My five-year-old son stood there smiling. He said he had started it by just pushing a special button. I was so grateful and ecstatic because my worries about my children freezing to death if the snowmobile wouldn't start were finally over. I just kept hugging and kissing him and kept telling him how much I loved him. Though I did not know then who the wonderfully kind stranger was who replaced the pull cord starter with an easy to manage button, I had enough sense to at least seize the moment and get on the snowmobile before it stopped running. When I got to the house of the grandparents, the grandfather was standing outside grinning over what I assumed was his victory. Knowing that I would have to apologize for getting upset over a curling iron, I did not care because I felt so inspired by what seemed to be a random act of kindness that had started my day. Instead of speaking



to me, the grandfather began telling my son how proud he was of him and how he was a real Inuk. Baffled, I asked the grandfather what he meant. This is what I learned.

When I loaned my snowmobile to help out my grandfather's elder son, I was the one being helped. My son had shown him where I hid the curling iron. The grandfather was able to use something from the curling iron to make an electric starter for the snowmobile that was so easy to use that even my five-year-old son could work it. He had told my son that if he did not mention it to me, he would experience one of the greatest joys of being able to help his mother out for all she did in raising him. All he would have to do is watch how I reacted to his starting of the snowmobile in the morning. I guess the emotions I displayed that morning made a lasting impression on my son. To this day, he is always trying to make my life easier, and to creatively find ways to help others in need. Both of these Inuit traits are valued highly. As a result of the snowmobile episode, I learned to be more aware of what is really significant, and what experiences contribute to knowledge and life-long learning.

Currently, in Nunavut, many Inuit students are having a hard time getting started in high school. My research findings related to the home support that Inuit feel that parent involvement and closer home - school relationships will provide the "quick start" that will help more Inuit students to stay in high school (Tyler, 2007).

*Findings Related to the School:  
Remember I Care About You and our Relationship? (Ain?)*



Figure 77: Researchers Daughter Wearing Glasses Dressed in an *Amautik*



Figure 78: Researchers Daughter in an *Amautik*

To create effective school improvement, the literature supports evaluating schools in terms of how they interact within the larger context of the community, which is referred to as a systems model approach.<sup>120</sup> As a result, in this study, school improvement was examined in terms of parents' roles and literacy at home, teaching practices and procedures in school, community partnerships, and Inuit culture. While the influence of the home was discussed previously, this section focuses on interactions relating directly to schools. Subsequent sections discuss the influences relating to the community and Inuit culture.

Specifically, according to the literature, to encourage more Inuit to stay in school and graduate, schools should provide instruction that matches the cultural values used by parents to raise their children, and a curriculum that is culturally relevant.

Participants were asked questions to identify what was presently occurring related to the school to establish a baseline as well as to find out what they thought might be needed. To identify the current relationship between schools and culture, data was collected in both communities related to teaching practices and school policies. The aspects of teaching practices that interviewees were asked about related to the use of the computer, the qualities that make a good teacher, what type of activities students did, and the degree of challenge of the school work. Since the data on the use of the computer was inconclusive, it was not included. The degree of challenging instruction and the use of innovative programs are discussed in the next chapter, chapter seven. Data was also collected relating to aspects of school policies that related to homework support, transition from junior high to high school, the number of years spent in grade ten, and difficulty in grade ten.

Emergent themes revealed that interviewees in both communities expressed a desire for funds to encourage the involvement of elders and other significant community role models in school activities and programs that developed relationships and mentoring. In child-rearing, Inuit parents often convey to their children how much they care for them by using the expression “*Ain*”. It is meant to remind children that they are being guided and mentored by someone more knowledgeable who cares about their well being. This expression can be applied to findings related to school because by developing “caring relationships” and mentoring opportunities, like those traditionally provided by elders, more high school students will remain in high school.

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<sup>120</sup> For more research relating to the systems model approach, see the literature review, chapter three.

*Current School Environment: Teaching Practices*

*How elders instruct others.*

The elders in both communities described how they traditionally mentored and developed relationships with those that they instructed:

The Sanikiluaq Elder also talked about how she traditionally taught:

Maybe it's better to be watched [by students] and to tell [students about traditional skills] when they [are] out on the land. [When] the students drop out [of school, elders]... usually have to think [ahead about] what [would be helpful to] talk about [with that individual and be] ready and tell about that... [For example, the individual might not know] even how to start a fire with no matches. [Elders] even try to tell them what they used to try and eat when there was no food around. There are a lot of things that the men and the women used to do... [She] wouldn't mind teaching them both [males and female students. After watching], it's true, you have to keep doing it... respect and helping each other [are important] (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk taught seal skin and caribou preparation and sewing of animal skins. She explained the way that she taught:

“[First she] would do a demonstration and then when [she was] done... [students] would do it with her supervision... [She would give each student the next step] instead of [having a student] wait for the whole class to finish [that step]... Some ... [students] are eager, whereas some of them are not so eager. It is just the same

way they do in the school. With slower students, who were really slower to learn, [she]... would ask them to make the same [object] again after completing it [so they could] practice again... [She]... noticed [that] for those people who weren't so willing to learn, like they didn't have the enthusiasm, what they would do is try and do things any old way... Those people who were eager and interested [and are] more of a perfectionist, they tried to do a better job... [She] will become very good friends with... [her] students. A lot of times, and even shape them... one of [her]... students was left-handed... very capable... [She] became good friends. They get a special bond... just because it's for a certain time doesn't mean that you... stop talking to that instructor... [She encouraged her] students if they were trying to make something and if they got stuck and needed help that... [she] was open for them to come over and... [she] would show them how even if... [she] wasn't teaching anymore (Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

The researcher experienced this traditional way of learning that involved mentoring and developing relationships. In these instances, an experienced older Inuit took an interest in motivating a younger individual to learn through guided practice. This is because Inuit cook, and sew by touch and experience, rather than by measurement. Of equal importance in learning the skill, was the development of a relationship and bond that was created between the mentor and the individual who was being taught that continued into other activities. Two examples follow:

Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk, on numerous occasions when the researcher lived previously in Pangnirtung, had tried to teach her how to make the pan fried bannock

that she is well-known for. Sometimes this involves making it at her house. At other times, the elder came to my house and watched me make it using my utensils and oven.

During a recent visit, my youngest daughter was also encouraged to make the bannock through repeated practice. On the first occasion, she observed the elder. The next time, she practiced on her own. On more than one occasion visiting relatives would let my younger daughter know ahead of time when they would be coming to taste it. Each time they came, they would offer a suggestion and encourage her to try again.

*Qualities of a good teacher.*

In describing what they meant by a good teacher, Inuit focused on the teacher's personality, rather than his or her expertise. In Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, most students said that a good teacher is someone who can "teach," is friendly, is easy to approach, and instructs using activities (Figure 79 and Table 38, 39). The few adults that commented said that a good teacher is someone who has previous teaching experience in their community, can "teach," is friendly, instructs using activities, and has high expectations for students (Figure 80 and Table 40).

One adult female said that a good teacher helps Inuit students who are often shy: "Some of the students are really quiet. They really don't have any guts to... [question] the teacher, so if that student is quiet I want the teacher to go to them instead. That would help a lot. I've seen that" (Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF2). Other comments by students reflected a desire for a teacher who they could talk to and who helps them:

"They come when we tell them to come when we need help" (Pangnirtung female student: PSF4).

“Someone you could talk to” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF1).

“[Teachers] understand better [about the] students” (Pangnirtung male student: PSM3).

“Sometimes we even get to talk to them about our problems... [teachers] come when we tell them to come when we need help” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF4).

Not all students thought having a friendly teacher was the most important quality: “When the [teachers] just teach instead of getting to know you... they are more strict in different ways. It was a lot better when they focus on their work and what they are teaching” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF9).

Students and adults in both communities also felt that a good teacher would support more Inuit to stay in school by: showing enthusiasm; helping and motivating learners; and having high expectations for students. The qualities of a good teacher were described by participants:

“Good enthusiasm is good” (Pangnirtung male student: PSM1).

“A good teacher explains [things] well” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM3).

“[A good teacher would be] teaching” (Sanikiluaq female student: SSF9).

“[A good teacher] helps me to learn more” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF5).

“[A good teacher is someone that is] helping you do your assignments”

(Pangnirtung female student: PSF8).

“I want the teachers to do more work with their students a lot” (Pangnirtung male parent: PAMP1).

“[A good teacher] motivates you” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF1).

“Well, that particular teacher left halfway through the season and my grades dropped... I guess I think it helps when a teacher has been around for a good while and many of the students know that teacher more and more and vice versa”

(Pangnirtung male parent: PAMP2).

“A teacher with high expectations when I was I school a lot was expected of me and that is what got me motivated” (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF3).

Having qualified teachers who are committed to providing students with a quality education was mentioned by adults:

“Get educated teachers [in Nunavut.] The school selects them from this town even if they don’t have any education, even without grade 12” (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF2).

[Now all we have are teachers who are only qualified to teach] just the general grade and [they give only] the departmental exams for language art in grade12... [That is] nothing like when I was in high school [here]. We had departmental exams in math, science, and all other subjects... [in order to graduate. That was] in 1988, 19 years ago... but [currently in here, my son’s] only departmental exam was language arts [to pass grade 12 and graduate] and I was disappointed (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF 3).

[Teachers should have an] understanding of the importance of their students needing this education. [They are] not just there to get paid... They are always prepared for their classes and their teaching. [It is important if] they have extra



work prepared in case some students are ahead of others. I find they are able to communicate more with parents... There was this one teacher... who was a good teacher and he did his own orientation and information session with parents within that grade and they are open (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF1).

Another adult stressed what is needed on a larger scale:

Individual teachers should not be pressured into having to go out of their way to welcome parents. The system, the school, and programs need to recognize and support that. Though without that system in place, it is way too easy for locals to criticize individual teachers and say that is a good one that is a bad one (Pangnirtung adult male: PAM1).

For some participants, it might have been difficult to respond to the question about what the qualities of a good teacher were because they may not have experienced the type of strategies an expert teacher would use to support instruction. The type of activities Inuit students experienced is discussed further in the next section.

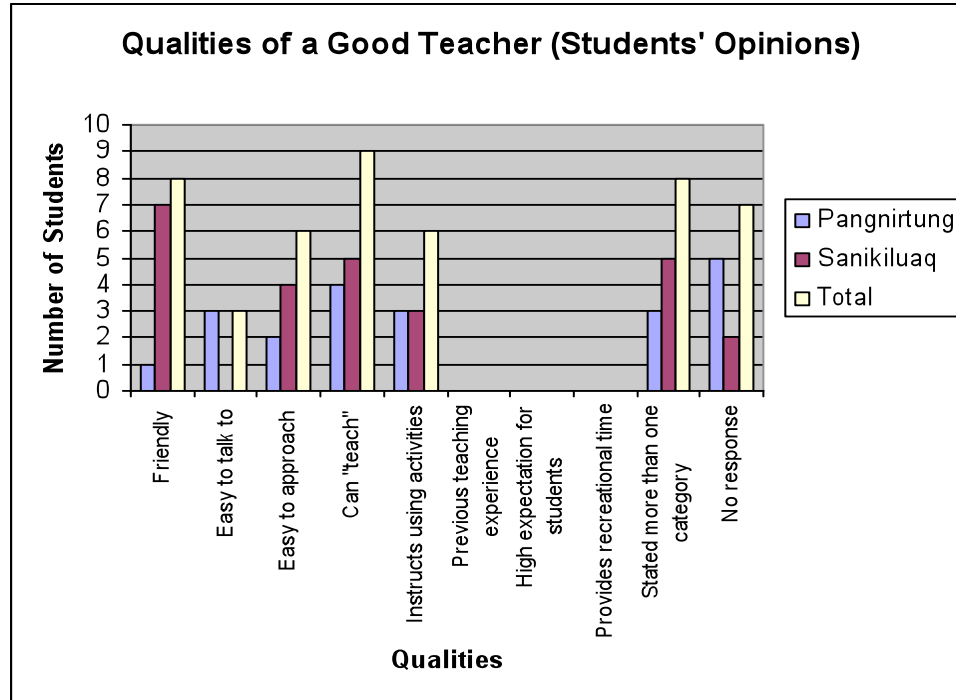


Figure 79: Qualities of a Good Teacher (Students' Opinions)

Table 38: Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Students' Opinions) Including Friendly and/or Enthusiastic through Easy to Approach and Readily Available

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Friendly and/or enthusiastic	6% of 15 students	41% of 17 students	25% of 32 students
Easy to talk to	20% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	9% of 32 students
Easy to approach and readily available	13% of 15 students	34% of 17 students	19% of 32 students

Table 39: Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Students' Opinions) Including Can Teach is Helpful and Good Listener Through No Response

Can "teach," is helpful, and good listener	27% of 15 students	29% of 17 students	28% of 32 students
Instructs using activities	20% of 15 students	18% of 17 students	19% of 32 students
Has previous experience teaching in the community	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Has high expectation for students	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Provides students with recreational time	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Stated more than one category	20% of 15 students	29% of 17 students	25% of 32 students
No response	33% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	22% of 32 students

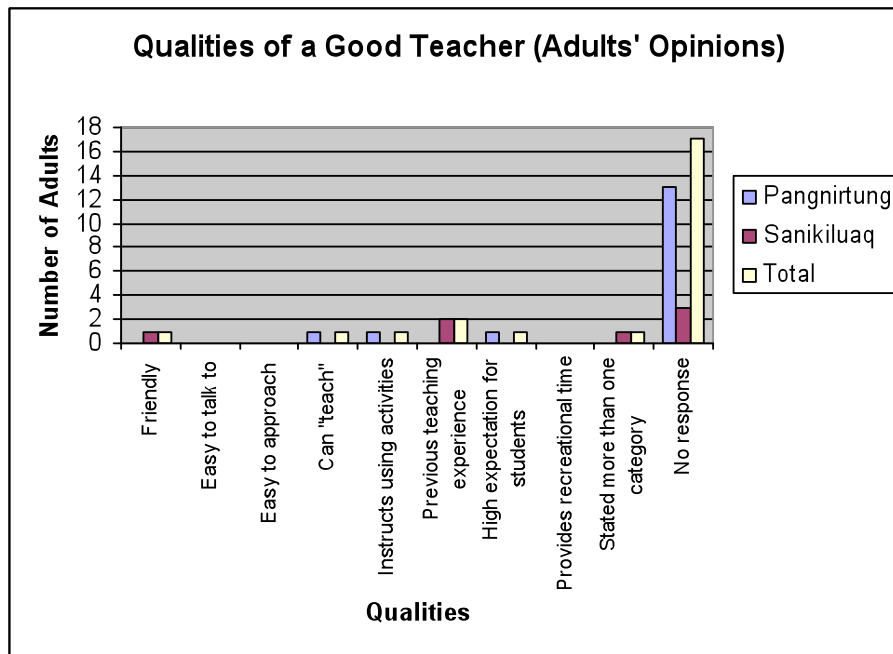


Figure 80: Qualities of a Good Teacher (Adults' Opinions)

Table 40: Qualities of a Good Teacher (Inuit Adults' Opinions)

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Friendly and/or enthusiastic	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Easy to talk to	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Easy to approach and readily available	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Can "teach," is helpful, and good listener	5% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Instructs using activities	5% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Has previous experience teaching in the community	0% of 19 adults	15% of 13 adults	6% of 32 adults
Has high expectation for students	5% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Provides students with recreational time	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Stated more than one category	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
No response	68% of 19 adults	23% of 13 adults	53% of 32 adults

*Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students*

Students and adults were asked what type of activities they had experienced; and if they those activities would help more Inuit students to remain in school. In Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, most students and adults did not comment on the type of activities. Those who did respond mentioned a desire to work in groups, do projects, and varied activities (Figure 81 and Table 41).

In Pangnirtung, the type of activities mentioned included doing projects or hands-on learning activities. The following comments by the students and adults who had experienced this type of learning appear below:

“Hands on I learn more” (Pangnirtung student: PSM1)

“I think it would be more fun to do more projects” (Pangnirtung student: PSM4).

“More fun, like activities” (Pangnirtung student: PSF3)

“Groups is more easier” (Pangnirtung student: PSF5)

“More projects, more involvement, not just go to school and sit there and do nothing. I think they’ll learn more with projects” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF3).

In Sanikiluaq, most students did not separate working in groups or hands-on activities from the innovative cultural programs that helped them stay in school<sup>121</sup>. Only one male student in Sanikiluaq indicated that “I do like working with a partner and group” (Sanikiluaq student: SSM4). Adults in Sanikiluaq suggested that hands-on activities; working with a partner; and integrating learning across disciplines would help student to stay in school. Participants’ comments are listed below:

An adult male noted a good teacher does “mostly hands-on and [uses words [from their] mouth, working with the whole class” (Sanikiluaq male adult: SAM1).

Another adult commented,

I’ve seen more teachers just talking in the classroom. What they should be doing that I have been thinking, take... [students] out and show them what they can learn. Like by seeing, not just by talking. [Now] they learn by talking, but if they

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<sup>121</sup> For more details about Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq’s cultural programs, see chapter three.

see [something learned just by listening], they don't know [what] it [is]... They usually say, "What is this?" [They say that] because they [only] understand by talking, you know what I mean? (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF10).

An adult female mentioned a strategy that she had seen a good teacher use. She said:

[It is good] when... [students] work with their friend or a partner. It makes it even more fun for them. She also pointed out how learning activities could be connected, language is connected to maybe math, if you're measuring how to put so many cups [of flour] into the baking; or if you're getting plants, it has to do with social studies. So different lessons are more than one thing connected together sometimes (Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF9).

The researcher anticipated that individuals would comment more about the classroom activities they enjoyed. In the high school classrooms where instruction in academic courses was observed in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, most students were lectured to and/or worked independently through chapters in a book. The lack of data would suggest that it should be the responsibility of the teacher to learn about and use learning strategies that are known to be effective with second-language learners.

This data supports that it should be the responsibility of the high school teachers to provide learning activities<sup>122</sup> that support the Inuit culture. Vygotsky's research has shown that students learn best when the learning begins with what they are familiar with and extends it with guidance and challenging activities further into what he identifies as the zone of proximal development. When learning is not in this challenging zone and

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<sup>122</sup> For more details, see literature review in chapter three: (Vygotsky, 1989).

support for learning is not provided, students are more likely to become bored or discouraged. To help students reach this optimal learning zone, activities should focus on the visual and kinesthetic learning style of the Inuit and their preference for working in a cooperative group.

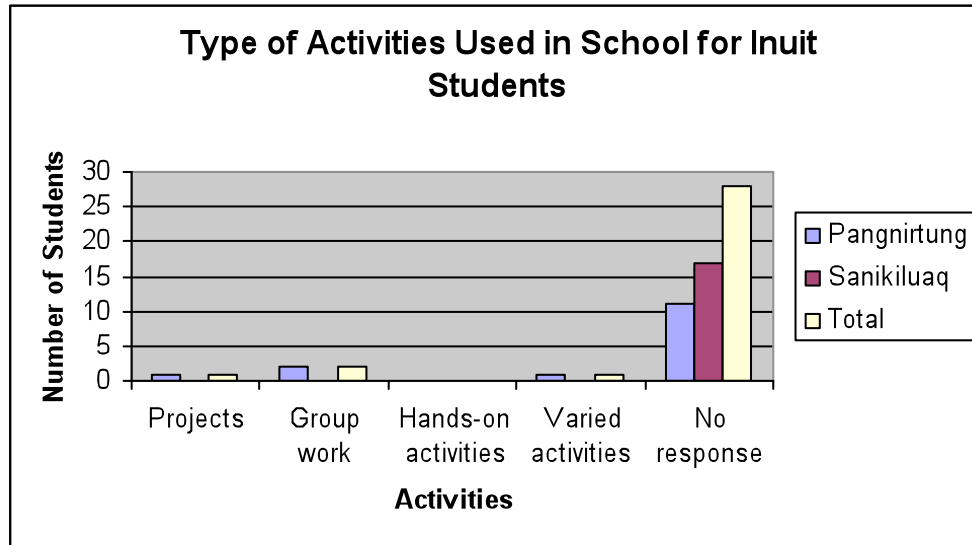


Figure 81: Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students

Table 41: Type of Activities Used in School for Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Projects	7% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
Group work	13% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
Hands-on activities	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Varied activities	7% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
No response	73% of 15 students	100% of 17 students	88% of 32 students

*Current School Environment: School Policies*

Inuit students and adults were asked to comment about certain school policies. These included providing homework assistance, transition from elementary to junior high school, number of years students spent in grade ten, and the difficulty of grade ten.

*Homework assistance.*

Participants in both communities felt that having homework often would help more Inuit students to remain in school. Students in both communities were asked who they went to when they had difficulty with their homework.

In Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, the majority of the students did not know who to ask for help when they had trouble with their homework. In Pangnirtung, female students were more likely to not know where to go for homework help. In Sanikiluaq, male students were more likely to not know where to go for homework help (Table 42). In Pangnirtung, those female students that did seek help were more likely to go to their teachers or their parents, while male students went mostly to their teacher (Figure 82 and Table 43). In Sanikiluaq, those female students that did seek help were more likely to go to their mothers and their friends. Then they sought help from their teachers, fathers, or siblings. Male students went to their teacher, their parents, and their friends when they needed help with their homework (Figure 83 and Table 44). Most Inuit adults in both communities did not comment (Table 45). In Sanikiluaq, the few adults who commented preferred to ask a teacher and then a friend for help with homework.



Schooling is a relatively new phenomenon in Nunavut and most Inuit students' parents did not graduate from high school. This might explain why students did not know who to ask for help with homework:

Certainly not my parents, but when I went to high school, we had study hour from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m., but we could stay late if we wanted to. When I saw people my age working hard, and that encouraged me to work hard too... Homework help—yes, that would be very helpful for the students. I think they have started that before but I don't think it worked out well... A lot of the parents here don't have grade 12 so maybe they are feeling kind of nervous about helping or volunteering for this kind of issue. So everything I think falls back on the high school teachers (Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF9).

Two other adult females also raised concerns about how hard it was for Inuit parents to help high school students with their homework and the need for a place outside of the home where students could do their homework: “I know some parents don't know how to help their kids... I've heard that it's heartbreaking that their parents don't know how to help them with their homework so it's sometimes sad to see [students] not getting help from their parents” (Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF3).

Another adult commented:

Unfortunately, yes, the teacher was the one person that could help them. Once our students get into high school... then their work is beyond us...[Sometimes, our children try to]...study[and do] homework...during a time when it's really busy in the house...it can get busy in so many houses. So it's kind of hard for student

to have a quiet place to study for their school work, no little corner that they can go to[in their homes]... Study halls [have been done] before and it seems to work for some of the students, depending on whether they are serious about their education and it doesn't work for the kids who aren't serious. (Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF5).

One male student mentioned that when he needed assistance with homework, he found it better to “stick around [school] and do [his homework] right after [school ended]” (Sanikiluaq male student: PSM1). Another male student said the same thing: “I try to finish my homework right after school, not later. I just do it” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM2).

Table 42: Individuals Who Provided Homework Help to Inuit Students

Students:	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
Students who did not know where to go for homework support (total)	60% Total: 15	41% Total:17
Females who did not know where to go for homework support	47% Total:9	30% Total:10
Males who did not know where to go for homework support	13% Total:6	57% Total: 7

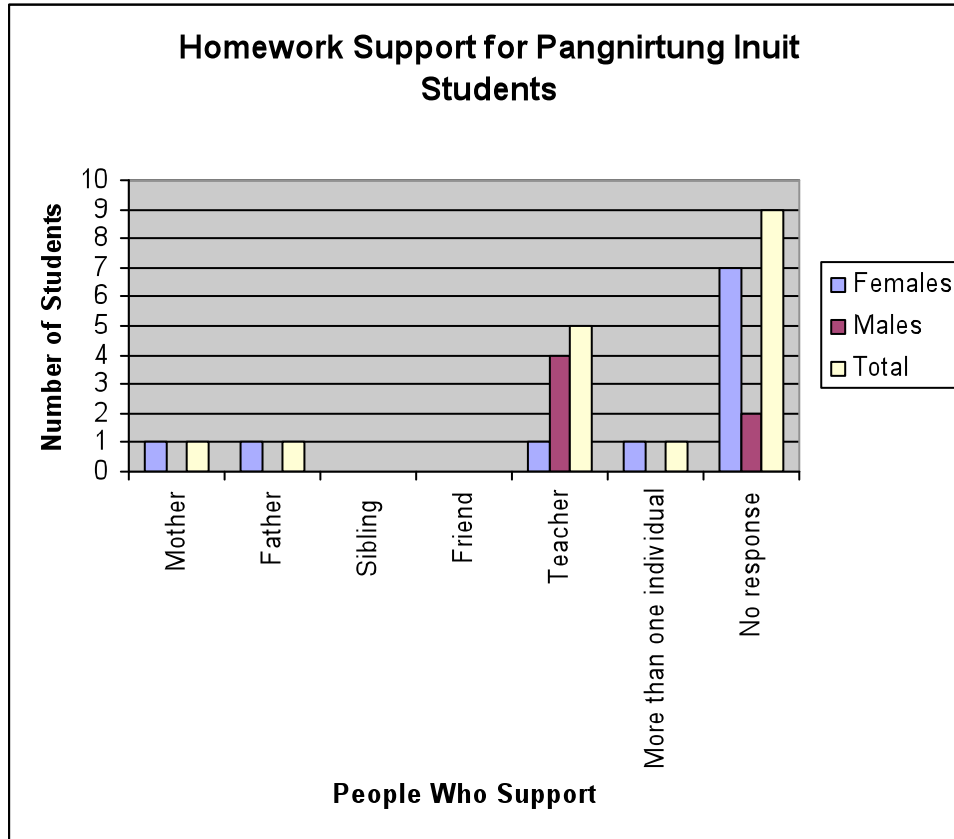


Figure 82: Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Pangnirtung Inuit Students

Table 43: Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Pangnirtung Inuit Students

	Female	Male	Total
Mother	11% of 9 female students	0% of 6 male students	7% of 15 students
Father	11% of 9 female students	0% of 6 male students	7% of 15 students
Sibling	0% of 9 female students	0% of 6 male students	0% of 15 students
Friend	0% of 9 female students	0% of 6 male students	0% of 15 students
Teacher	11% of 9 female students	67% of 6 male students	33% of 15 students
More than one individual	11% of 9 female students	0% of 6 male students	7% of 15 students
No response	64% of 9 female students	17% of 6 male students	60% of 15 students

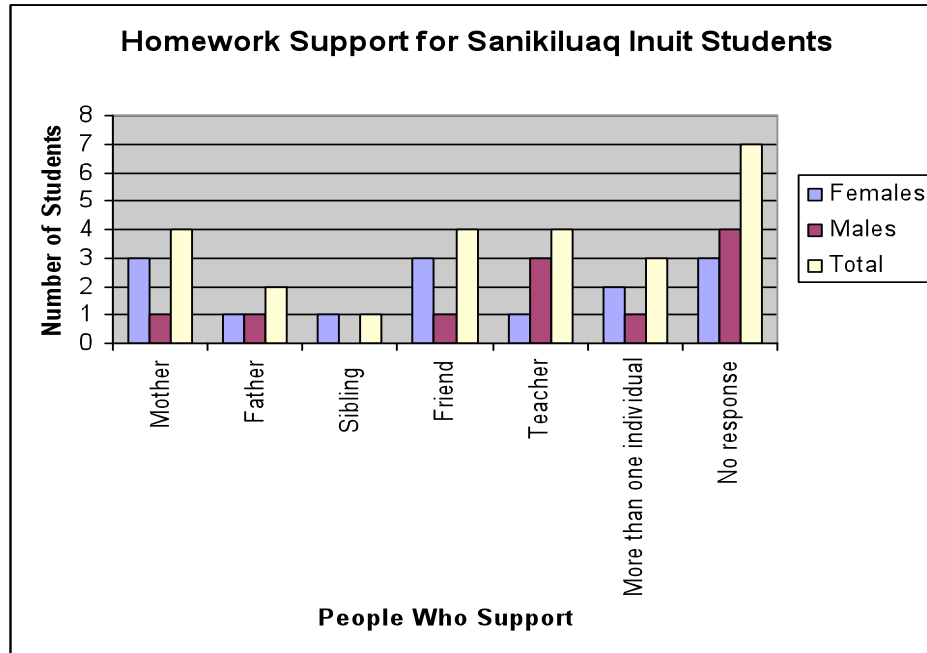


Figure 83: Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 44: Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

	Female	Male	Total
Mother	30% of 10 female students	14% of 7 male students	24% of 17 students
Father	10% of 10 female students	14% of 7 male students	12% of 17 students
Sibling	10% of 10 female students	0% of 7 male students	6% of 17 students
Friend	30% of 10 female students	14% of 7 male students	24% of 17 students
Teacher	10% of 10 female students	43% of 7 male students	24% of 17 students
More than one individual	20% of 10 female students	14% of 7 male students	18% of 17 students
No response	30% of 10 female students	57% of 7 male students	41% of 17 students

Table 45: Individuals Who Provided Homework Support to Inuit Adults When They Went To School

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Mother	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Father	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Sibling	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
Friend	0% of 19 adults	7% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Teacher	0% of 19 adults	15% of 13 adults	6% of 32 adults
More than one individual	0% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	0% of 32 adults
No response	100% of 19 adults	77% of 13 adults	81% of 32 adults

*Degree of difficulty of transitioning from elementary school to junior high school.*

In Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, a majority of the Inuit students thought that the transition from elementary school to junior high was easy (Figure 84 and Table 46). Inuit adults in both communities found the transition to be of average difficulty (Figure 85 and Table 47).

Some parents spoke about how the transition from elementary to junior high school involved having students who had been taught in Inuktitut begin to learn English. Others commented how eager students were to go to elementary school, and how attitude towards school changed as the students went onto higher grades. These views are expressed below:

My child is learning mostly Inuktitut in elementary school... They learn some English in grades 2, 3, 4, 5 but she is going to the other school and I requested she have an English teacher because I want her to start learning more in English...

Her Inuktitut is very good and there is an Inuktitut grade 6 teacher, two classes for grade 6, one of them is an Inuit teacher and the other is a [non-Inuk] teacher

(Pangnirtung adult: PAF1)

“I used to do so well in elementary school, like before I went to junior high and I was always so eager and everything to go to school; but when I went to junior high that’s when... I went to an I don’t care state” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF2).

Just looking at it from outside the school, you can tell the elementary students are more eager to go to school, and they are taught only in Inuktitut so they understand what they are learning and the values of the Inuit culture so they have more willingness to go to school at the elementary level. Whereas when they enter high school somehow they lose interest... [She] doesn’t know if it’s the curriculum, or the teachers are not making it interesting enough in order for the students [to learn]... We often hear nowadays that it’s usually the students’ fault that they don’t want to attend, if they misbehave or did some damage to the school... She figures that is not the only reason that the high school students don’t want to attend school... [She] truly believes that if the education system is kept interesting... students would be willing, more eager to go to high school...

Something’s lacking that doesn’t encourage or attract the high school students to stay in school. Whether it is the teachers themselves or the curriculum [she is not sure what it is] but there is something lacking at the high school level

(Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

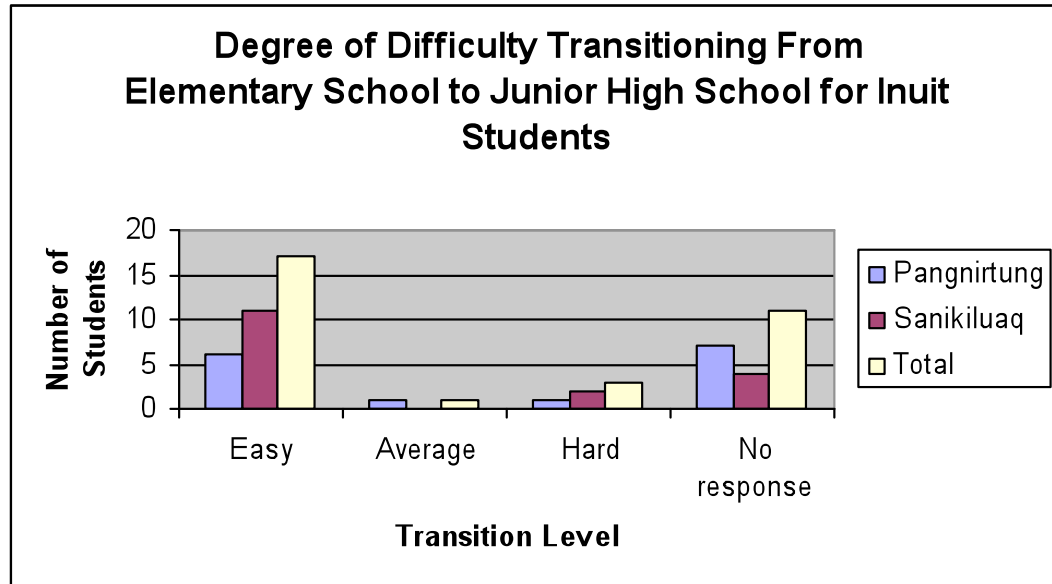


Figure 84: Degree of Difficulty Transitioning from Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Students

Table 46: Degree of Difficulty Transitioning From Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Students

	Pagnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Easy	40% of 15 students	65% of 17 students	53% of 32 students
Average	7% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
Hard	7% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	9% of 32 students
No response	47% of 15 students	24% of 17 students	34% of 32 students

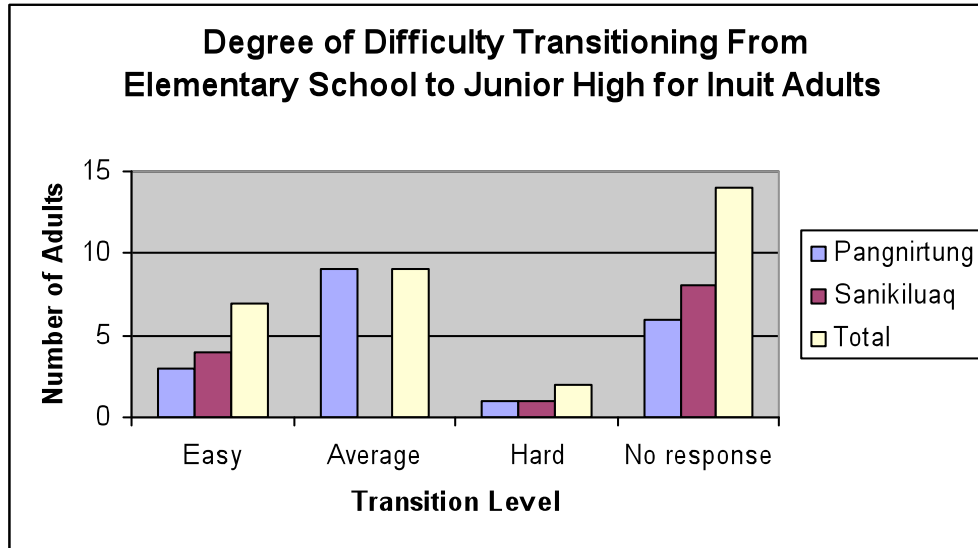


Figure 85: Degree of Difficulty Transitioning From Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Adults

Table 47: Degree of Difficulty Transitioning From Elementary School to Junior High for Inuit Adults

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Easy	16% of 19 adults	31% of 13 adults	22% of 32 adults
Average	47% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	28% of 32 adults
Hard	5% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	6% of 32 adults
No response	32% of 19 adults	62% of 13 adults	44% of 32 adults

*Length of time spent in grade ten.*

The findings for length of time spent in grade ten were particularly alarming. In Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, many of the Inuit students are spending two or more years in grade 10 (Figure 86 and Table 48). Some students, especially males, are spending as long as six years there. One male student said he was 22 years old and is a recent graduate who spent “four years” in grade 10” (Pangnirtung male student: PSM3). Another male student who was 23 and just graduated said, “I was in grade 10 for like five years...



I dropped out... my parents always told me to go to school and finish” (Pangnirtung student: PSM2).

This issue of Inuit students having to spend numerous years in grade ten needs to be addressed so that Inuit students are provided with a quality education that meets their needs. More data is needed to clarify if students are consecutively repeating grade ten or returning to grade ten after having been out of school for a period of time. The length of stay is discussed further in the next section in relation to the degree of difficulty of grade ten.

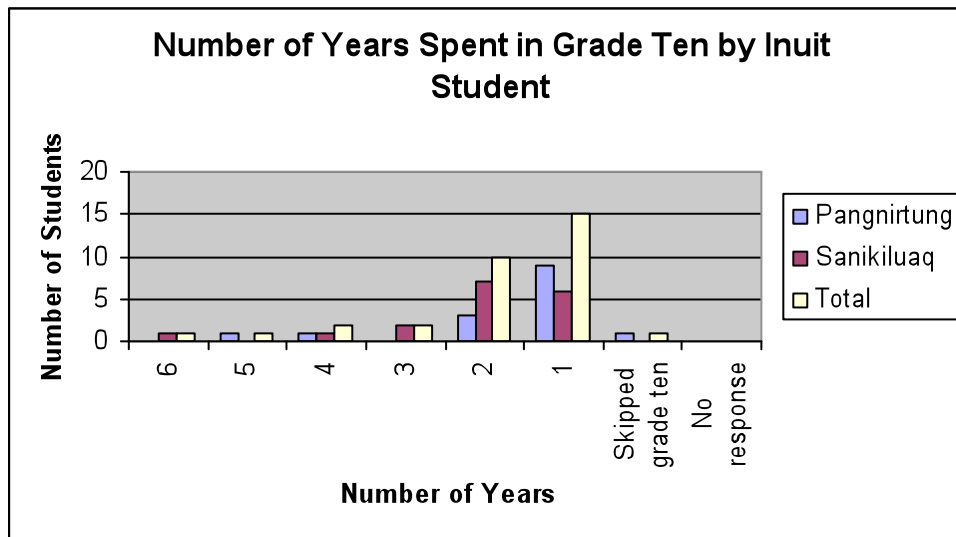


Figure 86: Number of Years Spent in Grade Ten by Inuit Students

Table 48: Number of Years Spent in Grade Ten by Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
6	0% of 15 students	6% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
5	7% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
4	7% of 15 students	6% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
3	0% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
2	20% of 15 students	41% of 17 students	31% of 32 students
1	60% of 15 students	25% of 17 students	47% of 32 students
Skipped grade ten	7% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	3% of 32 students
No response	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students

*Difficulty of grade ten.*

Students and adults in both communities were asked if they thought that grade ten was difficult because student records and comments indicated that some students had to repeat it more than once. Most participants gave brief responses as to whether the overall “grade ten experience” was any harder than that of any other grade. The majority of students in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq commented that grade ten was “easy” or “not hard,” even though they may have had to repeat it more than once (Figure 87 and Table 49).

One 19-year-old male student who is currently in grade 10 hoped to be a water truck driver when he graduated. He said that grade 10 was not hard, even though he was there for “almost four [years]” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM8). A 20-year-old grade 10/11 student who had been in grade 10 for three years when asked whether it was hard said, “I’m not sure” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM5). A 25-year-old male, now in grade

10/11 found grade 10 “a little bit hard” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM5). Another student who had been in grade 10 for six years, said he was motivated to finish high school because “I want to get a job. I want to find a job and other things” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM6). In Pangnirtung, one female student said grade 10 was hard because of “not knowing exactly how to do the work” (PSF5), while other students said “English” (PSF7) and “the assignments” (PSF8). Another student said that, “I think people drop out because they get bored because just the same stuff [is taught] and all that, just try to do more different stuff” (PSF9).<sup>123</sup>

The majority of the Inuit adults in both communities did not respond. This may have been due to the fact that grade ten might not have been available in their community when they were going to school (Figure 88 and Table 50).

It is very surprising that some of the students who were in grade 10 for an extended number of years thought grade 10 was easy. Students’ main reasons for continuing on so long were often just to finish or get a job. Those students who were included in this study would have been students who were more likely to have not found grade ten too difficult. The fact that Inuit students do not perceive grade ten to be hard when many students are in grade ten for more than a year, and only 25 percent of them graduate from high school, further supports why a qualitative research study like this one is needed.

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<sup>123</sup> This issue is discussed further in this chapter, in an earlier section related to type of activities used in the school for Inuit students.

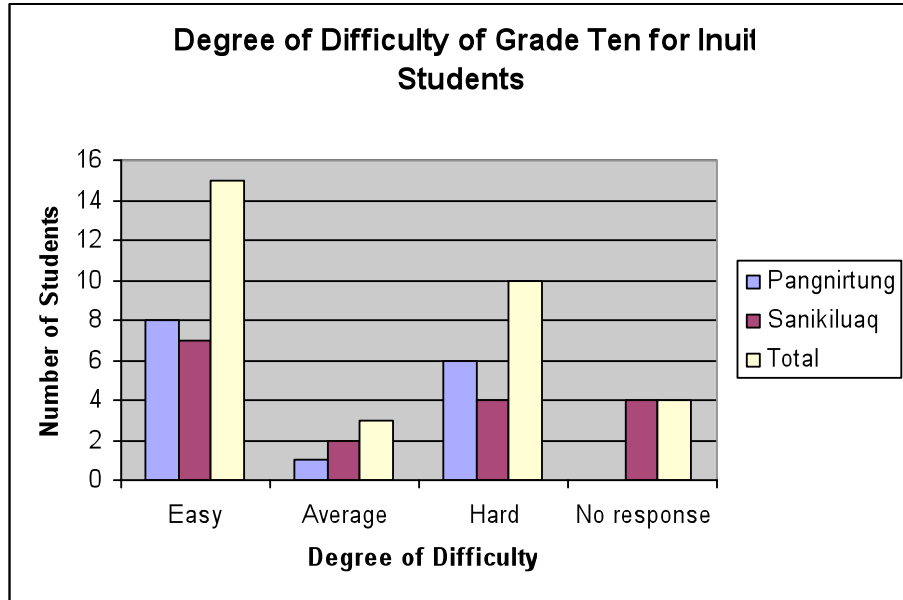


Figure 87: Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Students

Table 49: Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit students

	Pagnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Easy	53% of 15 students	41% of 17 students	47% of 32 students
Average	7% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	9% of 32 students
Hard	40% of 15 students	24% of 17 students	31% of 32 students
No response	0% of 15 students	24% of 17 students	13% of 32 students

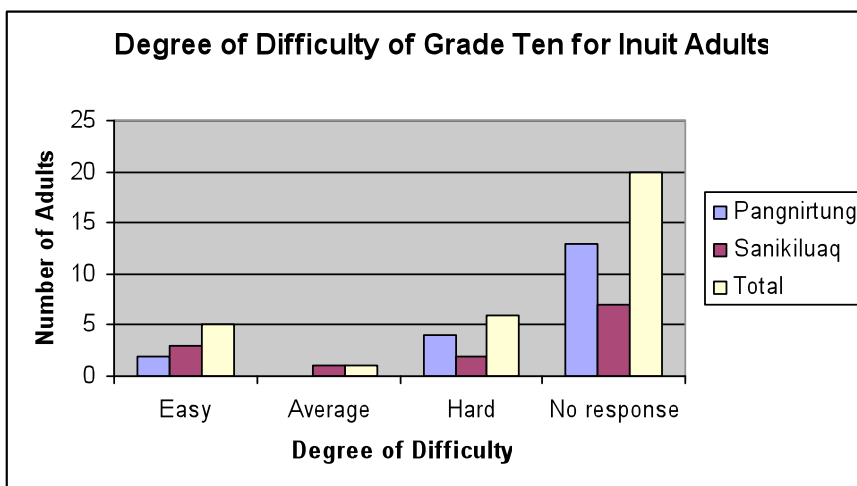


Figure 88: Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Adults

Table 50: Degree of Difficulty of Grade Ten for Inuit Adults

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Easy	11% of 19 adults	23% of 13 adults	16% of 32 adults
Average	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Hard	21% of 19 adults	15% of 13 adults	19% of 32 adults
No response	8% of 19 adults	54% of 13 adults	63% of 32 adults

### *Suggestions Related to the School Environment*

#### *Inuit Desire Opportunities that Value Mentoring*

Inuit expressed a strong desire for a significant increase in funded learning opportunities that encouraged mentoring. Other ways to foster these types of opportunities, other than the unique community programs described in chapter seven, emerged from participants' responses (Table 51). These were: providing homework and

assistance; assisting with learning English; using assessment; promoting career planning, and providing guidance counseling. These suggestions are described below:

*Providing homework and assistance.*

Funded opportunities could also include homework assistance and developing relationships with those that could mentor them. The issue of the amount of homework given emerged as a concern in both communities. Currently, in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq, Inuit students had mixed feelings about the amount of homework they were being given: Students did not respond to the idea of having to do more homework, and one student even laughed awkwardly at the question (PSF4). A different female student stated that she had asked for homework. She did not get it and no explanation was given: “I ask, but they won’t give me any papers” (Sanikiluaq female student: SSF8). A male student thought that the homework he got in Ottawa helped and he further explained: “You got it every day. Here you don’t get it at all” (Pangnirtung male student: PSM1).

Parents felt that students in other communities in Nunavut and Canada benefitted when homework was given more regularly. They also felt that homework should be introduced in the earlier grades to help prepare Inuit high school students for high school. In addition, one adult expressed that opinion:

I think if we look... [at the] work in the junior high classes and homework is introduced earlier than later, I think that if they have at least [that preparation prior to reaching high school, students]... have a better chance of actually succeeding. I have a daughter who just started grade 10 who never brought

homework home in junior classes... regardless of how many times... homework programs [have been tried]... I have spoken with different friends and five have stayed with some of these friends when I travel and their children have homework... Now I see... some homework... done in the... primary [grades]... but by the time [students] get to junior high... [homework] just all of a sudden seems [to get] cut off. And I think... we [should] introduce a homework program... [to students] at an early age so they are not so scared of homework by the time they get to high school... A lot of our high school students think that they don't need to do homework because they didn't do it in junior high. That's one of the biggest reasons why [I think that] they are not making it through the high school... lack of homework. (Sanikilauq female adult: SAF8)

A few parents who had been to school remembered having a lot of homework.

Other parents felt that since the students pass a grade by age, and not by skill, homework was not given, especially to those who might be doing better than others. The two quotes below reflect these views:

“My children hardly ever bring home any homework. When I was in high school our bag was heavy.” (Pangnirtung male parent: PAMP2).

He went through grades 10, 11, 12 with no homework. I even bugged him and his teacher to give him extra work because he is pretty smart, but the teachers tend to go with the more general stream because most of the students are behind. They ignore the smarter ones... they pass by age, not by skill, and I have a big problem with that (Pangnirtung female adult: PAF3).

When I went to high school I had tons of homework every night and on the weekends, and, here, they don't have any homework. I can't figure that one out. Obviously they are not learning the same things we learned in high school (Pangnirtung male adult: PAM2).

Another adult stated:

I think that the biggest barrier we have is dealing with the boys, and I strongly believe too that they do not get the preparation in junior high, of homework...

They need to learn to do homework. I think it would be a little bit easier for some of our students; but by the time they hit high school, they are overloaded with all this homework that they didn't have in junior high. I say this because I'm a parent and I observe as a parent... if homework is introduced earlier than later, I think if they have that at least, they have a better chance of actually succeeding

(Sanikiluaq female adult: SAF8).

One adult male suggested that students could be asked to read for homework and that homework programs could be tried again:

There is one thing that I would encourage the kids to do is...read [more, even for homework. When students read]... I think they would do much better. Also they used to have homework sessions in the evening, that should be [done] more [often] (Sanikiluaq male adult: SAM3).

Other informal comments in both communities also indicated that at one time there had been a homework assistance programs in their communities that had not worked. The data from this research indicates that the reasons why these programs



did not work should be reexamined and modified to meet the needs of a variety of students to make it more successful. Since males indicated that they are more likely to ask teachers for homework assistance, they should be encouraged by the teachers to do so. Informal conversations indicated that sometimes males, who miss a lot of classes due to hunting activities, are discouraged by teachers from getting homework help to catch up in their work because teachers feel that they should have been attending class. This research suggests that would support that schools should try to provide some accommodation or means, like special tutoring, for those males, as well as for females who miss school due to pregnancy.

*Assisting with learning English.*

If students worked with elders in real life situations requiring English, they would gain practice needed to improve their oral and written English skills. This type of experience is more important in Nunavut, where Inuktitut is still the only language used for instruction in most schools from preschool through third grade.<sup>124</sup> English is not introduced until the fourth grade. When students go from junior high into grade ten, they often have learned only minimal English, Yet, students in grade 10 have different teachers for each subject who only speak English, and who are probably unfamiliar with the Inuit culture. One student simply responded that “English” (Pangnirtung student: PSF7) was what might be difficult for grade ten students. Other participants also mentioned that not knowing English might be a factor: “I failed one class for the first time, very first time in English, which I got, I kept going after I failed” (Pangnirtung

student: PSF4). Another student remarked, “In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, they start to learn English, so it was kind of difficult to learn it [and use it in school] when you mostly speak Inuktitut” (Sanikiluaq student: SSM1).

One adult suggested to “have them [students] going into high school speaking and reading and writing in English. That is the number one thing... If they are confident they are going to show respect. I think they are tied together” (Pangnirtung adult: PAM2). One male student mentioned that “in the fourth grade they start to learn the English, so it was kind of difficult to learn it when you mostly speak Inuktitut” (Sanikiluaq Student: SM1). Another adult indicated: “I think if they start early in English, like in kindergarten, they would do much better in grade 10” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF6).

*Using assessment.*

Opportunities to be tutored as well as mentored is often dependent on knowing what an individual can do and what he/she needs to do. Funds could also be provided to develop opportunities for teachers to work more individually with students in a mentoring relationship that would depend on how students are assessed and monitored in a uniform and frequent manner.

Currently little is known about what academic and social skills individuals at different grades need. Initially promotion occurs from kindergarten through junior high on the basis of age in both communities, and in most schools in the Arctic. When

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<sup>124</sup> There is one elementary school and one middle school in Iqaluit, Nunavut where French is the language of instruction.

Nunavut was created, standardized testing was discontinued as it was not felt to be appropriate for the Inuit population. While there is a curriculum for grades Kindergarten through grade ten,<sup>125</sup> there is not a standardized test that measures what students have learned or should learn at any particular level in any subject.<sup>126</sup> Promotion is based on age because there is also not any standardized bench markers for all Nunavut schools to identify skills mastered prior to entry in grade ten. The Nunavut Department of Education is piloting standardized testing in grade 4.<sup>127</sup>

When students begin grade ten, their teachers for most of their academic classes only speak English, and probably are unfamiliar with the Inuit culture. Grade ten is the first grade in which students must pass exams in order to complete a course and be promoted on to the next grade. In order to get their diploma, high school students must pass exams for high school subjects based on a curriculum from Alberta, Canada. At this time, there are only a few high school courses that have been developed specifically for Nunavut.

One parent suggested testing could be done in both languages, but also pointed out that the Inuktitut curriculum could be developed to extend into high school:

There needs to be more support. I strongly feel that more development needs to be done in testing, regardless of whether it is done in English or Inuktitut; if that is what the students has learned in his years. It is very unfair to say that our Inuktitut students are uneducated, when in fact they have learned everything they were

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<sup>125</sup> This curriculum is specified on the Nunavut Department of Education website:  
<http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/>

<sup>126</sup> A standardized test for math ability is currently being piloted in Nunavut for grade four (Picco, 2007).

<sup>127</sup> Informal conversations with Minister Edward Picco (Picco, 2007).

taught in Inuktitut. But the fact that it does not get used in later in the higher grades does not mean they are slow learners. They are not. Their years of work is just not furthered nor supported in the higher grades (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

One female adult commented that students are only assessed “depending on which teacher is asking for what assessments. [Assessment is only done] on specific students... [if] they feel that a child is [not doing well]... in class.” She also said:

Student support teachers and program support teachers have varied.

In the past, [they have] done a lot of assessment, especially reading and writing, because that’s where our students are most lacking, and find that they’re most lacking, and find... [students] struggling in the language arts department, and so every year we’ve had-not in the last few years-but in the past, we’ve had teachers making sure that we knew... [the level and ability of ] the students [who] were in junior high before they went[onto] to high school (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8).

*Guidance counseling and career planning.*

Guidance counseling and career planning advice would help students to set goals and develop career aspirations. Inuit expressed these views below:

I don’t know if it’s just being teenagers, but when they have something to look forward to , when they are trying to aim for something, they are really motivated... I was so determined to do much better because I knew I wouldn’t be out hunting, I wouldn’t be sewing all those skins (Pangnirtung adult: PAF 3).

“I just want to finish school” (Pangnirtung student: PSM6).

The importance of setting goals, career planning, and job experiences are another type of funded opportunities that would develop relationships between students and those mentoring them through high school.

*Inuit Desire Opportunities that Value Relationships*

Inuit expressed a strong desire for a significant increase in funded learning opportunities that encouraged building relationships. Other ways to foster these types of opportunities, other than the unique community programs described in chapter seven, emerged from participants' responses (Table 51). These were: improving teacher-parent-student interactions; transitioning to grade ten; designing alternatives for male students that hunt; providing day care access; and understanding the importance of an education. These suggestions are described below:

*Improving teacher-parent-student interactions.*

One adult male parent mentioned that teachers could focus on their relationships with the students as well as the academics: "I want the teachers to do more work with their students." He also stated that a teacher had never been to his house, and "It would be a lot better if they came and visited my house." The same individual said good teachers would have expectations for students. They would be "teaching the students... [to the best of their ability] and they [would] want their students to learn more because school is their future" (Pangnirtung male parent: PAMP1).

*Transitioning to grade ten.*

One adult mentioned that a transition program had been tried in Pangnirtung to make the transition into grade ten easier:

[It was tried] to do a transition from grade 9 to high school by acting that they are in high school, that they do some high school work, even though... [students] are in grade 9. Towards the end of the year they do a test or an exam that high school does just for practice so that they know ahead what [to expect]... Grade 9 students are always excited to go to high school especially when the school was new (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

Little evidence was found in either community to show what else is being currently being to specifically prepare students for into grade.

*Alternatives for male students that hunt.*

Hunting for males was mentioned, particularly in Sanikiluaq, as an important reason why male students had difficulty in completing the work in grade ten due to prolong absences. For example, one parent stated:

I strongly believe they have a big connection to the land, especially the boys. They'd rather be out on the land, go hunting, and hunting seasons vary throughout the year. There's a fall hunting season, there's a winter hunting season, and there's a spring hunting season. So by the time they are trying to get back to school, they are lagging very [far] behind because they spend a whole month of hunting October, and November, and then a whole month in May and throughout the winter months when the weather is good for seal hunting, so the guys missed out a lot. (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8)

She also pointed out that:

It's very hard for parents to say no, you can't go hunting if it's their boy who says I want to go hunting. A lot of times the teenagers are more than permitted to go because it will help provide food in their home (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8).

The same adult also suggested that designing high school units as modules would help make work easier for Inuit, especially male students who like to hunt, to complete (SAF8).

*Day care access.*

While the females noted the benefits of having a day care associated with the school, they did not indicate that being pregnant was a problem that prevented them from continuing their high school education. However, funding opportunities that enable children to engage in activities that promote education through developing relationships and focusing on transitions has been observed in the day care centers in Nunavut. More young mothers could have access to day care type activities on a part-time or outreach basis for mothers who stay at home. One parent expressed how other parents informally spoke of the benefits of day care below:

Having seen the benefits to... two preschoolers, I am a firm believer that it really is. We did a lot more work with our last two children than we did with the first two and the last two had a lot easier time understanding... numbers are universal... by the time they got to kindergarten they could do some addition, some subtraction, some fundamental understanding... Of course we would read books and everything to them even in their preschool years... I am a strong

believer that... [if there is] a goal [that] we need to set for the higher grades, well we have to do work at the lower grades to support that process (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

*Understanding the importance of education.*

One adult felt that the reasons students had difficulty in grade 10 was that parents do not understand the importance of education, there isn't enough support for learning English as a second language, and students lack a strong foundation:

I guess a number of factors. One, lack of parent involvement in understanding the importance of education [and] completing high school. Again, another problem maybe lack of encouragement programs for locals that are studying a different language... another factor may be because both parties [students and parents] do not fully understand the importance and benefits of the long term, not understanding fully the long term benefits of completing high school.

The same adult continued:

Again I feel, not recognizing early enough when a student is seen as failed or dropped out of school [is a problem]. They are seen by many as somebody not being able to cope with the education system, not understanding English, not being able to wake up, or just being lazy, or whatever. I don't think those are the problems. Those may be the symptoms more than reasons why a student is struggling. So [there should be] more recognition of the fact that a student has failed, maybe has dropped out because their [cultural] foundation has never been set (PAM1).



Table 51: Summary of Findings between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Related to School

Broad Theme: School	
Data Sources: Elders, Students, & Adults	
Suggestions that emerged from the participants:	
1. Promote and fund more learning opportunities for students to mentored by elders and other individuals	
2. Promote and fund more learning opportunities that value relationships	
Topics	Findings for Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq
Teaching practices: Use of computer	Data inclusive- no response
Teaching practices: Qualities of a good teacher	Students said someone who can “teach,” is friendly, is easy to approach, and uses activities to instruct. The few adults that responded said someone that has previous experience teaching, can “teach,” is friendly, and instructs using activities.
Teaching practices: Type of activities	Students said that group work, projects, and varied activities helped. Most adults did not respond.
Teaching Practices: Level of challenge	Pangnirtung: Most participants had no response. Those that did respond mentioned that students had to wait for others to finish and some participants felt that students should be able to continue on to the next topic. (This topic is discussed in chapter seven.) Sanikiluaq: No response
Teaching policies: Who did they go to for homework help	In both communities, most students did not know who to go to for help with homework and most adults did not know or did not respond. Pangnirtung: More female than male students did not know who to go for help. Those that did seek help, went mostly to their teacher. Sanikiluaq: More male than female students did not know who to go for help. Those that did seek help went to teacher, parent, or a friend.
Teaching policies: Difficulty of the transition from elementary to junior high	Pangnirtung: Students said it was average Sanikiluaq: Students said easy
Number of year in grade 10	Students in both communities spent a range of one or more years in grade ten. Adults had no response. Pangnirtung: Some males spent 4 to 5 years in grade 10. Sanikiluaq: Some males spent 3 to 6 years in grade 10.
Difficulty in grade 10	A higher percentage of students said grade 10 was easy. A higher percentage of adults said grade 10 was hard.

Kim's Story: Do You Know I Care About You and Our Relationship? (*Ain?*)

In the Inuit culture relationships are highly valued. As a result, Inuit people refer to each other by their relationship rather than by their given name. For example, my friend, Nancy, would be called "friend" (*piqati*) and my aunt, Kayrene, would be called "aunt" (*atta*). Since my second child was a girl and she was bigger than her older brother, in Inuktitut, I called her "big daughter" (*Panikpaja*) even though her actual name was Tanya.

Inuit babies are encouraged to recognize and respond to their mothers' voice. An Inuit mother could go into a crowded community center and simply say the word "daughter" ("*panik*"), and her child would respond to her voice without hearing her given name called. That was apparently not the case for my daughter, Tanya. Whenever any mother said "daughter," or any version of daughter with an adjective added to it, Tanya would run to her. When Tanya approached a mother who had been calling her own child, she was greeted with the Inuktitut phrase, "Do you know I care about you and our relationship?" ("*Ain?*") Often she was also given an "Inuk kiss" ("*kunik*") on the cheek, which is the Inuit way of showing their fondness for children. Both of these cultural practices encouraged Tanya to continue responding to mothers who were calling their daughters. Inuit mothers found it amusing that my daughter was so friendly at an age when most children shy away from individuals that they don't know well. Those "strangers" who tended to be around my daughter a lot soon became familiar to her. In the Inuit culture, the name one individual calls another establishes certain relationships. Others in the community started to call Tanya, "big daughter" ("*Panikpaja*") just as I did,

which implied that they too would treat her in the same special way that they would treat their own daughters.

Relationships continued to have a significant effect on Tanya as she began school. Two incidents, that both occurred in the United States, highlighted how relationships can improve one's ability to succeed in school.

The first incident occurred when I went to visit my parents. They were impressed with how Tanya had been learning through interactions with her Inuit relatives. However, they found it unusual that Tanya did not really know or respond to her birth name, but only to some guttural sounds that I made. They developed a relationship with her by watching what she did and showing her what to do when they wanted her to play with them.

As my parents began to know Tanya better, they noticed that she preferred to sit much too close to the TV set even though they kept reminding her to move back. When they asked me if her eyes had ever been examined, I mentioned that all preschoolers in Pangnirtung had their eyes checked by a visiting Canadian doctor. He examined all the Inuit preschoolers rapidly and did not see the importance of establishing a personal relationship with any of them. As a result, Tanya's vision problem was not identified by him. When I had her eyes tested in the United States, I was surprised to learn that her vision was closer to the near-blind category than it was to 20/20. The glasses first prescribed for her were as thick as the bottom of a coke bottle. The first time she tried them on that she was sitting on my lap, facing me. She looked at me and said I had pretty eyelashes which she had not been able to see before. Later in the day, she was surprised

that the trees had individual leaves. She really liked wearing her glasses. In the beginning, she would cry when I tried to take them off before she went to bed. She said she wanted to see clearer in her dreams.

In the Arctic, the plastic frames froze to her face in the winter. When she went to the United States again, at age five, she got fitted for a pair of contact lenses. Tanya still remembers that once when I was putting the lenses in for her, some of the acidity from an orange I had just eaten still remained on my hand. She had a burning sensation in her eye, and she learned to put the contacts in herself. I often wondered if she would have succeeded in school if her poor eyesight had been identified through her relationship with my parents.

In the Pangnirtung school, Tanya was able to learn how to read Inuktitut syllabics. Her teachers had been surprised she was able to read so well because as a preschooler she had not even been able to distinguish the sounds made by her own mother. When she spoke on the community radio, along with other children in her class, her Inuit relatives were surprised at how much she really did sound like their own daughters, even though her natural mother did not speak Inuktitut well. Part of her ability to read and retain the Inuktitut language came from the numerous “mothers” (*anaanait*) who gently encouraged and listened to “their daughter” (*paningi*) read.

The second incident that highlighted the Inuit value of relationships occurred when we went one year to the United States for school, and Tanya was placed in the fourth grade. On Tanya’s first day at school, she found it very upsetting that the fourth-grade classrooms were full of English words she could not read. Though she could speak

English and Inuktitut fluently, she had only learned to read in Inuktitut. English wasn't taught until the fourth grade in Pangnirtung. Through the close relationship she developed with an after-school mentor, who helped her twice a week, Tanya was able to learn to read English. By the end of that school year, her ability to read and write English was up to the level of other fourth graders.

As a result of Tanya's Inuit experience, she has developed relationships that have helped her academically and socially. Unfortunately, she does not have enough current Inuit experiences to speak Inuktitut fluently and to understand the meaning of the words she can still read. My research relating to high school students, as well as my experience with Tanya, has reinforced the Inuit belief that developing relationships will encourage more Inuit students to be successful in school.

*Findings Related to the Community: Are we in Agreement? (Ii?)*



Figure 89: Researcher's Daughter in an *Amautik*



Figure 90: Researcher's Daughter with a Polar Bear in the Background  
Picture taken by Geoff Shore, Keswick High School, Keswick, Ontario; gshore@idirect.com

Community partnerships, including work experiences, were identified in the literature as influences that would encourage more Inuit children to remain in school until graduation. To identify current community partnerships, data was collected in both communities from students' and adults' experiences related to exchange trips, participation in sports, and the combination of those experiences to reflect their exposure to individuals from a different culture. Emergent themes in the data revealed that interviewees in both communities expressed a desire for better communications and networking among government departments, businesses, and local organizations, as well as more work experiences for students.

In Inuit child-rearing practices, Inuit frequently check with each other to see if they understand each other and are in agreement using the expression "*Ii*." In the context of child rearing, it enables a toddler to have the opportunity to check with someone more knowledgeable to see if they understand what they are being asked to do and if they want

to do it. This expression applies to the findings related to community partnerships, because “understanding and agreement” are two aspects of communication that are needed to establish better communication and networking to form partnerships. These partnerships with the school will help more Inuit to stay in school until graduation. Participants were asked questions to identify what was presently occurring related to community partnerships to establish a baseline as well as to find out what they thought might be needed. Topics from the data on community partnerships (See Table 52, p. 303) and the findings between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq (See Table 53 p. 304) are summarized in table form at the end of this section.

#### *Current Community Partnerships*

##### *Participation in exchange trips.*

Exchange trips have been organized in both communities to provide Inuit and non-Inuit with an opportunity to learn first-hand about each others’ culture. During exchange trips, Inuit students often spent a week visiting mainland Canadian cities, and non-Inuit students from those cities then visited Nunavut for about a week at a later time.

The findings related to participation in exchange trips showed that there was a difference between the two communities among female and male students and adults. Elders had not participated in school exchanges.

In Pangnirtung, the majority of students and adults interviewed had not participated in exchange trips (Figure 91 and Figure 93). However, a greater percent of the total number of male students went on exchange trips in comparison to the total number of females who went (Table 54). Most students interviewed did not participate in

an exchange trip until grade 12, and these trips were usually planned close to the time that they would graduate. The lack of exchange trips of Pangnirtung may be due to characteristics of that community, like the influx of tourists, that was noted in chapter four.

In contrast, in Sanikiluaq, students and adults interviewed had participated in exchange trips (Figure 92 and Figure 94). However, a greater percent of female students in Sanikiluaq went on them in comparison to the percent of male students (Table 55). Four females and one male had been to Ottawa, two females had been to Toronto, one female had been to Vancouver, and one went to Camden, Ontario.

In Sanikiluaq, most students had been on an exchange trip prior to grade twelve. One female even reported she had been on an exchange trip in junior high school. Four students in Sanikiluaq specifically mentioned that doing homework was not a requirement for participating in an exchange. Of the Sanikiluaq students who did not go, one female and one male were in grade ten; two males were in grade 11; and one female and one male were in grade 12. A possible reason that more females participated in exchange trips might have been the fact that they had better attendance in school. Male students who missed school due to hunting were not eligible for exchanges that required good attendance and/or good grades.

Again, with the adults, there was a difference between the two communities in terms of their participation in cultural exchanges. In Pangnirtung, most Inuit adults had not participated in an exchange program (Figure 93). All the adults in Pangnirtung who had participated were males (Table 56). In Sanikiluaq, most adults had participated in an



exchange program (Figure 94). A greater number of female adults in Sanikiluaq went on exchanges as compared to the total number of male students (Table 57).

Responses below, from adults in both communities, support cultural exchanges as helping more Inuit stay in school until graduation:

Yes, it helps the students to learn more about... different cultures and how it is in other places, and especially down south... I took part in one, but my son, he's done that three times now... [He went to] Ottawa... New Brunswick... Ontario... We do help out when they are doing their fund raising... I think that helps many more students... I guess it encouraged them to stay in school... like when they hear about it way in advance (Pangnirtung Parent: PAMP2).

A student mentioned that in addition to the benefits of exchanges, “more activities, like learning different stuff, like different cultures and everything” [are needed] (Pangnirtung student: PSF9).

A female adult who had been on an exchange in grade 12 noted that she thought exchanges were good for “learning about other cultures.” She also explained that in order to be able to go on that trip she had to attend school regularly and “we had to finish our schoolwork” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF6). She thought that maybe going on a cultural trip earlier, in grade 10, might help. A parent of a current high school student talks about how trips help academically:

I can go back and think about it. Why did I do that? Because I remember getting homesick and it was only a week away. I think it has helped me to go to high school... away from home... Yea. I've seen kids who've gone to exchanges. They

turn around [academically] so I would like to see more of that program, especially for those who have academic problems to go often, so they will realize there's a world out there. That's the thing that I would like to change, because they only look at the kids who are doing great in school academically...That's why I have been to those places because I had good attendance and good grades (Sanikiluaq parent: SAFP2).

The value of the exchange program was also highlighted by another adult female who was a parent of a current high school student. The parent had been on two exchanges:

Like we were taught the [white person's] way. [We were exposed] to stuff that was irrelevant to us. We had no clue as to what a skyscraper was, or those kind of things, or subways, what do we need with that here? And do we take it seriously when we don't know it? But it did help me to see that what was there was true... [Exchanges] broaden [students'] knowledge and keep them on top of their studies. In the sense that having to join in an exchange group would mean having to keep up your grades, coming to school regularly and working (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF5).

While cultural exchanges may occur only every other year in Sanikiluaq, they were felt to "motivate students to see what there is in the outside world, but it does not necessarily motivate everyone... If they are cutting off kids that were not attending well, or had bad marks, we barely have anyone to send" (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8). One parent felt that exchanges should "be open to everyone. Because it would be a good experience

for the bad students” (Sanilikuaq adult: SAF1). An adult male commented that “exchanges are good because it was really interesting to see other places that you’ve never seen before” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM2).

Recently, in Pangnirtung, due to difficulties with obtaining passports readily and the rising cost of air travel, exchange trips have been organized so that Inuit students can experience a different culture without having students from those cities return to Nunavut. For example, last year, students in Pangnirtung went to Mexico. To subsidize these trips, parents of traveling students engaged in a variety of fund-raising activities. A student found that her cultural trip to Mexico “was awesome... Yes, we fund-raised for it. Yeah, it took almost a year... [We] went boating... saw flamingos and alligators... [It was] very hot” (Pangnirtung student: PSF8).

An adult in Pangnirtung expressed concern that while cultural exchanges outside of Nunavut may have benefits, he felt that it was important to first consider providing more Inuit students with a strong Inuit cultural background:

One of my biggest [concerns] in today’s world is when an Inuk is expected to learn about [other cultures, like for example] the Mexican culture. You have [a] \$1,500 dollar curriculum [that teaches students about the] Mexican culture [or] whatever [other cultures might be included in that curriculum]. Well, the student [who] has no understanding what [their own] culture is [will have trouble learning a curriculum about other cultures]. Not that there is any problem with learning a new culture, but the fact [is] that... [students] are getting behind again in not using their own culture as a learning tool (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

One adult mentioned the benefits of having cultural exchanges among Inuit who spoke with different dialects. His response also highlighted the importance of learning more about recent events that effected Inuit:

One of the best things I like... was seeing other communities, that was amazing. I never heard a different dialect like that. When I first heard people talking among themselves I could not understand them. It's almost like they were singing their words. It's like they were taking hops. It's the way I look at it... I couldn't figure out why Resolute people were so much like Northern Quebec people, that was before I found out they were moved<sup>128</sup>... I found that really, really interesting (Pangnirtung adult: PAM2).

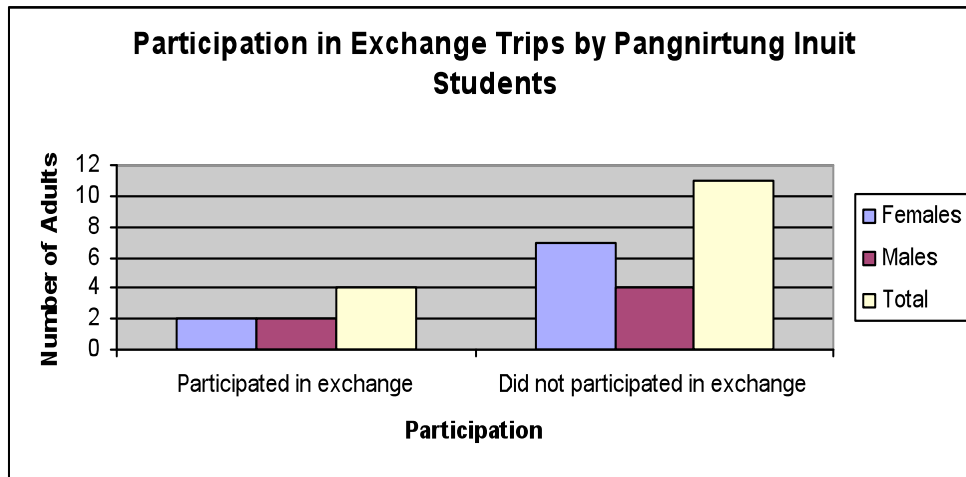


Figure 91: Participation In Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Students

<sup>128</sup> This refers to how some Inuit were forced to move by the Canadian government to different locations during Darnell's second historical period that is described in chapter three.

Table 54: Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Students

	Females	Males	Total
Participated in exchange	22% of 9 females	33% of 6 males	27% of 15 students
Did not participate in exchange	78% of 9 females	67% of 6 males	73% of 15 students

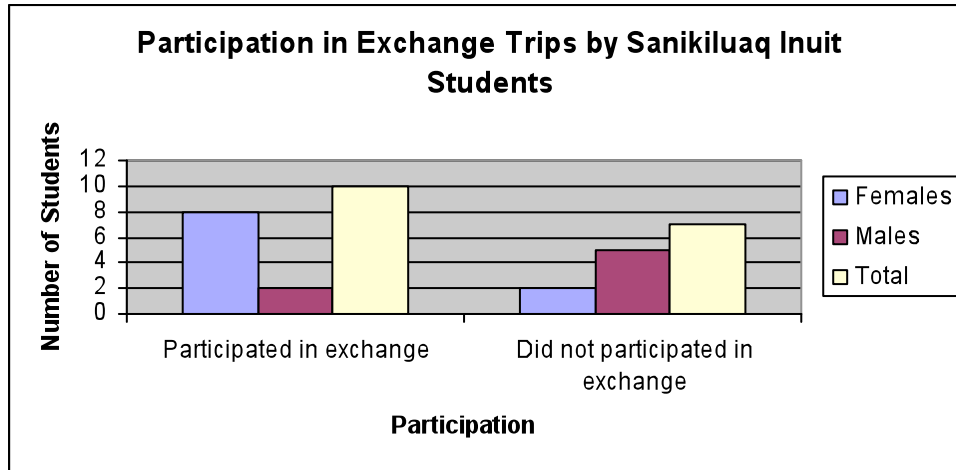


Figure 92: Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Students

Table 55: Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Students

Exchange Trip for Sanikiluaq Inuit Students			
	Females	Males	Total
Participated in exchange	80% of 10 females	29% of 7 males	59% of 17 students
Did not participate in exchange	20% of 10 females	71% of 7 males	41% of 17 students

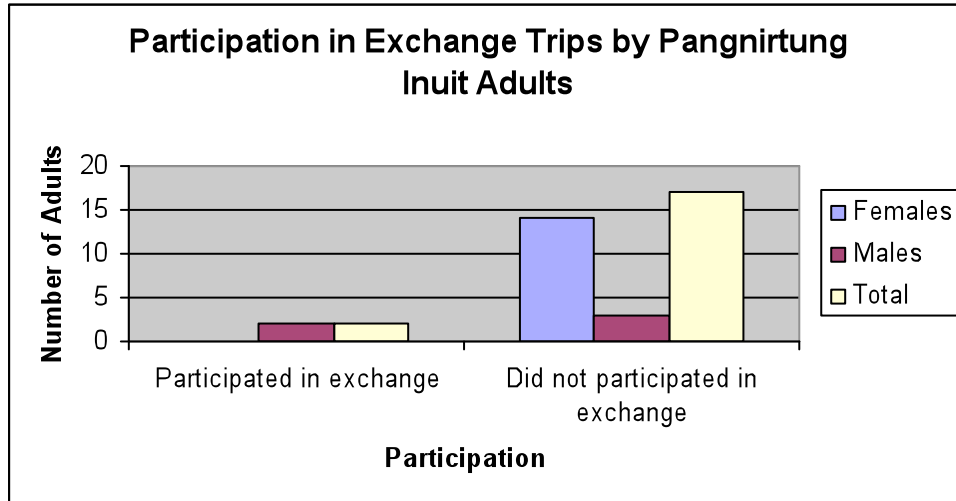


Figure 93: Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Adults

Table 56: Participation in Exchange Trips by Pangnirtung Adults

	Females	Males	Total
Participated in exchange	0%	40% of 5 males	11% of 19 adults
Did not participate in exchange	100% of 14 females	60% of 5 males	89% of 19 adults

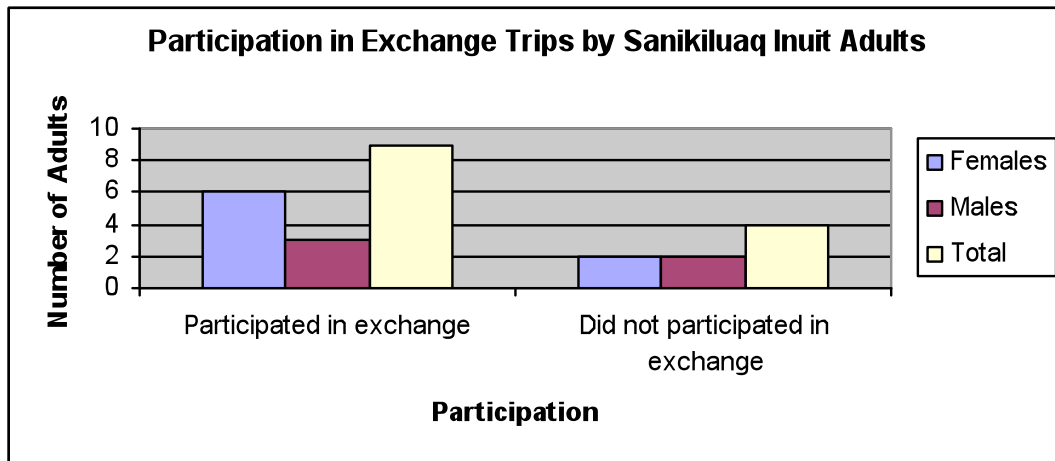


Figure 94: Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults

Table 57: Participation in Exchange Trips by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults

	Females	Males	Total
Participated in exchange	75% of 8 females	60% of 5 males	69% of 13 adults
Did not participate in exchange	25% of 8 females	40% of 5 males	31% of 13 adults

*Participation in sports events.*

Sports events have been organized to promote interaction and fitness between communities in Nunavut. Findings relating to sports indicate that the majority of Inuit students in both communities did not indicate whether or not they had participated in sports (Table 58). More male students in both communities participated in sports as compared to females (Figure 95 and 96). Some female students in Sanikiluaq mentioned that they did not like to play sports.

Again, findings related to Inuit adults' did not indicate whether or not they participated in sports because the majority of them in both communities did not comment (Figure 97, Figure 98, and Table 57). In Pangnirtung, only male adults had participated in sports events. In Sanikiluaq, 25 percent of the female adults versus 20 percent of the male adults participated in sports events.<sup>129</sup> A few male adults in Pangnirtung and a few female adults in Sanikiluaq mentioned that they did not like sports.

Those adults who had participated in sports, commented about the benefits of sports in motivating students to stay in school. One Inuit adult male stated: "It kept me interested and active" (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM1). He also agreed that sports helped develop good routines and habits. Other adults commented about the benefits of sports:

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<sup>129</sup> In Sanikiluaq, two out of eight female adults, or 25% participated in sports events. One Sanikiluaq male adult out of five male adults, or 20%, participated in sports events.

Different age groups had certain sports after school with a gym teacher...

[Different students were involved] every day [in the morning] and after school...

[He had students] involved basketball, soccer, and he taught on paper [about]

healthy food and stuff (Pangnirtung adult: PAF6).

“[When there’s something like [sports] that [is] going on at the school, it helps [students] to look for more [reasons] to go to school” (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

When the researcher asked one male adult from Pangnirtung, who had played in a regional tournament, if the sports had helped him to stay in school, he replied, “Oh yeah, big time... The hockey was good.” (Pangnirtung adult: PAM2).

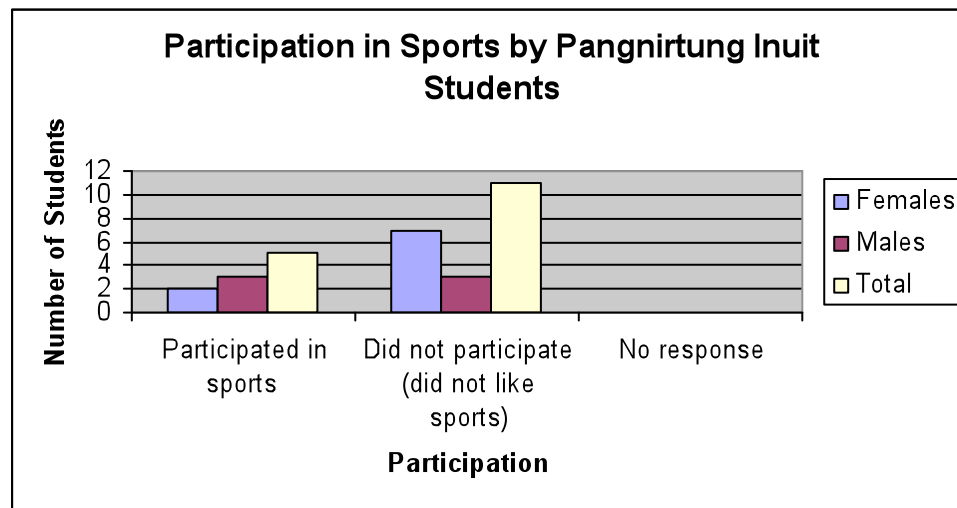


Figure 95: Participation of Pangnirtung Inuit Students in Sports



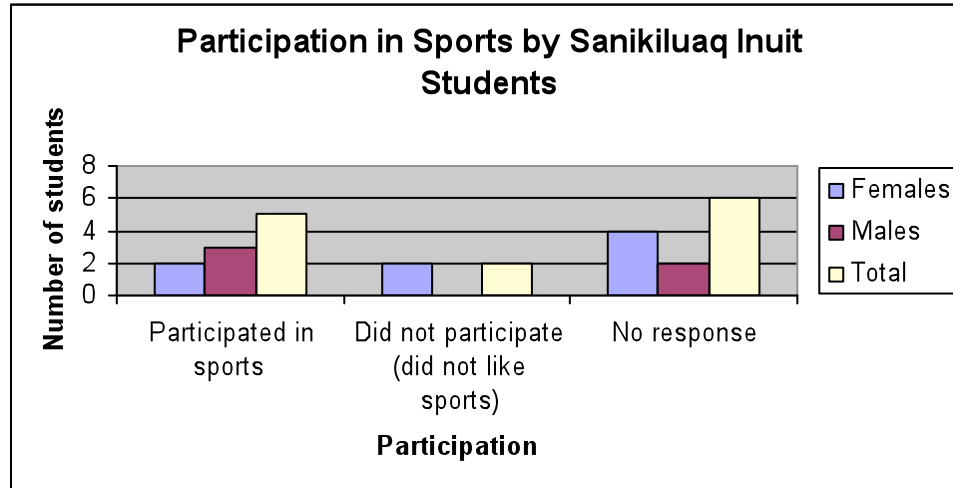


Figure 96: Participation in Sports by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 58: Participation in Sports Events by Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Participated in sports	33% of 15 students	29% of 17 students	31% of 32 students
Did not participate in sports (did not like sports)	67% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	38% of 32 students
No response	0% of 15 students	59% of 17 students	31% of 32 students

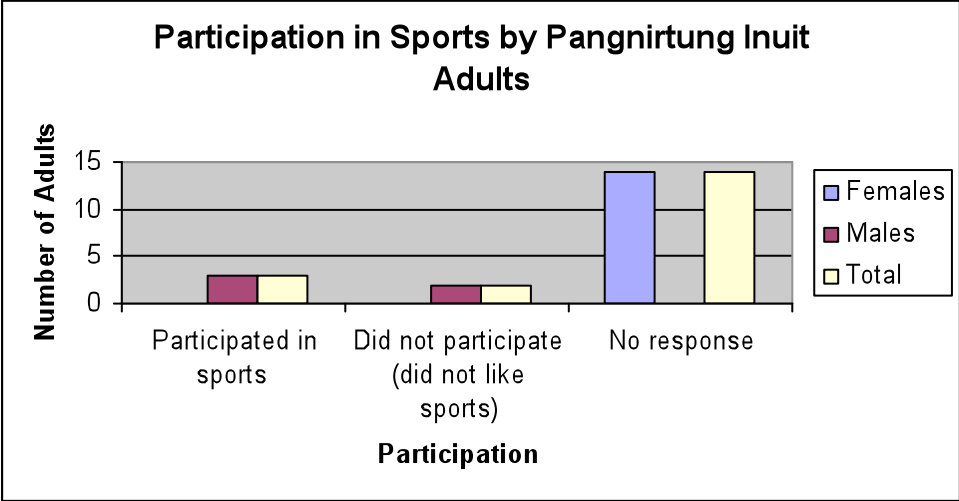


Figure 97: Participation in Sports by Pangnirtung Adults

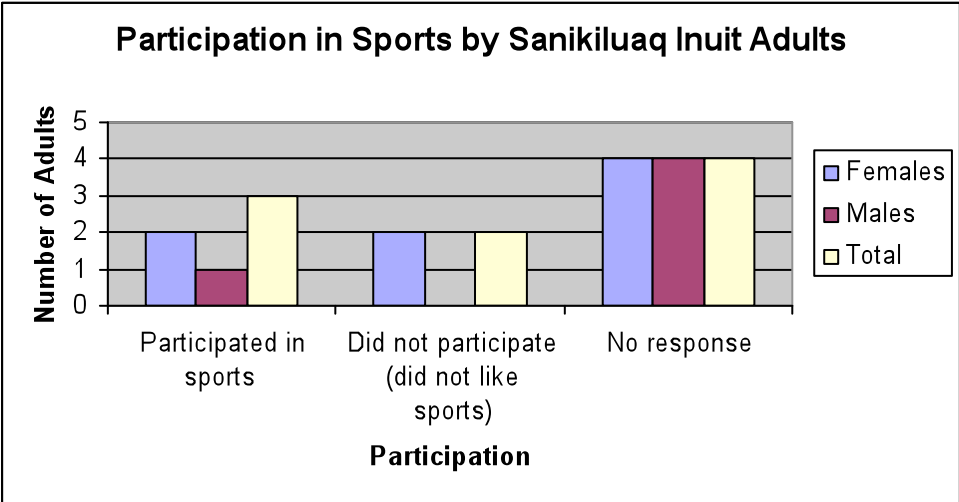


Figure 98: Sanikiluaq Adult Participation in Sports

Table 59: Participation in Sports Events by Inuit Adults

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Participated in sports	15% of 19 adults	23% of 13 adults	19% of 32 adults
Did not participate in sports (did not like sports)	5% of 19 adults	15% of 13 adults	9% of 32 adults
No response	79% of 19 adults	77% of 13 adults	72% of 32 adults

*Combined experiences with other cultures.*

Having meaningful experiences with individuals from different cultures was noted as a quality that was consistent among community leaders (Daloz, 1996).<sup>130</sup>

Developing leadership skills becomes especially important to the Inuit because they live in the only place in the world where indigenous people have been given the legal right to rule over their land and have their own government.

One way to help Inuit students from grade ten up to learn these leadership skills is to participate in a ten-month leadership program in Ottawa called *Nunavut Suviniksavut*. The program's success is attributed to the holistic way it provides support to the students, in all aspects of their well-being, not just their academic requirements (Nunavut Suviniksavut, 2007). At the community high school level, exchange trips with communities in southern Canada, as well as the sports events that occur in geographically diverse areas of Nunavut, also would have the potential for developing leadership abilities as well as motivating students to stay in school until graduation.

To evaluate students' experiences with different cultures, data from the exchange trips and data that related to sports trips outside of the immediate and neighboring communities were combined and re-examined. Participants who had been on either or both of those types of trips were considered to have had an experience with a different culture. This could involve visiting a southern city like Ottawa, Toronto, or a different

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<sup>130</sup> <sup>130</sup> Research shows that successful leaders have been exposed to a variety of cultures. See literature review, chapter three.

Inuit culture. Medical trips outside of Nunavut were not considered in the data as it was not clear how to evaluate these experiences.

In Pangnirtung, the majority of the students (Figure 99 and Table 60) and adults (Figure 101 and Table 61) had not had cultural experiences with non-Inuit, or with Inuit who might have had a different dialect or different traditions than they did. This may be why most Pangnirtung interviewees did not mention whether cultural exchanges and sports events would help more Inuit stay in school. In Sanikiluaq, the majority of Inuit students (Figure 100 and Table 60) and adults (Figure 102 and Table 61) had cultural experiences with non-Inuit, or with Inuit who might have had a different dialect or different traditions than they did.

Participation in sports events was often based more on physical ability. Participation in exchange trips often required good attendance and good grades. By combining these two categories, more students and adults in Sanikiluaq would be involved. This may be why more Sanikiluaq interviewees mentioned that they thought those activities would motivate more students to graduate.

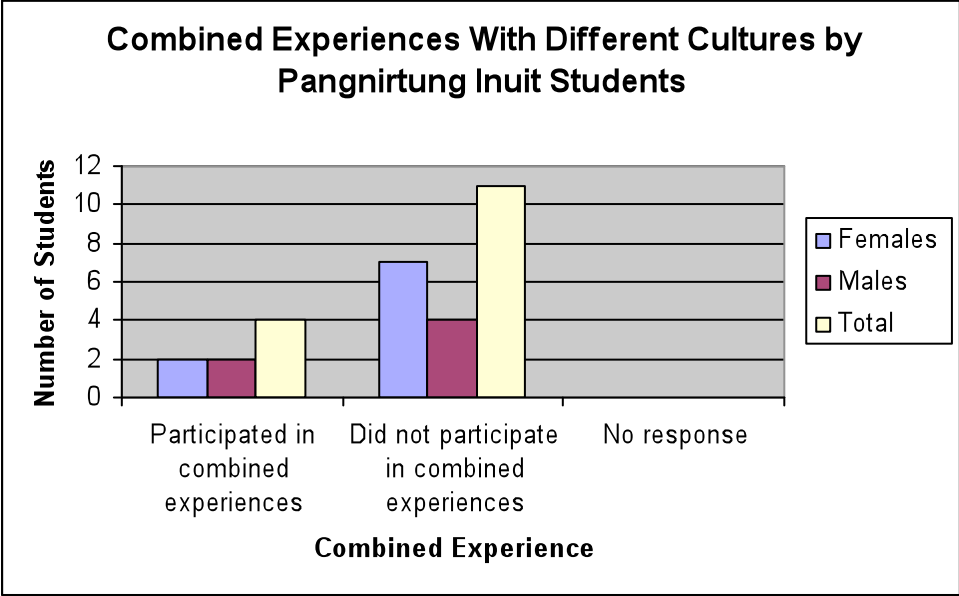


Figure 99: Combined Experiences With Different Cultures by Pangnirtung Inuit Students

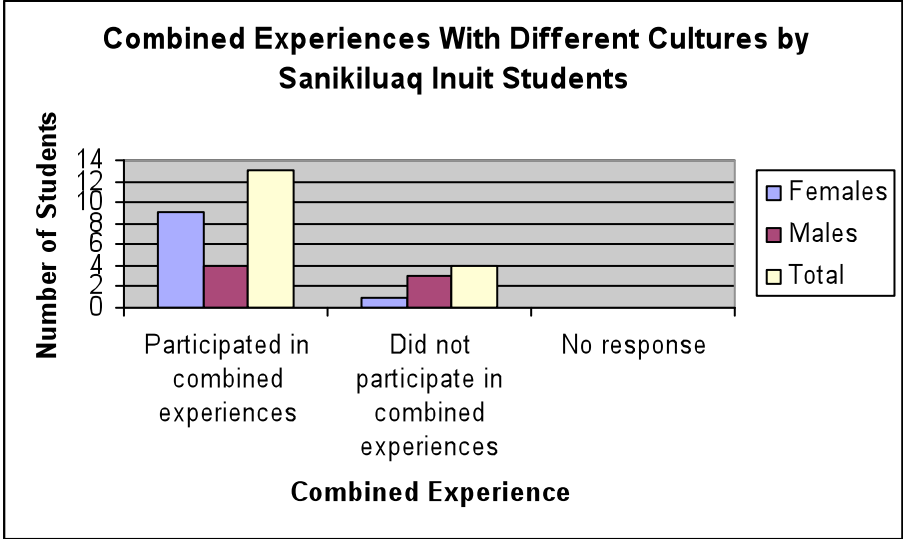


Figure 100: Combined Experience With Different Cultures By Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 60: Participation in Combined Experiences by Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Participated in combined experiences	27% of 15 students	76% of 17 students	53% of 32 students
Did not participate in combined experiences	73% of 15 students	24% of 17 students	47% of 32 students
No response	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students

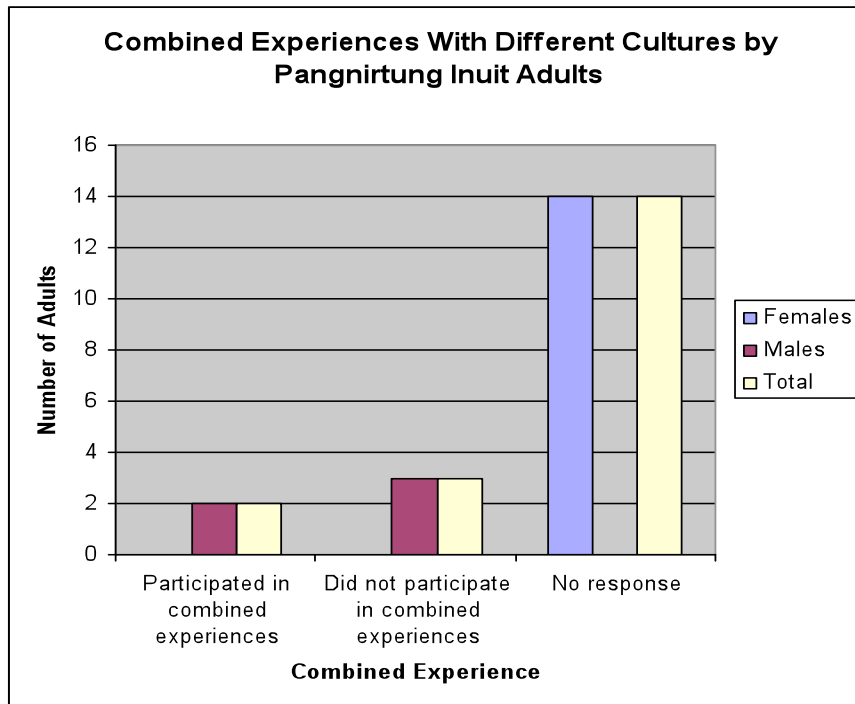


Figure 101: Pangnirtung Inuit Adult Experiences With Different Cultures

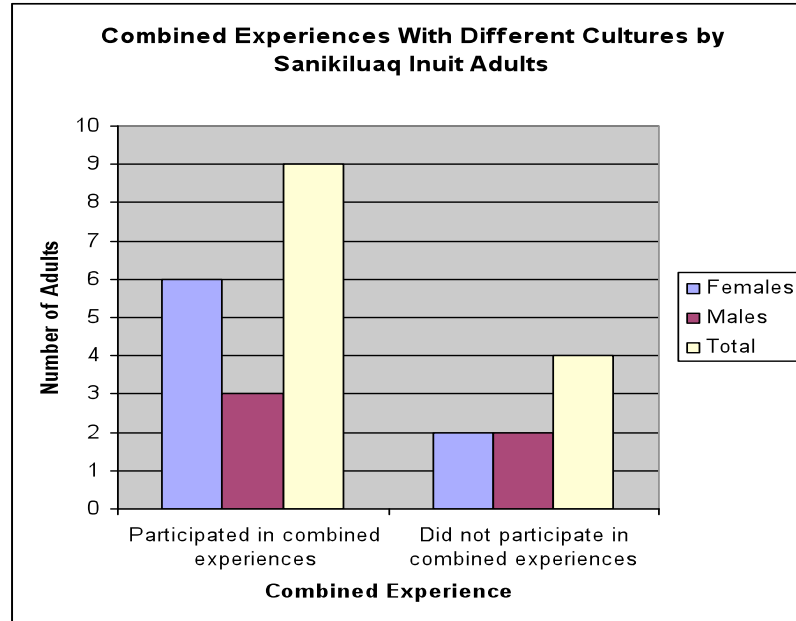


Figure 102: Combined Experiences with Different Cultures by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults

Table 61: Participation in Combined Experience by Inuit Adults

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Participated in combined experiences	11% of 19 adults	69% of 13 adults	34% of 32 adults
Did not participate in combined experiences	16% of 19 adults	31% of 13 adults	22% of 32 adults
No response	74% of 19 adults	0% of 13 adults	44% of 32 adults

*Suggestions Relating to Community Partnerships*

*Better communication.*

Better communication with community partners was mentioned as a way of giving support to students trying to complete their community service hours:

[Students should get more support when] they do community service... [needed] to get their high school diploma. I know some of them struggled to finish that this past school year and... got behind. [I heard that] there were only 12 or 13 students out of 24 [potential] graduates because the others were missing [community service] hours to complete their diploma. Maybe the [students were] thinking I'll get it done, but they put it [off for] later or [they were] not sure what to do (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

*More networking.*

To increase the networking between different community partners, interviewees in both communities wanted work experiences to be offered more consistently. Jobs were offered in some years but not in other. The following quotes indicate that more students might stay in school and be able to find jobs better when they graduate, if they were provided with more work experiences:

“Last year, [my son's] class experienced work experience which helped my son, the one who just graduated” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF6).

“I think... [there] could be more vocational type courses [offered so]... after high school [students would] have a better understanding [of work opportunities] and may be motivated to do [something]” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

Other suggestions for networking, including using elders and adult as mentors to students:



“[Elders] could be here just as spotters and they can be used as resources [for] their traditional knowledge and traditional life and to be mentors to the students” (Sanikiliaq adult: SAF5).

I wonder if assigning certain students to someone in the community [would help more students stay in school. This person would be someone] who benefit... [students by giving] advice and support, check in on them, see how they are doing, and if one of them is not doing well in school [that person could] give some kind of one on one [help to that student]. I think some of the students don't have that [type of support] sometimes [because students don't live with] their parents... or the parents aren't here anymore [in this community, and students] don't have that kind of support system (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

An interviewee also suggested that networking outside of Nunavut could provide stimulating academic experiences for students: “A science camp, if they have more things like that [students] could work for, and [when] they... advance into a certain level that they could [be rewarded by being able to] go somewhere, [like a science camp] that [would] really encourage [students]” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF3).

Table 52: Summary of Findings between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq for Cultural Exchanges and Sports

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Broad Theme: Community
Data Sources: Elders, Students, & Adults
Suggestions that emerged from participants:
1. Better communication needed
2. More networking: using adult mentors, sports events, cultural exchanges, and work experiences

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Table 53: Findings for both Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq

Topics	Findings for Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq
Participation in exchange trips	Differences were noted between communities and gender. Pangnirtung: Students and adults interviewed had not participated in exchange trips. Exchange trips occurred mostly in grade 12. More male students and adults participated in exchange trips than female students and adults. Sanikiluaq: Students and adults interviewed had participated in exchange trips. Exchange trips occurred prior to grade 12. More female students and adults participated in exchange trips than male students and adults.
Participation in sports events	Participation in sports events was not mentioned or played by the majority of students and adults.
Combined experiences with different cultures	Pangnirtung: Students and adults had no response. Sanikiluaq: Students and adults participated.

### Kim's Story: Are we in Agreement? (Ii?)

I first went to the Arctic, thirty years ago, hoping to experience the adventure of a lifetime. I did. But it was not the experience I expected. I could not have predicted that my close, personal relationships with the Inuit would teach me more about life than I ever hoped.

The high point of my first trip to the Arctic in 1977, when I was a college senior, was a hike through the Pangnirtung Pass in Auyuittuq National Park, a breathtakingly beautiful scenic area surrounded by spectacular mountains. Looking back I can't believe that I hiked forty miles in the Arctic wilderness for a week, and crossed a raging glacial stream by using a clip sliding across a suspended wire. Due to the increase in hikers, there is now a wooden bridge that makes the trip much easier.

That was thirty years ago. This past summer, I returned with Elaine, my twenty-one-year-old daughter. I moved to Vermont after she began college. Since Elaine and I had hiked together on a week-long forty mile hiking trip in New Hampshire, we felt prepared for a twenty mile hike in Auyuittuq National Park. When we arrived at the park, we were informed of potentially dangerous polar bear activity near the northern end of the park. We decided to start our hike at the southern end of the park, hike up to Summit Lake, and then return. We arranged our trip so as that we would near Summit Lake at the same time that two park wardens would be there, hiking through the park on their routine maintenance trips. Whenever possible, we listened to the daily park radio broadcasts in the morning or the afternoon, and checked in with the park wardens by radio in the scattered shelters. When we heard a broadcast or met up with the occasional group of hikers, the news was always the same: the weather was overcast, the glacial stream crossing was high and potentially dangerous, and there was no polar bear activity in the park. Our biggest challenge was deciding the best place to cross the rushing glacial streams which were deep and had strong currents. According to the warden, the best time to cross one particularly daunting glacial stream was at five o'clock in the morning. That is exactly what we did. It did not matter that we had to get up at two o'clock in the morning to hike three miles in the Arctic twilight to get to the river, and then waste an hour to deciding where to cross. Later when we met up with the park wardens at Summit Lake, they inquired about our crossing, and wondered why we were getting up at two o'clock in the morning to make our return crossing. When we reminded them that we were following their instructions, they laughed because we had followed their words

literally without taking into account any other conditions. Apparently, the height of the glacial streams was not like a train that could be scheduled daily. It related to the amount of sunlight that would melt the snow. The previous few days had been overcast so although the streams were still high, they were not as high as they could have been at that time of year. When Elaine and I crossed the stream at eight o'clock the next morning, neither of us noticed any difference between the streams at that time and those at the previous five o'clock crossing. But it was not until towards the end of our trip that I learned that sometimes even if one is overly cautious, it may not be enough to survive in the Arctic.

Since we were two females hiking alone, the park wardens kept an eye out for us, checking on our progress and on our gear. Elaine and I were impressed at how quickly they could hike the same distance which took us all day.

On our last afternoon, Elaine decided that she would like to hike ahead of me and beat the park warden to the hut. When he approached me, I was hiking by myself. He inquired if anything was wrong. During the last few days, the warden noticed that Elaine and I always hiked within a few feet of each other and stopped frequently to change our hiking shoes into rubber boots to cross the glacial streams. I kept hiking as I watched the warden disappear in front of me. Eventually he passed the other speck on the horizon that was Elaine. By the time I got to the hut an hour later, Elaine was already there. We heard for the familiar broadcast about overcast skies, high glacial crossings that still were potentially dangerous, and no polar bear activity sighted in the southern end of the park.

Two other hikers who had started at the northern end of the park, where bear-deterrent flares were sold, mentioned that they did not have to use them.

Since it was around four o'clock in the afternoon, and we had survived and enjoyed our hiking adventure, it seemed a good time to relax. Within the park boundaries, hikers are not allowed to pick any plants or collect any clams from the ocean. Since the tide was out further than usual, it reminded me of how much fun I had clam picking when I was living in the Arctic. I thought Elaine would enjoy the experience. I asked the warden if it was okay to go digging for clams in the tidal area just outside the park boundaries. The warden doubted that there would be many clams because it seemed too muddy. Armed with our large soup spoon, the warden's large stew spoon, and a plastic bag we decided to try. While the warden offered us a small shovel in case we found any, Elaine felt that it was better just to arm ourselves with our large soup spoons and borrow the warden's large stew spoon and a plastic bag. Worried about whether I would be able to pay close enough attention to the tide while searching for clams, I decided to go out deeper first and work my way in towards the shore as the tide came in. Elaine waded closer to the shore, not really expecting to find any clams, and occasionally sat on the rocks nearby. I looked at her silhouette, and saw her black rain shell, black pants, and black rubber boots bending down on occasion and then popping back up to look around. I thought for a moment that she might be mistaken for a seal.

I was startled to hear a first gun shot and see a flare go past me high into the sky. My first thought was that the hikers were bored and had decided to try shooting off their flares to see how they would sound. When I heard another flare, I turned to look towards

the shore where I saw the warden and two hikers waving their arms at me. I glanced towards Elaine who was closer to the shore, about a quarter of a mile from me. Behind her, I saw a large white blur running away along the tundra near the shoreline as the third flare went off. I screamed, "Polar bear!" We started running towards the shore. The polar bear must also have thought Elaine looked like a seal. Apparently, the polar bear was frightened away by the sound of the bear-deterrent flares. We kept running until we reached the warden. We were unnerved by how close the polar bear had been to us.

Neither of us remembered, in our moment of panic, that the small print in the wildlife pamphlet on polar bears said that the worse thing to do is to run away from a bear. This often provokes a polar bear to attack. Luckily, the polar bear was already fleeing from the noise of the bear-deterrent flares when we saw it. Even luckier for us, the warden had decided to fill up a gas container and happened to look our way. He noticed that a polar bear was stalking Elaine and copying her movements. As Elaine moved forward, the bear moved toward her. When Elaine stopped, the bear stopped. It was only twenty-five feet from her. The warden was amazed at how calm Elaine was. This was because neither she nor I realized a polar bear was approaching her. It was hard to believe Elaine was so close to a polar bear, since a polar bear had not been sighted in that area for eight years.

We later found out that the bear had been hiding behind large boulders near the shore. The size of its footprints indicated that it was a young adult male. An older polar bear might not have been so easily scared off by flares and a younger bear might have had more curiosity than fear of the flares.

When the report was made to the park service, the ability of the park wardens to go beyond their job descriptions was commended, and recommendations to honor the acts that saved Elaine's life were suggested.<sup>131</sup> Unfortunately, the park wardens were not commended because the incident occurred just beyond the park boundaries. I could not thank the park wardens enough for going beyond their responsibilities of their job and ultimately saving Elaine's life. This story illustrates the importance of taking into account the welfare of people in the community, rather than arbitrary boundaries. My research also identifies factors beyond the boundaries of school, that would support Inuit to work together as a community. This would help more Inuit students thrive in their school environment.

This story illustrates the importance of valuing relationships in a timely manner. Had not that park warden not looked beyond the park boundaries when he did, I would not have returned with my daughter safely and continued to collect data in Pangnirung and elsewhere. My minimum boundaries for this dissertation were to obtain six Inuit student interviews along with potentially four other adults to interview from each community. I try to remember that during the many times that I carried my heavy ten pound notebooks of data up and down the stairs, or poured over the almost quarter of a mile of data charts that this study produced, or the endless hours of people and activities that I could not join or participate in, or nights without sleep.

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<sup>131</sup> I am especially grateful to Daniel Kilabuk and Matthew Nauyuk, the park wardens in the story mentioned above. Their efforts to go out of their way to encourage and support all the hikers, like ourselves, made our adventure safer and more memorable. During the polar bear incident, they were, in my mind, nothing short of heroes. I am forever indebted to Matthew Nauyuk for saving my daughter's life, by sighting the polar bear and firing the flares that scared the polar bear away.

There is no doubt that the research presented here is comprehensive. There are seventy-five Inuit interviews between two communities that span four generations, including interviews with two elders. One might say that the park warden raised in Pangnirtung, Nunavut and my daughter raised mostly in Florida, United States could not be more different beyond the fact that they are both Nunavut beneficiaries. Yet, what mattered the most literally in a life or death situation, was first and foremost the value of people that crosses cultural differences and boundaries.

Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq are very different geographically and culturally though they both are predominately Inuit who live in Nunavut. Pangnirtung is in the northern region of Nunavut on Baffin Island. Sanikiluaq is the southern most community in Nunavut, located in the Belcher Islands. In its location and cultural traditions and dialect it has more in common with people Inuit in Northern Quebec according to the residents than it does with Inuit in the eastern Arctic.

The importance of valuing one's differences as well as looking for universals that were found to be in common between these two schools was a lesson learned from an encounter with the polar bears. I felt that identifying what both communities valued in common along with their differences would help Inuit youths there survive as well in a timely manner.



*Findings Related to Inuit Culture: Can we go Outdoors Together? (Ittaarlu?)*



Figure103: Researcher's Son with His First Seal Skin



Figure 104: Poster of the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ)

Government support of Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) in schools was identified in the literature as one of the influences that would encourage more Inuit children to remain in school until graduation (Figure 104). According to the literature, Inuit students would also be helped if the government developed short-term initiatives that supported their on-going long-term initiatives and ensured that all initiatives were implemented as intended. To identify current teaching level of Inuit culture in the schools, data was collected relating to shop classes, sewing classes, cooking classes, unique community cultural programs, and the involvement of elders. Emergent themes in the data revealed that interviewees in both communities expressed a desire for more cultural values to be taught. In addition, Inuit felt that Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and traditional values should be applied more in the modern world.

In Inuit child-rearing practices, Inuit often by use the expression “*Ittaarlu.*” In the context of child rearing, it implies that a toddler has the opportunity go outdoors, often to do activities on the land, with someone more knowledgeable so that he or she can learn from them. This expression also applies to findings related to Inuit culture because Inuit high school students need to learn more about their culture, which focus primarily on outdoor activities like hunting animals to obtain food and to make clothing; traveling by boat and snowmobile, and camping. Inuit students also need to learn how to apply Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to help them become more successful in school and in today’s society. Topics from data on Inuit culture (Table 62, see page 332) and the findings from Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq (Table 63 and Table 64, see p. 332 - 333) are summarized in table form at the end of this section. Participants were asked questions to

identify what was presently occurring relating to the teachings of Inuit culture in schools to establish a baseline, as well as to suggest what they thought might be needed.

### *Current Influence of Inuit Culture*

#### *Providing cultural skills in schools: shop classes*

Shop classes would provide some cultural skills for Inuit students. Generally, shop classes were assigned to male students, while female students were assigned to other classes like sewing. All data was calculated based on the total number of students and adults who were male. No data was collected in Pangnirtung on this topic. In Sanikiluaq, most male students participated in shop class and male adults did not (Figure 105, and Table 65). However, it was noted that one adult female in Sanikiluaq had taken shop classes.

Shop classes would also be one way that Inuit cultural skills could be applied in a modern context. Various items used by hunters, like seal hooks, or the making of traditional artifacts could be taught. For example, one adult in Sanikiluaq mentioned that high school students had made an emergency survival tool for all hunters in the community, young and old, that were likely to be traveling when the ice was thin (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAM 3).<sup>132</sup> Shop classes could also be expanded to include carving of items using traditional motifs.

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<sup>132</sup> A tool made of wood and nails was designed to help hunters pull themselves out in the event that they fell through the ice.

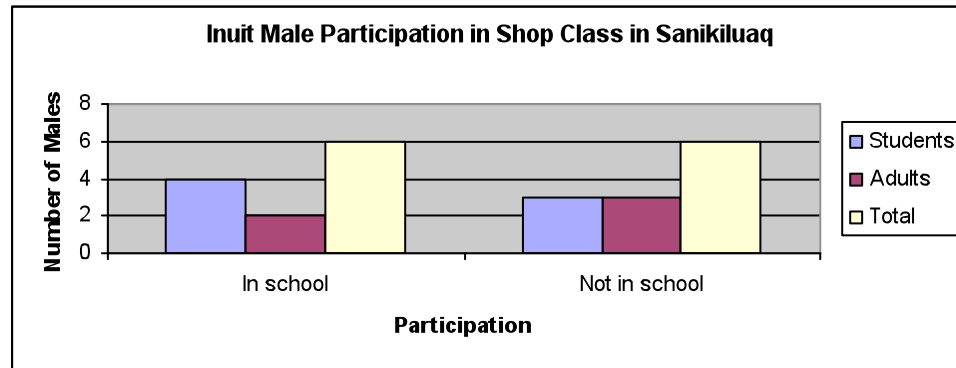


Figure 105: Male Participation in Shop Class in Sanikiluaq

Table 65: Participation in Shop Classes by Sanikiluaq Males

	Students	Adults	Total
In school	57% of 7 students	40% of 5 adults	50% of 12 interviewees
Not in school	43% of 7 students	60% of 5 adults	50% of 12 interviewees

*Providing cultural skills in schools: sewing classes.*

Sewing classes would provide some cultural skills for Inuit students. Generally, sewing classes were assigned to female students, while male students were assigned to other classes like shop. All data was calculated based on the total number of students and adults who were female. No males from either community participated in sewing classes. In Pangnirtung, no data was collected on this subject. Findings related to sewing classes indicated that most female students and adults in Sanikiluaq did sewing in school (Figure 106 and Table 66).

Sewing classes would also be one way that Inuit cultural skills could be applied in a modern context. For example, traditional parkas and mitts could be made from animal

skins as well as from fabric. In addition, embroidery could be taught to decorate clothing and craft items with traditional motifs. Preparing and using animals skins for use in craft activities, or to preserve using taxidermy could also be taught.

Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk indicated that she thinks it is a good idea for girls to learn to sew in the school so that they would know how to make some of the traditional styles of clothing that are no longer being worn as much by the youth (Figures 107, 108, and 109). For example, in reference to the design of the *amautik*,<sup>133</sup> young women are “not using them [the original design for their community] because they are learning from other communities, and using those designs.” The elder had not seen much of “the [traditional] shawl they used to use during the summer... only around this area [and the] Quebec coast” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

One female student said, “Oh yes, I sew a lot now. We learned it in the school and from my mother” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF2). An adult pointed out that her mother did not know how to sew traditional clothes because her mother’s schooling occurred outside of the community. “[Students should have]... the sewing experience. I didn’t grow up with that... because [my mother went to a] residential school” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF3).

A special room was desirable for preserving animal skins using taxidermy; or for preparing animal skins to make clothing or to be used in craft projects. The researcher was shown the preparation room in Sanikiluaq when it was being used to prepare walrus heads. While most new schools in Nunavut have a preparation room, informal conversations indicated it is often used for other purposes, like storage. One adult

described the preparation room: “Back then we had a portable school, it was a house, but they made it into a sewing room and we used it to clean seal skins, scrape the skins, a lot of the messy stuff” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF9). She commented further, “I learned, when little girls are growing up they [should be] encouraged to sew on anything [even] if it is just something very simple, just to get used to holding needles, cutting... and making knots” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAF9).

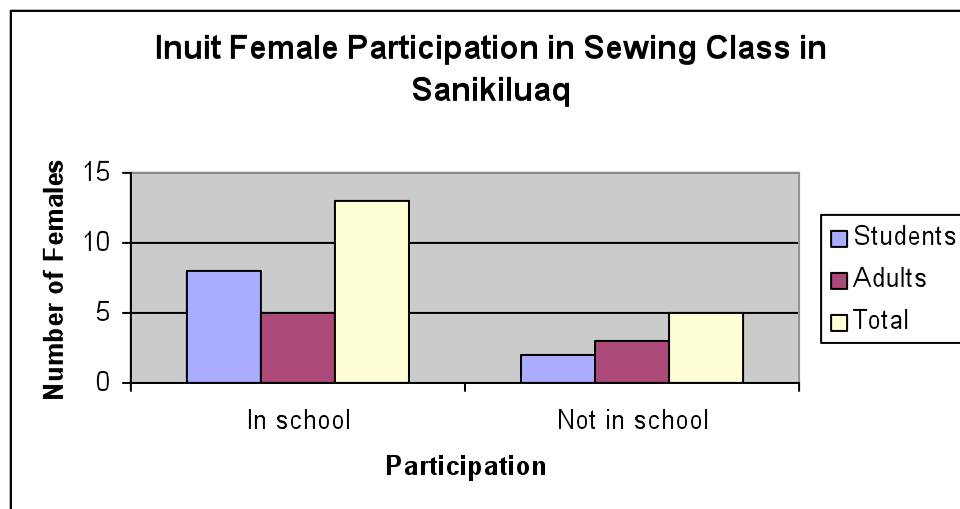


Figure 106: Female Participation in Sewing Class in Sanikiluaq

Table 66: Participation in Sewing Classes by Females

	Students	Adults	Total
In school	80% of 10 students	63% of 8 adults	72% of 18 interviewees
Not in school	25% of 10 students	38% of 8 adults	28% of 18 interviewees

<sup>133</sup> An amautik is an Inuit coat designed for women with a special pouch inside for carrying a baby, so that

*Providing cultural skills in schools: cooking classes.*

Cooking classes would provide some cultural skills for Inuit students. Generally, when cooking classes have been offered, they have been assigned to female students, while male students were assigned to other classes like shop. All data was calculated based on the total number of students and adults who were female. No males from either community participated in cooking classes. No data was collected in Pangnirtung. Most female students and adults in Sanikiluaq did not participate in cooking classes (Figure 106 and Table 67).

Cooking classes would also be one way that Inuit cultural skills could be applied in a modern context. For example, students could be taught how to prepare traditional Inuit foods that are high in nutritional value, like stews made from local animals, plants, and sea life. In addition to learning how to add store bought ingredients to traditional dishes, students could be taught how to prepare various foods and desserts found in most southern cook books.

Food preparation and activities centered around food are an important part of the Inuit culture that is not being addressed in schools. For example, Sanikiluaq is well known for its spiral shaped pan-fried bread that is not as commonly made in the eastern Arctic. If cooking classes were offered, students could learn to make food like this using their local cookbook.<sup>134</sup> Their local cookbook illustrates and describes the food preparation for many items found in the Belcher Islands, and not in the northern

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the baby can be warmed by the mother's body heat and protected from the weather.

<sup>134</sup> Sanikiluaq cookbook: Qikiqtamiut Cookbook. (2002). Occasional Publication no.51. Edmonton, Canada: Municipality of Sanikiluaq and Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press

communities. It is organized by season, not by food type as most cookbooks are. Other communities could use that format to make a cookbook with recipes from their own region. Since food preparation and sharing of food is central to the Inuit culture, cooking classes should be included as part of the curriculum.

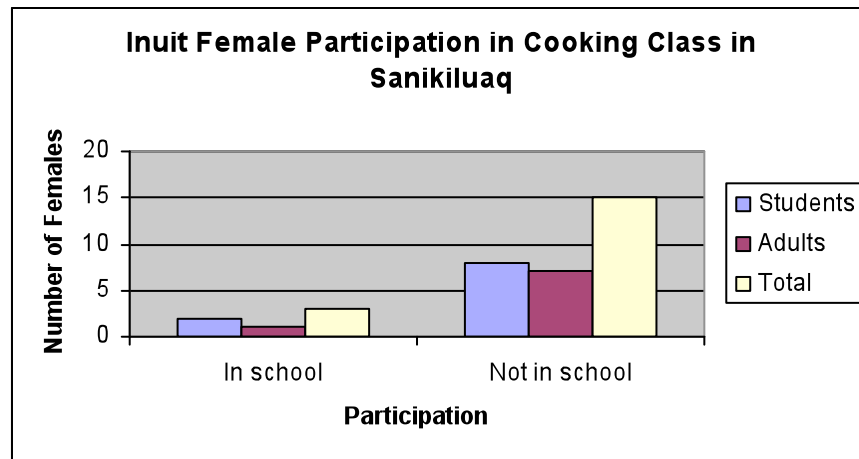


Figure 107: Female Participation in Cooking in School in Sanikiluaq

Table 67: Participation in Cooking Classes by Inuit Females

	Students	Adults	Total
In school	20% of 10 students	13% of 8 adults	17% of 18 interviewees
Not in school	80% of 10 students	88% of 8 adults	83% of 18 interviewees

*Elders' involvement in schools.*

Elders are seen as the individuals who are best able to transmit knowledge of Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). Students in both communities believed that elders should become more involved in school activities. Interviewees felt that having elders more involved would help more Inuit students stay in school until they graduation.



The findings show that students in both communities mentioned that elders should be more involved in school and help by teaching culture (Figure 108 and Table 68). One student in Pangnirtung also mentioned that elders could help with respect and discipline. Students in Sanikiluaq also mentioned that elders could help with respect and discipline; teach Inuktitut; teach stories; and encourage them to stay in school. Students' responses may have been influenced by the fact that Sanikiluaq students were often able to see elders involved in their school in a variety of ways, while elders were not as involved in the high school in Pangnirtung.

Findings in both communities showed that Inuit adults who responded also wanted elders to be more involved in the school and help teach about the Inuit culture (Figure 109). Pangnirtung adults that mentioned elders could also help with respect and discipline. Again, in Sanikiluaq, Inuit adults were more explicit about suggesting the different roles that elders might have in the school that would help more Inuit students to graduate (Table 69). Sanikiluaq adults mentioned that elders could also help with respect and discipline; telling stories, teaching Inuktitut; and encouraging students to stay in school.

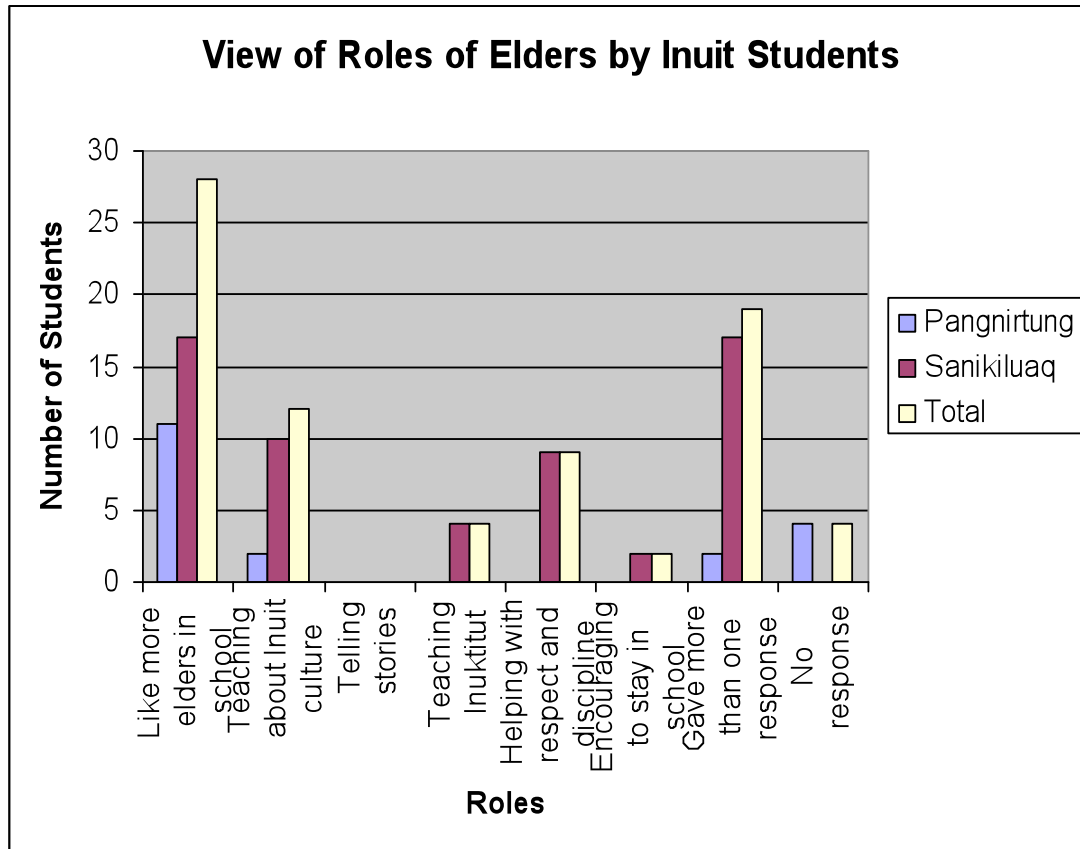


Figure 108: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Students

Table 68: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Students

	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Would like more elders involved in the school	73% of 15 students	100% of 17 students	88% of 32 students
Teaching about Inuit culture	13% of 15 students	59% of 17 students	38% of 32 students
Telling stories	0% of 15 students	0% of 17 students	0% of 32 students
Teaching Inuktitut	0% of 15 students	24% of 17 students	13% of 32 students
Helping with respect and discipline	0% of 15 students	53% of 17 students	28% of 32 students
Encouraging students to stay in school	0% of 15 students	12% of 17 students	6% of 32 students
Gave more than one response	13% of 15 students	100% of 17 students	59% of 32 students
No response	27%	0%	12%

	of 15 students	of 17 students	of 32 students
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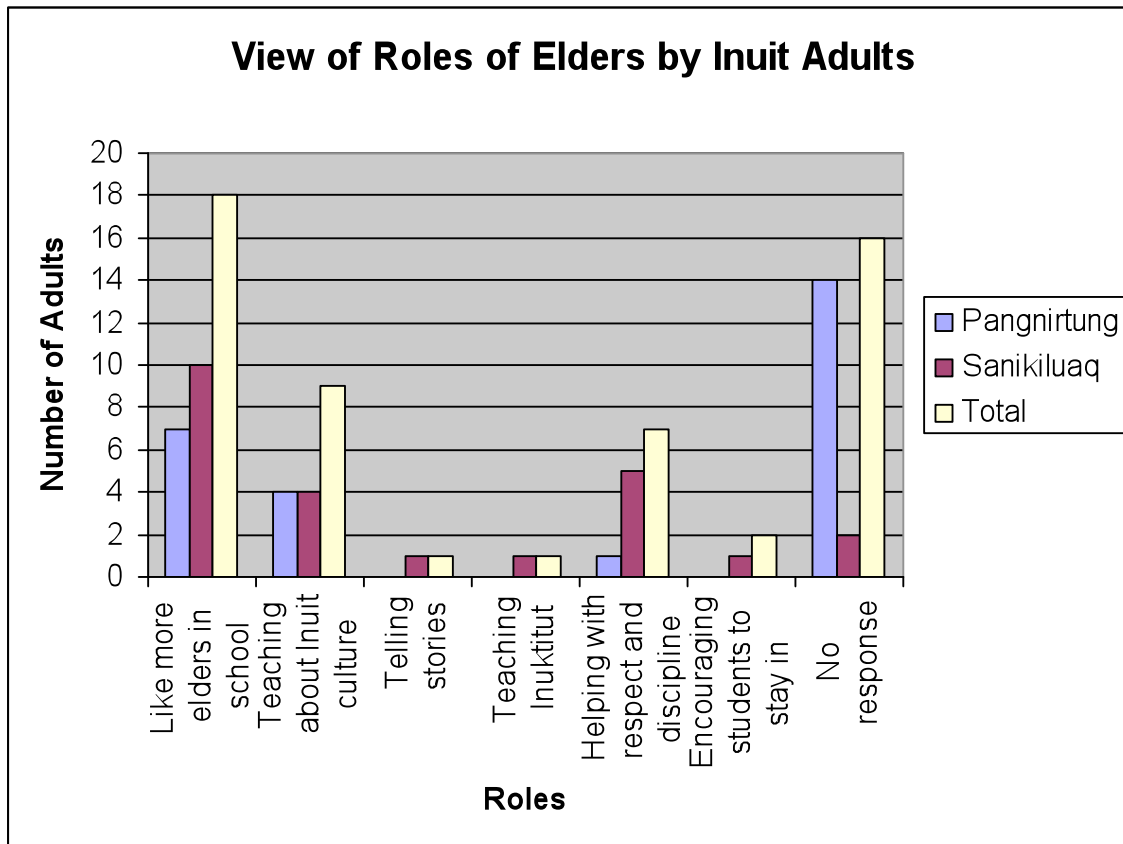


Figure 109: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults

Table 689: View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults

View of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults			
	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
Would like more elders involved in the school	37% of 19 adults	77% of 13 adults	56% of 32 adults
Teaching about Inuit culture	21% of 19 adults	31% of 13 adults	28% of 32 adults
Telling stories	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Teaching Inuktitut	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	3% of 32 adults
Helping with respect and discipline	5% of 19 adults	38% of 13 adults	22% of 32 adults
Encouraging to stay in school	0% of 19 adults	8% of 13 adults	6% of 32 adults
No response	74%	15%	50%

	of 19 adults	of 13 adults	of 32 adults
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*Providing unique community programs in schools.*

Both communities had unique cultural programs that were popular and motivated students. Interviewees thought these programs would help more Inuit to stay in school to graduate. They often provide opportunities to learn traditional skills that are not taught elsewhere. For example, in Pangnirtung, one adult commented: “Spring Camp [taught outside on the land as a unique community program] is the only thing that I think [where students] use the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*)” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF3).

The specific data for these programs will be discussed in chapter seven to illustrate how communities can implement cultural programs that meet their unique needs.

*Observations on the influence of Inuit culture in schools.*

In the schools a separation exists between Inuit cultural skills and the values promoted by the principles of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*). This observation was supported by two different findings. One was related to the type of cultural items displayed, and the other was related to the influence of Inuit staff in the elementary grades on the school climate, school activities, and school-wide decisions.

Cultural items were displayed on the walls and/or in showcases in both communities. There was an important difference between the displays in the Alookie Elementary School and the Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School. The displays in the Alookie Elementary School (grades K-5) reflected school and community projects made jointly, while those in the nearby Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School (grades 6-12) focused more on

the recognition of individuals in the community, or an activity in the school, like cultural exchange trips or the opening of the school.

In Sanikiluaq, the foyer to its only school (grades K- 12) has been officially designated as a Canadian museum because it preserves projects done by the community, as well as displays of exchanges, openings, and special community events. This museum reflected numerous traditional Inuit skills, like basket weaving, and modern cultural skills, like polar bear and bird taxidermy. Artifacts were also displayed.

The influence of Inuit cultural values and activities was strongest in the elementary school where the majority of certified Inuit classroom teachers worked. It was observed that the Inuit staff in the high school in Pangnirtung provided mostly services as directed in their capacity as instructors of Inuktitut, shop, sewing; and working as teachers' aids. One adult commented that she noticed how the teaching aides "this year ... [were] directed to try [and focus more on using a specific strategy.]" (Pangnirtung adult: PAF10). This contrasted to what occurred in the elementary school in Pangnirtung, where a different adult noted that the Inuit certified teachers and aides "work together on themes and language" (Pangnirtung adult: PAF8).

In Sanikiluaq, community involvement was encouraged school-wide. During a professional training session that the researcher attended, teachers of all grades were encouraged to use the innovative crafts that supported cultural culture, like jewelry making. (A ring, engraved with *inuksuk*, worked on by the researcher during this session, was later finished by others. It was given to her as a gift of appreciation from the community to the researcher for her research.

Elementary classes often looked like places where students might linger and explore, while high school classrooms look like places where students would conduct their business and leave. In Pangnirtung, the influence of culture, language, and a welcoming community climate were more prevalent in the school with the Inuit elementary teachers, than in the high school. However, there was also a notable sense of community in Sanikiluaq's elementary school, to which high school students were daily exposed to daily because they attended classes in the same building. The researcher noted that there are indirect cultural advantages to high school students who are in a building where there are qualified Inuit teachers and influential school-wide activities. This was supported by Inuit in interview data which stressed two factors:

1. The importance of creating more inviting and welcoming high school classroom environments
2. The importance of using the school as a center for cultural activities so that it becomes a more inviting place to the community

#### *Suggestions Relating to Inuit Culture*

Inuit participants expressed a desire for more cultural traditions to be taught and to help students apply Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to the modern world. It was felt that these suggestions would help more Inuit to stay in school.

#### *Using elders to teach about Inuit culture in schools.*

Male and female students in both communities commented that elders help them to learn about and preserve their culture. Their views, expressing why it would be good to have elders to teach in the schools, are highlighted below:

“It helps to learn about your culture” (Pangnirtung male student: PSM1).

“Of course, we wouldn’t want to lose our way of life” (Pangnirtung female student: PSF4).

“Because I want to learn more about the cultural [things.]” (Sanikiluaq male student: SSM6).

“I want them [elders] because, I don’t know what you say, we’re always losing our language or culture. They have to teach us how to survive” (Sanikiluaq female student: SSF4).

Inuit adults also stressed the importance of learning about their culture as something Inuit youth need to know. This opinion is highlighted in the comments below:

“I think it would be nice if there were more cultural education. I mean like going out on the land, so they don’t forget their Inuit lifestyle” (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2)

“[I believe that] elders’ knowledge [is important] and [in] the importance of passing [their] knowledge on to students” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF3).

“[Elders] should be more involved to teach younger kids to learn what the elders know from their parents to pass down to the next generation. A book should be written by elders for the school. They [students] change their attitude when the elders talk to them” (Sanikiluaq Adult: SAM2).

*Additional roles of elders in schools*

Additional ways elders could be involved with students were suggested, including using them as resource people and to help with guidance. It was felt that their experience and wisdom would be helpful in encouraging students to stay in school:

“[Students] would learn to respect the elders, learn how to listen (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF4).

“[Elders] can be at least around and just if somebody wants to talk to them, they can be open that would be a good start” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF9).

“I used to enjoy their storytelling... And encouraging us to stay in the school” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF2).

Having elders in our school helps a lot because they are talking to our students to stay in school, how to live life, what they used to do in the past and to help your family and all that sort of things. Not to try to ruin your life. Better finish your school and it may not help you to have a job in the future if you don't graduate (Sanikiluaq female student: SSF3).

One adult suggested that elders continue to be used more to help develop Inuit curriculum or as teachers' aides:

The use of Inuktitut is a lot more obvious with the Department of Education now producing more curriculum at its regional offices throughout the territories. I know, for example, in [other places]... they have done a lot of work with elders who actually produced the materials themselves and they have meetings with elders throughout Nunavut once a year. They produce exchange ideas for curriculum development. Also they are teaching the elders how to be classroom



assistants or supports teachers through completion of a couple of weeks program (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

*Funding elders full-time in schools.*

It was also suggested that elders should be employed and paid like teachers:

“[The Inuit culture is also now] only moving by money. And we... [elders, like everyone else] can only get [things like] transportation [if we get paid] with money [when we help out in the school]” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

“There should be more elders at the school. They could help with the other students who don’t want to do their work and talk to them... Yeah, they [elders] should be at the school just like other teachers” (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP1).

Models exist in Nunavut for having Inuit with special areas of expertise, similar to elders, who do not speak English, and/or do not have a high school education, participate as full-time paid employees in Nunavut’s Department of Education. In fact, before the researcher left the Arctic, I trained an Inuk woman to take over my position as an adult educator. She was extremely knowledgeable about Inuit culture having been educated on the land, and respected by the community; even though she spoke no English. In that position, she was able to continually make a difference to her community in a variety of ways. Returning to Pangnirtung to do my research, I learned that she just retired after seventeen fulfilling years at the job.

*Applying traditional knowledge and values to modern world.*

Inuit expressed a desire to have high school students acquire both academic and traditional Inuit skills:

“She...thinks that it would be better to get a diploma only if you know the ways of the government but also know the traditional ways, like the whole inside story” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Inuit also pointed out that the school environment does not match the cultural values taught in the home. In addition, Inuit felt that the school should better promote and teach Inuit cultural skills and knowledge to the youth:

“Once the children start school, academics... [students] don’t want to learn the traditional ways... and they look at the [the traditional food] as not very good, just the sight of it” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

“When we were in grade 9 we had to make a kayak out of seal skin and it was very stinky and I hated doing it... It would be ok if it came out from a less stinky sealskin” (Pangnirtung student: PAF 2).

It was harder for... [children who were sent away to residential schools] to learn because [they] had that [physical] gap [away from the Inuit culture. She feels] it’s the same thing nowadays with the students because they are up at the school... [in our own community, and yet] they are concentrating more on academics, than cultural [traditions]... It’s still like that even in Nunavut, the children are not learning the traditional. She is giving an example that... [some children] have never been out of the community for school... got all [their]schooling in town...

never went anywhere and [they] still [don't] know how to make [traditional items Inuit sew]" (Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

"[Administrators] use to stop high school [students] from going to Inuktitut or shop, but [recently students were allowed to] continue [these] even in high school. That is a big change... a very good thing" (Pangnirtung adult: PAF5).

[Students should] have choices [in high school to learn about their traditional culture. This would include] the knowledge of our ancestors, and [the knowledge of how to survive] living up here. [For example, students need to know] about hunting and sewing, they need to know that (Pangnirtung adult: PAF4).

Adults in both communities acknowledged that only elders had the expertise related to Inuit traditions and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) that needed to be transmitted to the youth to help them and their culture survive. Therefore, adults in both communities also felt that having elders more involved in the schools would help more Inuit students to graduate:

Sanikiluaq elder Mina Inuktaluk expressed the following thoughts: All around... [Nunavut, students] should have a teacher that is a real pure Inuk in the schools to teach the kids... [not a person that] just follows the books to do [or teach] what they know [from the books, but someone who has experienced what they have learned.] And she also wants an elder to be at the school who will teach about the IQ [Inuit Traditional Knowledge]. The teachers at the school now, the Inuit teachers, are getting really good, but they don't really know what it used to be like before because they were just kids then. Well if

there's no one to do that job, the culture of the Inuit will just disappear  
(Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Inuit adults also voiced their concern that Inuit traditional skills will be needed by youth to survive in the future, especially if the economic situation in the communities gets harsher:

Well the kids are just going to stay in the same community, they're not doing to move to a place where it is warm... [So also it would be good for elders] to teach... [those traditional skills that] would go for the women and the men because they all used to have to do things... It's easy to see that... [in the future, Inuit will need to know the traditional skills to survive.] Nobody will be able to go hunting because nobody will be able to afford the price of a snowmobile. Also maybe they won't be able to get the welfare that they're getting these days (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

At the high school level, a lot of emphasis is put on finishing grade 12 [not on cultural skills. Not all students] can get a good job and make good money when they get out. Not everyone can work in an office or work... [Even at] Arctic College, [she notices that students] don't have enough life skills to survive. At the high school level [she thinks that high schools] should start including how to survive up here in the north because that is where [students] are always going to be subjects that are relevant to the north [should] also be taught... [She] has implemented or introduced her own life skills teaching [for students] Not every

graduate has the same maturity level so [students] need to be taught how to live on the land (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

When traditional Inuit skills are not taught in the context of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and Inuit values, then students may not see the traditional skills as worth learning about in terms of their future role in society. Other than to preserve cultural traditions, learning to sew traditionally could be used as a way to build relationships, learn patience, the need for careful preparation, and attention to details, which are all skills needed in the modern world. Traditional sewing could also be valued, as an art form, like prints or tapestries. One Inuk adult explained why he felt that it was important to learn Inuit cultural values and knowledge along with traditional skills: “Some of [the students] learn the technical skills but the values and theories and who you are, that’s the most important.”

In regards to Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and scientific knowledge, the same adult commented:

[I often have to use Inuit] Traditional Knowledge [IQ] and... scientific information [to] make a decision, but when you try to compare [those two different ways of thinking]... you would get different answers... [Those two ways of thinking] can’t seem to... work parallel, there’s no integration or anything like that... One way [of thinking, scientific knowledge,] is measurable and one [way of thinking, IQ,] is feeling. So in order for students to be prosperous, they have to... [have] at least a little idea of both [ways of thinking]... That’s where the elders come in. I’ll tell you something, even before Christianity the Inuit were

thinking [using the IQ way of thinking because holistically views relationships between]... the creator, wildlife, and man [as part of the decision- making process] (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM5).

He continued, When you really understand who you are, where you come from, the kind of culture you have, [that for Inuit includes IQ, the Inuit way of thinking]... once you understand that, you respect all other cultures too and it's a really good thing... So once you understand that, [the Inuit culture,] if you're in a school... [Inuit students would be more likely to] do good in school I think (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM5).

Table 62: Summary of Findings between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq related to Inuit Culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ)

<b>Broad Theme: Inuit Culture and/Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ)</b>	
Data Sources: Elders, Students, & Adults	
Suggestions that emerged from participants:	
1. Learn more cultural traditions	
2. Apply traditional knowledge and values to modern world	

Table 63: Findings for the Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Shop Classes Through Unique Community Programs

Topics	Findings for Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq
Shop classes	Pangnirtung: No data was collected. Sanikiluaq: The majority of the students participated in shop classes in school and the majority of adults did not.
Sewing classes	Pangnirtung: No data was collected. Sanikiluaq: The majority of the students and adults participated in sewing classes in school.
Cooking classes	The majority of students and adults in Sanikiluaq did participate in cooking classes in school. In Pangnirtung, this topic not discussed.
Unique community programs	Motivation and participation in unique programs in both communities was high and considered to be a strong influence in helping Inuit to stay in school to graduate.

Table 64: Findings for the Pangirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Involvement of Elders in the Schools through Observational Influence of Culture in the Schools

Involvement of elders in the schools	<p>Students and adults in both communities wanted elders to be paid full-time like teachers. In both communities, Inuit students and adults felt that elders should be more involved in the schools and help teach Inuit culture.</p> <p>Pangnirtung: Only adults suggested elders could also help with discipline and respect.</p> <p>Sanikiluaq: Students and adults also mentioned elders could help with respect and discipline, teach Inuktitut, and encourage students to stay in school.</p>
Observational influence of culture in the schools	<p>Sanikiluaq’s K-12 structure: Cultural influence often extended into high school.</p> <p>Pangnirtung’s separate 6-12 structure: Cultural influence from elementary grades only occasionally extended into high school</p>

Kim’s Story: Do You Want to Go Outside Together? (*Ittaarlu?*)

Relationships are key to the Inuit culture. For many infants, a life-long relationship is established when they are given the name of a relative who has passed away. This practice in the Inuit culture is called “namesaking.” While this may seem similar to practices elsewhere, this story illustrates how the Inuit practice develops values that go deeper into creating relationships and bonds.

I left Pangnirtung to go to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, for two years to complete a Canadian degree in education. While there, my first child, Jason, was born. When he was two-weeks old, I decided to return to Pangnirtung so his relatives could see him. I was also looking forward to go camping on the land, something everybody knew I always loved doing. Unfortunately, when we arrived, we learned that Jason’s grandparents had just left to go camping and hunting and would return in a few days. They knew that it would not be appropriate for an infant to go camping. Jason’s

father decided to go out by canoe to their camp with his younger brother, while I visited other relatives in town. A windstorm came up and overturned their canoe. When neither his parents nor I had heard from him, a search and rescue mission was begun. During the next two weeks, items from his boat were found floating in the water. Presuming that both of the brothers had drown, the Anglican minister said the last rites for them. The following day, my father-in-law went to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to formally sign both death certificates. However, he delayed signing them because he wanted to check out a potential citing, by an elder, of individuals in an area not previously searched. The elder mentioned that although she had been in a boat with a loud motor and lots of children talking, she thought she had heard unidentified gunshots. My father-in-law persuaded the search and rescue plane to fly over that area and they spotted two men. Since the weather was bad, the plane could not land to explore further. A coast guard ship was sent to the area and the two brothers were rescued. The brothers were heading toward a cache of supplies when their boat overturned. They were able to swim to shore and were hoping to be rescued.

I went to visit Jason's great grandparents to tell them that their grandsons had been found alive. He was greatly relieved. He left the next day on a plane to go to the hospital. He chose not to let others know how sick he was until he knew his grandsons were safe. He passed away a few days later. I was glad that he had asked me to take a picture of him with his wife, who was cleaning a seal skin, before he went to the hospital.

Over time, I began to learn that namesaking forms special relationships that are often stronger than blood relationships. Jason was given the honor of being namesaked



after his great grandfather, which is the Inuit custom. This created relationships between Jason and relatives who were related by blood or namesaking to the great grandfather. In keeping with this custom, Jason referred to his Inuit grandmother as “daughter.” He also referred to her son (his uncle) as “father.” In respect for these relationships, Jason call his own father “distant cousin.” Jason was expected to visit his “daughter” daily and try to help her out in any way he could. The uncle who Jason called “father” was only sixteen but he took the responsibility of being namesaked “father” to heart. As Jason grew, the uncle often dropped by to play with my son with his blocks and miniature cars, or outdoors with his sled and playing hockey. I could tell he had visited when I was at work because Jason would be excited and talked about what they had done together. I would also be surprised that a crooked picture I hung was straightened or a clogged sink would be unclogged.

Nathan, my youngest son, broke his leg after falling off a snowmobile, and I had to fly with him and the other children to the hospital in Iqaluit for a few days. When we returned to Pangnirtung, the uncle dropped by to visit with Jason and the other children.

About two hours after he left, I got a phone call saying that he had committed suicide. I was in shock and Jason and I were overcome with grief. We went to his parents house to pay our last respect. During the funeral preparations, I found out that eight-year-old Jason, who called his uncle “father” was expected to help decide how the uncle’s grave was to be marked. I remember trying to ask individuals what to do. As an outsider, I did not know and I did not want to offend those I cared about by doing the wrong thing. All Inuit graves in Pangnirtung were marked by white, wooden crosses. Looking through

the uncle's notebooks, Jason and I were surprised to find several drawings of curved tombstones. He asked if we could get one of those for his "father." When I asked relatives about doing this, I was told that whatever I decided would be fine, as long as I let my son make the final decision.

That summer, I left Pangnirtung with my children to visit my parents in the United States. They were surprised that on some sunny days, I took my children to visit local graveyards. In walking through, I kept asking my son if he saw a tombstone he would like for his "father." One in particular caught his eye. On it, were carvings of mountains, similar to those in Pangnirtung, and a dove was flying through them. Previously, I had given my son the storybook, *Jason and the Argonauts*, thinking he would like it because it had his name in the title. The dove on the tombstone flying between the mountains reminded him of that book. He said that maybe the dove would also help his "father" to get safely to where he was going. I took a photograph of the tombstone and showed it to his family in Pangnirtung just to make sure that they approved of Jason's choice. It was carved in Ottawa and delivered a year later by ship. Since Jason was being raised in the Inuit tradition, it was important to the family that he honor his "father," his namesake.

This research is dedicated to all elders, like the great grandfather, and also to the uncle my son called "father." In their honor, it is my hope that this study provides workable solutions to help Inuit youths to stay in school and go forth in life.

Elder Aichinak Kilabuk, Jason's Inuit grandmother, and the mother of the uncle, was interviewed for this research. Having suffered the terrible loss of her son, she requested that Inuit youths be made aware of her thoughts that follow:

The youth [now] are very different like everybody says... You have to be really careful of what you say to them... Back then the children were raised more with tough love. Like they were told that they must do things whether the child wanted to or not, no choice. Nowadays you have to be very gentle towards them because what they threaten now is that if a lot of them don't get their way, or if there are problems, they threaten that they will commit suicide... I would just tell them that they should not threaten to do that... Maybe they don't want to face responsibility, that is why they use escape routes [drugs, alcohol, crime, and threatening] that they'll commit suicide. They use it for revenge if [they are not happy with how] they are treated... You know what I mean? So write it down properly (Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Implementing the Cultural Framework in Two Different Communities

#### *Introduction*

The cultural framework<sup>134</sup> that holistically organizes the influences that Inuit felt would help more Inuit students to remain in high school in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq. Within the four broad categories of home, school, community, and Inuit culture, these influences and associated cultural norms that Inuit felt were lost in the school system, were noted by the researcher to still be present in every-day Inuit child-rearing practices. The focus of this chapter is how the cultural framework was implemented differently in each community.

Using the image of a guidepost (*inuksuk*), the cultural framework is like the type of stones that each community needs to help more Inuit students succeed. Given the same set of stones, each community would assemble them differently to produce a guidepost (*inuksuk*) that would be specific to its needs and resources as illustrated in the artwork shown below (Figure 110).

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<sup>134</sup> The cultural framework that the researcher created to organize Inuit responses is described in chapter five.



Figure 110: Photograph of Print from Pangnirtung, Nunavut Showing Two Different Inuksuit: In The Winter Camp, Artist: Thomasie Alikatuktuk; Printmaker: Josea Maniapik  
2004 Pangnirtung Print Collection <http://www.uqurmiut.com/2004print18.html>

The process used to identify how this cultural framework was implemented is particularly important because it demonstrates how communities can use it to assess their current situation and as an indicator of what could be done. Once the cultural framework was identified, the researcher went back to each community to reevaluate the data.

To successfully benefit from all parts of the cultural framework, a community would need to show a balance of: a high school atmosphere that welcomes English and Inuktitut, a school focus that stresses both a quality education and the number of high school graduates; encourages community involvement as well as school influence, and has both a cultural and academic emphasis. Therefore, the cultural framework could be used as tool to both evaluate the current status of a community and help the community identify areas needing further growth.

In both communities, there was a different emphasis in the four areas—home, school, community, and Inuit culture—that affected how the cultural framework could be

implemented. The difference between these two communities studied focused on four main points: high school atmosphere that welcomed English versus English and Inuktitut; quantity versus quality; school versus community; and academics versus Inuit culture. These broad differences are discussed for each community (Table 69 and Table 70) prior to the sections discussing each community separately.

Pangnirtung's focus was on increasing the number of Inuit graduates; an academic emphasis, a high school atmosphere that welcomed English-speaking parents; and the school was the focal point. Parents in Pangnirtung who were able to speak English felt more welcomed in the school and this reinforced their ability to prepare students to acquire English. Though some of the staff was bilingual and available to translate, the atmosphere of the high school was affected by the fact that all those with authority and power to make decisions were non-Inuit certified teachers, the principal, and co-principal. Parents who could become more involved, were able to develop closer home-school connection, and felt more welcome to access the school. A focus on general academic skills, rather than individualized instruction which would require developing a more informal and personal relationship, existed. In the community, for example, in previous school years, sports activities had been scheduled before and after school for high school students. The community was seen as separate from the school. Academics took precedence over teaching of Inuit culture. Other than the "Spring Camp," cultural activities were lacking.

Sanikiluaq focused on the quality of education provided; a welcoming high school atmosphere in Inuktitut and English; and an emphasis on cultural knowledge and skills. The community was the focal point and their involvement in the school was evident.

Parents in Sanikiluaq who were able to speak only Inuktitut felt just as welcomed in the school as those that spoke English. Access to the school was not dependent on a given language, but made welcoming to individuals of both languages. The atmosphere of the high school was effected by the fact that there were certified Inuit teachers in the same building as the high school, as well as, an Inuit co-principal who all had authority and power to make decisions. Parents, community members, and elders were more involved, and had a closer home school connection. In the school, the quality of the graduates' education was stressed. Opportunities to develop relationships and be mentored with knowable adults and elders were possible in a wide variety of school programs, which would need funding to continue. Learning Inuit cultural skills and applying them to the modern world took precedence over academics. A variety of traditional skills were taught in conjunction with modern skills like T-shirt making, jewelry, taxidermy, and construction. These types of programs integrated traditional ideas in new ways that could potentially provide business opportunities for students inclined to pursue their interests.

Table 70: Different Implementation of Cultural Framework in Pangnirtung Versus Sanikiluaq Including Home and School

	Cultural Framework	Emphasis	Strengths in Pangnirtung	Strengths in Sanikiluaq
Home	Readiness for high school, more parent involvement, and closer home school relationships	Parents experienced a high school atmosphere that welcomed English vs. Inuktitut and English	Atmosphere welcomed English	Atmosphere welcomed English and Inuktitut
School	Funded opportunities to develop relationships, mentoring, involvement with elders	Quantity vs. Quality	Quantity (number of high school graduates)	Quality (high school graduates' education)

Table 71: Different Implementation of Cultural Framework in Pangnirtung Versus Sanikiluaq Including Community and Inuit Culture

Community	Better communications and networking	School vs. Community	School activities	Community activities and involvement
Inuit Culture	More cultural skills, values, <i>IQ</i> and application to the modern world	Academics vs. Culture	Academic programs	Cultural programs

*Pangnirtung, Nunavut*

*Introduction to Pangnirtung, Nunavut*

Pangnirtung was identified a community with a high mean estimated rate of student persistence in high school. Yet, Inuit in the community felt strongly that their high school graduates were not skilled enough in English or Inuktitut to compete in the job market, or continue with their education. They did not think students were being challenged enough academically. Parents who had completed a more academically challenging program in Pangnirtung in previous years felt that support should be provided for an academic program that would increase opportunities for graduates, rather than a curriculum that had been modified to allow more students to graduate.



*Pangnirtung School Profiles*



Figure 111: Pangnirtung, Nunavut Alookie Elementary School and the Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School.

Pangnirtung has two schools – The Alookie Elementary School and the Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School (Figure 111). Both schools are named after a respected deceased elder. Both schools are discussed separately below.

*Alookie Elementary School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.*



Figure 112: Inside Alookie Elementary School Pangnirtung, Nunavut



Figure 113: Foyer of Alookie Elementary School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut

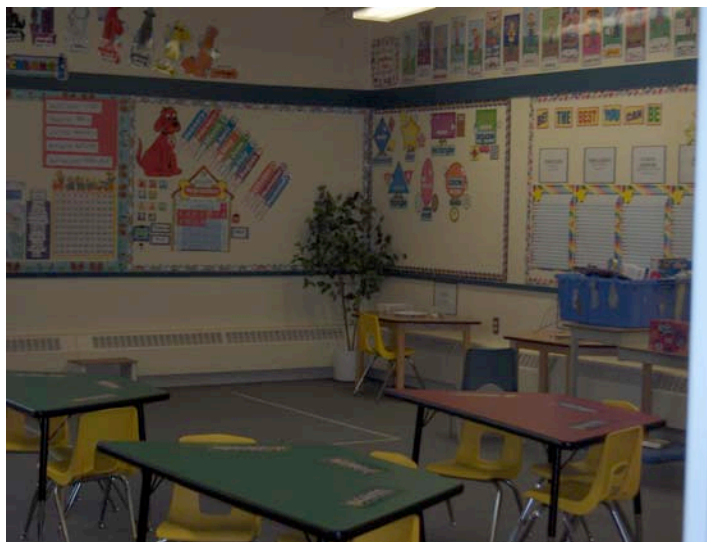


Figure 114: Inside an Alookie Elementary School Classroom in Pangnirtung, Nunavut

The elementary school was established in the mid 1960s, and the original building burned down five years ago. A new high school (6-12) was built where the old school had been and the new elementary school (K-5) was rebuilt nearby.

It is noteworthy that the elementary school (Figures 112, 113 and 114) is comprised mostly of Inuit teachers, and an Inuk principal<sup>135</sup> There is one non-Inuit ESL<sup>136</sup> teacher. There are four Inuit teachers with Bachelors of Arts degrees, which they received through the Nunavut Teachers Education Program that was offered in the community. Some of them are beginning the second year of a three-year community based masters level pilot program. This is the first time that such a program has been offered in Nunavut. To complete the requirements, participants also go to other communities for one to two weeks of class work every few months (McGill University, 2007).

*Attagoyuk Ilisavik School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.*



Figure 115: Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut

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<sup>135</sup> Information about the school was provided to the researcher when she was visiting the school.

<sup>136</sup> An ESL teacher is a teacher of English Speakers of another Languages.



Figure 116: Inside of a Classroom of Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut



Figure 117: Foyer of Attagoyuk Ilisavik High School in Pangnirtung, Nunavut

The Attagoyuk Ilisavik School (Figures 115, 116 and 117) is the building that houses the junior high and high school grades six through twelve, and was the focus of

this research project. During the 2007-2008 school year,<sup>137</sup> there were twenty-seven individuals on staff. While there were almost an equal number of Inuit and non-Inuit on staff, their roles varied. All the certified teachers were non-Inuit. Grade six through nine had only one teacher per grade. The non-Inuk principal had been at that school for five years prior. The non-Inuk vice principal was new to the half-time position for that school year, but had been in the community for three years prior. His position was split between being a vice principal and being a gym teacher. In contrast, Inuit were hired for a variety of roles like: instructors for Inuktitut, sewing, and shop, student support assistants, school counselor, secretary, hall way monitor, day care provider, and janitors.

While current data for the 2007-2008 school year had not been released at the time, the FTE<sup>138</sup> Enrollment Data for the 2006-2007 school year showed that there were approximately 280 Inuit enrolled in grades six through twelve. Of the 193 students in the high school, 79 Inuit were in grade 10, 41 Inuit were in grade 11, and 30 Inuit were in grade 12 (Nunavut Dept. of Education, 2007). Fifteen students graduated last year. This school has 19 teachers on staff, including a shop instructor, a sewing instructor, an Inuktitut instructor, and a student support teacher. There are also two co-principals, four teaching assistants and a secretary. The research was in the community during the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year. During that time, the high school was closed for a few days due to furnace repairs.

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<sup>137</sup> Information about the school was provided to the researcher when she was visiting the school.

<sup>138</sup> FTE is calculated by a formula and used by the school system to determine the number of students eligible for budget purposes.

*Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the Home:*

In Pangnirtung, for the majority of the participants, both parents were educated in the school.

*Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the School:*

*Lack of challenge in school.*

The topic of lack of challenge emerged only in Pangnirtung. Most female and male students in Pangnirtung had to wait for others to finish. Female students also mentioned that they felt bored or wanted to continue on with their work (Figure 118 and Table 72). Most adults, especially females, did not respond. Those adults that did respond said that they had to wait for others to finish, felt bored, or wanted to continue on with their work (Figure 119 and Table 73). Although Pangnirtung produces more high school graduates than Sanikiluaq, concerns were voiced by students, parents, and adults about the lack of challenge in the course work. Interviewees felt that if school was more challenging then more students would stay in school. Those who remained there would graduate with more of the skills needed to be competitive in the job market or further their education. Parents and students in Pangnirtung suggested that the lack of challenge in school was one reason why students might have difficulty remaining in grade ten. One student said,

I think people drop out because they get bored because just the same stuff and all that, just try to do more different stuff... It was more challenging [in the school in another community]. Here they are not really challenging students... how it should be, but its different here [in Pangnirtung]. I really enjoyed school [there]

more...yeah, instead of just sitting around and waiting (Pangnirtung student: PSF9).

“It was too easy for him” (Pangnirtung adult: PAF3).

I mean teach more challenging stuff, like some of the grades were challenging, some grades weren't. They just carry on and don't wait for everybody [to catch up.] Some of the teachers don't wait all the time, just some of them do (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

It was more challenging [in another school.] Here they are not really challenging students [which] is how it should be, but it's different here. I enjoyed school [there] more ... yeah, instead of just sitting around and waiting (Pangnirtung student: PSF9)

I think students need to be more challenged in our school... in some of the grades. [I] have friends who have children in [other community] schools in different grades... One of the things [that] I have noticed is in... classrooms [here the students] are not challenged enough. Teachers are not that organized... anymore. To me... individual needs [are an important consideration in instruction]... I think that [disregarding those individual needs] discourages students... [They get] bored... [when they are] not doing anything in class (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

General instruction that does not take into account the needs of the individual students in a given class could also be seen as a lack of challenge to some students, even though its intent is to make the learning at a level that is understandable to a large group. Participants in Pangnirtung indicated that instruction is directed to a general middle level, rather than in instruction on each student's strengths, needs, and interests which research

indicates is most effective.<sup>139</sup> As a result of this focus, some students indicated if they completed their work early, they had to wait for others in the class to finish. While some accepted this procedure, other individuals expressed a concern over whether this would discourage some students from remaining in high school:

“A few times, it didn’t bother me. Just because it didn’t take long for them to [finish their work] (Pangnirtung student: PSF4).

“He has mentioned that he has to wait for others to finish and help other students who need it” (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

There is no advanced track, its just all general at the high school... [my daughter] is really good, but she gets dragged down into the general stream because the rest of the classmates don’t understand what is going on, so she has to sit and wait there until everyone else is finished... Teachers tend to concentrate more on the wild, rowdy ones who won’t sit or listen (Pangnirtung adult: PAF 3).

Other consequences of this lack of challenging coursework and teaching to the mainstream of students, have resulted in graduates who are lacking skills they need to participate in the job market effectively or continue onto with further education:

Some of the students who graduated last year, they want to go to college... they are not ready yet... I don’t really know if all the grades have math, English, science right now but we see graduates with very low math skills or English skills (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP1).

Because when they enter college, if they would wish to pursue further education even if they have graduated they have to do another test and a lot of them are

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<sup>139</sup> See literature review, chapter three for research supporting differentiated instruction.



below the accepted level. Everybody is aware of that though, that is the funny thing, everybody is aware of that. Even the teachers I am pretty sure know because this concern has been brought up that grade level is below [the rest of Canada], even after they graduate, so we don't know what the reason is (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

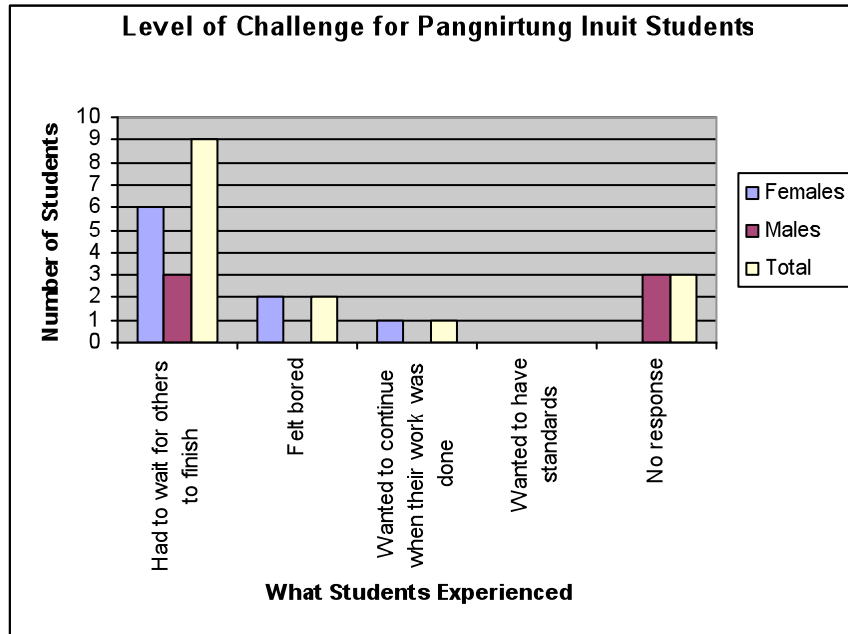


Figure 118: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Students

Table 72: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Students

Comments	Females (9)	Males (6)	Total Students (15)
Had to wait for others to finish	67% of 9 females	50% of 6 males	60% of 15 students
Felt bored	22% of 9 females	0%	13% of 15 students
Wanted to continue when their work was done	11% of 9 females	0%	7% of 15 students
Wanted to have standards	0%	0%	0%
No response	0%	50% of 6 males	20% of 15 students

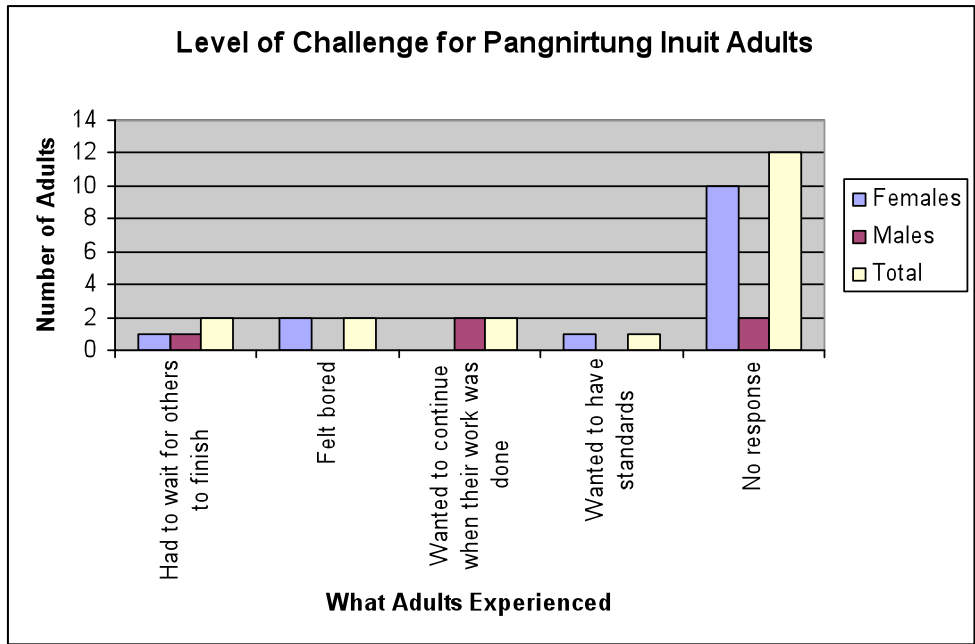


Figure 119: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Adults

Table 73: Level of Challenge for Pangnirtung Inuit Adults

Comments	Total Adults (19)
Had to wait for others to finish	11% of 19 adults
Felt bored	11% of 19 adults
Wanted to continue when their work was done	11% of 19 adults
Wanted to have standards	5% of 19 adults
No response	63% of 19 adults

*Other school procedures that motivated students.*

In Pangnirtung, three other factors, a hall monitor, rotating scheduling, and a breakfast program, were mentioned by participants as factors that they felt helped to motivate students to stay in school.

Boredom in school led to property damage by high school students, which was improved when a hall monitor was hired to help control the students. One adult mentioned that

It's getting better and lots of students want to learn more at the school, they don't just hang around in the hallway or outside... It's a lot better now, students stay in their classes now... less damage... The students are [now able]... to get to learn (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP1).

In Sanikiluaq, interviewees did not mention behavior problems.

Scheduling changes were made so that students do a six-day rotation. One adult stated that,

Students seem to like it better that way. They tend to stay and come back even though it is stormy or cold... they don't want to miss a day, if the school closes they don't [want to] miss a day (Pangnirtung adult: PAF5).

There is also a breakfast program which was staffed by volunteers, as needed, to keep it running. It was felt the students do better if they ate breakfast, which was not always available in their homes. One parent stated that,

It's also good that they have the breakfast program at the school That has been going on for a while. I believe it helps the students learn better. Just

because they have eaten and they are more healthy and if you are more healthy you can concentrate better (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

*Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in the Community*

Pangnirtung is visited by individuals from different cultures on a more regular basis than the smaller, more isolated community of Sanikiluaq. As a result, cultural exchanges did not occur here as often. When cultural trips were planned, they were used more as a motivator and a reward for graduating seniors who kept up their grades, had good attendance, and followed school requirements.

*Pangnirtung: Findings Related to Differences in Inuit Culture*

The elder indicated her concern that the students were not learning the traditional skills that they needed to because the focus was on academics:

It was harder for [students] to learn because we had a gap. It's the same thing nowadays with the students because they are up at the school. It's exactly the same up at the school because they are concentrating more on academics rather than cultural, what do you call it [cultural knowledge] She can tell you once the students start school academics they do not want [to learn about the Inuit culture].  
(Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk)

The researcher asked one adult female, "Do you think it is important for the high school to teach traditional skills?" The response was revealing.

I really don't know how to answer that. I'm not really sure if they could get some traditional skills that would be great, but there are other... they need academic skills, so trying to balance that, it must be hard, but I feel that some of them can

actually balance [the] two important [types of ] knowledge, [academic knowledge and cultural knowledge] (Pangnirtung adult: PAF9).

One unique way that Pangnirtung has tried to have students learn more cultural knowledge is through their “Spring Camp” (*upirngnik*), a cultural program run by the community. It was sponsored mostly through fund raisers initiated by parents. Spring Camp (*upirngnik*) included the teaching of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and elders were involved. Students in both schools were able to have traditional hunting and camping experiences on the land for varying lengths of times. High school students would go for one week, while elementary students might only go for a day. It was especially important for those students who did not have the opportunity to experience outdoor activities of this type with their own families. Families might not get to go camping for a variety of reasons related to work schedules, health, income, abilities, and equipment.

Most Inuit students (Figure 120 and Table 74) and most Inuit adults (Figure 121 and Table 75) felt that the Spring Camp (*upirngnik*) was helpful. Both groups mentioned having it last longer and take place in different seasons. Many participants felt that the Spring Camp (*upirngnik*) should be funded by the government because it really motivated students to learn about their culture and stay in school. These views are reflected in the quotes below:

Inuit have no set curriculum, but we have knowledge... we call it Spring Camp. We've been running Spring Camp like learning how to hunt and survive on the land and how to be on the land and how to gain knowledge in Inuit life... That

camp runs three weeks a year. It takes a whole school, not just few classes, the whole school they take turns though (Pangnirtung adult: PAF5).

“It was fun, it really helped” (Pangnirtung student: PSM2).

I think it would be nice if there were more cultural education. I mean like going out on the land, so they don't forget their Inuit lifestyle... Yes, many students look forward to it [Spring Camp] every year (Pangnirtung parent: PAMP2).

My children from what I know or see they have always been interested in taking part because its an opportunity to live with other students and adults when we are not there, and they are quite interested, especially my son, he loves hunting, ...he is lot more happier and healthier when he's involved in that setting and in the summer time (Pangnirtung adult: PAF1).

“Spring camp is the only thing where I think they use the Inuit Traditional Knowledge (Pangnirtung adult: PAF 3)

Another male student stated, “It was fun. It really helped” (Pangnirtung student: PSM2). Extending the Spring Camp (*upirngnik*) into different seasons was mentioned by some of the participants. “It would be a lot better if it [Spring Camp] was not only in spring time, if it could be around in the fall and in the winter. That would be perfect because kids need to learn the different [skills associated with different] seasons. That is my recommendation. More funding, more availability of funding support’ (Pangnirtung adult: PAF5). One student who did not know how to hunt in other seasons commented,

“Not for me, it [Spring Camp] didn’t teach me anything [as I already knew how to hunt in spring]” (Pangnirtung student: PSM3).

Concerns were raised about how problems associated with insurance and worker’s compensation made it difficult to set up a hunting program:

I know from having dealt with a local [hunter] who [had problems when he] was trying to get insured... [so he would] be able to give to [traditional] instruction to students. He had a hard time getting the insurance and workers compensation benefits set up because it was just so costly and time consuming for him... What he wanted to do was take students from the school and teach them about dog teams, building igloos, hunting, but he couldn’t get over the [first] hurdle... which was his insurance, the cost of insurance and his compensation... The programs he wanted to offer were not recognized by the Department of Education... [Those programs] were seen as nothing more than an obstruction, which is very unfortunate (Pangnirtung adult: PAM1).

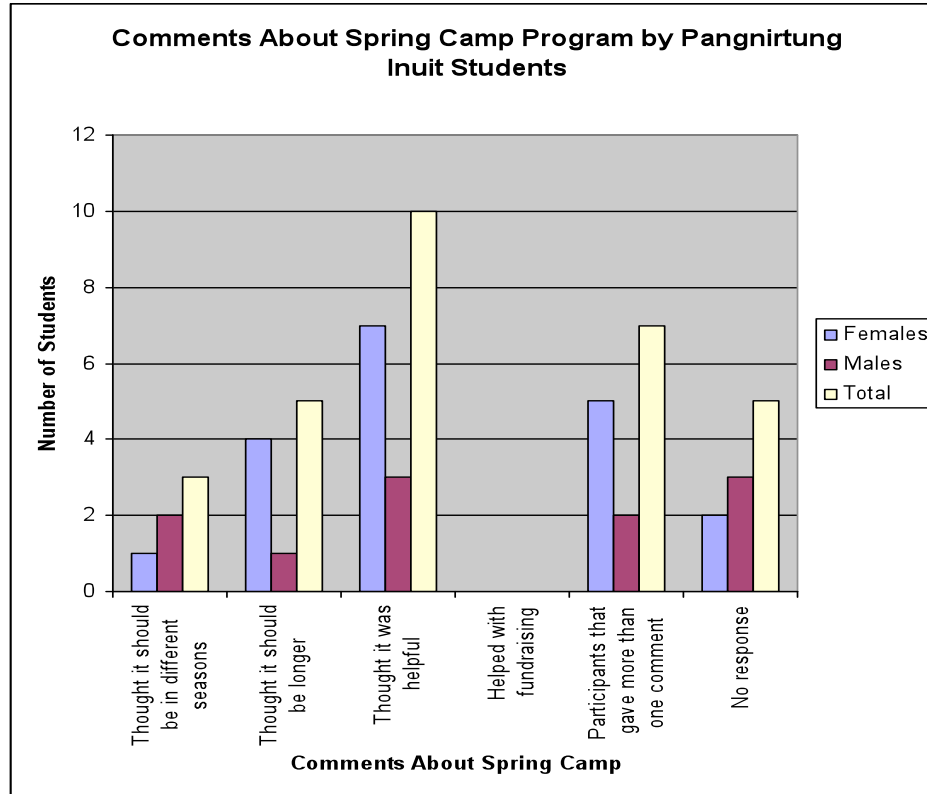


Figure 120: Comments About Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Inuit Students

Table 74: Comments About Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Students

Comments	Females (9)	Males (6)	Total Students (15)
Thought it should be in different seasons	11% of 9 females	33% of 6 males	20% of 15 students
Thought it should be longer	44% of 9 females	17% of 6 males	33% of 15 students
Thought it was helpful	78% of 9 females	50% of 6 males	67% of 15 students
Helped with fundraising	0%	0%	0%
Participants that gave more than one response	56% of 9 females	33% of 6 males	47% of 15 students
No response	22% of 9 females	50% of 6 males	33% of 15 students



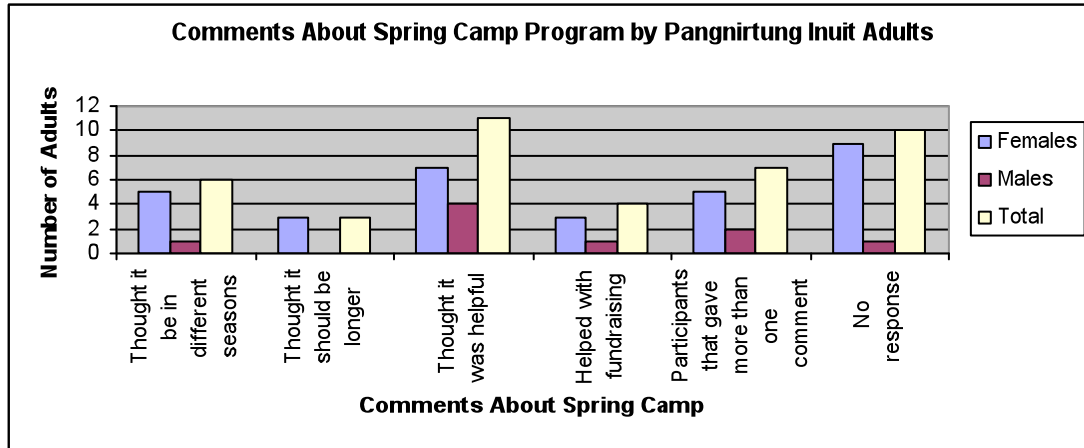


Figure 121: Comments About Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Inuit Adults

Table 75: Comments About Spring Camp by Pangnirtung Adults

Comments	Total Adults (19)
Would like to participate in it more	0%
Thought it should be in different seasons	32% of 19 adults
Thought it should be longer	16% of 19 adults
Thought it was helpful	58% of 19 adults
Was fundraising needed?	21% of 19 adults
Participants that gave more than one response	37% of 19 adults
No response	53% of 19 adults

*Pangnirtung: Observations*

Some student interviews were conducted in the high school during school hours, and students were informally observed as they went to class. They carried an occasional book to class, but the majority of the students did not carry book bags. The researcher also observed the first day of the high school. Students and parents assembled in the gym and were welcomed and introduced to the teachers. Students' names were called and they

proceeded to their classes with their teachers. Student interviews identified one grade ten teacher who they felt was helpful. This individual was interviewed and observed for an hour, while the classroom routines were explained during the first week of school. Classroom walls were relatively bare, with a few reference charts posted. There were a multiple copies of books that could be used as teaching texts in the classroom.

The physical setting of the school was noted. A display case in the foyer contained a plaque listing previous student exchange trips and the school opening. Pictures of previous graduates, some Inuit elders, and posters of Nunavut role models were posted in the hallway. Most of the high school classrooms had either desks arranged in rows or large rectangular tables that faced the front of the class. The school was kept in good condition and appeared clean. Unlike in the elementary school, high school students were not required to take their outdoor shoes off and wear special shoes inside.

#### *School and Community Activities*

The elementary school and the high school jointly host an outdoor picnic to enable the parents to interact with their children's teachers. The picnic that the researcher attended was held at a campground one afternoon, and tea, hot dogs, juice, and traditionally made bannock were available. Buses were provided to the campground, which was about a mile from the school. Participants mentioned that there is also a picnic in the spring to encourage parent and teacher interaction. Travel by snowmobile and sleds (*qamutik*) is provided to the site across the fiord where it is usually held.

The researcher also participated in a variety of activities available in the community. She went by boat to an area to pick berries. She also went on a day trip fishing for Arctic char, and on another day trip by boat to hunt for seals. In addition, to

get a flavor of what “tourists” do, she took the researcher also did what other “tourists” do, she took a four-day-long back packing trip in the Auyuittuq National Park that involved crossing the Arctic Circle. Sealift occurred during the researcher’s visit.

*Sanikiluaq, Nunavut*

*Introduction to Sanikiluaq, Nunavut*

Sanikiluaq was identified as a community with low estimated mean rates of student persistence in high school. Even so, the school, was often the center of cultural activities. As well, this community had received recognition for the strong connection it had developed with the community and business partners. The school formed partnerships, especially with the day care organization and government assistance programs. As a result, a variety of different modern and traditional opportunities enabled elders and other experts to mentor students in traditional activities like building a kayak or skinning polar bears and modern activities like taxidermy, jewelry, T-shirt making, and construction. In particular, the construction of houses provided direct benefits to the community.

Though academics was not the focus, the few students who graduated had gone on to further education and returned to work as teachers, or obtained other employment in Sanikiluaq, so that the community saw the direct benefits of having educated local people.

*Sanikiluaq School Profile: Nuiyak School (Grades K-12)*



Figure 122: Sanikiluaq, Nunavut Nuiyak School (Grades K-12)



Figure 123: View Number one of the Inside Foyer of Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq, Nunavut



Figure 124: View Number two of the Inside Foyer of Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq, Nunavut

The first school in Sanikiluaq was a federal day school in the southern part of Belcher Islands that was established in 1960. At that time, literacy was taught using the Inuktitut Bible. As families began to live near the current school site, portable classrooms were constructed. By 1988, grade 10 was available in the community, but students still had to go to Iqaluit to complete their high school education. Finally, in 1994, students could attend grades K-12 in their own community. The school was named *Nuiyak*, which translated means “a weapon that was used to hunt birds.” *Nuiyak* was an essential tool for the acquisition of food, so the symbol is to make the school an important tool for learning (Pulpan, 2006).

The current Nuiyak School building was officially opened in 1986 (Fulford, 2007). The Nuiyak School has received national Canadian recognition in 2007 as one of the ten model schools identified for showing tangible learning progress for aboriginal learners in the Sharing Our Success research study (Fulford, 2007). It is also the school in

the community that provides an education for students in kindergarten through grade twelve (Figures 122, 123 and 124). Therefore, it was the focus of this research project.

The principal has been in the community for over sixteen years, having left for a few years and then returned. The Inuit co-principal was previously a kindergarten teacher. In 2007, she received Canada's outstanding principal award "for her commitment to building partnerships in her community that provides supports for her students and encourages learning." This award was given as part of an initiative of the Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit Canadian organization that recognizes extraordinary contributions to education in publically funded schools (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

During the 2007-2008 school year,<sup>140</sup> there were thirty individuals on staff. The school had a greater number of Inuit than non-Inuit on staff, with twenty-two Inuit and eight non-Inuit. Kindergarten through grade nine had only one teacher per grade. There were ten certified Inuit teachers. These teachers taught mostly in the elementary grades (K-4), and one who was a co-principal was previously a kindergarten teacher. In 2007, she received Canada's outstanding principal award "for her commitment to building partnerships in her community that provides support for her students and encourages learning." This award was given as part of an initiative of the Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit Canadian organization that recognizes extraordinary contributions to education in publically funded schools (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

There were eight certified non-Inuit teachers. All the academic subjects in high school were taught by non-Inuit. Non-Inuit teachers taught mostly in the upper grades,

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<sup>140</sup> Information about the school was provided to the researcher when she was visiting the school.

and one was a co-principal for Nuiyak School who had prior experience in the community. The non-Inuit co-principal had been in the community for over sixteen years, having left for a few years, and then returned. Inuit were also hired for a variety of roles like: instructors for Inuktitut, sewing, and shop, student support assistants, school counselor, secretary, and janitors.

In the previous 2006-2007 school year there were two grade 10 classes, one grade 11 class, and one grade 12 class. English was introduced in grade 4 as a second language. Half the instruction in grades 4 to 6 is in Inuktitut and half was in English. In grades 7-12, Inuit received the majority of their instruction in English from a mostly non-Inuit staff (Fulford, 2007).

It is very noteworthy that five of the Inuit teachers on staff at the Nuiyak School had furthered their education past the requirements for obtaining a Nunavut teacher's license and obtaining Bachelors of Education degrees. They received their degrees through a community based teacher training program. Three of those Inuit teachers are beginning the second year of a three-year community based masters program that is being piloted. They also have to take classes outside of their community (McGill University, 2007).

While data for the 2007-2008 school year had not been released at this time, the 2006-2007 school year the FTE<sup>141</sup> enrollment was 280.5 Inuit. Of the 83 Inuit students in the high school, 53 were in grade 10, 18 were in grade 11, and 12 were in grade 12 (Nunavut Dept of Education, 2007). Two graduated last year (Nunavut Department of

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<sup>141</sup> FTE is calculated by a formula and used by the school system to determine the number of students eligible for budget purposes.

Education, 2007). One of those students is currently enrolled in Trent University in Ontario. Leaving the community for further education is not common in Sanikiluaq. However, quite a few past graduates had benefitted from community based programs for obtaining licenses to work in the school or the day-care center. Since 1997, there have been 36 graduates from Nuiyak School. Nine students graduated in the 2005/2006 school year, and the oldest graduate was 27 years old. A few graduates have gone to Arctic College in Iqaluit or to the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) in Ottawa.<sup>142</sup> NS is an eight-month program that provides Inuit graduates with extra academic and social support to help prepare them to take leadership roles in government (Fulford, 2007). Other graduates have participated in a two-year community based Early Childhood program and now work in the day care center.

Due to overcrowding, and limited classroom space, a new school in Sanikiluaq has been approved. Though the need for a new school seemed urgent, construction had not even begun at the start of the 2008-2009 school year.

As in Pangnirtung, a school closure occurred for furnace repairs. In addition, it was closed because of fumes from a near by building. A chemical spill near the school property was also being investigated to determine if it was hazardous and whether the school should be closed.

*Sanikiliaq: Differences Related to the Home:*

In Sanikiluaq, for the majority of the participants, both parents were educated on the land.

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<sup>142</sup> NS is a unique two year certificate program in Ottawa, Ontario for Inuit beneficiaries to gain educational and career training to prepare them to work in government jobs in Nunavut. For more information, see: <http://www.nstraining.ca/>



*Sanikiluaq: Differences Related to the School, Differences Related to the Community, & Differences Related to the Inuit Culture*

Sanikiluaq grade twelve students were older than those in Pangnirtung, and some were returning to school. The majority of Sanikiluaq students and adults had been on more than one exchange program prior to grade twelve. Unique to Sanikiluaq, was the way that they combined a variety of community and traditional resources to provide programs for youths and young adults. Many of these programs were supported by the Najuqsivik's Day Care,<sup>143</sup> which is located next to the Nuiyak School. The day care is a non-profit organization run by a board of eight volunteer members who do not get paid an honorarium. The "Najuqsivik's mandate is to promote and preserve Inuit culture through economic and cultural projects" (Najuqsivik Day Care, 2008).

The school programs in Sanikiluaq varied to meet the different interests of the students. It was assumed that no one program would be best for everyone and individuals should have a variety to choose from. The school was open to exploring programs that did not exist, if students expressed an interest in them. Some students built homes in the community and some competed in a business competition with students from other Canadian schools (E- Spirit).<sup>144</sup> Others learned how to design silver jewelry, silk screen T-shirts, or put photos on mugs that had traditional themes. Other students contributed to the museum in the school foyer (Figure 125 and Figure 126) by creating artifacts, learning how to make frames for displays, or preserving various animals using taxidermy. Still others learn how to use fur tufts to make a picture, to create a Christmas ornament

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<sup>143</sup> For more information about Najuqsivik Day Care, see: <http://www.Nujuqsivik.com>

<sup>144</sup> For more details about the E-Spirit Aboriginal Business Competition, see: <http://www.bdc.ca/espirit/en/default.htm?cookie%5Ftest=1>

that had a traditional use from a polar bear skin, or how to sew a polar bear rug. Students even made fish skin dolls from turbot. Interesting enough, the turbot skins were obtained from Pangnirtung, though residents there do not use the skin for crafts. The researcher was grateful to have been given a yearbook, which some students worked on, as it provided a history and promoted a sense of community pride. While the researcher was in the community, a walrus hunt had occurred and the school obtained a few walrus heads for activities with the students. Though Sanikiluaq did not have a Spring Camp program like Pangnirtung, there was interest in having students learn traditional skills.

The elder and other participants also expressed interest in initiating hunting activities during different seasons, which was not one of the cultural programs that were ongoing at the school at the time of these interviews.

This view is indicated by the quotes below:

They have to learn. What they can use in winter... all through the year. And also what they used to use from the land, like today the pampers are really expensive and back then they just used some kind of moss for the diapers. Cloth. Any kind of cloth. And they just washed it this way with water. And then dry them outside. They once showed it to the younger people, but nobody's using it still... well, she usually envies the people in Quebec because she knows that they usually take the [students] out for a whole month and [elders] stay with them the whole time (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

“Yes, I would love to [go hunting in a school program]” (Sanikiluaq student: SSM1).

An adult male felt teaching hunting in different seasons is an important program to have in the school. He remarked,

[The reason] why I only hunt during the summer [is] because they [my parents] would never let us hunt in winter because I was in school in the wintertime.

Sometimes it was embarrassing... [that] I do not know how to hunt in the winter.

[The idea of a Spring Camp] I think it would be good (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM5).

A female adult referred to the traditional learning that occurred doing activities on the land on her own, “We used to go camping every spring. Was that fun? Yes. Lots of learning from the elders” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF6). Another adult female said, “Personally, I think when the kids are on the land, their attitudes change, and today’s kids, I felt a lot of them don’t have respect so today I think we’re just saying, as long as they go on the land we don’t mind” (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF9).

An adult commented about the fact that many Inuit male students hunt geese in May, June, September, and October (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM3). Another adult commented that there was another hunting season that occurred during October, November, and December, with the meat gotten still helping to support families [at that time and during other months] (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8).

One reason that hunting program may not be offered now was suggested by one adult female.

They used to be more hunting programs but they tapered down because there’s so much paperwork to get through, so much red tape. Especially if the kids are going to bring guns, and Inuk kids like to bring guns... Yes, but I also understand its to cover their end so that they don’t get into trouble, I guess (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF5).

Slightly over half of the students interviewed had participated in more than one of the different cultural programs. More female students than male students participated in a variety of these programs (Figure 124 and Table 76). Most of the students had participated in the construction program, and many students participated in the jewelry or T-shirt making programs. One key concept about the cultural programs is that since not every student would participate in all the programs, a variety of them are offered. One female adult stated,

Not all students, some students, but not all, we have some students who are interested in jewelry making, but not all students. But then we have different students interested in building construction but not all students; but some, and then we have the students who are interested in [polar bear] rugging (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8).

Further comments by the same adult gave further insight into the nature of these unique programs.

For example, if a few students say hey, we haven't done kayak yet, we'll ask them is that what you want to do, and then we'll get started. Once it's started, it's always there. We always have the material for it even if we didn't start it, poof, right away in September. It's ready to go throughout the school year... It's good to have variety, but ... you need to be able to work with all these choices and be committed (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF8). The adults did not have these programs when they were in school.

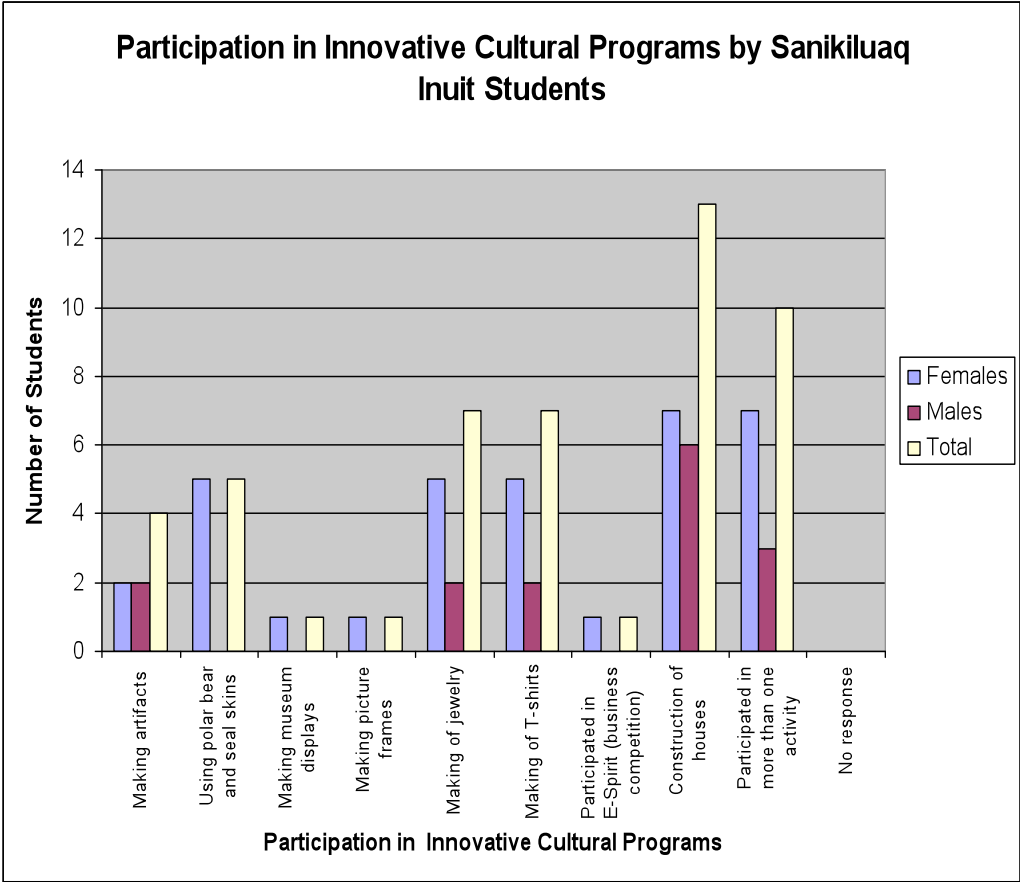


Figure 125: Participation in Innovative Cultural Programs by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

Table 76: Participation in Innovative Cultural Programs by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students

	Females (10)	Males (7)	Total (17)
Making artifacts (harpoons and fish nets)	20% of 10 females	29% of 7 males	24% of 17 students
Cleaning polar bear and seal skins; making polar bear rug or lice comb (used as tree decoration as looks like a snowflake ball)	50% of 10 females	0%	30% of 17 students
Making items for museum displays	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Making picture frames	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Making of jewelry	50% of 10 females	29% of 7 males	41% of 17 students
Making of T-shirts	50% of 10 females	29% of 7 males	41% of 17 students
Participating in E-spirit (business competition)	10% of 10 females	0%	6% of 17 students
Construction of houses	70% of 10 females	86% of 7 males	76% of 17 students
Participated in more than one activity	70% of 10 females	42% of 7 males	59% of 17 students
No response	0%	0%	0%

The positive benefits of the construction program were noted for students who gained skills and for the community:

They started doing that a year after I graduated. I wish they could have done that when I was in high school and I wish I could have been one of those students making houses. I tried to do that at home, my sisters they did some construction and whenever I need help with anything, they get it done in a matter of minutes that would take me all day. (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF2)

The researcher inquired, “Because they’ve had the construction?” The student continued, “Yea, they’re real good at measuring stuff... They are like professionals.” And they did that in construction? “Yes, all three of them...they

had a summer job... actually two of them helped build a little bridge out of town. That's helping a lot. Because the first bridge that we had was kinda wobbly, it wasn't safe" (Sanikiluaq adult: SAF2). One male adult noted that his daughter was "involved in construction last year, but not this year. She was getting up earlier and showed more interest in school. This year she's busy doing work" (Sanikiluaq adult: SAM2).

*Sanikiluaq: Observations*

The student and parent interviews identified two teachers who were thought to be helpful to students and these individuals were interviewed. One teacher was observed for an hour, during a class lesson. The researcher also substituted for a day for a high school teacher who was out of town at a conference. Like in Pangnirtung, the classroom walls were relatively bare, with a few reference charts posted. There were multiple copies of texts that could be used for instruction.

The physical setting of the school was noted. The foyer is a cultural museum with a full-size stuffed polar bear and other local animals stuffed and mounted. There is one central display case and two side cases that contain items made by the students. Photographs of special visitors, plaques recording previous student exchange trips, pictures of special events, and names of graduates are mounted on the wall along various hallways. There were offices for the two co-principals, the bilingual receptionist, and the district education committee. There was also an open lounge area for teachers furnished with three couches, and a small work area with a desk and some reference manuals.

The school also had a gym. The junior high classrooms and most of the high school classrooms were located in different areas of the building. During recess teachers

took turns monitoring doors so that students could use the restrooms. In the high school area, the classrooms had large rectangular tables facing the front of the class. The school was kept in good condition and appeared clean. All students were required to take their outdoor shoes off and wear inside shoes. Students and teachers were friendly and welcoming. The elementary school classrooms were visually appealing, colorful, and inviting. They were set up as learning communities with open spaces, attractive activity centers, and the walls had numerous Inuktitut charts made by the teacher. Students often went to share their school and cultural activities with the community by using the radio or TV station that was located at the nearby day care center or via the internet on their web page.

*Sanikiluaq: Parent, School, and Community Relations*

The researcher took part in an afternoon open house for the parents. Tea and traditionally made bannock were provided for community members. Parents were encouraged to visit their children's classroom and observe. A handout outlining the themes and skills to be covered for that year in each grade level were presented to the parents.

The researcher participated in the following school activities: A presentation by an army cadet ranger one afternoon in the gym; a charity walk to raise money for cancer, held in honor of Terry Fox. Teachers were expected to fund raise as well as join in the walk with their students, even though it was scheduled on a Saturday morning. The researcher also observed one class and substituted all day in another class. The researcher also visited the separate construction sites where male and female students worked.



Drinks and snacks were provided for students and their instructors during coffee break at both sites as this was considered an important time to develop relationships.

The researcher also went on a staff retreat designed to acquaint or reacquaint the staff with the Inuit culture. On the day of the retreat, classes for students were not held and the staff went by Honda over the land to a point about five miles away for tea, bannock, marshmallows, and the sharing of food. The researcher also attended a staff workshop on jewelry making that the teacher could do with their students. The researcher also observed an elder telling stories in an elementary classroom. Elders were invited to attend. The researcher also participated in local activities like berry picking by Honda and collecting sea urchins and driftwood during a wind storm by Honda. A traditional camping area was also visited by Honda. Walrus hunting occurred during the researcher's visit.

Table 77: A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Home

	Recommendations	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
Home	Preparation and readiness for high school; parent involvement; home-school partnerships	Areas Needing Growth: all areas	Areas Needing Growth: all areas

Table 78: A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including School and Community

	Recommendations	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq
School	Funded opportunities for mentoring with elders and community leaders	Strength: Focus on academics. Many graduates Little opportunities for mentoring.  Areas Needing Growth: More challenging academic curriculum as graduates with limited skill. Fund and expand “Spring Camp”	Strength: Focus on cultural activities. Some opportunities for mentoring. Qualified graduates remaining in community  Areas Needing Growth: More stress on academics to increase number of graduates. Fund and expand “Cultural Programs”
Community	Better communication and networking between government, business, and local organizations	Areas Needing Growth: School is separate from community. More Networking and Communications	Strength: School is used by community as cultural center  Local organizations, especially day care, and government assistance programs extensively involved in cultural programs

Table 79: A Comparison of How the Cultural Framework is Implemented Differently in Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq Including Inuit Culture

Inuit Culture	More traditional skills, and how to apply cultural values and <i>IQ</i> to the modern world	Strength: “Spring Camp” addresses traditional skills Areas Needing Growth: Apply to modern world	Strength: “Cultural Programs” addresses some traditional and modern skills Areas Needing Growth: Using Inuit Values and <i>IQ</i> in a modern context
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### Kim’s Story: Being Part of a Unique Community

In mid-February, when you live in a remote Arctic settlement, temperatures often reach 40 below zero and there is 24 hours of darkness. Although the bitter cold freezes your bones, it is not as numbing as the horrible tragedy of a young boy's suicide, which tears your heart to pieces.

There was a disturbing trend of teen-age suicides among Inuit boys in Pangnirtung, a community of about 1600 people. In a three-month period, three teen-age boys had taken their own lives. Their deaths were particularly tragic because almost everyone in the community was related, or knew each other. The loss of the boys seemed to symbolize the loss of connection between two generations: the adults who grew up following the traditional ways of Inuit elders, and the teenagers who left the community to be educated in the Southern school system and the uses of modern technology. The teenagers were expected to straddle two cultures and many could not cope with this stress.

During this time, I worked for the Adult Education Center with an Inuit adult educator. We made an attempt to create a program to bring the youth and elders together. Something was needed to rebuild relationships between the two groups. My coworker and I thought that a fisheries program, sponsored by the government, might provide this opportunity if it was advertised as meeting a need in the community. The government was trying to promote a turbot fishing program but the Inuit weren't interested because to them, turbot was a tasteless, white fish. They were accustomed to fishing Arctic char. With its orange meat, akin to a salmon, Arctic char was delicious and abundant.

My coworker and I were emotionally numb from the impact of the suicides and we had been conducting awareness and counseling programs. However, we thought that it would be good to at least advertise the turbot fisheries program, and stress that it was an opportunity for youth and elders to establish a relationship. The elder men could teach the youth how to survive on the land and fish. The youth could help the elders with the new marketing requirements: how the fish should be frozen immediately, how to package the fish to transport it, and how to sell it to ship the fish down south.

Since my coworker was leaving town, she asked if I would announce the fisheries program on the local radio station to see if there was any community interest in it. I dreaded going on the radio with a passion since my pronunciation was not good. But I had no choice.

The translated text introducing the fisheries program went something like this:

“We are offering a unique program that both young and old men can enjoy and learn about together. It is a hands-on program that is needed and will work both your mind and your body. Everyone is welcome.” (“*Saqqijaartittijatta qalliralaq missaanut*

*angutitut inarnut inuusuttunullu quvianaqtumit tamakkiinnut ilinniaqatigiinimit timimut isumamullu akaujumit.”)*

The next morning my coworker left on a plane. As is typical, the whole community closed down for lunch and went home. So, at lunchtime, I stopped by the radio station and made my announcement. When I arrived at my father-in-law’s house where my children were having lunch, my father-in-law asked me if I was planning to announce the program again after work. I responded that I would if anybody showed up that afternoon to sign up for it.

To my surprise, that afternoon, five or six people signed up, a mixture of old and young. So I announced the program on the radio again in the evening. When my father-in-law asked me how my day went, he could tell that I was obviously delighted that some people had signed up. He again encouraged me to continue on the radio, because when more people heard about it, he was sure they would sign-up. I should have been suspicious when my father-in-law was suddenly interested in a program that he previously referred to disdainfully as “white man’s learning” (“*qallunaat ilinniarassangit*”) I was too enamored by the fact that I actually had men sign-up for a course, which was quite rare in our community, so I didn’t question his motive. When my coworker returned the following week, we had about 40 men of varying ages signed-up. She was in awe and could not believe it. She asked what I had done. I told her, all I did was make an announcement on the radio.

So she said to keep it up. But this time, when I went to announce the program at lunchtime, as my co-worker heard my announcement. When I got to work after lunch, she could not stop laughing. All week long I had been mispronouncing the name of the

fish with one slight inflection difference. The unique program I announced was ladies underwear (*qalliralaaq*), not a fish (*qaliralik*). My father-in-law had made sure that people kept signing up so that I would keep announcing it to the enjoyment of the community. When people talk about small towns, my community did not seem small enough, and I just wanted to crawl into a hole. Everyone knew about my mispronunciation but no one had corrected me. To this day, I still get teased and asked to say the name of that white, tasteless fish, so they can just still hear me mispronounce it.

Visitors from various governments departments came to the adult education center and noticed that we had so many people signed-up for a fisheries program. They were impressed that both young and old men were involved. It was perfect timing to have something positive to replace the despair that hung over the community because of the suicides. Suicides were also prevalent in other communities.

Once the fisheries program had government backing as an innovative-community-based program, other community agencies and territorial departments began to contribute services and donations. As a result, we were able to fully fund and pilot a two-week turbot fisheries training program. The pilot program was a great success, and more training was offered as the fisheries program grew. With the hopes of building a locally managed and permanent fisheries operation in our community, including a fisheries plant, shares in the new fisheries company were sold to the community. With my limited language skills, I explained that if people paid twenty Canadian dollars, it would help older males and younger males work together to build a future. I did not know how to explain shares in their language as the concept did not exist. People usually bought shares, as I did, one for each of their children.

My coworker and I also worked on grants that would bring older women and younger women together by creating a daycare center. Older women could provide mentoring for younger mothers, and the younger mothers would also get the opportunity to go back to school or to work. Around this time, while flying back to Pangnirtung, I had a conversation with the man sitting next to me about the need for a daycare center in the community. I mentioned how hard it was to get a grant since a suitable location for the center was not available. Coincidentally, my seatmate was an architect who had designed a day-care and was on his way into our community with the blueprints for a new municipal (hamlet) building. He suggested that my coworker and I present our proposal to Pangnirtung Hamlet Council that evening. He mentioned that he could adjust the blueprints so that at very little additional cost, the “basement” of the proposed new building could be the site of a day-care center. The hamlet approved the adjusted blueprints that night. Other agencies matched donations to contribute to supplies and the training of day-care workers, many of whom only spoke Inuktitut, as well as funding for salaries and subsidies. The day-care center is still in operation today.

It has been 15 years since I left that community. There are still some suicides, even recently, but they are much less frequent. A turbot fisheries packing plant has been built, and the fisheries provide a viable and sustainable income for the community. About two years ago, I received a notice from the Board of Directors of the incorporated fisheries companies proposing to force people who no longer lived in the Arctic to sell their shares. They asked for my response. I replied that, to me, the “real value” of the shares was in the legacy I wanted to pass on to my children. I wanted them to know that I helped the community to work together in innovative ways. Those shares represented a

part of me that I had left in Pangnirtung. Although the manager never saw the logic of my reasoning, the Board voted that I could keep the shares, even after I left Canada to live in the United States. I got a chance to understand what the meaning of shares actually was when, almost 12 years later, I unexpectedly received a Canadian dividend check in the mail, signed in Inuktitut.

The initiation of the day-care center and its continuation made me realize that being part of a vibrant community also means that one can benefit from embracing the sometimes unexpected or expected expertise of others. Neither of the projects I mentioned would have been possible without matching support from a wide range of agencies and departments that helped to develop, implement, monitor, and sustain ideas that the met needs the community felt were important.

I returned to Pangnirtung in 2008, looking for new ways to help more Inuit youths stay in school. It was interesting that the majority of the participants I interviewed were still looking for ways to get support for innovative programs that both young and old could enjoy by working together. People spoke about how hands-on programs were needed that would work both the mind and body and make everyone feel welcome, such as their Spring Camp. Luckily for me the word for Spring Camp (*upirngnik*) does not sound anything like the word for underwear (*qalliralaq*).



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Conclusions, Implications, Insights and Recommendations

#### *Introduction*



Figure 126: Elder Aichinak Kilabuk Teaching String Games to Researchers' Children

“It’s good when somebody comes to interview the elders. While we have a lot to say to the government we don’t go to them directly” (Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk).

Probably principals and teachers...[should] have like a school meeting ....or something and ask the students what would be helpful, not just [meet] between themselves. They should ask the students what they would like to see new in the school or new classes (Pangnirtung Student: PSF9).

This research study did “ask” Inuit elders like Mina Inuktaluk and Aichinak Kilabuk, (Figure 126) as well as Inuit students and adults to respond to the research question: What do Inuit perceive to be the modern guideposts (*nutaaq inuksuit*) that will help more Inuit students to graduate from high school in Nunavut, Canada? Their

responses provided the cultural framework around which emergent themes were organized and presented in chapter five. Similar findings between Pangnirtung and Sanikiluaq were discussed in chapter six, and their unique implementation was outlined in chapter seven. This closing chapter focuses on the conclusions and implications of those findings.

The mission statement of the Nunavut Department of Education is clear in its goals to provide Inuit students who graduate from high school with the needed academic and cultural skills that will enable them to further their education, compete for leadership roles, and become productive members of Nunavut (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Current long-term government initiatives that support this vision include the continued training of Inuit teachers, providing schools with more culturally relevant resources, and developing a bilingual K-12 curriculum (Berger, 2006). While Nunavut's mission and long-term initiatives clearly support Inuit traditional values and cultural norms, Inuit interviewees in the two communities studied expressed concerns that currently this vision is only being implemented locally at a rudimentary level. Research relating to educational change initiatives suggests that implementation at all levels, especially the local level, is key to the success of any vision or initiative (Fullan, 2001). This study provided a way for the Inuit participants to voice what they thought could be implemented in the short term to encourage higher numbers of Inuit students to stay in school to offset the current low numbers indicated by Nunavut's twenty-five percent Inuit high school graduation rate (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007).

To continue to respect how indigenous people, like the Inuit, view knowledge holistically, as well as from the perspective of its interconnected parts, both broad conclusions and implications and specific recommendations are presented in this chapter. While the broader conclusions and implications relate to the findings from the Inuit interviews, the specific recommendations are drawn from the overall research process and the researcher's Arctic experiences. The broad conclusions and implications that emerged within the four organizational themes of home, school, community, and Inuit culture, are presented below. My insights and recommendations emerging from this study close the chapter.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

Broad conclusions and implications associated with the cultural norm are presented for each theme of home, school, community, and Inuit tradition. These conclusions derive from the findings of sixty-six Inuit interviews relating to the research question of what Inuit perceive to be the modern guideposts (*nutaaq inuksuit*) that will help more Inuit stay in the high schools of Nunavut, Canada. Implications are then drawn from the findings. The researcher noticed that the influences identified in this study were also cultural norms that Inuit use when rearing their children.

#### *Home: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm*

##### *Conclusions.*

1. The education of the students' parents varied. More parents in the larger community were educated in school, while more parents in the smaller community were educated on the land.

2. Inuktitut language was spoken in the home and there were few Inuktitut print materials in the homes for most participants.
3. Students spoke a little English in the home and the availability of English print varied. Most adults did not speak English and they did not have English print materials in the home.
4. Most Inuit students and adults in both communities were encouraged by one or both of their parents.

*Implications.*

1. Parents should continue to be a strong encouraging influence on their children, regardless of their own schooling experiences.
2. Inuktitut literacy should continue to be used in the homes and more Inuktitut print should be made available. The use of English in the home and print is an optional preference.
3. Programs like day care, weekly parent groups, and library visits could be used to promote English activities for preschoolers.

*Cultural norm.*

The cultural norm associated with these findings was captured by the Inuktitut phrase: Are we prepared and ready to go? (*Atii?*).

In summary, Inuit parents should encourage their children to develop a vision for their future, and parents should learn how they can help them achieve this goal. Inuit desired more readiness for high school, parent involvement, and home-school

connections than the rudimentary levels that exist now in order to help more Inuit students to graduate.

*School: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm*

*Conclusions.*

1. Students identified the qualities of a good teacher as someone who could “teach,” was friendly, was easy to approach, and instructed using activities. Adults identified the qualities of a good teacher as someone who had previous experience teaching in their community, could “teach”, was friendly, and instructed using activities.
2. Most students and adults did not know where to go for homework support. Most students who responded to this question mentioned going to a teacher, a parent, or a friend, for help.
3. The transition from elementary to junior high was remembered as not at all difficult by students. The adults responses varied.
4. Students remained in grade 10 mostly one to two years, with some males spending three to six years in grade 10.
5. The level of difficulty of grade 10 was said to be easy by most students. Those few adults that responded said it was hard.
6. Concerns for and against introducing English earlier than fourth grade were raised by participants. There are long-term initiatives in place for a bilingual K-12 in the new Nunavut Act which would introduce English earlier. Instruction in the middle and high schools in Nunavut is still only in English.

A further consideration, would be the availability of learning French, which is the other official language of Canada besides English. At this time, there is one elementary school and one middle school in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, that provide English and French instruction.

*Implications.*

1. It is the responsibility of the Nunavut government and schools to ensure that teachers have the needed expertise and professional development to carry out teaching activities that benefit and encourage indigenous learning. This would include activities that take into account visual and kinesthetic learning styles, and cooperative and group preferences.
2. Since most students did not know where to seek help when homework was difficult, homework programs should be initiated to provide guidance in this area. Parents may not be able to assist high school students with their homework, assuming it is assigned. The lack of homework was an issue raised by some adults.
3. The transition from elementary to junior high was not noted as being difficult. Comments by students and adults indicated that students who were not fluent in English would have found grade ten hard. Participants had varied opinions about when to introduce English in schools. Grade ten still appears to be causing difficulty. The few students who “made it” were those who had not found grade ten difficult. Some male students had been in grade 10 for

extended periods of time, or had dropped out and returned. The issues concerning grade ten should be dealt with.

4. Promotion by age up to grade ten should be examined. The choice whether to take an academic or general degree, made in junior high school, also affects how a student experiences grade ten. Parents in one community mentioned they would like to be made more aware of the degree of challenge in the curriculum so that they can decide whether their children will be prepared to proceed easily on to further their education after grade 12.
5. When and how to best introduce English in the schools should be fully researched. This is especially important now, in the transition period, as Nunavut works towards its long-term plans for a bilingual K-12 program in English and Inuktitut. While some Inuit felt that English should be introduced earlier than in grade four, others expressed concern that this might interfere with the ability of students to learn and use Inuktitut properly.
6. Observations by the researcher also indicated that high schools could create more inviting and welcoming classroom environments similar to that of the elementary schools. High school students gained indirect cultural advantages when they shared a building with the elementary school where qualified Inuit teachers worked. These schools also had more school-wide activities. The researcher also noted that if the school was used frequently as a center for community activities, it became a more inviting environment overall.

*Cultural norm.*

The cultural norm associated with these findings was captured in the Inuktitut phrase: Remember I care about you and our relationship? (*Ain?*)

In summary, educators should initiate and sustain the development of relationships between parent and community networks to insure that the learning process addresses the needs of Inuit students. Interviewees desired more funded learning opportunities that promote the value of relationships and mentoring with elders<sup>145</sup> and other individuals than the rudimentary levels that exist now. These opportunities should be ongoing and sustained as a permanent part of the school system.

*Community: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm*

*Conclusions.*

1. Cultural exchanges were prevalent in one community for adults and students.
2. Sports participation was recommended by a few students in one community. Most students did not discuss it.

*Implications.*

1. Exchanges and sports events were not consistently present as part of the school program.
2. They should be encouraged because of their value to the students' learning.

Since they provide exposure to other cultures in positive ways.

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<sup>145</sup> The various roles that elders could have in the school to develop mentoring relationships are outlined under Inuit Culture: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm.



3. To offset the cost of such exchanges, the government could use its resources and networking to look for alternative ways to subsidize these trips through grants, inter-agency programs, discounted fares, business contributions, etc.
4. Communities who often have visitors should be advised about how to attract and profit from them on a regular basis.

*Cultural norm.*

The cultural norm associated with these findings is captured in the Inuktitut phrase: Are we in agreement? (*Ii?*)

In summary, adults and elders in the community should continue to collaborate to teach Inuit culture and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to students, stressing cultural values as well as native skills. Inuit interviewees stressed that better communication and networking among government departments, businesses, and local organizations are needed to help more Inuit students graduate from high school.<sup>146</sup> Of special urgency is the need to utilize elders in the schools as full-time funded “experts,” who can pass along cultural values and traditional knowledge to future generations effectively. The mentoring relationship used by elders to teach students is as important to the Inuit as the elders’ wisdom. Therefore, just incorporating their knowledge only in written form into the school system would not be adequate. Elders also need to start training other adults to help them pass on Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), Inuit values, and native skills to students. Inuit interviewees stressed that better communication and networking among

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<sup>146</sup> Examples of cultural and academic programs that result from better communication and networking between the school and the community are outlined under Inuit Culture: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm.

government departments, businesses, and local organizations are needed to help more Inuit students graduate. Currently this is done only on a rudimentary level.

*Inuit Culture: Conclusions, Implications, and Cultural Norm*

*Conclusions.*

1. The only classes that supported Inuit traditions were shop, sewing, and cooking.
2. Participation in shop and sewing varied. The majority of the students and adults did not do any cooking activities in the school.
3. There was high interest and participation in unique community sponsored programs like Spring Camp in Pangnirtung and Innovative Cultural Programs in Sanikiluaq.
4. Inuit students and adults in both communications wanted elders to be more involved in schools. Interviewees suggested elders could help teach about Inuit culture, teach Inuktitut, help with respect and discipline, and encourage students to remain in school.

*Implications.*

1. Specific skills should be identified and taught for sewing and for woodworking. Students should learn Inuit values along with Inuit skills.
2. Cooking should be taught because food preparation and sharing food are central to the Inuit culture.
3. Unique programming should be funded year round and involve elders and youth.

4. Elders should also be funded on a full-time basis to become more involved in schools in a variety of roles.

*Cultural norm.*

The cultural norm associated with these findings was captured in the Inuktitut phrase: Can we go outdoors together? (*Ittaarlu?*)

In summary, government leaders should reevaluate how they fund the Nunavut Department of Education's mission to preserve cultural knowledge because it does not currently address important needs of Inuit students. Inuit interviewees desired traditional skills to be taught more thoroughly.

What is missing is a lack of funds to support and sustain opportunities for programs that involve elders; and utilize traditional values and skills in a modern context. The following are examples of independently-funded community-oriented programs that would achieve this, but they must have additional funding to survive:<sup>147</sup> innovative courses using community partnerships, traditional camping-on-the-land experiences, utilization of full-time elders on a full-time basis in the schools, innovative cultural programs, student exchange programs, and sports tournaments. A web page where cultural lessons and resource materials could be posted should be maintained. The web page would allow materials to be modified into different dialects and then downloaded. Inuit interviewees desired traditional skills to be taught more thoroughly.

Of special urgency is the need to utilize elders in the schools as full-time funded "experts", who can pass along cultural values and traditional knowledge to future

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<sup>147</sup> Traditional camping – on-the-land experiences and innovative cultural programs are also activities that would involve elders.

generations effectively. The mentoring relationship used by elders to teach students is as important to the Inuit as the elders' wisdom. Therefore, just incorporating their knowledge only in written form into the school system would not be adequate. Elders also need to start training other adults to help them pass on Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to students.

The overall specific conclusions of this study was that it would be beneficial for educators and parents to work together to utilize the cultural framework and the associated cultural norms. This would help the two communities in this study develop their own guideposts for increasing the number of Inuit students graduating from high school. The implications of this research are that these findings and themes may also be relevant to other Nunavut communities and contribute to the growing knowledge base related to indigenous learners, specifically with regard to graduation from high school.

#### Insight From Research and my Experiences

In this study, I have made a comprehensive analysis of dialogues from a diverse group of sixty-six Inuit participants ranging in age from seventeen to seventy-seven years. It is significant because it is the largest collection of Inuit interviews in Nunavut, both in terms of the number of individual interviews conducted, and in terms of the breadth of the participants included, who spanned four generations in two different communities.

The Inuit respect for mindset (*isuma*) impacted my research and resulted in the inclusion of *Kim's Stories* and this section. This concept can be described as the ability to respect the thoughts and feelings of others. "Its influence can be seen in the

unwillingness of Inuit to offer opinions as to what others may be thinking, or in the quiet contemplation of Inuit during a meeting or general discussion” (Qitsualik, 2008, pg.2). Inuit adults who have grown up in the communities refrained from commenting about Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) as they said that the elders were the most knowledgeable about this because they had experienced it when they were living a nomadic lifestyle. Another example is that Inuit youths did not comment on how a teacher might vary their classroom instruction, only on the qualities of a teacher. The unwillingness of the Inuit to offer opinions made it more important for me organize Inuit responses into a cultural framework. Like a traditional guide post (*inuksuk*), information in the cultural framework is provided in a way that Inuit can “read” it and then formulate their own opinions as to how it would apply to their local situation. In addition, I used knowledge gained from my cross-cultural experiences to provide the missing insights and recommendations needed to make this research more comprehensible.

People are predisposed to have certain values and attitudes which have been acquired from their cultural backgrounds. As a result, attitudes and associated behaviors develop that reflect these predispositions, and can become unseen impediments in environments that are not congruent with their values. In the Inuit culture, I have observed three key obstacles that inhibit students’ ability to learn. The school system has created two of these obstacles, while the third stems from assumptions that Inuit and non-Inuit have that inhibit learning. These obstacles have created unseen barriers for students that need to be recognized and addressed if more Inuit students are to graduate from high school (Table 80, see p. 417).

The first obstacle for Inuit students to surmount is that the school system has totally switched their value system. “The school system emphasizes competition and encourages children to question the teachers...For example, Inuit children are taught to be non-competitive [cooperative] and not to ask direct questions” (Pauktuutit Inuit Women’s Association, 2000, p. 22).

My children were raised in two cultures; my own “a white woman from the south,” and the Inuit culture in which they were being raised. Even in the third-grade the relationship between asking questions and being recognized as a good student was apparent son’s school experience. He was taught by me to ask questions of non-Inuit if he wanted to know something. His non-Inuk teacher responded approvingly with this note of praise in his report card (Figure 127 and 128): “I like having Jason in class. He tries hard. He asks questions when he wants to know something” (Bartlett, 1988, p. 5).

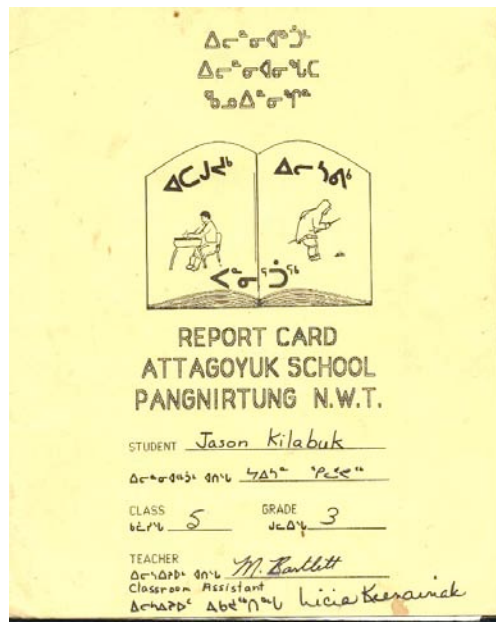


Figure 127: Cover of Jason Kilabuk’s Third Grade Report Card Attagoyuk School, Pangnirtung, NWT.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> At this time, Nunavut (NU.) had not been created. Pangnirtung was in the Northwest Territories (NWT.)



The Nunavut government and the schools have not figured out how to support Inuit students and not isolate them from their cultural values. Currently, the existing school system favors individuals who have distanced themselves from traditional skills and values and acquired modern ones. As a result, very few Inuit are able to graduate from high school. Those who drop out may feel that they are failures in both cultures.

Schools should focus on how what students are taught can be applied to benefit the community as well as students themselves. Students have little opportunity for building relationships or giving back to the community during their school years, except for an occasional brief community service requirement in high school.

The second obstacle is that school system has totally separated Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and cultural values from Inuit traditional skills. Elders used to pass on this knowledge by developing mentoring relationships with younger adults and youths. Since young people are now in school all day, they have minimum contact with the elders. Many of the current generation of adults did not learn traditional skills to pass on to their children as they were sent out to residential school away from their communities.

It has been assumed that shop classes for males and sewing and cooking classes for females taught traditional Inuit skills. This was not supported by my research. The schools have focused more on woodworking, crafts, and baking. These courses do not provide an opportunity for students to learn how the Inuit value using all parts of the animal, like the bones for carving, the skins for clothing, and the meat for food. Even students in a school that is housed in the same building as the elementary grades, rarely use the “skin preparation rooms” for the purpose of learning to cut and prepare skins. In



Sanikiluaq, there was some evidence that sometimes projects had a traditional connection<sup>150</sup> or the focus has been on a short-term traditional projects like building a kayak, or sewing a Inuit parka used to carry babies (*amautik*). Pulpan's study (Pulpan, 2006) in Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq showed that that involving elders in cultural school programs was one way that elders could continue to preserve and transmit their traditional knowledge to youth.

For example, in Sanikiluaq, one school-community project involved the building of a traditional sod house next to the Nuiyak School. Elders were involved in all aspects of this project. Elders also suggested expanding the original archeological focus to include discussions about the early modes of transportation and food sources near the traditional local camps. Students helped to create maps that located these camps. In the process, they discovered that many of the camps were also near patches of year-round open water (polynas), which would make it easier for Inuit to survive during the Arctic winters.

However, the school-community projects like the building of a traditional sod house in Sanikiluaq, is one of the few exceptions. More programs, like this one, could be better used to promote traditional skills in a holistic way.

The first two obstacles can be overcome with the help of my recommendations which support the initiatives suggested by Inuit interviewees. The third obstacle is assumptions that non-Inuit teachers have about Inuit students, and Inuit students have

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<sup>150</sup> See chapter six, Inuit traditions section for more detailed

about their own culture. These unseen obstacles that inhibit students' learning are summarized later in this section (Table 81, see p. 418).

McKenzie and Scheurich's research shows that teachers may not realize that they often treat students from culturally different backgrounds in various ways that inhibit their learning. These behaviors, which they refer to as "equity traps," are defined as "ways of thinking or assumptions that prevent educators from believing that their students can be successful learners and that [this] can unconsciously lower expectations or result in differential treatment" (McKenzie, 2004, p. 602). Their research provides more information how teachers can recognize and overcome their assumptions.<sup>151</sup>

However, what I have recognized as assumptions that Inuit students need to recognize and overcome in order to succeed in school have not been previously documented. Their assumptions are related to their views of elders, how knowledge is acquired, their attitudes about the individual, and what it means to be an Inuk today. These need additional explanation and are discussed in the next four sections (Table 82, 83, and 84, see pp. 418 - 421):

1. Inuit Culture: Future Elders;
2. School: Knowledge & A Zone Where Inuit Learn Best;
3. Community: A Collective Voice; and
4. Home: Modern Inuit.

A discussion of all the obstacles follows, prior to my recommendations.

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<sup>151</sup> For more details about equity traps, see literature review, chapter three.

### *Inuit Culture: Future Elders*

Using the theme of Inuit culture, the cultural framework indicates that there is a need for better for application of Inuit values and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) to the modern world, and to focus more on teaching Inuit culture in high school. The Inuit expression used in child-rearing practices that applies here is: “Can we go outdoors together?” (“*Ittaarlu?*”) Once Inuit youths reach high school, cultural values, related skills, and traditional knowledge are no longer emphasized. As a result, they feel that traditional skills are only useful for recreational purposes. Although they believe that the knowledge and values of the elders should be preserved, to them, they don’t apply when they are seeking a job or furthering their education.

Inuit youths must be taught to realize that Inuit cultural values provide life skills that can help them in their daily lives and make them contributing members in Nunavut and in a global society. In addition, applying these values in the high school, will also make it easier for more students to graduate. This is why it is imperative to have elders and others in the high school who can “translate” these values in a way that Inuit youths can use them into a modern context. The Spring Camp in Pangnirtung is a good example of how traditional skills and values can be taught holistically to students with elders and other community members involved. Currently, it is only running for a month in the spring, Inuit interviewees would like funding to have it open year round.

There is an assumption about the qualifications needed to be an elder in today’s society. This assumption derives from the concept that elders are individuals who have

grown up living on the land, following in the traditions of their ancestors. According to this concept, Inuit elders are part of a generation that will soon be extinct.

Since the Inuit lifestyle has been supplanted by modern conveniences like radios, guns, and motorized transportation, being mentored in the traditional lifestyle is no longer a realistic option. Even though some permanent outpost camps do exist, they also rely on modern conveniences, and are too remote for ongoing, daily access by students in the school.

To remedy this assumption, the definition of an elder should to be changed to include individuals who have been mentored by current elders so that they can pass on traditional skills, values, and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), even though they might not have lived a traditional lifestyle. Individuals who would be mentored by elders, would carry on the culture and have the honor of keeping the traditional values and skills alive for future generations. They would have been mentored by the elders, and would carry on the cultural tradition by mentoring others. Even though some of the traditional knowledge can be written down, it is the personification of this knowledge which will keep the traditions alive. There is an expression in Inuktitut for elders who have gained their wisdom, as their ancestors did, through the experience of living on the land (*Innait*).<sup>152</sup> To parallel this, a word is needed to define the modern concept of an elder. To describe these individuals, I suggest using the word *Innartituuqtuit*<sup>153</sup> which means individuals who act “the same as elders.”

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<sup>152</sup> This is the plural for both a male and female elder. *Ittuq* is the singular for male elder and *Ittuit* is the plural for male elders. *Ninguiq* is the singular for female elders and *Ninguit* is the plural for female elders.

<sup>153</sup> *Innartituuqtu* is the singular form. This phrase does not exist in Inuktitut, but the creation of a word for this concept is suggested by this research.

*What Happens After this Generation of Elders Passes on?*

Since future generations do not have the knowledge and the skills to carry on the traditions of the elders, a vital part of the Inuit culture will be lost. My research offers a viable solution from preventing this from occurring. Since the lifespan of the current elders is limited, it is critical to effectively implement Inuits' desire to utilize elders in schools, as soon as possible, no matter what other initiatives are being explored.

*Community: A Collective Voice*

Using the theme of community, the cultural framework would support more community-school projects through networking and developing partnerships. An expression used in Inuit child-rearing practices which would apply here is: "Are we in agreement? (*Ii?*)"

Through networking and community partnerships, individuals would realize that a collective voice and range of expertise are a powerful vehicle to remove obstacles that inhibit Inuit students. There is an assumption by Inuit adults and students that their individual concerns are not meaningful in the larger community. When problems develop in school, they blame themselves rather than examining whether outside factors could be contributing to their difficulties. They are reluctant to question school policies because they also believe that things are the way they are and can not be changed. These assumptions become an obstacle for them in the school environment. Since Inuit students

are willing to accept the status quo,<sup>154</sup> very few aspire to gain oral and written fluency in Inuktitut and English, or further their education.

To overcome these obstacles, students must become fluent in oral and written English and Inuktitut. This should be a minimum requirement, regardless of which track<sup>155</sup> they select, so that they can become contributing members of their community. Students should also participate in a variety of cultural and intellectual experiences so that they can develop a broader outlook and find more role models to inspire them. When government initiatives are implemented in the high school, there is a need to hire local Inuit coordinators to provide the opportunities for Inuit to have a forum to discuss their concerns, and suggest possible improvements to existing school programs and policies.

*Why is an Inuit Curriculum Being Taught by a Non-Inuit Teachers?*

The Aulaaqjuktuk curriculum<sup>156</sup> was developed and piloted by Inuit across Nunavut. It was implemented in high schools in 2007. “Aulajaaqtut is aimed at developing life long learners who are self-directed and community-directed. Having this sense of direction and the stamina to keep pressing on towards the desired goal are important concepts developed through this curriculum” (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, pp. 1-2). It was widely acknowledged as a successful and meaningful curriculum taught by Inuit in conjunction with elders to help Inuit youths develop needed leadership skills. As a result, the government made this program part of the high school

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<sup>154</sup> In Nunavut, the majority of adults and youths lack a high school education and do not have oral and written fluency in Inuktitut or English. See chapter one for more details.

<sup>155</sup> Various tracks are in the process of being implemented in Nunavut high schools that would help students to obtain the needed requirements for entry into different trades, further education, or to complete the requirements for a standard diploma.

<sup>156</sup> For more details, see: Nunavut Department of Education. (2007). Aulajaaqtut teacher's manual: An introduction. Retrieved April 21, 2007, from <http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/css/10-12.resources>

curriculum required for graduation. This meant that only a certified high school teacher could teach it. Since there are no certified Inuit high school teachers, non-Inuit teachers, unfamiliar with the Inuit culture, must now teach this course. If there was an Inuk coordinator to monitor how this program was implemented, then this problem could be addressed.

*Why does Pangnirtung, the Community with the Highest Number of Graduates also have a Higher Number of Suicides and Other Mental Health Issues?*

One difference between the two communities is their educational focus. This has produced very different results. Pangnirtung has higher high school graduation rates, yet it also has severe mental health issues like suicide among youth. Pangnirtung now provides a general high school diploma which has enabled more students to graduate, when in the past they offered an advanced high school diploma. As a result, the problem is that now most graduates with a general degree do not have a high level of fluency in Inuktitut or English, or many basic job or life skills needed in Nunavut. The majority are also not qualified to enter into any further college or vocational program. The fact that some graduates still don't have the skills they need to function effectively in their own community or further their education may contribute to their mental health problems.

*Why is Sanikiluaq, the Community Most Recognized for Innovative Cultural Activities have the Lowest Number of Graduates?*

Sanikiluaq has received the most recognition in Nunavut and Canada for its cultural activities, yet it has lower graduation rates than Pangnirtung. Although

Sanikiluaq provides an advanced high school diploma, it does not provide enough support to enable more students to take advanced courses and graduate.

What is needed in both communities is a high school education that emphasizes both academic standards and cultural programs to produce bilingual individuals who can function in either culture. The focus of the Nunavut government should be on monitoring the skills students need to graduate, rather than on the number of graduates. In addition, schools also needed to provide an opportunity for students to achieve higher academic standards. This was noted in Pangnirtung by the lack of challenging courses which would prepare graduates for the future. In Sanikiluaq, a concern over the lack of available substitutes who are qualified to provide instruction at the high school level was mentioned.

*School: Knowledge and a Zone Where Inuit Learn Best*

Using the theme of school, the cultural framework indicated that Inuit wanted more funded opportunities by the government that promote elders, relationships, and mentoring in the schools. This was evident in the cultural norm used in child-rearing practices: “Remember I care about you and our relationship? (*Ain?*)” Opportunities for relationship building occurs when learning involves members of the community who provide practical experiences for students. In both communities, most students worked on their own from textbooks and had little interaction with peers and teachers. Few opportunities were available for them to gain practical experience from the core high school courses required for graduation.



However, an assumption by Inuit youth is that knowledge is only valuable if it is gained through actual experiences. Furthermore, acquiring knowledge isn't important unless it can be used for the benefit of the community. Learning that includes practical experience and benefits the community would help build mentoring relationships, support Inuit values, and improve self-esteem for students.

My research showed that most students indicated that the only reason to complete school was "just to finish" or to get a job. Applied learning and community service programs would give students practical incentives to help motivate more of them to complete school. For example, in Sanikiluaq, the construction program, in which students have built houses and a small bridge, has been very effective in motivating students who are in school to continue, and encouraging drop outs to return to school. Numerous community members went out of their way to informally comment to me about the success of the program and the pride the community took in the students' achievements.

Students who build houses are able to make a difference in their community because there is a severe housing shortage in Nunavut. This is significant because most students are young adults who have waited a long time to live in their own house.

Students lose their house when they leave their community to further their education.<sup>157</sup>

This is a problem that needs to be addressed.

To overcome students' assumptions about the significance of what is taught in Nunavut's high schools, the curriculum needs to be changed. It should be restructured so

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<sup>157</sup> In addition, residents in both communities also informally mentioned their concerns that students, who are often young adults, are forced to return during holidays and summers due to lack of funding at those times. When these students complete their training and return to the community, they do not have any housing for their families.

that each year it provides increasing applied learning opportunities for students to combine their academic skills with practical experience in a way that benefits the community. Models exist in training programs for teachers and engineers which often use this approach to provide students with a more well-rounded educational background.<sup>158</sup>

*What do Inuit Students Need to Help Them Prepare for High School?*

Inuit youth have limited their ability to envision what jobs they might aspire to that would motivate their need for a high level of fluency in English and Inuktitut. Having Inuit role models would help Inuit youth to aspire to different occupations. In Nunavut, there are few Inuit role models. To be a doctor, lawyer, pilot, accountant, etc. advanced degrees or certification are needed. Government jobs require a fluency in English equivalent to that in the rest of Canada. However, in Nunavut, job applicants would also need a knowledge of the Inuit culture and a high level of fluency in Inuktitut. In elementary school, promotion is by age, whereas in the high school promotion is associated with how well students are prepared academically. The few students who reached grade ten did not find it linguistically or academically difficult because they had adequate prior preparation. Their readiness for high school depended on their fluency in English, their parents' education, and knowing how to obtain academic support when it was needed

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<sup>158</sup> For more details about these programs, see the University of Vermont's elementary education web page: <http://www.uvm.edu/~doe/elementary/> and the University of Vermont's school of engineering web page: <http://www.uvm.edu/~cems/soe/?Page=undergrad/me/default.php&SM=undergrad/undergradmenu.html>

### *What Should Schools do to Become More Effective?*

Research studies on teaching and learning, conducted outside of Nunavut, would be applicable to schools in the communities studied. Research focusing on best teaching practices, and cross-cultural and second-language learners should be implemented in Nunavut to help more students remain in school.

Inuit students need to learn when it is beneficial and often necessary to use questions as a tool to get more information. In addition, students need to be provided with a curriculum that more closely matches their cultural values and the Inuit learning style preferences. Inuit learn through observation and participation. Rather than teaching to the needs and interests of an individual in a competitive situation, effective teaching strategies can be used at the high school level that include having students work with partners or in groups cooperatively, that enable students of varying abilities to work together and benefit from each other's strengths. Vygotsky's views on learning in a conceptual environment where students learn best, and on teaching, are helpful to understanding how to effectively apply this research in the schools. "Vygotsky (1978, 1986) conceptualized a zone of proximal development as a way of viewing what children are coming to know... [Within this zone] conceptualizing is often enhanced by visualizing... [and] children become active participants in their learning" (Wink & Putney, 2002, p.86-89).

Students would need to travel in this zone, that conceptually lies between the home and the school, if they are to succeed in graduating from high school. The cultural framework suggested in my research would be the guideposts (*inuksuit*) that will help the

Inuit students through this “zone where Inuit learn best.” References in the literature can further identify more specific skills and values than the broad ones mentioned here. Moll refers to the knowledge of the community as “funds of knowledge” that need to be both available and used in and by schools. “Based on Vygotsky’s notion of socio-cultural teaching and learning, students, teachers, and families act in dialogue together with each other, jointly constructing what counts as knowledge in the life world, what Moll and colleagues (1990) refer to as funds of knowledge... Funds of knowledge are the cultural artifacts and bodies of knowledge that underlie household activities (Moll, 2000). They are inherent cultural resources found in communities surrounding schools. Funds of knowledge are grounded in the networking that communities do in order to make best use of those resources” (Wink and Putney, 2002, p. 63 and 97).

*What Should Instruction in School Consist of?*

Not only are guideposts (*inuksuit*) needed, but the “zone” itself needs to have activities that support learning. These activities especially should focus on applied learning for a purpose that visibly benefits the community. Working cooperatively in groups, using projects that require students who have multiple abilities to work together, and learning that engages students actively are all beneficial teaching tools that would support Inuit values and promote academic learning. Differentiating instruction to meet individual needs and interests as well as regular and consistent assessment would further enrich this “zone where Inuit learn best.” Both non-Inuit and Inuit teachers should also be trained to use other cross-cultural and second-language strategies than those specifically highlighted in this paragraph. In schools, in both communities, students were usually

working individually going their own pace through chapters in textbooks. This type of learning does not motivate or stimulate learning.

Establishing the capabilities for long-distance learning in the two communities studied would be essential. Students who are not challenged in one community could participate in long-distance learning via the internet, web pages, computer, and television with a class in another community. They could have access to an instructor in another location, exchange resources on a web page, provide homework assistance to each other, etc. This could include providing courses which are not currently part of the curriculum. Motivational speakers, career counselors for students, developmental courses for teachers, and shared cultural experiences could also be included. I am familiar with successful models that have been used in the United States at Harvard University where an Indian art course was taught by an instructor in India to students in the United States, or pharmaceutical students participating in lectures at the University of Florida from their home towns.<sup>159</sup>

Inuit need to become fluent in both languages so that they will have access to different opportunities. They also need to develop aspiration based on role models. The balance between cultural and academic knowledge and values needs to be promoted by the Nunavut government and the community by implementing a strong undergirth to the current curriculum while they continue to develop more culturally relevant resources.

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<sup>159</sup> For more details, see Harvard University Extension School at <http://www.extension.harvard.edu/> and the University of Florida's College of Pharmacy at [http://www.uspharmd.com/school/pharmacy/University\\_of\\_Florida.html](http://www.uspharmd.com/school/pharmacy/University_of_Florida.html)

This undergirth would focus especially on providing bilingual experiences from elementary school through high school.

Just providing students with the new proposed options for different tracks in high school does not mean that certain students would not obtain basic fluency in English and Inuktitut, a strong sense of Inuit values to guide them, as well as basic cultural and academic knowledge. These are needed for all students regardless of their track.

Implications from this research support that a combination of these will increase the retention rates of high school graduates and provide them with a quality education.

*Why Doesn't the Nunavut Government Fund Pangnirtung's Spring Camp and Sanikiluaq's Innovative Cultural Programs Since They Make Such a Difference to Nunavut Students and Help Preserve Inuit Culture?*

Promoting Inuit culture in the modern world should include providing authentic experiences Inuit can relate to. Such experiences will enable Inuit youth to develop a positive sense of identity and self-worth as contributing members of Nunavut. Hopefully, this research will alert the Nunavut government to the need to do so and how to implement it with the supports to sustain Inuit initiatives.

#### *Home: Modern Inuit*

Using the theme of home, the cultural framework indicated that Inuit suggested that it was important in preparing students for high school, to increase parent involvement, and have better home-school connection. The concept of being prepared is evident in the expression used in their child-rearing practices: "Are we prepared and ready to go? (*Atii?*)" It is also used in everyday language between adults. In order to

prepare Inuit youth to do well in high school, and thrive in a competitive society, parents and the school need to help youths clarify the concept of what “Being Inuk” means.

There is an assumption by both Inuit and non-Inuit that “being Inuk” is only possible if you live in the Arctic. According to this concept, it is preferable that Inuit continue to live where they were born, so that they can learn the specific traditional Inuit skills related to that environment. This means that Inuit students are forced to give up their sense of their heritage if they leave Nunavut for further education or a job. In addition, interviewees pointed out that just living in the community and going to school did not guarantee that one was able to gain traditional skills because the high schools do not include enough of these skills. This has created a dilemma for Inuit youth since it is no longer possible for them to be “Inuk” in the traditional sense. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a high incidence of serious mental health issues among young Inuit.

To enable Inuit youth to overcome the confusion relating to their identity, the high schools should address their concerns by helping them to understand how to be an Inuk in today’s society. Sanikiluaq is starting to address this problem with a variety of innovative programs. Students there are being taught how to combine traditional skills with modern practices to create special exhibits for the museum in the foyer of the school. For example, they have learned how to clean polar bear skins and stuff a life-sized polar bear using taxidermy. They have also made jewelry using traditional symbols. Programs initiated in Sanikiluaq have provided students with skills in taxidermy, jewelry making, picture framing, silk screening T-shirts, etc. that can be used to promote Inuit culture and

utilized for future jobs. Interviewees there said they would like these programs<sup>160</sup> to be fully funded year round.

There is an expression in Inuktitut for an Inuk who is honored and respected because he or she follows all of the old ways (*Inumari*).<sup>161</sup> To parallel this, a word is needed to define the modern concept of an Inuk. Today, Inuit needs to be respected for preserving traditional values and utilizing them in conjunction with modern skills. To define this concept, I suggest using the phrase *Inuk Ajungituq*,<sup>162</sup> which means an Inuk who “can accomplish it all.”

#### *Is it Possible to Straddle two Cultures?*

Yes, but it is important for Inuit to preserve their cultural values and traditions related to their environment, in addition to acquiring the academic skills to thrive in Nunavut.

What did I learn from raising my children in the Arctic, that was made more evident by being able to see the Inuit culture from a distance? When I left the Arctic, and moved to Florida, my children ranged in age from four to ten. As a result, only my eldest son had begun to learn some of the Inuit traditional values that, for boys, related to hunting. Even if there had been another Inuit in the area to mentor the children, the year-round, hot and humid Florida climate with its tree-speckled lowlands and sandy beaches was not an appropriate environment to practice any of the Inuit traditional skills.

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<sup>160</sup> For more details about Sanikiluaq’s programs, see chapter seven.

<sup>161</sup> This word is used for male and female elders.

<sup>162</sup> The plural form would be *Inuit Ajungituit*. This phrase does not exist in Inuktitut, but the creation of a word for this concept is suggested by this research.



I realized that many Inuit activities are related to the environment. Inuit had to develop specialized knowledge to survive during frigid Arctic winters that they would not have needed if they lived in the desert. That specific knowledge is valuable, and it still should be preserved for its usefulness as a life skill, recreational interest, and its historical value for those who remain in the Arctic. What I was able to do was foster Inuit values of the importance of the family working together to help each other, to make a difference by helping others, and contributing to the community. I gained these values from an Inuit elder who had always asked me, “Who did it help?” each time I visited her in relation to the activities I had done. So, in my family, rather than focusing on “How was your day? or What did you do?” as is typically asked in cultures like the United States which focus on the individual, I asked the children first “Who did you help?” As a family, we also started focusing on volunteer activities like clothing drives, helping at the church, and volunteering for Special Olympics that contributed to our community. This focus helped my children to retain some of the core Inuit values in spite of their remote location from the Arctic. Apparently, they were able to retain enough Inuit values that their Inuit grandmother, now an elder, commented about it upon their return to the Arctic seven years later. She mentioned that her husband, who passed away a few months earlier, would have been proud to see that although they could not speak Inuktitut or did not know the traditional skills, they were still “Inuit.” This was in spite of the fact that when they left Pangnirtung originally, she thought they would lose their Inuit values going to a southern location. In the schools, the way to overcoming the cultural barrier, is by using Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ) and values with a focus on the future, and finding ways

to “translate” for the students, like I did for my children, how to apply these values to the modern world.

The presence of the three obstacles makes the application of the cultural framework that organizes the voices of the Inuit in a holistic fashion more critical. This research shows that a key factor in students’ ability to remain in high school is their background. Students who are fluent in English are more likely to have less difficulty entering high school and remaining there. This study also showed that parents of second-generation students are more likely to have the skills to both encourage and support their children in high school.

School is strongly valued by the Inuit as a community institution which is expected to provide their children with the academic skills needed to prepare them for future careers in addition to preserving their cultural heritage. At present, these expectations are not being fulfilled since schools are not focusing on how to motivate students to remain in high school until graduation.

The Inuit are not unique in their focus on the collective group. Many other aboriginal and Asian cultures<sup>163</sup> share the same emphasis, whereas in most parts of Canada and the United States the focus is on the individual. After leaving the Arctic, my children were able to retain the Inuit focus on the group and other Inuit values even in a foreign environment with numerous outside influences. With their fluency in English, my background in education, and ability to interact with their teachers, they were able to

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<sup>163</sup> See: Brooks, David. (2008). The biggest issue. New York Times, July 29, 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/29/opinion/29brooks.html?em&ex=1217476800&en=5b2c99da8856e57c&ei=5087%0A>

obtain high school diplomas and continue on to further education (vocational, college, graduate school) to achieve careers in various fields – aviation, law, business, and medicine - that enabled them to help others. My children overcame these cultural obstacles by pursuing their education until they graduated from college and then were able to choose careers that enabled them to help others.

They succeeded because they were lucky enough to have a parent who provided the necessary encouragement and support. As a result, they could balance two seemingly contradictory cultures. From suggestions from Inuit participants, a cultural framework evolved, that combined with my recommendations, would provide the kind of support necessary for Inuit students to succeed in school. In addition, fluency in Inuktitut and knowledge of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ) and skills, important to Nunavut, would be achieved within the context of a quality high school education.

Table 80: Summary of Unseen Obstacles That Inhibit Inuit Students' Learning

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Obstacle 1: School system has switched Inuit values.

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Obstacle 2: School system has separated Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and values from Inuit skills

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Obstacle 3: Assumptions :

1. Non-Inuit teachers towards Inuit students
  2. Inuit students have about their culture
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Table 81: Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Inuit Culture: Future Elders

Broad topic and questions	Cultural framework and associated cultural norm found in current child-rearing practices	Unseen assumptions by Inuit students about their culture that inhibit learning	How to overcome assumptions
Inuit culture: future elders  What happens when this generation of elders passes on?	Application of Inuit values and Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) to the modern world; more cultural skills, including fluency in Inuktitut  Cultural norm: Can we go outdoors together? ( <i>Ittaarlu?</i> )	Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ), values apply when they are seeking a job or furthering their education  Elders can only be individuals who lived as their ancestors did.	Teach youth that Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) and values are life skills that can help them in their daily lives and are applicable to the modern world.  Promote new concept of elders as carriers of Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ), skills, and values. These individuals did not live as their ancestors did, but they might have been mentored by traditional elders.

Figure 82: Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Community: A Collective Voice

Broad Topic and Questions	Cultural framework and associated cultural norm found in current child-rearing practices	Unseen assumptions by Inuit students about their culture that inhibit learning	How to overcome assumptions
Community: a collective voice  Why is an Inuit curriculum being taught by a non-Inuit teacher?  Why does Pangnirtung, the community with the highest number of graduates also have a higher number of suicides and other mental health issues? Why is Sanikiluaq, the community most recognized for innovative cultural activities have the lowest number of graduates?	Better networking and communication to develop community partnerships  Cultural norm: Are we in agreement? ( <i>Ii?</i> )	Individual concerns are not meaningful in the larger community  Things are the way they are and can not be changed.	Community partnerships will enable Inuit to have a collective voice and benefit from a variety of expertise  Hiring an Inuk coordinator in the local high schools will provide a forum for Inuit to provide feedback on school initiatives and policies  Oral and written fluency in Inuktitut and English, and role models will help change the status quo.

Figure 83: Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes School: Knowledge and a Zone Where Inuit Learn Best

Broad Topic and Questions	Cultural framework and associated cultural norm found in current child-rearing practices	Unseen assumptions by Inuit students about their culture that inhibit learning	How to overcome assumptions
<p>School: Knowledge and a zone where Inuit learn best</p> <p>What should schools do to be more effective? What should instruction in school look like? Since Pangnirtung's Spring Camp and Sanikiluaq's Innovative Cultural Programs make such a difference to Inuit students, and help to preserve their culture: Why doesn't the Nunavut government fund them?</p>	<p>Funded opportunities by the government that promote relationships, mentoring, and elders' involvement in the schools.</p> <p>Cultural norm: Remember I care about you and our relationship? (<i>Ain?</i>)</p>	<p>Knowledge is only valuable if it is gained through actual experience.</p> <p>Acquiring knowledge is not beneficial unless it can be used for the benefit of the community.</p>	<p>Provide a "zone where Inuit learn best" that better matches their cultural predispositions: Use Vygotsky 's socio-cultural theories of learning and the zone of proximal development, Moll's funds of cultural knowledge to provide optimal learning environment</p> <p>Restructuring high school curriculum to focus on applied learning and community service programs.</p>

Figure 84: Summary Chart of Unseen Assumptions and How to Overcome Them Which Includes Home: Modern Inuit

Broad Topic and Questions	Cultural framework and associated cultural norm found in current child-rearing practices	Unseen assumptions by Inuit students about their culture that inhibit learning	How to overcome assumptions
Home: Modern Inuit	Better readiness for high school, parent involvement, and home-school connection	Being an “Inuk” is only possible in the Arctic, and related to learning the traditional skills where you were born.	Help Inuit youths to address how to be “Inuk” in today’s society.
Is it possible to straddle two cultures?			Provide innovative programs.
What did I learn from raising my children in the Arctic, that I was more evident by being able to see the Inuit culture from a distance?	Cultural norm: Are we prepared and ready to go? ( <i>Atii?</i> )		New concept of being an Inuk in today’s society means able to balance skills and values of both cultures.

### Recommendations

My study provides both a baseline and a strong cohesive voice for needed changes in the school system. It will alert the government to what Inuit perceive are the critical concerns in their high schools and their suggestions for improvement. Since I have organized their input into a cultural framework, both the government and the local community education councils will be able to use it as a tool to re-evaluate, monitor, and improve the existing high school system.

I feel that my fourteen years of living in Pangnirtung and raising my children there, before moving back to the United States, has given me the perspective to evaluate how what Inuit suggested in the research can best be effectively implemented.

Recommendations are provided for major short-term changes needed in the next three to five years to strengthen the current high school curriculum and support long-term initiatives like bilingualism, training Inuit teachers, developing a culturally relevant curriculum, and designing different tracks in high school. It is particularly important for the government to respond quickly. The need to drastically improve the low graduation rate must be a high priority so that Nunavut can control its own future, and reap the benefits of bilingual education when it is finally implemented. Inuit need to see that their input makes a difference, so that they can feel they are part of the process. It is my hope that the conclusions and my recommendations from the research be implemented at least as a pilot program in the high schools, in both Sanikiluaq and Pangnirtung, shortly after this report is released to the Nunavut government.

It has been well-established, according to research by Fullan, that just suggesting a vision for educational change and how it might be applied, is not enough to make reforms effective. To successfully implement any educational reform, it is essential that supports that match local needs be implemented and assessed (Fullan, 2001). To ensure that the recommended programs can be carried out effectively both Inuit and non-Inuit groups still need to work together to examine any underlying assumptions described above that might inhibit their ability to make the suggested changes. In addition, the government needs to implement new methods of assessing school success that



correspond to the new initiatives, rather than the current method of measuring a school's success based on the number of high school graduates who have passed the standardized subject area tests to get their diploma.

Within each broad theme--home, school, community, and Inuit culture--Inuit participants' suggested initiatives that will help more Inuit to graduate from high school. These are listed below in order of priority (Table 85, see p. 418):

1. Inuit culture: Two fully funded high school positions for elders (one male, one female), and the application of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) and values to the curriculum and to the modern world;
2. Community: Year round fully funded Spring Camp in Pangnirtung and Innovative Cultural Programs in Sanikiluaq, and more community-school partnerships;
3. School: More opportunities should be provided for high school students to develop mentoring relationships, foster career aspirations, and apply their learning in ways that benefit the community and themselves;
4. Home: Better home-school connection and more parent-teacher involvement.

My expertise and experience have enabled me to assess the Inuit initiatives, and I have provided the necessary recommendations that will make them successful and sustainable. Program funds would include, but not be limited to: instructors' expenses, participants' costs, materials, resources, etc. Funds for technological equipment and installation in both communities are crucial. These would enable the high schools to have their own ability to broadcast programs, share digital video recordings and pictures,

communicate with each other via the internet, scan documents, produce multi-media presentations, develop web pages, and publish books, etc. The same equipment could be used in both communities to support challenging classes not offered in one location and help when substitutes are not available for short-term absences due to meetings. Funds are also needed to support varied, yearly positive exchanges: like participating in activities; sports exchange; academic exchanges related to business, science, or areas not specifically mentioned like debate and drama, either in or outside of Nunavut.

All positions recommended below would be at the local high school and community level and should be fully funded on a permanent basis. Four additional positions in the local high schools of both communities must be created to carry out the above initiatives. The initiatives are listed below (Table 86 and 87, see pp. 418 – 419):

1. Elders' Coordinator (who can use technology to broadcast and document Inuit cultural activities);
2. A male Apprentice (who can be mentored by the male elder hired);
3. A female Apprentice (who can be mentored by the female elder hired);
4. Cultural Framework Coordinator (who can monitor and assess initiatives).

The main roles of these individuals are outlined in their job descriptions below:

1. Elders' Coordinator:
  - a. Coordinate elders' role in the curriculum and promote traditional skills;
  - b. Help elders to translate the application of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*), and values to the modern world;
  - c. Preserve and exchange cultural traditions using technology;

- d. Promote concepts of “future elders” and “being a modern Inuk.”<sup>164</sup>
2. A male and female Apprentices:
    - a. Provide physical support to help elders carry out activities;
    - b. Work with Elders’ Coordinator to carry out curriculum initiatives and help with the preservation of elders’ knowledge. (These apprentices will be trained by elders to become “future Elders,” and they train future apprentices.)
  3. Cultural Framework Coordinator:
    - a. Coordinates the year-round cultural programs (Spring Camp in Pangiirtung and Innovative Cultural Programs in Sanikiluaq);
    - b. Works with Elders’ Coordinator to coordinate other cultural programs;
    - c. Works with Elders’ Coordinator to utilize technological equipment to provide distance learning opportunities to challenge students and support the curriculum when teachers are absent;
    - d. Coordinates opportunities for positive student exchanges;
    - e. Emphasizes career planning, goal setting, homework assistance;
    - f. Organizes professional development and promotes an awareness of classroom activities involving cooperative groups, class projects, differentiated instruction, assessment to develop “zones where Inuit can learn best;”

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<sup>164</sup> The terms “future elders” and “being a modern Inuk” are discussed previously in this chapter.

- g. Supports the use of research and teaching strategies that take into account students from different cultures and students who are learning English as a second language;
- h. Monitors and assesses the implementation of the initiatives and these recommendations;
- i. Assists with establishment of assessment criteria for academic and traditional programs, and helps develop new criteria and measures of student success.

*Concluding remarks*

My research has surfaced the importance of preserving and continuing the Inuit culture in the lives of Inuit youth. I offer two concluding artifacts in support in support of this point. The first is the comments of my son in the picture he drew twenty years ago that he drew when he was in the third grade (Figure 129). In response to the questions “What should be schools be doing for our students?” he wrote “I want to learn about the old ways when the used dog sleds before they had skidoos and when they used to live in igloo”<sup>165</sup> (Kilabuk, 1988, p. 1).

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<sup>165</sup> Jason Kilabuk wrote the Inuktitut and translated what he wrote into English and the non-Inuk teacher recorded what he said. This picture and comments were submitted as a writing entry in the 1988 Baffin Divisional Board of Education Writing Competition. It was selected as a winning entry for his age group. It was published in the local newspaper and he was awarded a travel bag.

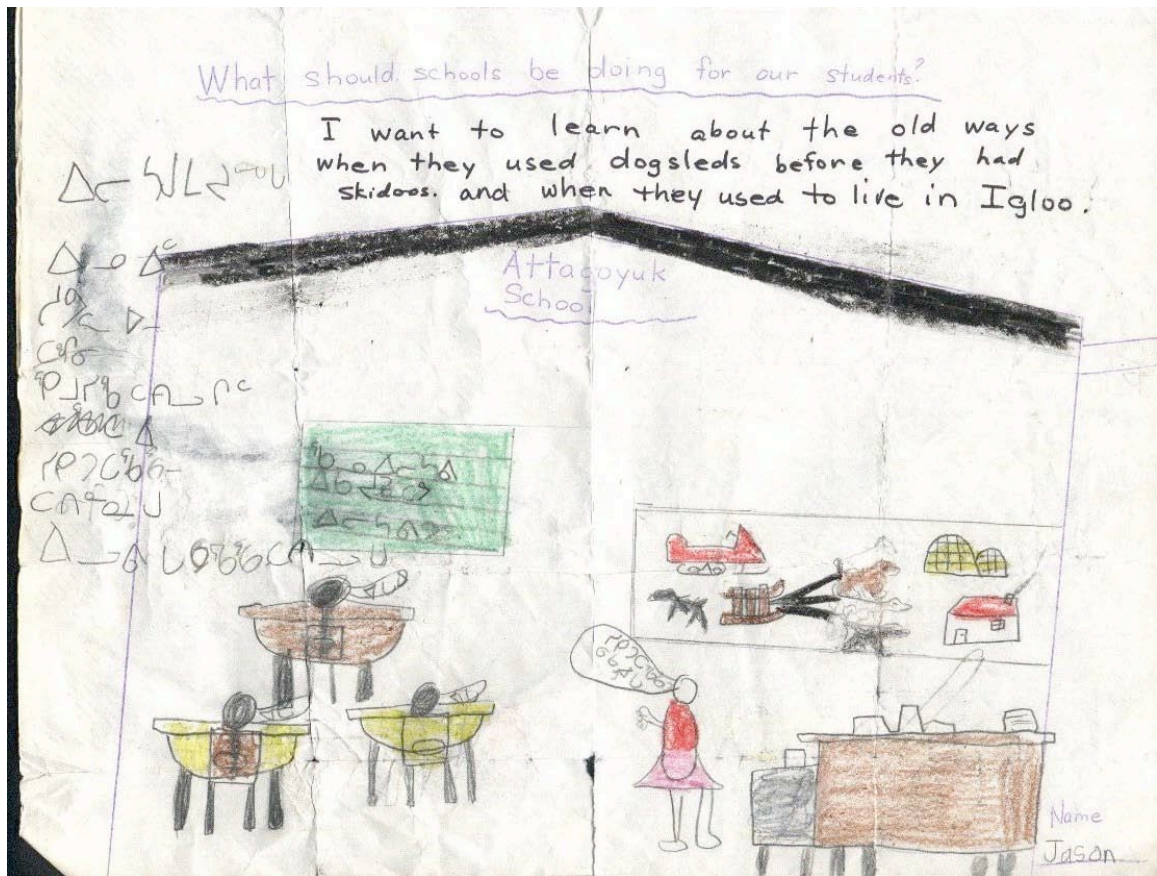


Figure 129: Jason Kilabuk Third Grade Entry for 1988 Baffin Divisional Board of Education Writing Competition

The second is a quote from one of the Pangnirtung Inuit interviewees made twenty years later:

I was thinking, when a white person wakes up in the morning, he doesn't purposefully set out to do something white, he just lives. But like for us Inuit, we have to try to prove that we are Inuit, I don't get that. Do you know what I mean? ... I mean it is good that we try to preserve our culture and everything but why do we spend so much time trying to be Inuit, why don't we just live? (Pangnirtung Adult: PAM2).

My research also surfaced that in order to “live,” Inuit youth must resolve their identity crisis. The Inuit initiatives and my recommendations will help them to straddle the two cultures, appreciate the benefits and values of their cultural heritage, and equip them to participate in the variety of opportunities open to their non-Inuit contemporaries.

Therefore the government, in a timely fashion, needs to provide funding to initiate Inuit suggestions that were organized into a cultural framework, my recommendations for how to effectively implement them, and address the obstacles and assumptions that prevent many more Inuit students from graduating high school. By doing so, it will enable these graduates to have a cultural background handed down by the elders, and required academic skills that will give them more opportunities to live full and productive lives. Like the smell of freshly baked bread, it is my hope that the benefits of this research will linger and give Inuit students the chance to taste a variety of engaging cultural and academic courses. By following the guideposts (*inuksuit*), Inuit initiatives, and my recommendations, schools will be able to empower more Inuit students to feel motivated to complete high school, value their culture, and prepared to compete for future jobs in Nunavut or elsewhere.

Table 85: Suggest Initiatives by Inuit That Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order

Broad Theme	Suggested Inuit Initiatives
Inuit culture	Two fully funded high school positions for elders (one male, one female), and the application of Inuit Traditional Knowledge ( <i>IQ</i> ) and values to the curriculum and to the modern world
Community	Year round fully funded Spring Camp in Pangnirtung and Innovative Cultural Programs in Sanikiluaq, and more community-school partnerships
School	More opportunities should be provided for high school students to develop mentoring relationships, foster career aspirations, and apply their learning in ways that benefit the community and themselves
Home	Better home-school connection and more parent-teacher involvement

Table 86: Recommended Positions That Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order to Effectively Support Inuit Initiatives Including Inuit Culture

	Positions: Fully Funded Positions in Local High Schools	Funds
Inuit culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elders' Coordinator (who can use technology to broadcast and document Inuit cultural activities)</li> <li>2. A male Apprentice (who can be mentored by the male elder hired)</li> <li>3. A male Apprentice (who can be mentored by the male elder hired)</li> <li>4. A female Apprentice (who can be mentored by the female elder hired)</li> </ol>	<p>Funds for technological equipment and installation in both communities are crucial. These would enable the high schools to have their own ability to broadcast programs, share digital video recordings and pictures, communicate with each other via the internet, scan documents, produce multi-media presentations, develop web pages, and publish books, etc.</p> <p>The same equipment could be used in both communities to support challenging classes not offered in one location and help when substitutes are not available for short-term absences due to meetings.</p>

Table 87: Recommended Positions That Need to be That Need to be Implemented in the Next Three to Five Years in Priority Order to Effectively Support Inuit Initiatives Included is Community, School and Home

	Positions: Fully Funded Positions in Local High Schools	Funds
Community, school & home	Cultural Framework Coordinator (who can monitor and assess initiatives).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program funds would include, but not be limited to: instructors' expenses, participants' costs, materials, resources, etc.</li> <li>2. Funds are also needed to support varied, yearly positive exchanges: i.e. to different communities in or outside of Nunavut, sports exchanges, other academic exchanges related to business, science, or other areas not specifically mentioned like debate, drama, etc..</li> </ol>

### Kim's Story: The Gift of Appreciation

During the winters when I lived in the Arctic, I used to pull my sled (*qamutaq*) past an elder's house on my way to and from my babysitter's house. He was often sitting on the steps in front of his house. Sometimes he would point to something my children accidentally dropped, like a toy, or other times he would just beckon me over to try some native food from a pot that he had on his steps. We could not speak each other's language, so we often just gestured or smiled. Sometimes, I brought him a loaf of bread that I baked, as it was something different from the pan fried bread (*palauga*) he usually ate. One day I noticed he was not there. When he was not there on the following day, I inquired and learned that he had died. I felt a real loss. Though I did not "know" him, he had become such a part of my everyday routine that I looked forward to seeing him. I



wanted to express my loss, but I did not know how. So I baked a loaf of bread for his wife as a gift. When I went inside their house for the first time, everyone, including the elder's wife, looked at me silently. Then they all burst out crying. I thought that maybe I had done something wrong by mistake, and I should not have gone there. I waited a little before saying that I was sorry about their loss. I left the bread and went home. I felt terrible and ashamed. I asked some Inuit women what I had done wrong that had made everyone cry. I was told that if my motive for visiting was to show respect, then I did nothing wrong. Although I never forgot what was a humiliating incident, I did not realize then it would be connected to something that occurred five years later.

My ten-year-old son, Jason, had to travel by plane to play in a regional hockey tournament, and I could not afford to go because I had only enough money to buy his ticket. His team was considered the "underdogs" because Jason was such "pipsqueak" of a goalie. The coach had confidence in him and made him the lead goalie. At the beginning of the tournament, the other communities attributed Jason's team's victories to luck, or a fault made by the other team. By the final playoff series, Jason's determination and skill had inspired the best in his teammates, and had the crowd cheering. Jason's hockey team represented a small community, based on the traditional Inuit values of friendship, acceptance of diversity, and teamwork. They were playing a more competitively trained southern city team which picked members for their size and skill. The hockey tournament was tied until the final few minutes of the last game in the series. Jason's team won after a great, quick save by him, and then a quick return shot by another player that caught the opposing team off guard.

The other team had been so sure that their shot could not be stopped, they did not rally for a defense. The crowd went wild over the upset. Apparently it was such a “legendary game” that people from other communities started to refer to me as the “mom of the goalie.”

After the tournament, the elder’s wife asked me to visit her. By now, I could understand and carry on a simple conversation in Inuktitut. She asked me if I had seen the hockey game everyone was talking about. I said I hadn’t, but I told her that I heard it was an unbelievable game. I explained that my son could not even begin to describe the “tremendous honor” he had felt when his teammates had rushed over to him, lifted him up on their shoulders, and carried him around the ice. His teammates, along with the standing crowd, cheered as much for the victory of the game as they did for the enduring strength of their cultural heritage. I told her I could not have wished for any greater gift for Jason than for him to have had the joy of being “honored” for trying to the best of his ability to help his team, and inspiring them to play their best according to Inuit cultural values. Then the elder’s wife looked at me and said, “Thank you” (“*Qujannamiik*”). Though I understood the words she said, I did not understand why she was thanking me.

She reminded me that the coach, her son, would often have the team stop at her house for a short visit before and after the hockey practices. They did this so she could see her son and her grandson, who was also on the hockey team. Her son knew that she liked the company of the children and it encouraged the team to learn and show respect for their elders, something highly valued in the community. One day,

before Jason and the coach had arrived, she told his teammates that if they happened to win the final game of the series that they should lift Jason up on their shoulders and carry him around the ice. She had seen this done on television. She also told them not to tell Jason or the coach ahead of time. In the Inuit culture, there is no greater privilege than to be asked or “chosen” to do something for an elder. It is even a greater rite of passage to honor it. The community as a whole understands that these requests take precedence over any ties to one’s parents or friends, etc. Not one of those ten-year-old boys said a word to Jason, the coach, or anyone else until after the game when they proudly told their parents and the elder how they had respected the elder’s request.

The elder’s wife said that when I visited her house after her husband died, she remembered that I had brought a gift of bread that I baked to “honor” her husband. She felt especially “honored” because I was the first white person to have come into their home. She explained that everyone had started to cry because of my unexpected kindness. She knew I would appreciate an honor given to my son. To thank me according to the Inuit culture, she had to return the “feeling of appreciation felt from receiving the gift.” So five years later, she made sure that Jason’s teammates “honored him” in keeping with the Inuit cultural values.

Following Inuit cultural values, it is now my turn to honor the Inuit youth and the traditional Inuit culture that I was privileged to have experienced. I hope that information derived from this research will be used by the Nunavut Department of Education to enable more students to graduate from high school. By improving the

quality of their education, Inuit youth will be better prepared to preserve their culture, face the challenges of the future, and assume leadership roles in their community.

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<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204009&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Pangnirtung&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom>

Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Population Profile 2006, Pangnirtung

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/aboriginal/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204009&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Pangnirtung&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom>

Statistics Canada, Community Profiles 2006, Sanikiluaq

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204001&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Sanikiluaq&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

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<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/aboriginal/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204001&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Sanikiluaq&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006, Iqaluit

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204003&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Iqaluit&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

Statistics Canada Aboriginal Populations Profiles, 2006, Iqaluit

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/aboriginal/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204003&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&Data=Count&SearchText=Iqaluit&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

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APPENDIX A  
IRB Permission  
July 12, 2007 – July 11, 2008

The University of Vermont  
COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RESEARCH  
SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
AND FLETCHER ALLEN HEALTH CARE  
WEB SITE: [www.uvm.edu/irb](http://www.uvm.edu/irb)

RESEARCH PROTECTIONS OFFICE  
OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS  
245 South Park, Suite 900, Colchester, VT 05446  
Telephone (802) 656-5040 FAX: (802) 656-5041

CHRBS#: 07-190\*

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS ASSURANCE

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay in High School: Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M.Ed

Institution: University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, Burlington, VT 05405

This institution has an approved assurance of compliance on file with the Department of Health and Human Services which covers this activity.

Assurance number for University of Vermont and State Agricultural College: FWA 00000723  
IRB number: IRB 00000486  
(Fletcher Allen Health Care Assurance number: FWA 00000727)

CERTIFICATION OF IRB REVIEW

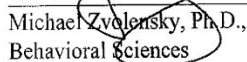
X This activity has been reviewed and approved by an IRB in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR 46, including its relevant Subparts; and, when applicable, with the requirements of 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56.

Date of approval JUL 12 2007 Full IRB review \_\_\_\_\_ Expedited review X  
Date of expiration JUL 11 2008

\_\_\_\_ This activity contains multiple projects, some of which have not been reviewed. The IRB has granted approval on condition that all projects covered by 45 CFR 46 will be reviewed and approved before they are initiated and that appropriate further certification will be submitted.

As a condition of approval, this institution's Committee on Human Research required \_\_\_\_\_ did not require X changes and/or modifications to the above referenced application. (A list of required changes and/or modifications is attached as appropriate.)

Institutional Signature/Date:  
Name and Title of Official:

 7/12/07  
Michael Zvolensky, Ph.D., Chair, Committee on Human Research in the Behavioral Sciences

APPENDIX B  
IRB Permission  
June 18, 2008 – June 17, 2009

The University of Vermont  
COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RESEARCH  
SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
AND FLETCHER ALLEN HEALTH CARE  
WEB SITE: www.uvm.edu/irb

RESEARCH PROTECTIONS OFFICE  
OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS  
245 South Park, Suite 900, Colchester, VT 05446  
Telephone (802) 656-5040 FAX: (802) 656-5041

CHRBS# : 07-190\*

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS ASSURANCE

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay in High School: Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler M.Ed.

Institution: University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, Burlington, VT 05405

This institution has an approved assurance of compliance on file with the Department of Health and Human Services which covers this activity.

Assurance number for University of Vermont and State Agricultural College: FWA 00000723

IRB number: IRB 00000486

(Fletcher Allen Health Care Assurance number: FWA 00000727)

CERTIFICATION OF IRB REVIEW

This activity has been reviewed and approved by an IRB in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR 46, including its relevant Subparts; and, when applicable, with the requirements of 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56.

Date of approval JUN 18 2008 Full IRB review \_\_\_\_\_ Expedited review   
Date of expiration JUN 17 2009

\_\_\_\_ This activity contains multiple projects, some of which have not been reviewed. The IRB has granted approval on condition that all projects covered by 45 CFR 46 will be reviewed and approved before they are initiated and that appropriate further certification will be submitted.

As a condition of approval, this institution's Committee on Human Research required \_\_\_\_\_ did not require  changes and/or modifications to the above referenced application. (A list of required changes and/or modifications is attached as appropriate.)

Institutional Signature/Date: Betsy Hoza 6/18/08  
Name and Title of Official: Betsy Hoza, Ph.D., Associate Chair, Committee on Human Research in the Behavioral Sciences

APPENDIX C  
IRB Request For Modification/Amendment To Approved Protocol

RECEIVED APR 11 2008

The University of Vermont  
COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RESEARCH

SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
AND FLETCHER ALLEN HEALTH CARE  
WEB SITE: HTTP://WWW.UVM.EDU/IRB/

RESEARCH PROTECTIONS OFFICE

OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS  
245 SOUTH PARK, SUITE 900, COLCHESTER, VT 05446  
TELEPHONE: (802) 656-5040 FAX: (802) 656-5041

COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RESEARCH  
REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION/AMENDMENT TO APPROVED PROTOCOL

**ENTERED**

Study modifications may not be instituted until you have received written approval from the Committee. Form completion instructions are on the web site. If this is a General Clinical Research Center and/or Vermont Cancer Center study you must submit to their respective committees for review as well.

1. CHRMS  CHRBS  #:  Principal Investigator (PI):   
Protocol/Project Title:

2. Sponsor Study #:  Sponsor's Amendment Number:  Date of Protocol Amendment:   
Date of Consent Version (if applicable)

3. Modifications and Justifications

A. Did IRB staff specifically request that you submit this amendment?  Yes  No

B. Check all that are applicable to this request.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Study Title   | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Consent Form (may affect currently approved HIPAA authorization)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> *Addition or Deletion in Key Personnel                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Requiring Re-consent (HIPAA authorization may be necessary)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Review of Recruitment Materials                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in HIPAA authorization (may occur when consent is revised)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editorial Changes to Protocol   | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Suspension – Provide reason for suspension under Section VII.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Compensation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Closure to Accrual (e.g. interventions and/ or follow-up still occurring locally) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Changes to Protocol  | <input type="checkbox"/> Close Protocol – Complete Section 7.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility/Ineligibility Criteria Changes                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Collaborating Sites (may need agreement, see manual guidance.)          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase in Accrual Target to: # <input type="text" value="76"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Review of Retention Materials   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Funding   | <input type="checkbox"/> Addition of surveys, questionnaires, etc.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Procedures (describe below)                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> **Other – Describe in section 8   |

C. Provide a description and justification for the requested change(s).

Original number was 60. Participants in the arctic wanted to be included in study. Target number of Inuit participants is 66. Non- Inuit participants whose interview information would be used to triangulate with the Inuit interviews would be 12. Total number of participants 16 years and over all signing approved and translated informed consent would be 76 in the study. Nunavut Research License Guidelines supports including the input of all those interested in participating in the study.

\*List personnel in Section 8. All key personnel are required to complete the Training in Protection of Human Subjects in Research Tutorial, which can be found on our website.

\*\*Remember do not use this form to report safety information such as revised drug brochures, study progress reports, or safety alerts. Refer to our forms page for the appropriate submission forms for these materials.

4. Does the proposed change affect the risk to subjects, either increase or decrease?  Yes  No

If yes, please explain:

5. After review of the proposed change, in the opinion of the Investigator, does the currently approved consent form require revision in order to adequately convey the potential risks of study participation? If yes, remember to attach a highlighted and a clean copy of the consent form.  
 Yes  No



If yes, please explain:

- 6. Are there subjects currently enrolled?  Yes  No  
 If yes, how will the new information be conveyed to the subjects? (We strongly recommend use of an information sheet or consent form addendum.) (See our forms page for consent addendum template.)

- 7. Final Summary of Study Activities (if applicable)

- 8. Additional Comments: (Note: If you are taking a person off key personnel and that person is currently listed as the contact for this protocol, please identify a new contact person here.)

- 9. Other Reporting  
 Is this a GCRC or VCC Study?  Yes  No If yes, copy this report to the appropriate department.

- 10. Principal Investigator Signature

Karen Jyles

Date April 10, 2008

\*\*\*\*\*  
This amendment has been reviewed and approved.  Full Review  Expedited Review

Committee Official Signature: Betsy Hoza 6/18/08  
Name and Title of Committee Official: \_\_\_\_\_ite

Betsy Hoza, Ph. D., Associate Chair  
Committee on Human Research in the Behavioral Sciences



APPENDIX D  
Nunavut License

**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE**

LICENCE # 0102207N-M

ISSUED TO: Karen Tyler  
101 Cherry Lane  
Burlington, Vermont  
USA  
802 999-0695

TITLE: Exploring Why Students Stay in High School: Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

**OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:**

Inuit high school graduates obtain academic and cultural skills that enable them to further their education, be employed in leadership roles, and become contributing members of Nunavut's developing future. From 1999 to 2006, only 25% of the Inuit high schools graduated (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Inuit youths who do not remain in school have minimal levels of English literacy (Nunavut Tunngavik, 2006) which makes it difficult for them to obtain leadership positions (Berger, 2006) or pursue professional careers. The purpose of this research is to provide critically needed information on what Inuit students perceive helps them remain in school. This Nutaaq (New) knowledge can then be used to guide other Inuit students in the school environmen; much as Inuksuit (Guide Posts) have traditionally helped Inuit find their way on the land.

**DATA COLLECTION IN NU:**

DATES: August 01, 2007-September 30, 2009

LOCATION: Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq

Scientific Research Licence 0102207N-M expires on December 31, 2007

Issued at Iqaluit, NU on August 22, 2007

---

Mary Ellen Thomas  
Science Advisor

Karen Tyler  
101 Cherry Lane  
Burlington, Vermont  
USA

## **RE: 2007 Science Research Licence**

Please find enclosed your 2007 Research Licence No. **0102207N-M** which was prepared under the *NUNAVUT SCIENTISTS ACT*. Should you require further support from the NRI Research Centre, please contact the Manager to discuss your research needs.

Please be advised that this multi-year licence is subject to all criteria established in the *Nunavut Land Claim Agreement* and will be subject to any future changes that may occur in the *Nunavut Land Claim Agreement*. A multi-year licence may also be revoked for any of the following:

- the researcher fails to submit an Annual Summary Report
- the researcher breaches any term or condition set out in the licence
- the researcher fails to renew associated licences
- complaints with *just cause* are received concerning the project or any project team member
- the researcher fails to notify the NRI of any changes to the project

## **Important Renewal Information**

Multi-year licences are granted for the duration indicated on your application form. All NRI licences however, expire at the end of each calendar year. To renew your licence each year, according to the *Scientists' Act*, researchers must submit a 500-1000 word non-technical *Annual Summary* of your research activities and findings in English *and* Inuktitut or Inuinaqtun. The translation ensures maximum accessibility of your research results to Nunavut residents. A list of translators is available from the NRI.

Upon completion of your fieldwork in Nunavut, please ensure that you submit a *Final Report* with an English and translated executive summary. Copies of papers that you publish are appreciated. Electronic copies of reports Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF would be most appreciated for posting on the NRI web site ([www.nri.nu.ca](http://www.nri.nu.ca)).

Thank-you in advance for assisting in the promotion and development of a scientific research community and database within Nunavut. The reports and information you provide are utilized to prepare an annual research compendium, which is distributed to communities and organizations in Nunavut as well as to researchers across Canada.

Please accept our best wishes for success in your research project.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dunford

APPENDIX E  
Non-Technical Project Summary Report

Exploring Why Students Stay In High School: Inuit students' perceptions of *Nutaaq Inuksuit* (Guide Posts)

Karen Tyler, M. Ed. (Harvard University)  
University of Vermont (Burlington, VT)

Research to be conducted August 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007.  
Anticipated completion by December 2008.

Inuit high school graduates obtain academic and cultural skills that enable them to further their education, be employed in leadership roles, and become contributing members of Nunavut's developing future. From 1999 to 2006, only 25% of the Inuit high schools graduated (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Inuit youths who do not remain in school have minimal levels of English literacy (Nunavut Tunngavik, 2006) which makes it difficult for them to obtain leadership positions (Berger, 2006) or pursue professional careers. The purpose of this research is to provide critically needed information on what Inuit students perceive helps them remain in school. This *Nutaaq* (New) knowledge can be used to guide other Inuit through the school environment; much as *Inuksuit* (Guide Posts) have traditionally helped Inuit find their way on the land. This qualitative case study will interview Inuit high school students who are 16 years and older and enrolled in grades 10-12 from three different Nunavut schools. Students, their parents, and other participants will sign a translated consent form to participate and to tape interviews. Names will not be used and all data will be coded to protect the identity of the participants. Data will be triangulated with other individual or focus groups interviews, class observations and related documents.

These three high schools were purposefully selected using Nunavut's Department of Education enrollment and graduation data from 2000 to 2006 for the Qikiqtani region. Estimated median rates of Inuit students who stayed in school were calculated, schools with similar rates clustered into three groups, and one school from each group was selected. They are the Nuiyuk School in Sanikiluaq, the Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit, and the Attagoyuk Illisavik in Pangnirtung. These schools vary in their school settings and in their community size. The exemplary status of the Nuiyuk School (Fulford, 2004), the high proportion of non-Aboriginal students that remain until graduation in the Inuksuk High School, and the researcher's previous fourteen years of living and working as a teacher and adult educator in the community where the Attoguyuk Illisavik was located were also considered. The researcher recognizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in the research design and community members will be consulted during all research stages of the research. Interpreters will be used. Data will be analyzed to identify themes that emerge within and across schools and the influence of the school, home, community, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) will be discussed. Recommendations for selected schools can be used to increase the numbers of students remaining in high school and graduating. Implications for further research and educational policies will be suggested.

A translated final report will be sent to the government, schools, DEAs, NRI, and others interested. The study will be published as a doctoral dissertation.

APPENDIX F  
Non-Technical Project Summary in Inuktitut

Exploring Why Students Stay In High School: Inuit Students' Perceptions of *Nutaaq Inuksuit* (Guide Posts)

Karen Tyler, M. Ed. (Harvard University)  
University of Vermont (Burlington, VT)

Research to be conducted August 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007.  
Anticipated completion by December 2008.



APPENDIX G  
Recruitment Letter in English

Title of Research Project: Exploring Why Students Stay In High School:  
Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Investigator: Ms. Karen Tyler, M.Ed.  
Faculty Sponsor: Mr. Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You are being asked to help in the recruitment process for this research study. This letter first describes the research study and then explains the process for recruitment that you are being asked to assist with. Once participants have been identified, you will be asked to approach the potential subjects to invite them to participate.

This research is being conducted to learn more about what Inuit students report are the factors that help them to stay in grades ten through twelve in three schools in Nunavut, Canada. This research is important because currently only 25% of Inuit students in Nunavut graduate from high school. This is also important because Inuit make up 85 percent of Nunavut's population. Inuit youths should have cultural and academic knowledge that will help them to participate and contribute to Nunavut, a new Canadian territory that Inuit gained the power to govern in 1999. Research data collected will be analyzed for themes. These themes will be discussed in relation to influence of school, community, home, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge).

The principal investigator has lived and worked previously for fourteen years in Pangnirtung, NU. Culturally sensitive research methods will be used. This study is being conducted by the principal investigator as one part of the University of Vermont's requirements for a doctoral dissertation.

Initial interviews and observations will take place between August 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007. Additional interviews and observations will be scheduled as needed in order to complete this research no later than June 2009. We encourage you to ask questions and take the opportunity to discuss this study with anybody you think can help you make this decision.

This research is being conducted to learn more about what Inuit students report are the factors that help them to stay in grades ten through twelve in three schools in Nunavut, Canada. This research is important because currently only 25% of Inuit students in Nunavut graduate from high school. This is also important because Inuit make up 85% of Nunavut's population. Inuit youths should have cultural and academic knowledge that will help them to participate and contribute to Nunavut, a new Canadian territory that Inuit gained the power to govern in 1999. Research data collected will be analyzed for themes. These themes will be discussed in relation to influence of school, community, home, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge).

Thirty to sixty people will take part in this study who are between the ages of 16-99 years of age in three different communities. Participants will include Inuit, non- Inuit individuals, males, and females.

Participants are being asked to take part in an in-person interview that will take between 30 to 60 minutes to complete. The format of the interview will be conversational. Sample questions will include: Can you tell me more about yourself? Can you help me to understand some of the reasons Inuit students stay in school? Further prompts will be asked to understand your responses in relation to the influence of the home, school, community, and Inuit Qaujimaqatugangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge). The interview will take place in their community school, another public building, or a home depending on where they prefer to be interviewed. They may also be observed for approximately one hour in a school or learning environment. Interviews, observations and related educational artifacts will not be audio taped, videoed, or photographed for the purposes of transcription and translation unless they give written consent.

This study has minimal to no physical, legal, psychological, social, other risks or discomforts to the participants. In the unlikely event, that during an interview or observation any information that might have a potentially harmful type of risk is revealed, that information will be deleted from the data and/or tapes and not used in this study. In the unlikely event that participants show any discomfort or distress in reaction to the interview questions, reveal harmful information, and /or information about illegal activities, the interview and /or observation will be stopped. That participant will then be referred to appropriate counseling or other supports available through the school or other community services.

A potential benefit from participating in this study is that participants may learn more about what might help more Inuit students in grades 10-12 in your community to stay in high school. You would be contributing to knowledge that is important because it may guide teachers and others working with students to help more Inuit youths stay in school and graduate. This research may also identify areas needing further research in schools or related to educational policies.

If participants prefer or if there is any difficulty in scheduling an in-person interview, the interview could be completed over the phone, or by typing and emailing your responses using the internet, or by responding in writing on paper. If participants do not want to be available to be observed at any time during your school or learning experience, they can indicate your choice of when you would like to be observed or decide if you do not want to be observed.

There are no costs to the participants. There is no compensation for the participants. Participation in the interview and /or observation is fully voluntary and individuals may choose to discontinue at any time without any repercussions during the study. Participant's personal data will be deleted if they decide to withdraw from the study. Once the final report has been completed, participants will no longer be able to withdraw from the study.



The only potential risk from participating in this study is if participant responses were not to remain confidential. The procedure for protecting against that unlikely occurrence will be to have all interviews and observations coded. Names or any other identifying information will not appear on the data. The coded key will be locked and kept separate from the data. Electronic versions of the master code list will be accessed using a secure password. The password and locked documents will be accessed only by the primary investigator. In addition, any individuals assisting in this study will be required to maintain the same confidentiality as the participants. Summary results of this investigation may be published. The detailed information obtained during this study will remain confidential. Recruitment and Enrollment

The same recruitment and enrollment procedures for each student /parent /teacher /adult cohort will be done in each of the three school sites. A letter will be sent to key informants who know the students like the principal, education council member, and community members to help with the recruiting process. Once participants have been selected, they will have a Dear Participant letter mailed or emailed to them to invite them to participate in this study. If consent is not obtained, the selection process will continue to identify other potential participants. Between six to ten students will be identified to be interviewed and/or observed. The criteria for recruitment and enrollment will be school records in each school site. Students who are currently enrolled in grade 12 for the 2007-2008 school year and are 16 years of age or older will be chosen. If less than ten students can be identified, students first enrolled in grade 11 for the 2007-2008 school year and are 16 years and older will be selected and if necessary, students enrolled in grade 10 for the 2007 and 2008 school year and are 16 years and older will be considered. If there are more than ten students in any given grade who meet the above criteria where the selection is occurring, the following guidelines will be used in order to purposefully sample students:

1. Equal number of females and males
2. Students who have stayed in the same school for grades 10-12
3. Those students recognized for documented strengths or achievement
4. (sports, grades, special programs, honors, awards, etc..)
5. Those students recognized informally by high school teachers, administrators, community education authority, community members, etc as exemplary for their work, participation in projects, etc...

Between 4-10 other individuals who are considered to be the parents, teachers, and other knowledgeable adults of students identified above will be interviewed and possibly observed. A minimum of two individuals will be selected from each area, totaling six interviews. The additional interviews will be selected based on information arising from the student interviews and the guidelines listed for each category.

Parent recruitment and enrollment: Parents of students selected by the above procedure will be selected for interviews either individually or in a focus group. Observations of cultural or academic activities that support their child's

ability to remain in school may also be done. The following guidelines will be considered in order listed to purposefully sample parents:

1. Equal number of male and females
2. Range of parents from those with limited school exposure to
3. those parents who had attended school
4. Parents whose role is specifically identified in student's interview

Teacher recruitment and enrollment: Teachers and/or individuals teaching a program or part of the curriculum that students identified above are currently enrolled in or have previously taken will be selected for an interview and/or observation. Interviews may be conducted individually or in a focus group. Observations of cultural or academic activities that support Inuit students' ability to remain in school may be done. The following guidelines will be considered in order listed to purposefully sample teachers and or teaching personnel:

1. Range of non-native and native teachers or teaching personnel
2. Range of males and females
3. Range of teaching and cross-cultural experiences
4. Individuals whose role is specifically identified in student's interviews

Adult recruitment and enrollment: Knowledgeable adults of students identified above will be interviewed individually or in a focus group. Observations of cultural or academic activities that support Inuit students' ability to remain in school may be done. Selection will be done using the following guidelines:

1. Role related to high school (Administration, Education Council Member, Community partnership, etc.)
2. Familiarity with students selected

Thank you for your time and assistance. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the principal investigator below.

### **Contact Information**

Name of Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M.Ed.

Address: University of Vermont /Room 530, Waterman Building, Burlington , Vermont.

Telephone Number: 1-802-999-0695, fax: 1-802- 656-0004

Email: [ktyler@uvm.edu](mailto:ktyler@uvm.edu).

Local contact information will also be provided.

APPENDIX H  
Recruitment Letter in Inuktitut

Exploring Why Students Stay In High School: Inuit Students' Perceptions of *Nutaaq Inuksuit* (Guide Posts)

Karen Tyler, M. Ed. (Harvard University)  
University of Vermont (Burlington, VT)

Research to be conducted August 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007.  
Anticipated completion by December 2008.



ክፍል ከሆነ ጊዜ ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ይህን ድምፅ ለማውጣት ስልጠና ለማድረግ ይችላሉ።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ዕድሜ 60 ዓመት ሲደርስ ለሥራ ለመቆይ ለሚችል ሁኔታ ለማረጋገጥ ይችላል።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ስልጠና ለሚያደርግበት ስድስት ወር ወይንም ለአንድ ወር ለመቆይ ይችላል።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ስልጠና ለሚያደርግበት ስድስት ወር ወይንም ለአንድ ወር ለመቆይ ይችላል።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ስልጠና ለሚያደርግበት ስድስት ወር ወይንም ለአንድ ወር ለመቆይ ይችላል።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ስልጠና ለሚያደርግበት ስድስት ወር ወይንም ለአንድ ወር ለመቆይ ይችላል።

የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ስልጠና ለሚያደርግበት ስድስት ወር ወይንም ለአንድ ወር ለመቆይ ይችላል።









APPENDIX I  
Student Assess/Parent Informed Consent in English

**Student Assent/Parent Informed Consent**

**Title of Research Project: Exploring Why Students Stay In High School:**

**Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)**

**Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M.Ed.**

**Faculty Sponsor: Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.**

Throughout this document "you" refers to "you or your youth."

You are being invited to take part in this research study that is exploring what helps Inuit students stay in high school, so that more students will be able to do so. This study will interview and/or observe students who are 16 years or older and who are in either grades 10, 11, or 12 during the 2007-2008 school year between August 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007. To better understand what helps students stay in high school, some parents of the students who participate in the study as well as professionals working with those students may be interviewed. These adults may also be observed doing activities that have been identified to promote students ability to gain traditional or academic knowledge. Additional interviews and observations may be scheduled anytime prior to June 2009. This research is conducted by Karen Tyler, the principal investigator, as part of the University of Vermont doctoral program. We encourage you to ask questions and take the opportunity to discuss your decision to participate in this study with anyone that can help you decide.

Why is This Research Study Being Conducted?

This research will look at three schools in Nunavut, Canada to learn more about what helps Inuit students stay in grades ten through twelve. Inuit youths should have cultural and academic knowledge that will help them to graduate, participate and contribute to Nunavut. . This research is important because currently only 25% of Inuit students in Nunavut graduate from high school. Research data collected will be analyzed for themes. These themes will be

discussed in relation to the influence of school, community, home, and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge).

#### How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?

Thirty to sixty people will take part in this study who are between the ages of 16-99 years of age. Participants will include Inuit, non- Inuit individuals, males, females, students, a parent, and professionals.

#### What Is Involved In The Study?

If you are a youth, you will be asked to take part in a conversational interview that will take place in person and last approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Sample questions will include: Can you tell me more about yourself? Can you help me to understand some of the reasons why you stayed in school?

If you are a parent, you may be asked to take part in a conversational interview that will take place in person and last approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Sample questions will include: Can you tell me more about yourself? Can you help me to understand some of the reasons why your youth has stayed in school?

Further prompts will be asked of those being interviewed to understand their responses in relation to the influence of the home, school, community, and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge). All interviews will take place in your community school, another public building, or a home depending on where you prefer to be interviewed. Some of the students and a parent may also be asked to be observed for approximately one hour in a school or learning environment if a particular activity has been identified as supporting students' ability to gain traditional or academic knowledge. Interviews, observations and /or related educational artifacts will not be audio taped, videoed, or photographed for transcription and translation unless you give written consent.

#### What Are The Risks Of The Study?

This study has minimal risks. If any information is discovered to be harmful, it will be removed and not used in this study. If you become uncomfortable at any time, the interview and /or observation will be stopped. If needed, you will be referred to counseling or other services available through the school or other community.

#### What Are The Benefits of Participating In The Study?

You may not benefit directly from participating in this study. However, you may learn about what might help more Inuit students in grades 10-12 in your community to stay in high school. This knowledge may also help teachers and others working with students to help more Inuit youths stay in school and graduate. It may also help with research in other schools and educational policies.

#### What Other Options Are There?

If you prefer or if there is any difficulty in scheduling an in-person interview, the interview could be completed over the phone, or by typing and emailing your responses using the internet, or by responding in writing on paper. If you do not want to be available to be observed at any time during your school or learning experience, you can indicate your choice of when you would like to be observed or decide if you do not want to be observed.

#### Are There Any Costs?

There are no costs to participate except your time.

#### What Is the Compensation?

You will not be paid to take part in this study.

#### Can You Withdraw From This Study?

Your participation in the interview and /or observation is fully voluntary and you may choose to discontinue at any time without any repercussions during the study. Your personal data will be deleted if you choose to withdraw from the study. Once the final report has been completed, you will no longer be able to withdraw from the study.

#### What About Confidentiality?

No names will appear on the data. The data will also be coded and locked up separately and available only to the principal investigator. Student responses will not be shared with a parent or a professional. The student responses will remain confidential and only the research team will know their answers. Parent responses will not be shared with their students or a professional. The parent responses will remain confidential and only the research team will know the answer. In addition, any individuals assisting in this study will be required to maintain the same confidentiality. If summary results of this investigation are published, all detailed information obtained will remain confidential. Audiotapes, videotapes, and photographs in this study will remain confidential and will not be used unless specific permission to use them publicly is obtained.

#### Contact Information

You may contact Karen Tyler, the investigator in charge of this study, at the University of Vermont for more information about this study. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research project you can also contact Ms . Mary Ellen Thomas, Executive Director of the Nunavut Research Institute in Iqaluit, Nunavut , at (867) 979-7202 or (867) 979-7109 or Nancy Stalnaker, Program Director of the Institute Review Board at the University of Vermont in 245 South Park/Suite 900, UVM,(802) 656-5040.

#### Statement of Consent

You have been fully informed of the objectives of the project being conducted. Should you have any further questions about the research, you know that you may contact the person conducting the study or the other individuals listed at the addresses and telephone number indicated below. You understand these objectives and consent to being interviewed or observed for this project. You understand that steps will be undertaken to ensure that this interview and observation will remain confidential unless you consent to being identified. You also understand that, if you wish to withdraw from the study, you may do so without any

repercussions. By signing and returning one of the two copies provided to you, you are giving consent to participate in the study.

This form is valid only if the Committees on Human Research's current stamp of approval is shown below.

STUDENT ASSENT:

Circle Response

Assent to use of audiotaping, videotaping, and/or photographs

Yes No

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Signature of Student

Time/Date

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Name of Student Printed

---

Signature of Witness

Time/Date

---

Name of Witness Printed

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Signature Parent or Legal Guardian for Student (16 - 17 yrs. old)

Time/Date

---

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian of Student Printed

---

Name of Witness Printed

---

Signature of Witness

Time/Date

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SIGNATURE OF PARENT SUBJECT

Circle Response

Consent to use audio taping, videotaping, and/or photographs

Yes No

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent Subject Time/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent Subject Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness Time/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Witness Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator or Designee Time/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Principal Investigator or Designee Printed

Name of Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M. Ed.

Address: University of Vermont, /Room 530, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

Telephone: 1-802-999-0695 , Fax: 1-802-656-0004

Email: [ktyler@uvm.edu](mailto:ktyler@uvm.edu).

Name of Faculty Sponsor: Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Address: University of Vermont/Room 539, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

Telephone Number: 1-802-656-4578

Email: [crathbon@uvm.edu](mailto:crathbon@uvm.edu)

Committee on Human Research  
Approved Through 07-11-08  
CHRBS # 07-190











ከጠቅላይ ልማት ጋንታው ጋር ለማስተካከል ለሚከተሉት ምክርቤቶች ማረጋገጥ አስፈሪ ሲሆን፡

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ላይን ሎገስቲክስ ንግድ ተባብሮ ለገቢዎች ማግኘት ለሚረገግ ጊዜ  
 ስርዓተ-ሰራተኛዎች ለመስጠት ለሚችሉበት ጊዜ

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ብሔር ለላይን ሎገስቲክስ ንግድ ተባብሮ ለገቢዎች ማግኘት ለሚረገግ ጊዜ  
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Committee on Human Research  
 Approved Through 07-11-08  
 CHRBS # 07-190

## APPENDIX K Professional Informed Consent in English

### Professional Informed Consent

**Title of Research Project: Exploring Why Students Stay In High School:**

**Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)**

**Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M. Ed.**

**Faculty Sponsor: Charles Rathbone, Ph. D.**

You are being invited to take part in this research study that is exploring what helps Inuit students stay in high school, so that more students will be able to do so. This study will interview and/or observe students who are 16 years or older and who are in either grades 10, 11, or 12 during the 2007-2008 school year between August 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007. To better understand what helps students stay in high school, some parents of the students who participate in the study as well as professionals working with those students may be interviewed. These adults may also be observed doing activities that have been identified to promote students ability to gain traditional or academic knowledge. Additional interviews and observations may be scheduled anytime prior to June 2009. This research is conducted by Karen Tyler, the principal investigator, as part of the University of Vermont doctoral program. We encourage you to ask questions and take the opportunity to discuss your decision to participate in this study with anyone that can help you decide.

#### Why is This Research Study Being Conducted?

This research will look at three schools in Nunavut, Canada to learn more about what helps Inuit students stay in grades ten through twelve. Inuit youths should have cultural and academic knowledge that will help them to graduate, participate and contribute to Nunavut. . This research is important because currently only 25% of Inuit students in Nunavut graduate from high school. Research data collected will be analyzed for themes. These themes will be discussed in relation to the influence of school, community, home, and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge).

#### How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?

Thirty to sixty people will take part in this study who are between the ages of 16-99 years of age. Participants will include Inuit, non- Inuit individuals, males, females, students, a parent, and professionals.

#### What Is Involved In The Study?

If you are a professional, you may be asked to take part in a conversational interview that will take place in person and last approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Sample questions will include: Can you tell me more about yourself? Can you help me to understand some of the reasons why Inuit youths stay in school?

Further prompts will be asked to understand your responses in relation to the influence of the home, school, community, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge). The interview will take place in your community school, another public building, or a home depending on where you prefer to be interviewed. You may also be observed for approximately one hour in a school or learning environment if a particular activity has been identified as supporting students' ability to gain traditional or academic knowledge. Interviews, observations and /or related educational artifacts will not be audio taped, videoed, or photographed for transcription and translation unless you give written consent.

#### What Are The Risks Of The Study?

This study has minimal risks. If any information is discovered to be harmful, it will be removed and not used in this study. If you become uncomfortable at any time, the interview and /or observation will be stopped. If needed, you will be referred to counseling or other services available through the school or other community.

#### What Are The Benefits of Participating In The Study?

You may not benefit from participating in this study. However, you may learn about what might help more Inuit students in grades 10-12 in your community to stay in high school. This knowledge may also help teachers and others working with students to help more Inuit youths

stay in school and graduate. It may also help with research in other schools and educational policies.

What Other Options Are There?

If you prefer or if there is any difficulty in scheduling an in-person interview, the interview could be completed over the phone, or by typing and emailing your responses using the internet, or by responding in writing on paper. If you do not want to be available to be observed at any time during your school or learning experience, you can indicate your choice of when you would like to be observed or decide if you do not want to be observed.

Are There Any Costs?

There are no costs to participate except your time.

What Is the Compensation?

You will not be paid to take part in this study.

Can You Withdraw From This Study?

Your participation in the interview and /or observation is fully voluntary and you may choose to discontinue at any time without any repercussions during the study. Your personal data will be deleted if you choose to withdraw from the study. Once the final report has been completed, you will no longer be able to withdraw from the study.

What About Confidentiality?

No names will appear on the data. The data will also be coded and locked up separately and available only to the principal investigator. In addition, any individuals assisting in this study will be required to maintain the same confidentiality. Professional responses will not be shared with their students, parents, or other professionals. The professional responses will remain confidential and only the research team will know the answer. If summary results of this investigation are published, all detailed information obtained will remain confidential. Audiotapes, videotapes, and photographs in this study will remain confidential and will not be used unless specific permission to use them publicly is obtained.

**Contact Information**

You may contact Karen Tyler, the investigator in charge of this study, at the University of Vermont for more information about this study. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research project you can also contact Ms . Mary Ellen Thomas, Executive Director of the Nunavut Research Institute in Iqaluit, Nunavut , at (867) 979-7202 or (867) 979-7109 or Nancy Stalnakar, Program Director of the Institute Review Board at the University of Vermont in 245 South Park/Suite 900, UVM,(802) 656-5040.

**Statement of Consent**

You have been fully informed of the objectives of the project being conducted. Should you have any further questions about the research, you know that you may contact the person conducting the study or the other individuals listed at the addresses and telephone number indicated below. You understand these objectives and consent to being interviewed or observed for this project. You understand that steps will be undertaken to ensure that this interview and observation will remain confidential unless you consent to being identified. You also understand that, if you wish to withdraw from the study, you may do so without any repercussions. By signing and returning one of the two copies provided to you, you are giving consent to participate in the study.

This form is valid only if the Committees on Human Research's current stamp of approval is shown below.

Circle Response

Consent to use audio taping, videotaping, and/or photographs

Yes No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Professional

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time/Date



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Name of Professional Printed and Role in Relation to Student

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Signature of Witness

Time/Date

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Name of Witness Printed

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Signature of Principal Investigator or Designee

Time/ Date

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Name of Principal Investigator or Designee Printed

Name of Principal Investigator: Karen Tyler, M. Ed.

Address: University of Vermont, /Room 530, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

Telephone: 1-802-999-0695 , Fax: 1-802-656-0004

Email: [ktyler@uvm.edu](mailto:ktyler@uvm.edu).

Name of Faculty Sponsor: Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Address: University of Vermont/Room 539, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

Telephone Number:1-802-656-4578

Email: [crathbon@uvm.edu](mailto:crathbon@uvm.edu)

Committee on Human Research  
Approved Through 07-11-08  
CHRBS # 07-190



የክፍብ ልዎል ልረኛ ክርክር ለማድረግ የሚገቡ ጉዳዮች?

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ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦ: ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᑲᑲᑲᑦ \ Room 530, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ: 1-802-999-0695, ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦ: 1-802-656-0004

ᖅᑲᑎᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ: ktyler@uvm.edu.

ᐊᑎᖃᑦ ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᖅᑲᓴᓴᓴᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ: ᑲᑲᑲᑦ ᑲᑲᑲᑦ, ᐃᑦᑲᑦᑲᑎᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᖅᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ

ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦ: ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᑲᑲᑲᑦ \ Room 539, Waterman Building, Burlington, Vermont

ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ: 1-802-656-4578, ᑲᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦ: 1-802-656-0004

ᖅᑲᑎᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ: crathbon@uvm.edu

Committee on Human Research  
Approved Through 07-11-06  
CHRBS # 07-190

APPENDIX M  
Interview Questions for Students

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay In School:  
Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Researcher: Karen Tyler, M. Ed  
UVM Faculty Advisor: Mr. Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Interview Questions for Students

This interview is being conducted to understand what helps Inuit youth stay in high school until graduation. The format of the interview will be conversational. Your signed consent form indicates your consent to be interviewed. This interview will only be videotaped or taped if you signed an additional consent to do so.

1. First, I am interested in learning more about you. Can you tell me about yourself?  
Home:
  - a. What is your age? gender?
  - b. How many people live in your house and what is their relation?
  - c. Do you work? If so, explain
  - d. What languages are spoken and written in your home?School:
  - e. What grade are you in?
  - f. Have you been in school continuously? Repeated a grade?
  - g. What do you hope to gain by going to school? What might you lose?Community:
  - h. What is your involvement in the community?
  - i. What aspirations do you have to contribute to your community?Inuit Traditional Knowledge:
  - j. What are the ways in which you learn about your Inuit culture? from whom?
  - k. What would you like to learn about your culture?
2. Can you help me to understand some of the reasons you stayed in school?  
Home:
  - a. What are your parent's expectations for you?
  - b. What are your parent's educational level and school experiences?
  - c. What is your parent's involvement in school?School:
  - d. What are your teacher's expectations for you?
  - e. What was the role of small groups? cooperative groups? hands- on activities?
  - f. What was the role of technology?
  - g. What type of literacy activities do you do in English? In Inuktitut?

- h. How long have your teachers and staff worked at the school? Do they interact?
- i. What has helped you stay in school?
- j. What has made it hard for you to stay in school?

Community:

- k. What was the role of community resource people?
- l. What was the role of field trips? Community projects?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- m. What was the role of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and
- n. Inuit culture had?
- o. What was the role of culturally relevant curriculum?
- p. What was the role of native teachers?



APPENDIX N  
Interview Questions for Parents

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay In School:  
Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Researcher: Karen Tyler, M. Ed  
UVM Faculty Advisor: Mr. Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Interview Questions for Parents

This interview is being conducted to understand what helps Inuit youth stay in high school until graduation. The format of the interview will be conversational. Your signed consent form indicates your consent to be interviewed. This interview will only be videotaped or taped if you signed an additional consent to do so.

1. First, I am interested in learning more about you. Can you tell me about yourself?

Home:

- a. What is your age? gender?
- b. How many people live in your house and what is their relation?
- c. Do you work? If so, explain
- d. What languages are spoken and written in your home?

School:

- e. What type of education or training have you had?
- f. What do you think your child will gain by going to school?
- g. What do you think your child will lose by going to school?

Community:

- h. What is your involvement in the community? Workplace?
- i. What aspirations do you have for your child to contribute to your community?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- j. What are the ways in which you teach your child about your Inuit culture?
- k. What would you like to have your child learn about your culture?

2. Can you help me to understand some of the reasons you stayed in school?

Home:

- a. What are your expectations for your child?
- b. What are your educational level and school experiences?
- c. What is your involvement in school? Is the school welcoming?

School:

- d. What are the teacher's expectations for your child?
- e. What was the role of small groups? cooperative groups? hands- on activities?
- f. What was the role of technology?
- g. What type of literacy activities does your child do in English? In Inuktitut?

- h. How long have the teachers and staff worked at the school? Do they interact?
- i. What helps your child to stay in school?
- j. What makes it hard for your child to stay in school?

Community:

- k. What was the role of community resource people?
- l. What was the role of field trips? Community projects?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- m. What was the role of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and
- n. Inuit culture had?
- o. What was the role of culturally relevant curriculum?
- p. What was the role of native teachers?

APPENDIX O  
Interview Questions for Adults

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay In School:  
Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Researcher: Karen Tyler, M. Ed  
UVM Faculty Advisor: Mr. Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Interview Questions for Adults

This interview is being conducted to understand what helps Inuit youth stay in high school until graduation. The format of the interview will be conversational. Your signed consent form indicates your consent to be interviewed. This interview will only be videotaped or taped if you signed an additional consent to do so.

1. First, I am interested in learning more about you. Can you tell me about yourself?

Home:

- a. What is your age? gender?
- b. How many people live in your house and what is their relation?
- c. Do you work? If so, explain
- d. What languages are spoken and written in your home?

School:

- e. What type of education or training have you had?
- f. What do you think Inuit students will gain by going to school?
- g. What do you think Inuit students will lose by going to school?

Community:

- h. What is your involvement in the community? Workplace?
- i. What aspirations do you have for Inuit students to contribute to your community?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- j. What are the ways in which Inuit students learn about Inuit culture?
- k. What would you like to have Inuit students learn about Inuit culture?

2. Can you help me to understand some of the reasons Inuit students stay in school?

Home:

- a. What are the parent's expectations for Inuit students?
- b. What training or experiences have you had in other cultures?
- c. What is your involvement in school? Is the school welcoming?

School:

- a. What are the expectations for Inuit students?
- b. What is the role of small groups? cooperative groups? hands- on activities?
- c. What is the role of technology?

- d. What type of literacy activities do the students do in English? In Inuktitut?
- e. How long have teachers and staff worked at the school? Do they interact?
- f. What do you think helps Inuit students to stay in school?
- g. What do you think makes it hard for Inuit students to stay in school?

Community:

- a. What is the role of community resource people?
- b. What is the role of field trips? Community projects?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- m. What is the role of Inuit Qaujimaqatunqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and

Inuit culture?

- n. What is the role of culturally relevant curriculum?
- o. What is the influence of native teachers in the student learning?

APPENDIX P  
Interview Questions for Teachers and Specialists

Title: Exploring Why Students Stay In School:  
Inuit Students' Perceptions of Nutaaq Inuksuit (Guide Posts)

Principal Researcher: Karen Tyler, M. Ed  
UVM Faculty Advisor: Mr. Charles Rathbone, Ph.D.

Interview Questions for Teachers & Specialists

This interview is being conducted to understand what helps Inuit youth stay in high school until graduation. The format of the interview will be conversational. Your signed consent form indicates your consent to be interviewed. This interview will only be videotaped or taped if you signed an additional consent to do so.

1. First, I am interested in learning more about you. Can you tell me about yourself?  
Home:
  - a. What is your age? gender?
  - b. How many people live in your house and what is their relation?
  - c. Do you work? If so, explain
  - d. What languages are spoken and written in your home?School:
  - e. What type of education or training have you had?
  - f. What do you think Inuit students will gain by going to school?
  - g. What do you think Inuit students will lose by going to school?Community:
  - h. What is your involvement in the community? Workplace?
  - i. What aspirations do you have for Inuit students to contribute to your community?Inuit Traditional Knowledge:
  - j. What are the ways in which you teach Inuit students about Inuit culture?
  - k. What would you like to have Inuit students learn about Inuit culture?
2. Can you help me to understand some of the reasons Inuit students stay in school?  
Home:
  - a. What are the parent's expectations for Inuit students?
  - b. What training or experiences have you had in other cultures?
  - c. What is your involvement in school? Is the school welcoming?School:
  - a. What are your expectations for Inuit students?
  - b. How do you use small groups? cooperative groups? hands- on activities?
  - c. How do you use technology?
  - d. What type of literacy activities do you do in English? In Inuktitut?

- e. How long have you and other teachers and staff worked at the school? Do they interact?
- f. What do you think helps Inuit students to stay in school?
- g. What makes it hard for Inuit students to stay in school?

Community:

- h. How do you use community resource people?
- i. How do you use field trips? Community projects?

Inuit Traditional Knowledge:

- j. How do you use Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and
- k. Inuit culture had?
- l. How do you use culturally relevant curriculum?
- m. What is the influence of native teachers in the students learning?

APPENDIX Q  
Codes for Sub-Themes

CODES:

Total for Study: 480

Total for Pangnirtung: 177

Totals for Sanikiluaq: 303

P - Elder	P - Adult Male	P - Adult Female	P - Male Student	P - Female Student	S - Elder	S - Adult Male	S - Adult Female	S - Male Student	S - Female Student
19	44	50	30	34	13	37	42	58	53

Four broad themes from input from Nunavummiut	Literature review (five themes #1 - 5)	Open-ended interview question: Can you tell me about yourself?	Open-ended interview questions: Can you help me understand some of the reasons you stayed in school?	Sub-themes for both communities
				Sub-themes = 29
				Graphs made for all students & elders by gender for sub-themes = 26 for 104 graphs No gender differences noticed in themes across students or adults in terms of sub-themes
				Careers, jobs, finish school, family, day care,

				generation difference, dialect, parent involvement & education not graphed due to data, quotes only used
Home	#5 Relationships between home (and other broad themes) - Family values promote education - English home literacy	Age, gender, languages spoke in home  Work, people in home	Parent's expectation, Parents education & school experiences, Parent involvement	Education of mother, Education of father, Inuktitut spoken, Inuktitut print, English spoken, English print, encouragement, woke up*
School	#3 All students experience educational equality - delivery school match home cultural values - culturally relevant curriculum  #4 Education includes academic and cultural knowledge  #5 Relationships between school and school change and other broad themes) - systems model for change	Grade, repeat grade, continuous, gain or lose from school	Teacher's expectations, group work, technology, what helped, what made hard  Literacy activities in English & Inuktitut, length of staff and interaction	Computer use*, group work, qualities of a good teacher, challenge (qualified graduates), homework, transition from junior high to high school, difficulty in grade 10, years in grade 10, stay in school



Community	#5 Relationships between community (and other broad themes) - community partnerships encouraged - community work experience	Community involvement  Aspiration to contribute to community	Community resource people, field trips, community projects	Exchange trips, sports trips, [experience other cultures (above combined)]
Inuit Tradition	#1 Respect for indigenous people - holistic & connected #2 Recognize and value culture - Inuit culture & knowledge promoted through government - short term as well as long term objectives #3 Education includes academic and cultural knowledge	Ways you learn about culture, from whom? What you want to learn?	Role of Inuit traditional knowledge (IQ), role of culturally relevant curriculum, role of native teachers	Role of elders, inclusion of shop, inclusion of sewing, inclusion of cooking, [unique independently funded cultural program (from individual communities)]

Topics deleted in two themes as not significant

Sub-themes

Sub-themes emerging from Pangnirtung	Sub-themes emerging from Sanikiluaq	Sub-themes emerging from students	Sub-themes emerging from adults
Parent involvement	Parent education, dialect		
Challenge (difference in schools, scheduling), qualified graduates, group work	Years in grade 10 (going back to school),	Difficulty grade 10	Generation Differences Homework (Lack of)
	Careers (work experience)		
Spring Camp	Elders (use knowledge) sewing, cooking, shop Innovative programs	Pangnirtung - Spring Camp Sanikiluaq - Innovative programs	

APPENDIX R  
Pangnirtung Data Sets (Step One)

Key to codes			
Community	Age Group	Gender	Ending Codes
P = Pangnirtung	S in 2 <sup>nd</sup> spot = Student	F = Female	P at end = Parent
	A = Adult	M = Male	I = Parent moved
			N = Non-Inuit*

Pangnirtung Students

PSF = Pangnirtung Student Females = 9	Grade	Age	PSM = Pangnirtung Student Males = 6	Grade	Age
PSF7	10B	19	PSM5	10	17
PSF9	11	16	PSM2 - 1	12	17
PSF3	11	17	PSM6	12	17
PSF1	11	25+	PSM3	12	17
PSF6	12	17	PSM 2	12	23
PSF2	12	17	PSM4	12 graduate	22
PSF4	12	18			
PSF5	12	20			
PSF8	12 graduate	18			

(Ages over 25 not indicated to protect identities)

Pangnirtung Students

PSF= Pangnirtung Student Females=9	Grade	Age	PSM= Pangnirtung Student Males=6	Grade	Age
PSF7	10B	19	PSM5	10	17
PSF9	11	16	PSM2-1	12	17
PSF3	11	17	PSM6	12	17
PSF1	11	25+	PSM3	12	17
PSF6	12	17	PSM 2	12	23
PSF2	12	17	PSM4	12	22
				graduate	
PSF4	12	18			
PSF5	12	20			
PSF8	12 graduate	18			

(Ages over 25 not indicated to protect identities)

Pangnirtung Adults

PAF= Pangnirtung Adult Females=14	Age	PAM = Pangnirtung Adult Males = 5	Age
PIAF1	26	PAM3	29
PIAF2	30	PAMP2(parent)	36
PAF2	30	PAMP1(Parent)	43
PAF1	34	PAM2	45
PAFP3 (parent)	35	PAM1	46
PAF3	37		
PAFP2 (parent)	40		
PAF6	41		
PAF8	44		
PAFP5(parent)	43		
PAF5	53		
PAF7	54		
PAF10	58		
PAF9	65		

Used interpreter

All participants are Inuit, unless indicated otherwise

NON-INUIT = 6	
	Age
PAN	25
PAN	40
PAN	45
PAN	49
PAN	58
PAN	58

Gender of non- Inuit not disclosed to protect identity

APPENDIX S  
Sanikiluaq Data Sets (Step One)

Sanikiluaq Data Sets (Step 1)

Key to codes			
Community	Age Group	Gender	Ending Codes
S = Sanikiluaq	S in 2 <sup>nd</sup> spot = Student	F = Female	P at end = Parent
	A=Adult	M= Male	I = Parent moved
			N = Non- Inuit*

Sanikiluaq Students (all participants are Inuit, unless indicated otherwise)

SSF = Sanikiluaq Student Female = 10	Grade	Age	SSM = Sanikiluaq Student Males = 7	Grade	Age
SSF10	10	18	SSM3	10	20
SSF8	10	23	SSM5	10/11	20
SSF5	10	24	SSM8	11	19
SSF9	10/11	17	SSM1	11	19
SSF2	11/12	20	SSM4	11/12	16
SSF6	12	19	SSM2	11/12	18
SSF7	12	21	SSM6	11/12	25
SSF4	12	22			
SSF3	12	25			
SSF1	12 graduate	Graduate'08			

Sanikiluaq Adults (all participants are Inuit, unless indicated otherwise)

SAF 11			
SAF = Sanikiluaq Adult Female=8		SAM = Sanikiluaq Adult Males = 5	
SAF2	26	SAM 1	28
SAF6	28	SAM 2 (parent)	44
SAF3	36	SAM 3	53
SAF9	37	SAM 4 (interpreter)	54
SAFP2(parent)	39	SAM 5	65
SAF5 (parent)	45		
SAF8	47		
SAF4	48		

NON-INUIT = 4	
SSN (student)	16
SAPN (parent)	56
SAPN (parent)	58
SAN	65

Gender of non- Inuit not disclosed to protect identity

APPENDIX T  
Pangnirtung Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two)

Pangnirtung Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two)

Participant	Quote From Transcript	CODE Broad theme	CODE Sub-theme	CODE Emergent sub-theme
Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk	“She will become very good friends with her students a lot of them.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Mentoring
PSF4	“Of course, we wouldn’t want to lose our way of life.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Culture, Yes
PSM1	“It helps to learn about your culture. I guess it could help for the people with deep backgrounds in Inuktitut.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Culture, Yes
PSM5*	[To graduate-Would it have helped if there were more elders in the school?] That would have helped more	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Yes
PSM6*	[More elders in the school...do you think that would be helpful?] yes [You would like to see more elders?] Yes	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Yes
PAF4	“To have choices and to have the knowledge of our ancestors, and living up here about hunting and sewing, we need to know that.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Yes
PAF5	“I think they should have a local person, Inuk person, knows the knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Yes
PAF9	“At the high school level they should start including how to survive up in the north because that is where they are always going to be.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Yes at school [Elders are carriers of this knowledge]

PAF9	“Not just pick any elder, but pick one according to their wisdom or their knowledge because wise elders, the students can listen to them more and will show more respect to wiser elders.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Respect
PAM1	“They have done a lot of work with elders that actually produce the materials themselves and they have meetings with elders throughout Nunavut once a year and they produce exchange ideas for curriculum development , also they are teaching the elders how to be classroom assistants or support teachers through completion of a couple of weeks program.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Yes
PAMP1	“There should be more elders at the school. They could help with the other students who don’t want to do their work and talk to them... Yeah, they [elders] should be at the school just like other teacher.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Encourage, Yes at school
PAMP1		Inuit Traditions	Elders	Yes at school

Note: PSM5\* included as sample of prompted responses



APPENDIX U  
Sanikiluaq Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two)

Sanikiluaq Sample of Coding of Transcriptions (Step Two)				
Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk	“Elder Mina Inuktaluk was asked to tell stories all week...she is going to ask you a question, do you know it’s usually foggy, do you know why” She says there’s a story about a big woman who bursted when she was across the river and when she bursted, it’s the time the fog started for all the world...well, that’s one story she told the kids this morning.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Stories
Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk	“And she wants an elder to be at the school who will teach the about the Inuit Quajimajatuqangut, about the knowledge of the Inuit. The teacher now, the Inuit teachers, are getting really good but they don’t really know what is used to be like before because they were just kids then....we’re only moving by money. And you can only get transportations with money”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Skilled Paid
SSF3	“Having elders in our school helps a lot because they are talking to our students to stay in school, how to live, what they use to do in the past, and to help your family and all that sort of thing.”	Inuit Tradition	Elders	Encourage, Pass on knowledge, stay in school
SSF4	“I want them [elders] because, I don’t know what you say, we’re always losing our language and cultures. They have to teach us how to survive.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Language, Yes

SSF5*	[Would you like to see more elders in the school?] yup [Do you think it would help?] yup[Just to have them here or because they know things that you want to learn?] Just to have here [It helps with discipline?] Yea [Are the students better when the elders are around?] Yea [Because they respect them?] Yea			Discipline, Yes
SSF8*	[Would you like to see elders in the school?] yea [To help out?] Yea [Like with old words they would help out, or the behavior, do you think they would be good at?] Maybe both. Behavior and words			Language, Behavior, Yes
SSF9	“talk about the past”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Yes
SSM6	“Because I want to learn more about the culture.”	Inuit Traditions	[Elders]	Culture
SAF2	“I used to enjoy their story telling...and encouraging us to stay in school.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Stories, Encouraging. Yes
SAF3	“Elder’s knowledge and the importance of passing their knowledge to students.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge
SAF4	“Would learn how to respect the elders, learn how to listen.”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Respect
SAF5	“Could be...just a spotter and they can be used as resources as their traditional knowledge and traditional life and to be mentors to the students...I think due to the fact that they have been brought up to respect their elders”	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Respect, Yes, Mentor
SAM2	“Should be more involved to teach younger kids to learn what the elders know from	Inuit Traditions	Elders	Knowledge, Respect, Yes

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their parents to pass down to the next generation. A book should be written by the elders for the school. They [students] change their attitude when elders talk to them.”

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Note: SSF5\* and SSF8\* included as sample of prompted responses

APPENDIX V  
Pangnirtung Microsoft Word Tables (Step Three)

Excerpt of Microsoft Word Tables: Taken from examples of quotes (Step 3)

Pangnirtung Elder: Aichinak Kilabuk:

Mentoring: “She will become very good friends with her students a lot of them.”

Pangnirtung Students	Mentoring	Pass on Knowledge	Culture	Encourage	Stories	Language	Respect	Yes
PSF4			Lose way of life					Yes
PSM1			Learn about culture					Yes

Pangnirtung Adults	Mentoring	Pass on Knowledge	Culture	Encourage	Stories	Language	Respect	Yes
PAF4		Choices, knowledge of our ancestors, and living up here about hunting and sewing						Yes
PAF5		Inuk person, who knows the knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat						Yes

PAF9	High school learn how survive in north, always live here		Yes
PAF9		Pick elder fort knowledge, listen and respect more	
PAM1	Elders produce materials, teach to be classroom assistants, and support teachers		Yes
PAMP1		Help other students, talk to, at school like other teacher	Yes

APPENDIX W  
Sanikiluaq Microsoft Word Tables (Step Three)

Excerpt of Microsoft Word Tables: Taken from examples of quotes (Step 3)

Sanikiluaq Elder: Mina Ishultak: Stories

“Elder Mina Inuktaluk was asked to tell stories all week...she is going to ask you a question, do you know it’s usually foggy, do you know why” She says there’s a story about a big woman who bursted when she was across the river and when she bursted, it’s the time the fog started for all the world...well, that’s one story she told the kids this morning.”

Sanikiluaq Students	Mentoring	Pass on Knowledge	Culture	Encourage	Stories	Language	Respect	Yes
SSF3	You’re your family	How to live, what did in past		Helps talk to stay in school				Yes
SSF4		Teach us to survive	Lose culture			Losing language		Yes
SSF9		Learn about past						Yes
SSM6			Learn more culture					

Sanikiluaq Adults	Mentoring	Pass on Knowledge	Culture	Encourage	Stories	Language	Respect	Yes
SAF2				Encourage stay in school	Enjoy stories			Yes
SAF3		Importance to pass to students						
SAF4							Learn respect, how listen	Yes
SAF5	Mentors to students	Resources traditional knowledge					Brought up to respect elders	Yes
SAM2		Pass down next generation, write book					Students attitude change when talk to elders	Yes

APPENDIX X

Pangirtung Synthesized Charts to Prepare for Excel (Step Four)

Pangnirtung Synthesized Charts Used to Prepare for Excel From All Data (Step 4)

Stories	Pass Knowledge, Culture	Encourage to Stay In School	Respect, Discipline	No response	Yes	No
	PSF4			PSF1	PSF2	
				PSF5	PSF3	
				PSF6	PSF4	
					PSF7	
					PSF8	
					PSF9	
0 total	1 total	0 total	0 total	3 total	6 total	
	PSM1			PSM2	PSM1	
					PSM3	
					PSM4	
					PSM5	
					PSM6	
0 total	1 total	0 total	0 total	1 total	5 total	
	PAF4		PAF9	PAF1	PAF4	
	PAF5			PAF2	PAF5	
	PAF9			PAF3	PAF9	
				PAF6		
				PAF7		
				PAF8		
				PAF10		
				PAFP1		
				PAFP2		
				PAFP3		
				PAFP5		
				PAIF1		
				PAIF2		
0 total	3 total	0 total	1 total	13 total	3 total	0 total
	PAM1			PAM2	PAM1	
					PAM3	
		PAMP1			PAMP1	
					PAMP2	
0 total	1 total	1 total	0 total	1 total	4 total	0 total



APPENDIX Y  
Sanikiluaq Synthesized Charts to Prepare for Excel (Step Four)

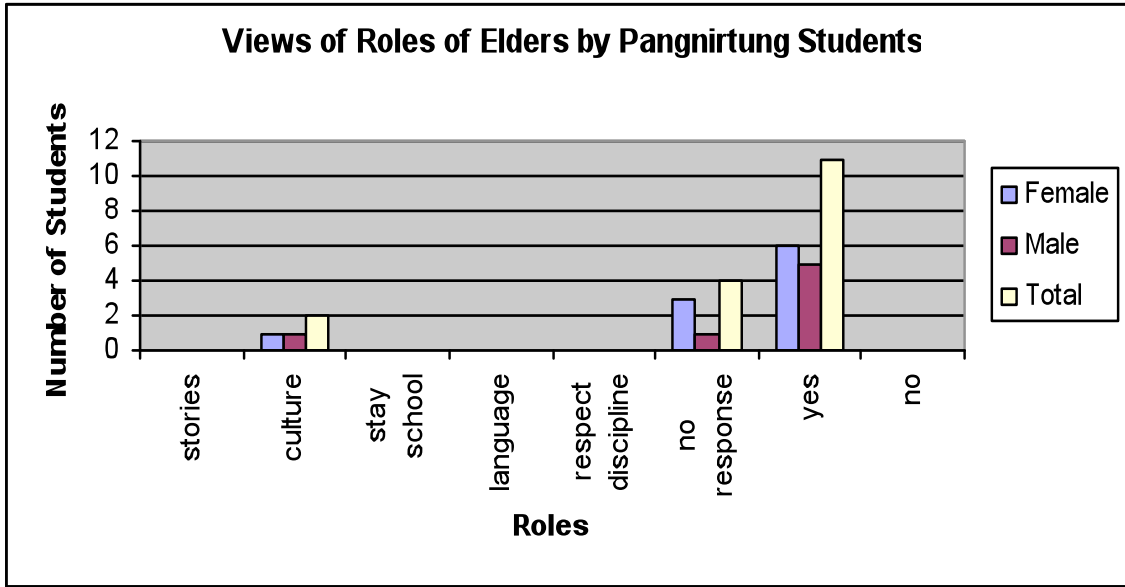
Sanikiluaq Synthesized Charts Used to Prepare for Excel From All Data (Step 4)

Stories	Pass Culture, Knowledge	Encourage to Stay In School	Language	Respect, Discipline	No Response	Yes	No
	SSF1	SSF1	SSF4	SSF5		SSF1	
	SSF2	SSF3	SSF6	SSF6		SSF2	
	SSF3		SSF7	SSF8		SSF3	
	SSF4		SSF8	SSF10		SSF4	
	SSF9		SSF10			SSF5	
						SSF6	
						SSF7	
						SSF8	
						SSF9	
						SSF10	
	5 total	2 total	5 total	4 total	0 total	10 total	0 total
	SSM1			SSM1		SSM1	
	SSM5			SSM5		SSM2	
	SSM6					SSM3	
	SSM8					SSM4	
						SSM5	
						SSM6	
						SSM8	
	0 total	4 total	0 total	0 total	2 total	0 total	7 total
	SAF2	SAF3	SAF2	SAFP2	SAFP2	SAF2	
		SAF5		SAF4		SAF3	
				SAF5		SAFP2	
				SAF6		SAF4	
				SAF9		SAF5	
						SAF6	
						SAF8	
						SAF9	
	1 total	2 total	1 total	1 total	5 total	0 total	8 total
	SAM1			SAM2	SAM3	SAM1	
	SAM2				SAM4	SAM2	
	SAM5					SAM5	
	0 total	3 total	0 total	0 total	1 total	2 total	3 total
							0 total

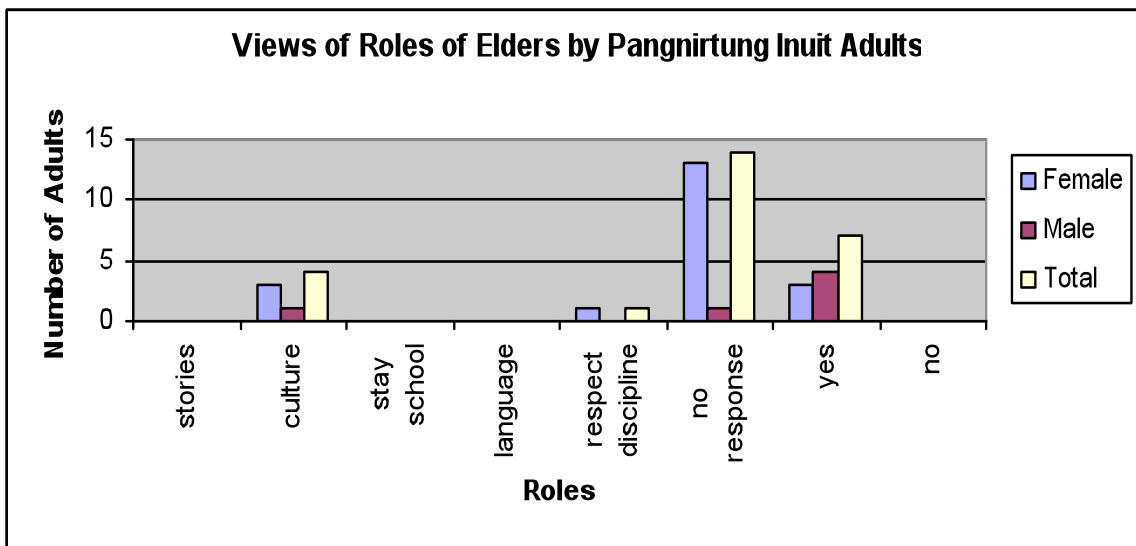
APPENDIX Z  
Pangnirtung Excel Charts and Graphs (Step Five)

Pangnirtung Excel Charts & Graphs From All Data (Step 5)

Views of Roles of Elders by Pangnirtung Students	Female	Male	Total
stories	0	0	0
culture	1	1	2
stay school	0	0	0
language	0	0	0
respect discipline	0	0	0
no response	3	1	4
yes	6	5	11
no	0	0	0



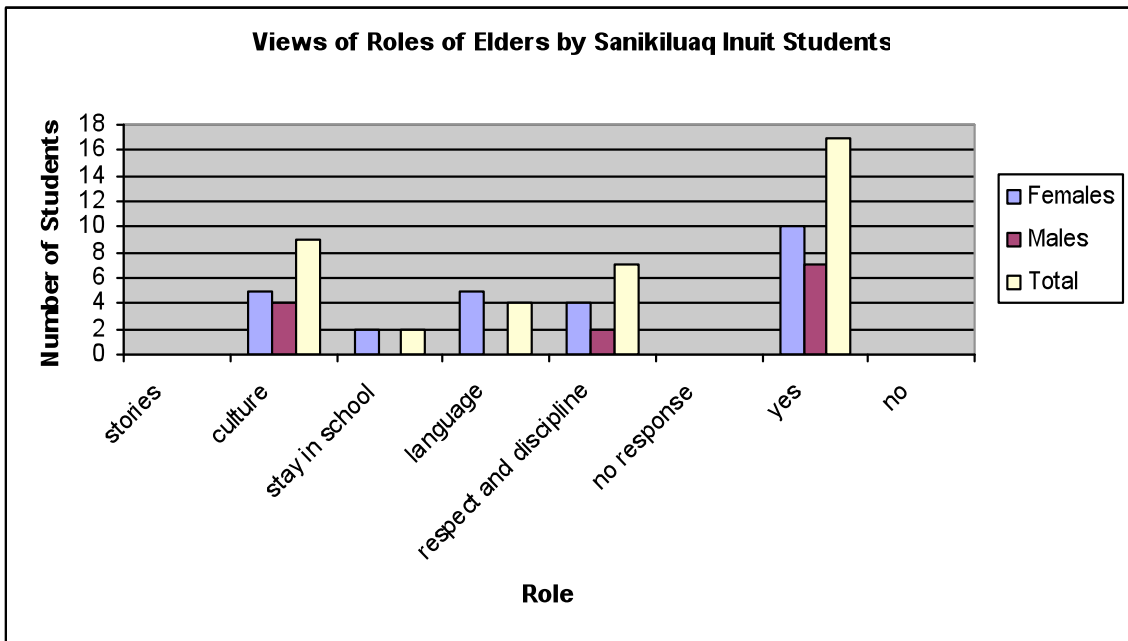
Views of Roles of Elders by Pangnirtung Inuit Adults	Female	Male	Total
stories	0	0	0
culture	3	1	4
stay school	0	1	1
language	0	0	0
respect discipline	1	0	1
no response	13	1	14
yes	3	4	7
no	0	0	0



APPENDIX AA  
Sanikiluaq Excel Charts and Graphs (Step Five)

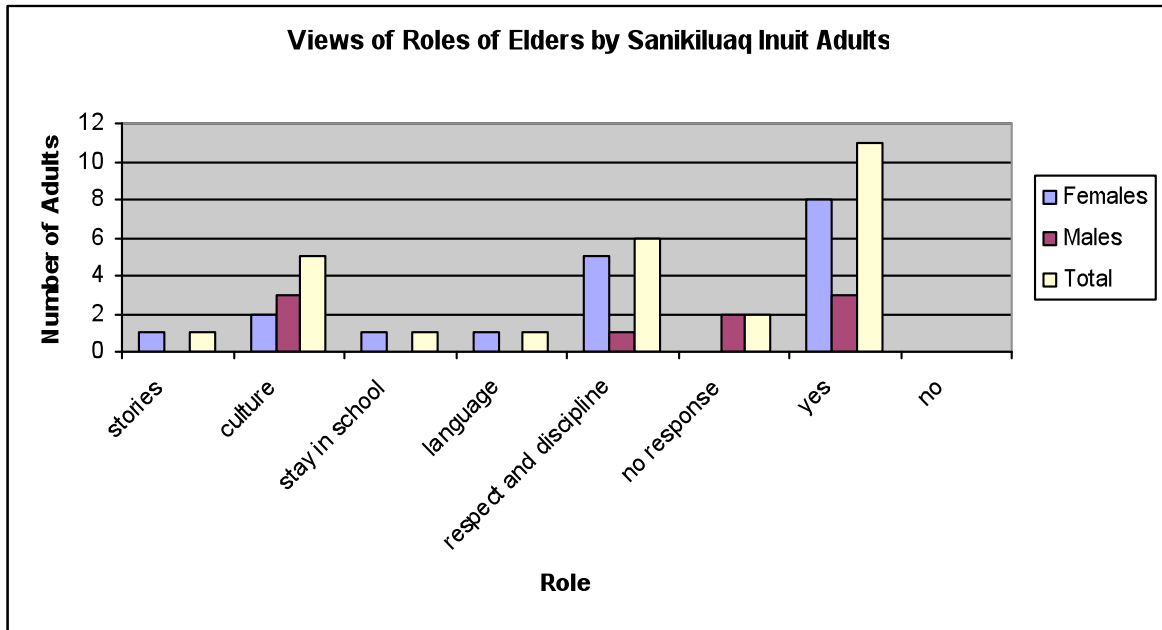
Sanikiluaq Excel Chart & Graph From All Data (Step 5)

Views of Roles of Elders by Sanikiluaq Inuit Students	Females	Males	Total
stories	0	0	0
culture	5	4	9
stay in school	2	0	2
language	5	0	4
respect and discipline	4	2	7
no response	0	0	0
yes	10	7	17
no	0	0	0



Views of Roles of Elders by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults

Views of Roles of Elders by Sanikiluaq Inuit Adults	Females	Males	Total
stories	1	0	1
culture	2	3	5
stay in school	1	0	1
language	1	0	1
respect and discipline	5	1	6
no response	0	2	2
yes	8	3	11
no	0	0	0



APPENDIX BB  
Cross Comparison of Data (Step Six)

Cross Comparison of Data From All Data (Step 6)

*Pangnirtung*

*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:*

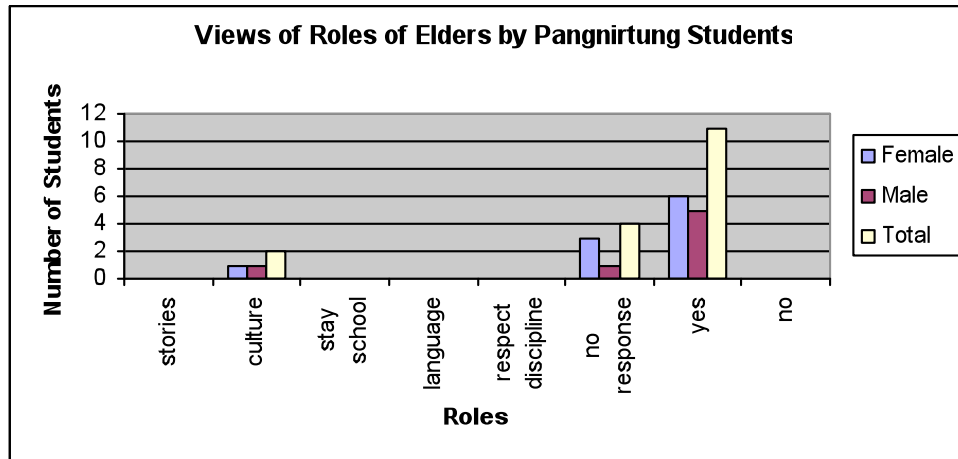
*Pangnirtung Elder Aichinak Kilabuk*

It would be very good to be able to do that but men are very hesitant to participate (interacting with young people, men and women).

*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:*

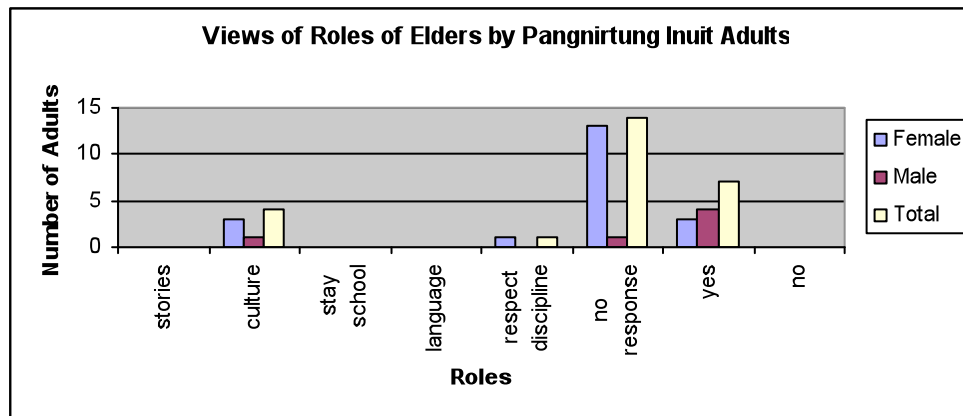
*Pangnirtung Students*

There were 64 percent of the students who mentioned that it would be a good to have elders more involved in the school. There were 13 percent of the students who said that elders help by teaching about their culture, one was a male student and one was a female student. There were 33 percent of students who did not respond.



*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:  
Pangnirtung Adults*

There were 37 percent of the adults who stated they would like elders to be more involved in the school. There were 21 percent of the adults who said elders play a role in teaching the culture. There were 20 percent of the adult males and 21 percent of the adult females who said elders played a role in the culture. There were 11 percent of the adults who mentioned elders help with respect and this was an adult female. There were 74 percent of the adults who did not respond, and these were all females.



*Pangnirtung Discussion of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School*

The involvement of elders in the school did not limit itself to just their physical presence in the school, but to their participation in school programs. The majority of the students and some of the adults that commented mentioned they wanted more elder involvement. The male and female students mentioned the role of the elders in terms of teaching cultural knowledge. The female adults mentioned the elder's role in terms of

teaching cultural knowledge and helping with discipline. The male adults mentioned their role in terms of teaching culture.

One male student commented, “It helps to learn about your culture.” (PSM1). One female student said, “Of course, we wouldn’t want to lose our way of life (PSF4).

The importance of “having choices and to have the knowledge of our ancestors, and living up here about hunting and sewing, we need to know that’ was noted (PAF4). Another female just stated,” I think they should have a local person, Inuk person, knows the knowledge and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangat” (PAF5), as an elder would. One adult female said “At high school level they should start including how to survive up here in the north because that is where they are always going to be... not just pick any elder, but pick one according to their wisdom or their knowledge because wise elders, the students can listen to them more and will show more respect to wiser elders” (PAF9). “There should be more elders at the school. They could help with the other students who don’t want to do their work and talk to them... Yeah, they [elders] should be at the school just like other teachers” (PAMP1). The researcher’s own personal bias in this area is very strong. Models do exist in Nunavut for having Inuit who do not speak English or have a high school education participate as full members in a learning organization. The researcher found the rewards of establishing the only adult educator who was knowledgeable in the community, yet, did not speak English, to fill her position when she left the arctic. That individual just retired this year after 17 years of working full-time since then.

The use of Inuktitut is a lot more obvious with the department of education now producing more curriculum at its regional offices throughout the territories I know



for example in [other places]... they have done a lot of work with elders that actually produced the materials themselves and they have meetings with elders throughout Nunavut once a year and they produce exchange ideas for curriculum development, also they are teaching the elders how to be classroom assistants or supports teachers through completion of a couple of weeks program. (PAM1)

*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:*

*Sanikiluaq Elder Mina Inuktaluk*

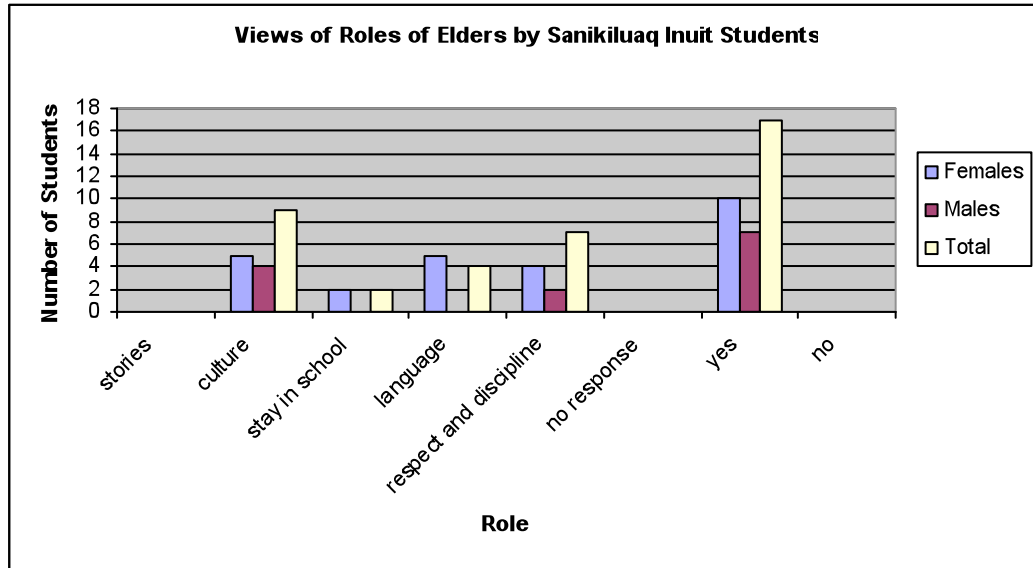
Elder Mina Inuktaluk was asked to tell stories all week but school was closed... She is going to ask you a question, do you know it's usually foggy, do you know why? She says there's a story about a big old woman who bursted when she was across the river and when she bursted, it's the time the fog started for all around the world... she was a big woman, well that's one story she told the kids this morning. Also another question, when you're beside the hill on a mountain, there's an echo do you know why? When you shout you'll hear the echo and when the man was here, he used to shout 'atta' and his words are all over the mountains, and that is why... they're all over the communities and when they tell them, they 're usually not quite the same... And they usually have a message for the kids to learn."

*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:*

*Sanikiluaq Students*

All the students mentioned that it would be good to have the elders more involved in the school. There were 60 percent of the female students who commented elders help by telling stories or in regards to discipline and respect. There were 57 percent of the

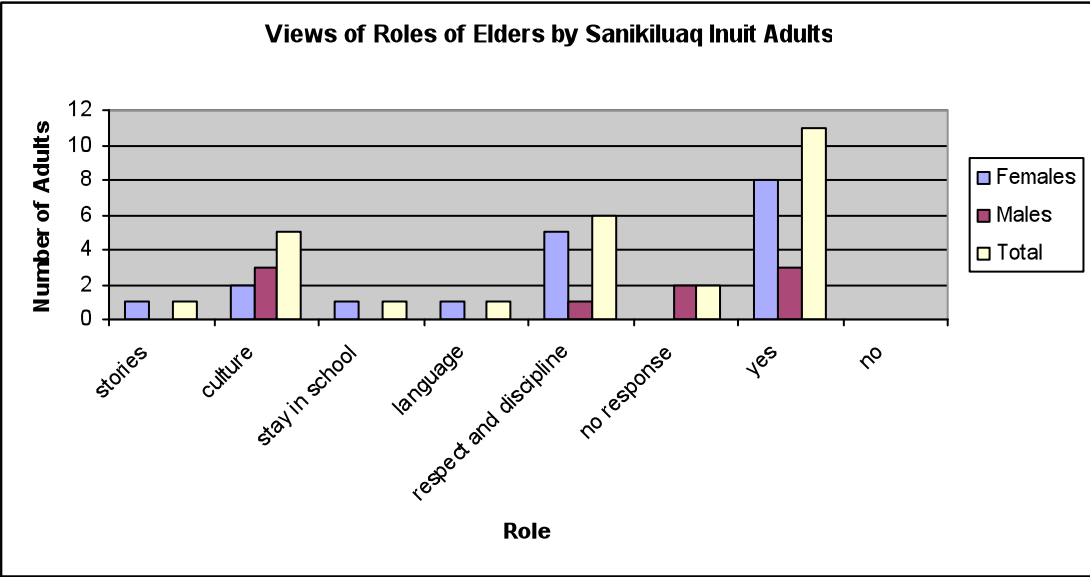
male students who commented the elders helped by telling stories and 43 percent of the male students indicated that the elders helped in regards to discipline and respect.



*Findings of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School:*

*Sanikiluaq Adults*

There were 77 percent of the adults who stated they would like elders to be more involved in the school. There were 62 percent of the adult females who said the elders helped with discipline and respect, while 60 percent of the adult males who said the elders helped teach cultural knowledge.



*Sanikiluaq Discussion of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (IQ): Involvement of elders in the School*

The involvement of elders in the school did not limit itself to just their physical presence in the school, but to their participation in school programs.

The majority of the students and adults wanted more elder involvement in the schools.

The students mentioned the elder's role of telling stories and helping with discipline and respect. The female adults also commented on the elder's role related to discipline and respect. The adult male's commented more about the elder's role in teaching cultural knowledge. One adult male suggested that the elders write a book for the school. One adult male comments were extremely insightful in suggesting the importance of traditional values being taught by elders as well as the skills. The same adult also pointed out the need to have Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) taught along with scientific knowledge.

The elder Mina Inuktaluk wanted to share the following comments:

All around they [students] should still have a teacher that is a real pure Inuk in the schools to teach the kids, one that's not doing just follow the books to do what they know. And she also wants an elder to be at the school who will teach about the Inuit Quajatataquit [Traditional Knowledge] about the knowledge of the Inuit. The teachers at the school now, the Inuit teachers, are getting really good, but they don't really know what it used to be like before because they were just kids then. Well if there's no one to do that job, the culture of the Inuit will just disappear. Well the kids are just going to stay in the same community, they're not doing to move to a place where it is warm... [So also it would be good] to teach... [what traditional skills] would go for the women and the men because they all used to have to do things. The reason why for that is ,back then, the only time they used to get married was... from the parents, the young ones didn't even know that they were actually going to get married and they only got married after the parents agreed with each other. [Also, it was important that] children have to go through the Inuk way and to stay in touch with the family members, know who your family members are because some people are forgetting who they are related too. Yea that goes for the namesakes<sup>1</sup> too, because even if you namesake,... try not to let the baby do that much what the namesake use to do. [As well, there] used to be a... way to travel and now in this community there is not even... [anyone that travels like that] and also its easy to see that [in the future] nobody will be

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<sup>1</sup> "Namesakes" refers to the Inuit tradition to name their children after relatives or people who have passed away. The namesake creates a new relationship between people that is often considered by some individuals to be more significant than blood relationships.

able to go hunting because nobody will be able to afford the price of snowmobile and also maybe they won't be able to get the welfare that they're getting these day...

Well she usually thinks it would be better to get a diploma only if you know the ways of the government but also to know the traditional ways, like the whole inside story.

The participants also shared a lot of what they thought about "elders." One female student said, "Having elders in our school helps a lot because they are talking to our students to stay in school, how to live life, what they used to do in the past and to help your family and all that sort of things. Not to try to ruin your life. Better finish your school and it may not help you to have a job in the future if you don't graduate (SSF3). A male student felt that elders are needed in the school "because I want to learn more about the cultural" (SSM6). Another student said, "I want them [elders] because, I don't know what you say, we're always losing our language or culture. They have to teach us how to survive" (SSF4). "This was supported by another student who said that elders should talk about the past" (SSF9). An adult noted that the elders "could be here just as spotter and they can be used as resources as their traditional knowledge and traditional life and to be mentors to the students" (SAF5). One adult stated, "I used to enjoy their storytelling... And encouraging us to stay in the school" (SAF2). One adult male felt that elders "should be more involved to teach younger kids to learn what the elders know from their parents to pass down to the next generation. A book should be written by elders for the school. They [students] change their attitude when the elders talk to them" (SAM2). One adult felt that students "would learn to respect the elders, learn how to listen" (SAF4). Another

adult remarked that about the elder's knowledge and the importance of "passing their knowledge on to students" (SAF3). Another adult felt that, "They can be at least around and just if somebody wants to talk to them, they can be open that would be a good start" (SAF9). The most revealing comments came from one adult male, in reference to the elders and Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*).

"Some of them (students) learn the technical skills but the values and theories and who you are, that's the most important" (SAM5). In regards to Inuit Traditional Knowledge (*IQ*) ("*IQ*") and scientific knowledge, the same adult commented:

Put it this way, I was told to base [a decision] on traditional knowledge and based on scientific information that I will make a decision, but when you try to compare... you would get different answers... they can't seem to only work parallel, there's no integration or anything like that... One is measurable and one is feeling, so in order for students to be prosperous they have to... (have) at least a little idea of both... That's where the elders come in, I'll tell you something even before Christianity, the Inuk were thinking (holistically about the relationships between)... the creator, wildlife, and the man. (SAM5).

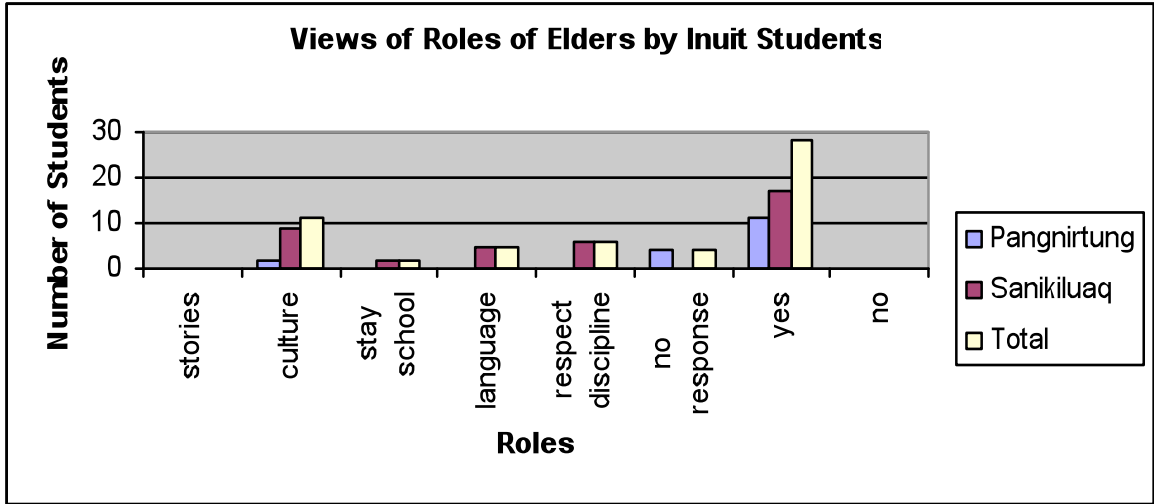
The adult continued,

When you really understand who you are, where you come from, kind of culture you have... that once you understand that, you respect all other cultures too and it's a really good thing that way so once you understand that, if you're in a school, you'll do good in school I think anyway (SAM5).

APPENDIX CC  
 Combined Excel Graphs (Step Seven)

Combined Excel Graphs From All Data (Step 7)

Views of Roles of Elders by Inuit Students	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
stories	0	0	0
culture	2	9	11
stay school	0	2	2
language	0	5	5
respect discipline	0	6	6
no response	4	0	4
yes	11	17	28
no	0	0	0



### Views of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults

Views of Roles of Elders by Inuit Adults	Pangnirtung	Sanikiluaq	Total
stories	0	1	1
culture	4	5	9
stay school	1	1	2
language	0	1	1
respect discipline	1	6	7
no response	14	2	16
yes	7	11	18
no	0	0	0

