

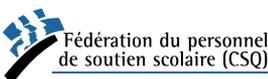


Centrale des syndicats
du Québec

Welcome
TIKILLUARIT!



Living and working in an **Inuit community**



Fédération du personnel
de soutien scolaire (CSQ)



FÉDÉRATION
DES SYNDICATS
DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT
CSQ



FÉDÉRATION DES PROFESSIONNELLES
ET PROFESSIONNELS DE L'ÉDUCATION
DU QUÉBEC (CSQ)





Message from the CSQ

Tikilluarit, welcome to all who wish to work in an Inuit community!

For the past 50 years, the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec* (CSQ) has represented educational professionals working in Cree and Inuit communities, members of the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ) and the *Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de l'ouest de Montréal* (SPPOM-CSQ).

Over the years, thanks to our *Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement* (FSE-CSQ), *Fédération du personnel de soutien scolaire* (FPSS-CSQ) and *Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec* (FPPE-CSQ) members working in Indigenous communities, we have developed a sense of the challenges of Inuit Nation members because of the prejudices of non-Indigenous people; we also understand their wish for economic and sociocultural development that resembles them, and their desire to contribute to their education system.

We are also aware of the difficulties facing non-Indigenous staff members who choose to work in these communities, particularly with regards to their retention in the North and the labour shortage.

Quebec's labour shortage is worrisome, but in Northern Québec this issue is even more alarming. Certain individuals living in the south are tempted by a northern work experience while others are fearful of living in a remote and unfamiliar community.

This guide aims to answer frequently asked questions about working in an Inuit community. For most individuals, integrating a new living or work environment is as exciting as it is stressful—Inuit Nation territory is no exception.

The goal is also to raise awareness regarding Inuit realities and enlighten educational professionals interested in working in Inuit communities, specifically pertaining to the life and culture differences between northern and southern Québec.

Welcome to education
in Inuit community!

Anne Dionne

Second Vice-President of the CSQ,
responsible for Indigenous affairs



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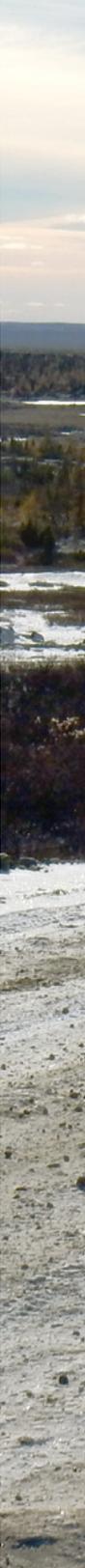




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Lexicon

This lexicon is a simple tool intended to encourage respect for Inuit culture and create an open-minded connection to ensure everyone's well-being. It also helps you quickly become aware of the surroundings to better understand the people who live here.



Community names¹

Akulivik (Cape Smith)

The central point of a trident-shaped harpoon

Aupaluk

Where the earth is red

Inukjuak (Inoucdjouac, Port-Harrison, Port-Lapérouse)

The giant

Ivujivik

Where the ice accumulates

Kangiqsualujuaq (George River, Port-Nouveau-Québec)

The very large bay

Kangiqsujuaq (Wakeham Bay, Maricourt, Notre-Dame de Maricourt)

The big bay

Kangirsuk (Payne Bay, Bellin)

The bay

Kuujuaq (Fort-Chimo)

Big river

Kuujuarapik (Poste-de-la-Baleine)

Big beautiful big river

Puvirnituk (Povungnituk, POV)

Where there is a smell of rotten meat

Quaqtaq (Notre-Dame-de-Quaqtaq)

That looks like a tapeworm; frozen

Salluit (Sugluk, Saglouc)

The skinny ones (those who are thin)

Tasiujaq (Baie-aux-Feuilles, Leaf Bay)

That looks like a lake

Umiujaq (in reference, a 15th village)

That resembles an *umiaq* (large open boat, traditionally made of seal skins)

1. QUÉBEC. MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DES COMMUNICATIONS (2012). *Les 14 communautés du Nunavik*, [Online]. [mcc.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=1747] (Accessed June 15, 2020).



Some useful vocabulary²

Ullaakkut

Good morning

Ullukkut

Hello
(in the afternoon)

Unnukkut

Good evening

Nakurmiik

Thank you

There are a few lexicons that will introduce you to this language, particularly regarding education:

- Inuktitut lexicon for students and educational professionals
rcinet.ca/regard-sur-arctique/2019/10/09/inuktitut-lexique-quebec-ugat-nunavik-inuit-langue/
lexique.uqat.ca/index.php/en/
- English – Inuktitut dictionary
glosbe.com/en/iu
- Audio platform to learn the origin of Nunavik (in Northern Québec) toponyms
toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/ct/toponymie-autochtone/liste-noms-autochtones-traditionnels/prononciation-noms-autochtones.aspx

Other linguistic resources:

- Resources for Nunavimmiut
kativik.qc.ca/our-schools/resources/
- Inuktitut Tusaalanga – Inuktitut glossary (online learning tool)
tusaalanga.ca/glossary/inuktitut
- Multiple Voices – Indigenous language teaching tool
voixmultiples.com/en/translations/

2. Link to consult an audio lexicon: tusaalanga.ca/glossary.

1

My new environment





1.1 Nunavik



KATIVIK

- Nordic village
- Inuit reserved grounds
- Naskapi village
- Unorganized territory

Formerly known as Nouveau-Québec, Nunavik—“the place where we live”—is located north of the 55th parallel and covers approximately 560,000 km². It is made up of tundra and boreal forest, as well as numerous glacier lakes³. Just over 14,000 people live on these lands; 84% are Inuit⁴. It is a young population (median age of 30), spread across 14 northern villages that form Nunavik. It also includes the Naskapi community of Kawawachikamach and the Cree community of Whapmagostui that is twinned with the Kuujuarapik village.



1.2 Administration

Unlike the First Nations, but like the Crees, Quebec Inuit do not live in communities previously called *reserves*, but in villages that have the status of “village municipalities.” As these northern villages are located between 100 and 850 km from each other and there are no roads between villages or leading south, planes are the only means of transportation.

Nunavik’s political, cultural and economic administrations are managed by the Makivik Corporation, an Inuktitut word meaning “to rise up.” Its mandate:

... social economic development, improved housing conditions, protection of the Inuit language and culture and the natural environment⁵.

This Inuit governance body is also mandated to protect individual rights and interests, and administer financial compensation owing to the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)⁶ and the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement that came into effect in 2007. Henceforth, these agreements are now the foundation of the relationships that Inuit maintain with their neighbours, and the federal and Québec governments. The Kativik Regional Government (KRG)—created in 1978 pursuant to the signing of the JBNQA—is responsible for providing public services to all people living in the territory.

3. For more information: avataq.gc.ca/en/Les-Nunavimmiuts/Le-territoire/Le-region-du-Nunavik (Accessed June 15, 2020).

4. For more information: statistique.quebec.ca/en/vitrine/region (Accessed June 15, 2020)

5. MAKIVIK COMPANY (2019). *Mandate of the Makivik Corporation* [Online]. [\[makivik.org/corporate/makivik-mandate/\]](http://makivik.org/corporate/makivik-mandate/) (Accessed June 3, 2020).

6. This agreement is the first comprehensive land claim by the Inuit in Canada.



1.3 Kativik Iisarniliriniq/Kativik School Board

Kativik Iisarniliriniq⁷ school board was created in 1975 under of the JBNQA, a treaty protected by the Constitution of Canada. Since 1978, Kativik Iisarniliriniq is the only elementary, secondary and adult education provider throughout the territory. This school board is 75% funded by the Québec government and 25% by the federal government. Governed by the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons* (R.S.Q. I-14), it holds some flexibility regarding the minimum 180 school days per year and on the content development of subjects taught in its schools.

The school board comprises 17 elementary and secondary schools, 5 adult education centres and 2 vocational training centres. From kindergarten to grade 2, Inuktitut is the language of instruction. As of grade 3 teaching is done in English or French, and Inuktitut teaching continues in parallel until the end of high school. Courses and vocational training programs are offered in Inuktitut, French and English.

The educational services and teacher training offices are located at the Kuujuaq headquarters. They help develop curricula and offers educational support. Administrative services, human and material resources, finance, and payroll, as well as adult education and vocational training services are in Montréal's Saint-Laurent borough.

A semi-interactive map of the Kativik Iisarniliriniq School Board is available⁸. Click on the name of a village to display basic information regarding its schools—including the address, staff, and students⁹.

7. The Inuktitut name for the school board is *Kativik Iisarniliriniq*, so this is the term we use.

8. KATIVIK ILISARNILIRINIQ (2020). Our schools [Online]. [kativik.qc.ca/our-schools/] (Accessed June 30, 2020).

9. For more information on Kativik Iisarniliriniq: kativik.qc.ca/ (Accessed June 10, 2020).

2

Living conditions



Extensive information on living conditions in Nunavik is available in *Living in Nunavik*¹⁰, a complement to the various topics covered in this section.



2.1 The cultural and economic way of life

One of the greatest challenges facing the Inuit Nation is the preservation of cultural practices in modern society. Undeniably, the current situation of Inuit in Nunavik is a mere reflection of their traditional way of life less than 100 years ago¹¹.



10. KATIVIK ILISARNILIRINIQ SCHOOL BOARD (2019). *Vivre au Nunavik, Living in Nunavik, Orientation* (August), 47 p.

11. Links to learn more about Inuit history and evolution over the centuries are available in the appendix.

In the aftermath of World War II—under the pretext of facilitating the management of the territories—the Canadian government developed a set of policies forcing this population to become sedentary, thus disrupting Inuit way of life. An example from the early 1960s is the systematic massacre by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police of sled dogs—a means of transportation essential to their survival—thereby obliging Inuit to settle down. Add to this: hundreds of Inuit children placed in residential schools, prohibited from speaking their language and abused psychologically, physically, and sexually. The aftereffects of these events still weigh heavily on the communities. The bonds of trust between staff and students will be discussed in a subsequent section.

Throughout the years, many non-native concepts were introduced to northern villages forcing Inuit to adapt and assimilate. These changes have become entwined into their culture and, as a result, several facets of their identity, ancestral knowledge, and traditional activities are being lost and forgotten. Today, these changes are often seen as obstacles to the realization and reconstruction of a society that is representative of them.



2.2 The effect of climate change

Too often overlooked: if the Arctic is our planet’s health barometer, its inhabitants, Inuit—who have lived there for almost 800 years—are the ones who ensure the survival of these lands. Year after year, those who live “on the roof of the world¹²” witness its rapid environmental degradation and its effect on their culture.

Melting permafrost causes road surface degradation and landslides. Animal migratory routes are changing, rendering hunting and trapping more and more uncertain, thus creating food insecurity. Melting ice makes fishing risky. Snowmobiling is ubiquitous in communities, and pollution threatens inhabitants’ health. These upheavals have undeniable consequences. For Inuk author Sheila Watt-Cloutier¹³, the spirit of the wounded hunter is manifested in collective distress and lost Inuit references, for whom food sharing brings families and the entire community together.

In such a context, how does one live in an environment so dissimilar from life south of the 55th parallel?

12. Expression borrowed from: WATT-CLOUTIER, Sheila (2019). *Le droit au froid*, Écosociété, Montréal, p. 147.

13. WATT-CLOUTIER, Sheila (2019). *Le droit au froid*, Montréal, Écosociété, 360 p.



2.3 Daily life

Before your arrival, it is essential to understand certain realities of daily life in Nunavik. Some of you come alone or with your life partner, and children. Adjustment is different depending on your situation but, generally, the following information applies to everyone.

2.3.1 A northern territory and its sometimes-freezing climate

In Nunavik, two climates coexist: the subarctic and the arctic. With climate change, predicting the weather is becoming increasingly difficult. The frost-free season lasts between 20 and 80 days, depending on whether you are in the southern or northern part of this territory. Only July and August are usually devoid of snowfall, but thunderstorms are more frequent and severe.



So, depending on the village's geographic location, winters are long, and days are short; daylight is only a few hours, or roughly 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. During the winter solstice, nighttime lasts a little more than 17 hours¹⁴.

Temperatures can drop to -40 °C. However, it is not so much the extreme cold that Nunavik inhabitants fear but the famous blizzards—winter storms that disrupt daily life—when it is impossible to go outside and airplanes are grounded. Therefore, trips are often rescheduled.

But living through this cold, along with the ice and snow, is a unique experience, both from a cultural and outdoor perspective. Three national parks are must-sees: Pingualuit, Kuururjuak and, the most recent, Tursujuq. Thanks to the snow, you can learn everything about Inuit culture; snow and ice enthusiasts, and nature lovers and wildlife aficionados will be incredibly happy. The Northern Lights, always impressive, cannot be disregarded. But, to make the most of this area, there is a golden rule: bring clothes designed for the climate.

2.3.2 Housing

In Nunavik, funding for the construction of social housing is the federal government's responsibility. The provincial government covers these units' operating and maintenance costs, and the Makivik Corporation is responsible for managing federal contributions and supervising work. The Kativik Municipal Housing Office provides quality social housing to the population of Nunavik.

Clearly, the government's financial efforts are insufficient, and the housing situation is critical: dwellings are inadequate and overcrowded; they are rapidly deteriorating. The number of housing units required to meet the population's current needs is estimated at 1,500. A short construction season, the high costs of materials and fuel, and the maintenance of the current property inventory represent challenges that exacerbate this housing shortage for Inuit families.

14. Video capsule to watch: *Living far away*
[lieuxderencontre.ca/en/content/enjoying_living_in_the_middle_of_nowhere.html].



The situation is somewhat different for educational professionals who come to work in the villages; this causes frictions that should not be taken lightly. In fact, the school board provides staff housing for individuals whose permanent residence is more than 50 km from their place of employment. These apartments are furnished, heated and lighted; they are not free, but inexpensive, and the rent is deducted from their pay. This amount, considered a taxable employment benefit, is added to the worker's tax receipt.

In addition to the rent, be sure to bring items such as a microwave, coffee maker, radio, television, telephone, and toaster; also dishes, pots and pans, utensils, bedding, shower curtain, hangers, etc., in other words, any item that will make your stay more enjoyable.

Upon arrival at your accommodation, it is recommended that you carefully examine the premises. The school board's policy provides for an inspection report. Taking pictures is a great idea, as this makes it easier to get repairs done, if necessary. This is even more important if you leave the village for summer vacation as the school board may use your accommodation during your absence, in which case you must safely store your personal effects. You can refuse and cover the rent during the summer. Again, it is recommended that you take pictures before leaving, therefore avoiding any problems upon return.

Based on experience, it is advisable to take out personal insurance. To avoid complications, contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) directly that will automatically assign you an insurer^{15,16}.

As there are no aqueduct systems, drinking water and wastewater are transported by tanker truck twice a week, except in Kuujjuarapik, where there are water and sewer systems. However, conditions may cause delivery and collection delays. Water is a scarce commodity in villages, and for the sake of the environment, you must consume it wisely, particularly on weekends.

15. CSQ members benefit from Protections RésAut CSQ. For more information, visit the website: lacsq.org/services/la-personnelle-les-protections-resaut/.

16. Speaking to your union, either the AENQ-CSQ or the SPPOM-CSQ, is also an excellent idea (you will find contact details in the **Your Union** section at the end of this guide).



2.3.3 Transportation

All villages are only accessible by plane. Flights are dependent on the vagaries of the temperature and may be delayed or canceled. Nevertheless, all villages have a hotel, but no food service is available. Therefore, it is a good idea to always travel with enough food. Three trips, including one at the start of the year and another at the end of classes, are covered by the school board. These trips allow travel to a residence located more than 50 kilometres from the village where the person is assigned for a full year. Exceptions may apply depending on the job category; trips can also be used by your dependents¹⁷.

However, it is important to note: the third trip is not eligible for a tax deduction; therefore, make inquiries prior to using it¹⁸. Again, speak to your colleagues.

17. Transportation details are available in the following document: KATIVIK ILISARNILIRINIQ SCHOOL BOARD (2019). *Vivre au Nunavik, Living in Nunavik, Orientation* (August), 47 p.

18. If the purpose of the trip is medical, you may be eligible for a tax deduction, but nothing is provided for in this regard in the school board policy.



2.3.4 Food

In all villages, restaurants are limited. Most villages have a Coop store and often, a Northern Store; encouraging the Coop store, which is owned by the municipality and employs locals, is a good idea as you contribute to the local economy that really needs it. Your gesture will be appreciated. The products are familiar but cost more. It is also possible to buy products from the south. Fresh meat is readily available, since many Inuit hunt and fish every day. A document¹⁹ prepared by the school board provides all relevant information relating to purchases in the south arriving by air freight. Your colleagues can also help you better use these services²⁰.

2.3.5 Health care

The villages are served by either the Ungava Tulattavik Health Centre or the Inuullitsivik Health Centre. There are two hospitals, in Kuujjuaq and Puvirnituk. All villages have a dispensary where free consultations and medical care are offered; these are funded for JBNQA beneficiaries. Priority is not the same for non-beneficiaries. Most villages do not have pharmacy; Your village's dispensary may coordinate with your pharmacy in the south to obtain your medication, but it is not guaranteed. Consequently, it is advised that you bring a first aid kit and all necessary medication and prescriptions for the duration of your stay.

19. To consult the document *Directive concernant le transport de nourriture, des effets personnels et des meubles pour les employés affectés au Nunavik*/Directive concerning the transport of food, personal effects and furniture for employees assigned to Nunavik, use the link kativik.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/TRA-03-Transport-of-Food-and-Personal-Effects-for-employees-E.pdf (Accessed June 18, 2020).

20. For more information, see the Food section on the website: lieuxderencontres.ca/en/content/learning-to-cook.html (Accessed June 10, 2020).



2.3.6 Domestic animals

For some, bringing their pet with them is essential as they are family. A pet can also help counter boredom and isolation. It is possible to bring your pet with you, but there are no veterinarians in Nunavik. Also, your pet's transportation presents certain challenges: you must ensure there is place available for its transport, and this, two months in advance. Even when you have reserved a place for your pet, depending on the number of pets on board, come departure time, it may no longer be available. You should also be aware that there are times when animals are not authorized to travel. Be sure to check with the airline, as these restrictions may shorten your vacation time south. It is also possible to adopt a Nordic dog—available in large numbers in the North; in many cases, this gesture saves a dog's life.

3

Professional integration





3.1 At first, shock

“It is not up to Nunavik, its residents or students to adapt to you. It is you that must make the effort to adapt to their lifestyle and culture²¹.”

This new territory for you to discover is one that has forged its population over the centuries. Traditional subsistence activities and various sources of revenue coexist and weave a network of solidarity in the communities. For you, everything will be new: Inuit perspective on the world, their history, connection to the seasons, language, cultural practices, food, time management, school pace and village organization.

Respect for *Indian Time* is a good example. Undeniably, Inuit relation to time is different than that of southerners. According to Drew Hayden Taylor, Ojibwe author and humorist, *Indian Time* is defined as an enigmatic idea based on a unique cultural relationship with time. In other words, things happen when they happen—a day is not defined by 24 hours—time is limitless, impossible to cut into pieces²².

These disparities between your own cultural references and Inuit way of living and thinking are destabilizing, especially at the beginning. You must not deny this culture shock: it is inevitable. For this reason, those who have already experienced the North say that it is important to prepare yourself. But, once you have lived in Nunavik, you will seek any opportunity to return.

21. Anonymous quote from a questionnaire submitted to members of the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ) to realize this guide.

22. For more information: riic.ca/the-guide/in-the-field/indian-time/ (Accessed June 15, 2020).

Several actions can help tame this new environment and your integration: learning the basics of the language, acquiring knowledge or skills pertaining to Inuit history, cultural perspectives, or contemporary issues²³.

Another likely shock relates to the adaptation to programs adopted by this school board. In this regard, colleague expertise, including teaching and support staff as well as educational advisors, is essential to help you understand the differences and develop teaching practices tailored to this environment.

////// 3.2 Cultural learning

Throughout the weeks, you will adjust to your new environment, understand its ways, and gradually adapt to the village, but mainly to the school and its students. Two challenges must be highlighted. On the one hand, Inuit perceive time as rhythms and cycles, notably that of the seasons. Nevertheless, with all it takes to adapt, they have gradually learned to coexist with the Western notion of time that is based on working time, and their own cyclical notion of time. Therefore, this distinct notion of time must be considered in your daily interactions.

23. At the end of this guide, you will find suggested reading, videos and other documents that will help you better understand the realities of the North.



On the other hand, distinctive traditional Inuit community subsistence activities have considerably disappeared without sufficient new paying jobs being developed to ensure the economic autonomy of all families. Some do well in terms of employment, but not all, and dependence on government aid programs has disruptive consequences on the solidarity between families.

In these villages, where there are few newspapers²⁴, the written word is rarely used. Although many Inuit are literate, their learning methods are more so based on oral and symbolic systems, and Inuit writing is nothing like the leading educational approach applied in school. Social media promote the development of cultural habits that are distinct from traditional practices and customs. As one teacher pointed out, since all villages have Internet access, young people are increasingly online, and many have Facebook accounts.

It is vital to learn about the culture and issues affecting Inuit of Nunavik and the village in which you will be working. Beyond being informed, you need to understand the work environment and be wary of your own biases. Many people who have worked in Inuit villages say that it is important to develop connections outside the workplace and mingle without prejudice. To integrate and socialize, participate in community activities, listen to community radio—broadcasting mainly in Inuktitut and English—join a sports team or a cultural project.

24. Two print media serve Nunavik: *Makivik Magazine*, published by the Makivik Corporation, and *Nunatsiaq News*, a private newspaper for the populations of Nunavut and Nunavik.



3.3 Support from colleagues

“Colleagues who helped me get to know the school and understand life in the North significantly aided my integration²⁵.”

In many areas, the union or colleagues organize welcome activities; these are important as they allow you to meet Inuit and non-Inuit colleagues with whom you will work during the school year. Do not hesitate to attend. In some schools, there is pairing or mentoring between more experienced individuals and newcomers. Such contacts help ease loneliness and counter boredom.

Developing a relationship with colleagues to talk about the challenges of working with young people, and the administrative or technical work required, is especially important. Other people’s experience helps put our own experiences into perspective. Whether it is swapping tips or ideas, these exchanges help you understand the village mindset. These provide a better understanding of parent-student relationships, student services, each staff member’s role, classroom organization, procedures, school administration and maintenance.

25. Anonymous quote from a questionnaire submitted to members of the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ) to realize this guide.



3.4 Support for daily work

In each village, a union delegates representing educational and support staff who are members of the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ) are available. Professional staff can count on the *Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de l'ouest de Montréal* (SPPOM-CSQ). These people can be of great support in helping you obtain key information relating to your set up, your integration into the position, and your work and community rapport.





3.5 Building a trusting relationship with youth

“Youth are the hope of their people²⁶.”

Despite many efforts, the current school system places Inuit students in a cultural environment that is foreign to them. In fact, there is a large gap between the current education system and Inuit apprenticeship systems. In the current system learning depends on the student’s reading and writing skills, whereas in communities, oral transmissions—via the elderly and shared cultural codes—are fundamental and define youth identity²⁷. But even today, despite studies and reports, learning in schools is scarcely based on these codes: books and programs are poles apart from their culture, and the school calendar scarcely aligns with traditional activities²⁸.

To establish student trust, it is essential to give them time to get to know school staff. The effects of the qallunaat (non-Inuit) education personnel turnover rate must not be under-estimated. This makes bonding difficult as every year, students experience a certain abandonment. Many feel that there is no point in bonding with someone who will be leaving. Despite all this, depending on your adaptability and attitude to their reality, over time, you will build trust and bond with them.

You must be aware that **you are not there to change the culture of young Inuit, but allow them to pursue their education and achieve their goals, while respecting their culture**. This is the challenge that awaits you in Nunavik; it can be extremely exciting and inspiring.

26. Anonymous quote from a questionnaire submitted to members of the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ) to realize this guide.

27. Sheila Watt-Cloutier highlights the importance of the report: *Silatunirmut: le chemin de la sagesse*. (WATT-CLOUTIER, Sheila (2019). *Le droit au froid*, Montréal, Écosociété, p. 140.)

28. KAINE, Elisabeth, Jean TANGUAY and Jacques KURTNESS, dir. (2016). *Voix, visages, paysages. Les Premiers Peuples et le XX^e siècle*, La Boîte Rouge VIF and Presses de l’Université Laval, Québec, p. 133-136.

Not all Inuit youth are familiar with their origins, the history of their people, their value system, customs, and language; therefore, it is difficult for them to appreciate their opportunities and acknowledge their potential. The courses and the education system must help restore and strengthen their Inuit pride.

All these factors can influence school attendance.



3.6 School attendance

Dropping out of school is symptomatic of the socioeconomic and cultural difficulties facing Inuit communities. The statistics speak for themselves.

For the 2017-2018 school year, the rate of young people leaving school without a diploma or qualification in general education in Kativik Ilisarniliriniq is 82.4%, which is alarming; in comparison, the Quebec rate is 13.6%. According to data from the Minister of Education and Higher Education (MEES), those leaving school were 86.1% boys and 78.7% girls²⁹.

Beyond statistics, one must understand the historical and contextual factors that explain the societal issues in the villages, and make schooling so challenging for young Inuit. Yet, these young people are brimming with curiosity and dreams, which are often shattered by their living conditions.

29. QUÉBEC. MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR (2020). *Taux de sorties sans diplôme ni qualification en formation générale des jeunes*. [Online], 11 p. [education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/statistiques_info_decisionnelle/Methodologie.pdf] (Accessed June 29, 2020).

The Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services, better known as the Viens Commission, clearly demonstrated that the boarding and residential school systems in Canada and Quebec between 1934 to 1996 contributed to destroying the culture and identity of the youth placed in these schools. These traumas have been passed down from one generation to the next and still affect the villages. The under-education and distrust of parents in the school system influence their children, rendering communication between parents and school staff tricky³⁰.

Several socioeconomic factors contribute to learning difficulties and hinder academic success, but these are not irreversible, even if being successful in school in the North is often a challenge³¹.

Tatiana Garakani, professor and researcher at the *École nationale d'administration publique* (ENAP), conducted research on the academic persistence of young Inuit. According to her:

[Young Inuit], even those who face challenges in school, demonstrate resilience and self-esteem, both at a personal level and in their family and community relationships. These are strengths that we must recognize and on which we can build³².

30. To know more:

Interview with Katherine Sorbey: lieuxderencontre.ca/en/content/crying_in_the_streets_of_montreal/plus/the_shock_of_residential_schools.html;

Interview with Rose-Anna McDougall and Anne Tremblay: lieuxderencontre.ca/en/content/crying_in_the_streets_of_montreal/plus/dissociation.html;

Interview with Irene Otter: lieuxderencontre.ca/en/content/crying_in_the_streets_of_montreal/plus/great_wounds_great_courage.html.

31. NUNAVIK REGIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES with the collaboration of INSTITUT NATIONAL DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE DU QUÉBEC (2011). *Health Profile of Nunavik 2011: Demographic and Socioeconomic Conditions*, [Online]. Government of Québec, 32 p. [inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/1589_portraitsantenunavik2011_conditionsdemosocioecono_va.pdf] (Accessed April 29, 2021).

32. ÉCOLE NATIONALE D'ADMINISTRATION PUBLIQUE [s. d.]. « La persévérance scolaire chez les Inuits », *La recherche, pour mieux servir le public*. [Online]. [enap.ca/ENAP/docs/Portail_etudiant/Etudiants_chercheurs/Tatiana_Garakani_Le_Devoir.pdf] (Accessed June 15, 2020).

Yes, it takes time and constancy to be accepted by students facing all these challenges, and their families, and encourage them to take an interest in their child's education. From an academic standpoint, do not hesitate to think outside the box; establish a flexible learning framework, innovate with alternate educational practices and services that are adapted to their culture—all to develop their sense of belonging to the school. Several school staff recounted the positive effect of cultural activities and sports competitions. For others, it is scientific activities, in particular science fairs, and new technologies that motivate and encourage them to persevere in school.

An open mind and unpretentiousness are excellent tools for a successful integration. Try to develop strategies that link village life and school life; arouse in these young people new talents and discover student role models. Again, exchanging with colleagues is important, as there are positive experiences that can inspire you and lead to a successful school year.



3.7 The words to say it

“Our language is what we are. By preserving our language, we preserve our identity. There are so many languages on this planet, ours is one of them. We cannot lose it³³.”

For members of Inuit villages, the survival of their language is especially important: it is the thread that binds them to the land. This language survives despite all the “suppression and very violent eradication” strategies that these people have endured. Today, Inuktitut is still the leading language of communication; it is vital to preserve it and make all efforts, however small the gesture, to contribute to it.

This language is still alive and maintaining it within the educational context is even more important. Despite a school system that is not theirs, Inuit succeed in refuting attempts to erase their language³⁴.

33. Comments made by Ulaayu Pilurtuut, teacher in Kuujjuaq.

34. Video clips on language and culture:

Richard Mollen: voixvisagespaysages.com/vvp/fr/contenu/innus-ilnus/visite-guidee-de-la-communaute-avec-richard-mollen-partie-2.html?q=mollen;

Tite McKenzie: voixvisagespaysages.com/vvp/fr/contenu/innus-ilnus/visite-guidee-de-la-communaute-avec-tite-mckenzie-partie-10.html.

Your union

To facilitate your professional integration and your daily work, your local union can provide you with information on various work and collective agreement topics. Do not hesitate to contact a union advisor to book an appointment or to talk.



Here are some topics you can obtain information on:

- Pay scales
- Insurance plans
- Information regarding payroll deductions (income taxes, union dues, insurance premiums, retirement plan contributions)
- Employment insurance
- Maternity, paternity, adoption, and sick leaves
- Education and training
- Professional integration program
- School calendar and pedagogical days
- Minimum protections that the employer must grant
- Any occupational health and safety issue
- Professional obligations

If you are educational staff or school support staff, you can contact the *Association des employés du Nord québécois* (AENQ-CSQ), which is affiliated with the *Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement* (FSE-CSQ) and the *Fédération du personnel de soutien scolaire* (FPSS-CSQ):

Association des employés du Nord québécois (AENQ-CSQ)

9405, rue Sherbrooke Est
Montréal (Quebec) H1L 6P3

Telephone: 514 356-8888, ext. 2801

Toll free: 1 800 465-0897

Fax: 514 354-8714

Email: aenq@lacsq.org

Website: aenq.org

If you are professional staff, you can contact the *Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de l'ouest de Montréal* (SPPOM-CSQ) that is affiliated with the *Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec* (FPPE-CSQ).

Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de l'ouest de Montréal (SPPOM-CSQ).

3300, boul. de la Côte-Vertu, suite 204
Saint-Laurent (Quebec) H4R 2B7

Telephone: 514 748-5983

Fax: 514 748-5822

Email: sppom@sppom.qc.ca

Website: fppe.ca/sppom



Your Centrale

Your union is affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec* (CSQ), your central labour body. The CSQ groups several education and public service employee federations:

- *Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec* (FPPE-CSQ)
- *Fédération du personnel de l'enseignement privé* (FPEP-CSQ)
- *Fédération des enseignantes et enseignants de cégep* (FEC-CSQ)
- *Fédération du personnel de soutien de l'enseignement supérieur* (FPSES-CSQ)
- *Fédération des syndicats de l'action collective* (FSAC-CSQ)
- *Regroupement des unités catégorielles* (RUC)
- *Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement* (FSE-CSQ)
- *Fédération du personnel de soutien scolaire* (FPSS-CSQ)
- *Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges* (FPPC-CSQ)
- *Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec* (FIPEQ-CSQ)
- *Fédération de la Santé du Québec* (FSQ-CSQ)
- *Fédération de la recherche et de l'enseignement universitaire du Québec* (FREUQ-CSQ)

The CSQ also negotiates with the government on issues common to public and parapublic sector jobs, such as wages, insurance and pension plans, parental rights, and regional disparities.

The CSQ has set up a youth committee to represent it. This committee's mandate is to support the emergence of a dynamic union succession and promote the adoption of practices likely to increase the involvement of young people within the CSQ. It also monitors government policies towards young people. Meetings (youth networks) are organized by the CSQ.

The CSQ has created other committees and networks in which you can participate to represent your local union. Whether you are interested in political action, the status of women, democracy or environmental issues, occupational health and safety, or sexual diversity and gender identity, you will be able to discuss these issues with other CSQ members.

For more information, visit the Centrale website (lacsq.org).

Facebook: [@lacsq](https://www.facebook.com/lacsq)

Instagram: [lacsq](https://www.instagram.com/lacsq)

Twitter: [@csq_centrale](https://twitter.com/csq_centrale)

YouTube: [Centrale des syndicats du Québec \(CSQ\)](https://www.youtube.com/Centrale%20des%20syndicats%20du%20Qu%C3%A9bec%20(CSQ))

To find out more



To read

- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, and MIKANA (2019). « *Tu n'as pas l'air autochtone !* » et autres préjugés. Booklet available at accueil@amnistie.ca. Also available online: amnistie.ca/sinformer/publications/autres/tu-nas-pas-lair-autochtone-autres-prejuges.
- CENTRALE DES SYNDICATS DU QUÉBEC (2012). *Sociocultural and political changes in the Inuit Nation of Québec* (September), 9 p. Publication available via the CSQ Documentation Centre under D12342-A.
- KAINE, Elisabeth, Jean TANGUAY and Jacques KURTNES, dir. (2016). *Voix, visages, paysages. Les Premiers Peuples et le XXI^e siècle*, La Boîte Rouge VIF and Presses de l'Université Laval, Québec, 248 p.
- LEPAGE, Pierre (2019). *Mythes et réalités sur les peuples autochtones*, Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse and Institut Tshakapesh, 180 p. Also available online: cdpdj.qc.ca/Publications/Mythes-Realites.pdf.
- SAUL, John (2015). *Le grand retour: le réveil autochtone*, Montréal, Boréal, 336 p.
- WATT-CLOUTIER, Sheila (2019). *Le droit au froid*, Montréal, Écosociété, 360 p.
- A series of CSQ articles on Inuit and Cree realities in education. Available at: magazine.lacsq.org > Magazine > Société > Autochtones.
- Welcome to Nunavik! nunavik-tourism.com/index.htm.



To watch

- Campagne Prof, ma fierté! in Inuit territory
facebook.com/profmafierte/videos/2005340769477351/
facebook.com/profmafierte/videos/1991026580908770/
facebook.com/profmafierte/videos/1991021037575991/
facebook.com/profmafierte/videos/1991002960911132/
- Campagne L'école a besoin de soutien
youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRP-jOUtFOZVnwgEwKKRC4IKaNtkgs-Jk

Le lien fourni dans le PDF
annoté pour NAMES FOR
SNOW était le même que
pour THROAT SINGING
Nous avons cherché le bon
lien sur le site

- **Espaces autochtones** is a Radio-Canada site designed to reveal, explain and understand Indigenous realities. An inclusive site to obtain information, express yourself, and debate.

ici.radio-canada.ca/espaces-autochtones

facebook.com/espacesautochtones

- **Wapikoni mobile** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to distribute films and educate audiences about the issues facing First Nations and Inuit by promoting their rich, and, too often, overlooked culture. Some titles include:

Names For Snow

- Rebecca Thomassie is Inuk. We follow her on the territory near Kangirsuk to learn 52 ways of saying snow in Inuktitut.

wapikoni.ca/movies/names-for-snow-les-noms-de-la-neige

Throat Singing in Kangirsuk

- Eva and Manon are throat singers from Kangirsuk, a small village in Nunavik. Montage interspersed with images by Johnny Nassak featuring the four seasons in Kangirsuk.

wapikoni.ca/films/katatjatuuk-kangirsumi-chants-de-gorges-a-kangirsuk#lid=828f2693-0c4d-402a-bfc9-19ccf0bc06&videotype=vimeo

Kinauvunga (Qui suis-je ? / Qui je suis)

- Like many young Inuit, Charlie shares his time between Montréal and Kuujuaq. He explores his Inuk identity through the circus arts and wants to give back to his community.

wapikoni.ca/films/kinauvunga-qui-suis-je-qui-je-suis

What Would You do If You Were Me

- Secondary 3, Jaanimmarik students speak out about bullying, addiction, and suicide in a music video.

wapikoni.ca/films/what-would-you-do-if-you-were-me#

lid=828f2693-0c4d-402a-bfc9-19ccf0bc06&videotype=vimeo



To discover

- **Eye on the Arctic** is a circumpolar co-production created and coordinated by Radio Canada International. It brings together print, radio, television, and web journalists from circumpolar countries to better describe the reality of communities and people directly affected by global warming.
rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/about-us/
- **Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada** presents Indigenous perspectives, much older than the nation itself, shared through maps, artistic creations, history, and culture. It was produced by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society in partnership with the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Métis Nation, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, and Indspire.
indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/



Centrale des syndicats
du Québec