

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the Transformation of High School Education in Nunavut

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Abstract

Rapid economic, ecological, and sociocultural changes have serious implications for Inuit communities in the Arctic. Education can provide Inuit with a range of coping skills to adapt to these challenges, such as making more informed decisions, and managing environmental and socio-economic change. Understanding the factors that create educational success for young Inuit will enable school and community leaders to transform schools into meaningful learning environments that provide leadership development so that skilled graduates can become the next generation of Arctic stewards. Our overall goal is to uncover and share successful practices and strategies that contribute to the improvement of high school education in Nunavut. The vision of Inuit education led by Inuit and based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, Inuit ways of knowing and being, is moving forward through recent legislative and policy changes in Nunavut and the implementation of the National Strategy on Inuit Education. Our research explores the changes occurring both in Nunavut high schools, and in the lived experiences of research participants. Over the funding cycle, our project has collected stories of Inuit and non-Inuit school leaders who supported young people as they navigate issues of identity in the modern world, and captured the current perspectives of Inuit youth who have experienced high school education. The findings reveal how Nunavut youth are successfully negotiating extraordinary changes in their culture and society and inform us about the future of the Arctic which will be in the hands of these young people. To ensure that the results reach as many people as possible, our team has created bilingual documentary videos (Inuktitut/English and Inuinnaqtun/English). The documentaries, ‘Going Places: Preparing Inuit High School Students for a Changing, Wider World; Alluriarniq- Stepping Forward: Youth Perspectives on High School Education; and Millie’s Dream: Revitalizing Inuinnaqtun’ have been heavily promoted via social and print media and distributed extensively across Nunavut and to Inuit organizations in the South. Results are reaching target audiences, the education

stakeholders such as political leaders and policy-makers, and parents, principals, community members, and students. To provide contextual information and statistical profiles that support the interview data, our team has also completed ten-year historical and statistical reports of four high schools in our research communities of Pangnirtung, Clyde River, Rankin Inlet, and Kugluktuk. These reports focus on grades 10, 11, and 12. They reveal information specific to each school and highlight educational indicators such as school attendance, teacher retention, and graduation rates. This project involves a partnership between the Department of Education within the Government of Nunavut, and the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities, which is a territorial organization that represents 26 community groups that represent parental voices in education. The research program emphasizes the involvement of Inuit researchers and community members, responding to community priorities, and returning all the data to communities in ways that communicate the findings and inform all stakeholders.

Key Messages

- In the past, a lack of robust research related to school achievement indicators presented serious challenges for policy-makers, school leaders, parents, and communities in Nunavut in their efforts to make informed decisions about high school education.
- Research results reveal effective practices and strategies that contribute to improving students’ success in Nunavut high schools and enable policy makers, schools, and community groups to make informed decisions.
- Sharing data in ways that reach Nunavut community members ensures that research results reach a wide audience and have an impact across the territory.
- Bilingual documentary videos are a widely accessible medium that can reach many people and engage Inuit in valuable discussions about research-based changes in high school education.

- A new documentary video, *Millie's Dream*, highlights a key educational leader in Nunavut, Millie Kuliktana, revealing her vision and hope for the future revitalization of the Inuit language, Inuinnaqtun.
- Historical and statistical reports on four Nunavut high schools reveal patterns related to education in each research community and provide longitudinal indicators of school success not previously available.
- Inuit researchers and students are integrally involved in the high school research, providing capacity building and opportunities for student growth.
- Knowledge generated during an international exchange between Inuit and Sami educators has been analyzed and published.

Objectives

1. To conduct research on high school achievement that is community driven and identifies strategies and approaches that can improve high school achievement in Nunavut.
2. To ensure Inuit communities benefit from the new knowledge by sharing research findings in an innovative way that is accessible to all Nunavummiut, in bilingual documentary videos.
3. To contribute to the limited literature on Inuit education by disseminating research findings in reports, articles and peer-reviewed publications co-authored with Inuit educational researchers in Nunavut.
4. To sustain and develop the capacity of Inuit and Northern educational researchers and leaders as they document, analyse, reflect on, and write about policy-based changes and innovations in high school education in Nunavut.
5. To prepare and deliver presentations developed by and with Inuit researchers at a variety of academic, public, professional, and community venues.

Introduction

The state of Nunavut education is visible in school statistics that reveal low attendance and graduation rates, low levels of staff retention, and a lack of Inuit teachers, particularly in high schools (Nunavut Tunngavit, 2010-2011, p. 13). Education in the new territory has come under scrutiny in the recent Office of the Auditor General's Report (2013) and much anecdotal evidence in the media about the prevalence of social promotion, low academic standards, and the lack of instruction in an Inuit language during high school grades. These issues are all cause for concern. However, recent public policy developments in Nunavut have created opportunities for Inuit and their non-Inuit colleagues to build a school system based on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ), traditional Inuit social values and knowledge. The use of IQ in schools is now mandated, but implementing corresponding change takes time, and though improvements are gradually taking place, the current education system is not adequately addressing students' needs or legislative requirements.

Long-term educational change requires strategic, Inuit-led decisions and actions that improve schools and increase parental engagement in children's education. Extended Inuit families continue to feel the impact of the residential school era and low levels of education create cycles of dependency on social assistance and create poverty when the cost of living is very high. For parents with negative memories of school, one of the current challenges is to demonstrate the value of education in the lives of Inuit in Northern communities. Working collaboratively with parents, represented by the Coalition of District Education Authorities of Nunavut and Inuit researchers, this high school research is helping to re-build parental supports for education.

Inuit education has become a key priority across Canada. Under the leadership of Mary Simon a National Committee on Inuit Education (NCIE), representing the four regions in Inuit Nunangat, has developed and is implementing the ground-breaking

National Strategy on Inuit Education that focusses on strategic priorities for change. Improving educational outcomes was described by Simon as, “The greatest social policy challenge of our time” (NCIE, 2011, p. 6). Yet, “There is almost no data or evidence supporting any of the major policy shifts in Inuit education” (NCIE, 2011, p. 90). This lack of data limits the ability of policy-makers to make informed decisions about education.

In Nunavut, policy makers are most concerned about education. Recently elected Premier, Peter Taptuna, has placed education as a top priority in the new government, because “The situation that we’re in now is rather dire” (Weber, 2013). Nunavummiut realize that education can start to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life, yet exactly how to improve student success remains a complex issue that is now being addressed at the high school level in this research.

This research indicates that improvements in the quality of education, and as a result the success rates of Nunavut high school students, have taken place when committed educators, parents, community members, and students work collaboratively together (Tompkins, 1998). However, given the high turnover of educational leaders it is unlikely that the practices and approaches uncovered in this research were shared widely enough within the education community to have a long-term impact on educational policies and practices.

The mandate of this project is to identify best practices in Inuit education at the high school level, to share them widely and in a way that ensures the people of Nunavut are the main beneficiaries of the research results. In pursuing this goal, our team is committed to increasing the research skills and knowledge of Inuit educational leaders and researchers who must lead change in the future. To achieve results that impact policy, this research is conducted in partnership with the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities (CNDEA), and the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut. The project, and the approach that is being taken with respect to

the research, is now providing results and findings that can start to make a significant contribution to Inuit education policy in Canada, supporting the National Strategy on Inuit Education and leading to improvements in the educational levels and social well-being of Inuit.

Activities

Timeframe and Study Area: Interviews were conducted in June 2013. Analysis of existing data interviews in Clyde River, Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, and Kugluktuk, Nunavut took place throughout the year.

Research: Data collection in the current year was focused on building upon the existing body of interview data from the 2010-2013. Based on findings emerging from interviews with 19 young people for the documentary, *Stepping Forward* (Walton, Wheatley, & Sandiford, 2012), additional interviews as well as historical research took place to produce a video on language revitalization. Resources were also used to finalize and publish the ten-year historical and statistical reports from Rankin Inlet high school, and Kugluktuk high school (McGregor, 2014).

- Advance copies of the documentary video, *Stepping Forward*, were sent to participants and partners prior to the territory-wide launch.
- A press release for *Stepping Forward* was sent to all news providers including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in Iqaluit, Nunatsiaq News, and the Northern News Service.
- A website was created (<http://nunavut.uei.ca/content/full-interviews>) and 19 full-length research interviews were posted online on both YouTube.com and Isuma.TV.
- On May 30, 2013, *Stepping Forward* was premiered at the Astro Theatre in Iqaluit, Nunavut to an audience of community members, including representatives from partners in research, Coalition of Nunavut DEAs and Nunavut Department of Education.

- Research quotes and comments on Stepping Forward and high school education in Nunavut were shared on Facebook and Twitter.
- Interviews conducted with Millie Qitupana Kuliktana in 2012-13 were transcribed and analyzed for a new documentary video project.
- Research on language policy and the history of education in Kugluktuk, Nunavut took place to support video production.
- Interviews with Edna Elias, Commissioner of Nunavut and sister of Millie Kuliktana, were conducted, transcribed and translated from Inuinnaqtun to English to provide a background for new documentary.
- Partner organizations received advance copies of the documentary video, *Millie's Dream: Revitalizing Inuinnaqtun* (Arnaquq, Walton, Kuliktana, Wheatley & Sandiford, 2013), from 1000 copies duplicated for distribution.
- A box-set of all DVD documentaries produced with current ArcticNet funding was completed, with 1000 copies to be widely distributed and including: *Going Places* (Walton, McAuley, MacDougall, O'Leary, Ross, & Sandiford, 2011); *Stepping Forward*, and *Millie's Dream*.
- Copies of *Millie's Dream* will be mailed by our Coalition partners to the 182 DEA representatives in all 26 Nunavut communities.
- *Millie's Dream* will be mailed to every school and post-secondary institution in Nunavut from the elementary to the college level, and to all Inuit organizations in Canada.
- *Millie's Dream* will be launched, and a press release distributed to media during Language Week in Nunavut, February 17-24, 2014.
- Research data from the knowledge exchange between two Northern communities, Jokkmokk, Sweden and Clyde River, Nunavut was analyzed and a book chapter was written and published (Thomas, I. Hainnu, Kuoljok, & J. Hainnu, 2013).
- The reports on the statistical and historical profiles of high school education in both Rankin Inlet (McGregor, 2013a) and Kugluktuk, Nunavut (McGregor, 2013b) were finalized, enabling the full report on four communities to be widely circulated.
- The research team focused on increasing the skills, knowledge and research capacity of Masters students and team members working at the post-doctoral, doctoral and master's levels.

Results

Documentary Video Sharing- Stepping Forward

The documentary video *Stepping Forward* (Walton et al., 2012), which shared the candid opinions of 19 youth in Nunavut as they reflected on their experiences in high school education, was heavily promoted early in the 2013-14 funding cycle. The video, and the interview testimony of youth from across the three regions of Nunavut, triggered conversations about the research results in Inuit communities. The dissemination of the film was supported by a bilingual marketing strategy, with graphic designs that included images of key participants, and Northern imagery (Figure 1). Promotional kits were sent to key stakeholder groups and to every school in Nunavut, with copies of the DVD and bilingual full-color posters to announce screenings of the documentary video.

Color advertisements for the film were placed in Northern magazines, *Above and Beyond* and *Up Here*, the in-flight publications of the two major airlines servicing Nunavut. The total of number of ads in circulation was approximately 76,000 (See Table 1).

During the film launch *Stepping Forward* received positive media attention from CBC television and radio and *Nunatsiaq News*. This publicity increased the awareness of the Nunavut community about the current research findings of the project.

Table 2. Views of each research documentary by host website, and total views.

Title	Language	Isuma.TV /Nunavut-Education	YouTube.com/ Nunavut Education	YouTube.com/ UPEI	Total Views	
<i>Going Places (2011)</i>	Inuktitut w/English Subtitles	1344	766	666	2,776	
<i>Stepping Forward (2012)</i>	English	899	503	-	1,402	2,089
	Inuktitut	556	131	-	687	
<i>Millie's Dream (2013)</i>	English & Inuinnaqtun	610	203	-	813	

Providing Equal Access to Research Findings

Our team has demonstrated a strong commitment to communicating research findings in an open and accessible way to all Nunavut communities and educational stakeholders. Sharing findings in ways that allow all Nunavut communities to benefit regardless of their remote locations, is one of our goals. This goal was achieved through a research dissemination strategy for reaching Inuit. The strategy included two successful approaches.

1. Videos were posted on an Internet site optimized for viewing on low bandwidth, Isuma.TV. Videos posted on this site were watched more than those posted on Southern based sites such as YouTube. Comparing the “Nunavut Education” channels on both video hosting sites, the videos were viewed:

- Twice as often on Isuma.TV: *Going Places* and *Stepping Forward* (English version), were each viewed 1.8 times for every 1 view on YouTube
- Three times more often on Isuma.TV: *Millie's Dream*, was viewed 3.0 times for every 1 time on YouTube
- Four times more often on Isuma.TV: *Stepping Forward* (Inuktitut version), was viewed 4.2 times for every 1 time on YouTube

2. Videos were shared in DVD format, to ensure that interested individuals did not need to use personal internet bandwidth to view results. Sharing video with communities required large orders of documentary videos to be shipped great distances to ensure that remote communities as well as regional centers had equal access to the research findings. To date the 5,500 copies of our films are in circulation (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of copies of DVD documentaries in circulation.

Film	Single DVD	Box-Set DVD	Total Circulation
<i>Going Places (2011)</i>	500	1000	= 1500
<i>Stepping Forward (2012)</i>	1000	1000	= 2000
<i>Millie's Dream (2013)</i>	1000	1000	= 2000

Open Access to Information

To foster communication with Nunavut communities and to improve the integrity and accountability of our research, and with the permission of participants who previously received and approved copies of their individual interviews, the full-length research interviews conducted for *Stepping Forward* (2012) were posted on the UPEI Nunavut research website and edited full-length research interviews were posted online. Interviews were uploaded to YouTube, and a webpage was created with images of each participant (University of Prince Edward Island, 2013). To date, the most clicked interview is with a young man in Kugluktuk, Nunavut (99 hits).

Identifying Specific Student Supports

Further analysis of research interview data from 19 youth from Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, Kugluktuk and students living in Ottawa was conducted. Additional findings identified the kinds of student support required for educational success in high school. Presented at the ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting (Wheatley, 2013), the research revealed that Nunavut students identified three different areas of support: personal supports promoting student well-being and identity; cultural supports to strengthen students' Inuit language and culture; and educational supports specific to students' individual life goals and academic skills. The last encompasses life goals ranging from careers in the trades to attending post-secondary education to raising families in the North as well as to improving academic writing and research skills. The data supporting these findings are now being more deeply analysed to identify, substantiate and verify common themes.

Social Media Engagement in Education

Alexander McAuley (Network Investigator) and Kerri Wheatley (MEd Student, UPEI), used social media platforms Facebook and Twitter to engage youth in an online discussion. The goal of the discussion was to use the research data on Nunavut high schools to spark conversations about education and to compare individual experiences with the views shared in the film *Stepping Forward*. This online discussion was not successful. The main lesson learned from this experience was the importance of timing when engaging key stakeholders in any educational research. This discussion aimed to engage youth in the late spring, when summer is being anticipated in Nunavut and schools are to closing. The researchers learned that it is better to engage youth before spring activities begin to take place in communities. The unsuccessful experience will help research team-members to plan more effectively for future research.

Statistical Reports on High Schools in Nunavut

Heather McGregor (PhD candidate at UBC) conducted a rigorous analysis of existing school data in Pangnirtung, Clyde River, Rankin Inlet and Kugluktuk to build histories and statistical profiles of each of the four high schools in our research sites. The last two reports were finalized this year, for Rankin Inlet (McGregor, 2013a) and Kugluktuk (McGregor, 2013b). These historical reports add to the literature from Pangnirtung and Clyde River (McGregor, 2011), previously completed as part of this grant. Analysis of descriptive educational statistics over a ten-year period of time were used to construct an overview of student success at schools from a number of perspectives including, but not limited to, attendance rates, enrolment, and graduation rates (Figure 3). For example, by comparing grade 12 enrollment and graduation rates it is possible to determine the level of success the school achieved in supporting students through to completion of their education.

Results show the unique contexts of each school. Kugluktuk high school (KHS), for example, has been implementing a program focussed on preparing students for careers in the trades. This program has been successful at improving attendance rates of participants; Grade 10 students in 2006-07 attended 47.1% of instructional time, whereas the attendance of

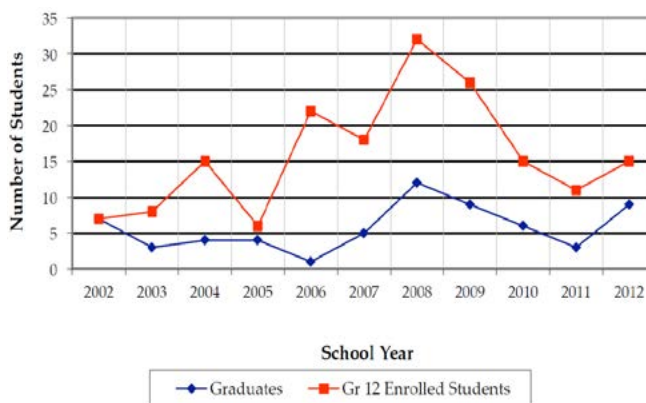


Figure 3. Comparison of graduates and grade 12 enrollment by year at Kugluktuk High School [KHS] (McGregor, 2013b.).

students enrolled in the pre-trades cohort was 74.1% (McGregor 2013b). The students of this special cohort-model program were also less likely to leave school before graduation: only 15% of the pre-trades students in grades 11 and 12 had dropped out, compared to the 65% of students in the regular curriculum (McGregor, 2013b).

One key finding from Kugluktuk and Rankin Inlet identified by teachers and supported by this data is the existence of a critical turning point in grade 10 when as many as 50% of students become disengaged from school. At the high school in Rankin Inlet, Maani Ulujuk, on average 67 students enroll in grade 10 each year but only 32 students graduate annually (McGregor, 2013a). In Rankin Inlet there has been a general trend toward increasing rates of student enrollment in the final two years of high school (Figure 4).

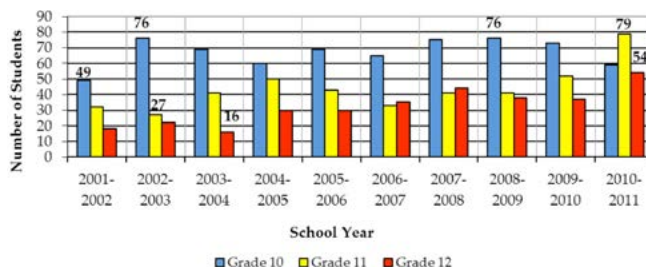


Figure 4. Enrollment at Maani Ulujuk School, with slowly increasing enrollment in grade 11 and 12.

Extending Research to International Partners and Researchers

A valuable international knowledge exchange related to culture and education took place when Jan-Erik Kuoljok, a skilled Sami teacher, craftsperson, and reindeer herder, travelled from Jokkmokk, Sweden to Clyde River, Nunavut in March-April 2013 to share his skills and learn about Inuit education. The results of this exchange have been published (Thomas, I. Hainnu, Kuoljok & J. Hainnu 2013).

Sharing research findings within Nunavut was a top priority for the research team, but extending the scope of our research more broadly to the international community is also important. Suzanne Thomas, a Network Investigator who has recently retired, and Fiona Walton (Lead Researcher) have now established and extended research relationships between Inuit educators and researchers in Nunavut and northern Sweden.

Increasing Research Skills of Team Members

The commitment to improving the research skills of participants and research team members enabled Naullaq Arnaquq, a Nunavut PhD student, to develop the skills required to produce, write the script, and narrate the documentary video *Millie's Dream*. Naullaq also presented a paper on her research for *Millie's Dream* at the ArcticNet Scientific Meeting (ASM) in December 2013.

In December 2013 the team supported our research partner at the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs, Nikki Eegeesiak, to co-present at the ArcticNet Annual Scientific Conference (Walton & Eegeesiak, 2013). Her first presentation at an academic conference, this resulted in the development of confidence related to presentation of research findings Nikki was also recognized in the Arctic Inspiration prize for her efforts to engage and mobilize parents in Nunavut, a process supported by the ArcticNet high schools research team. Also at the ASM, MEd student Kerri

Wheatley (2013) made her first oral presentation on high school success factors.

Research results will continue to be shared at the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education (WIPCE) 2014 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Inuit researcher, MEd Graduate, and Director of Language and Culture at Nunavut Arctic College, Louise Flaherty, and Kerri Wheatley will present findings related to high school education in Nunavut.

Heather McGregor (Doctoral Candidate, UBC) will also present ArcticNet funded findings on historical and statistical case study research at the International Arctic Social Sciences Association Eighth International Congress, in Prince George, BC in the fall of 2014.

Discussion

Supporting the National Strategy on Inuit Education and Government of Nunavut Priorities

One of the ten recommendations in the National Strategy on Inuit Education states, "A new era in Inuit education needs the capacity to collect data and evidence, and analyze and share the results to inform policy and decision making" (NCIE, 2011, p. 14). The research team addresses this recommendation through mixed methods research that provides qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the key issues and priority goals in the Strategy. The current research explored and identified specific supports that promote high school success and directly and positively affect access to post-secondary education for Nunavut high school graduates. In addition, it identified limitations to success within high school education. Successful access to post-secondary education by Inuit students depends on high school completion. Our data to this point suggests that successful completion of high school may be correlated with the extent to which students can connect personal visions for their futures

with the specific and explicit opportunities offered by high school programs. Exploring and understanding the factors underlying this possible correlation relevant to the success of high school education in Nunavut, will make a significant contribution to the field and support a key priority of the Nunavut Government as well as that of ITK and any industry or business seeking to be successful in Nunavut.

Using Community Based Participatory Research

The National Strategy on Inuit Education called for increased research in Inuit education, but also recommends changes in the way research takes place with Inuit and in Arctic communities. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Amaujaq National Centre for Inuit Education hosted a research meeting in Iqaluit, February 19-21, 2013, with Inuit representatives from the four regions, and a group of researchers. While attending this meeting Fiona Walton (Network Investigator) was able to validate that current methodological approaches used in the high school research support the five recommended principles expressed in the research report:

1. Respect for IQ principals at all stages of the research from design to dissemination;
2. Development of the capacity of Inuit researchers;
3. Investigation of topics important to Inuit communities;
4. Adaption of the project to incorporate community input; and
5. The need for researchers to acknowledge any personal conflicts of interest to research (Amaujaq National Centre for Inuit Education, 2013).

By using decolonizing methodologies and community-based participatory action research to produce four case studies, our team has worked towards furthering research that is respectful towards Inuit communities and based on reciprocal relationships with Inuit communities and researchers.

Research Dissemination Using Documentary Videos

Scope of Knowledge Dissemination

The decision to make bilingual documentary videos in Inuktitut and English was based on the importance of reaching community members, parents, students and educators when sharing and disseminating research findings. Producing documentary films with research is a demanding and time-consuming process, requiring constant negotiation as bilingual production develops. Creating bilingual research products takes more time than creating unilingual English publications, yet it has the dual benefit of its potential to reach a much greater percentage of the target audience of Nunavut stakeholders as well as its response to the legislative requirement for bilingual materials in Nunavut. Sharing research via video is also proving to be more culturally appropriate for Inuit who have long-used oral history as a means of relaying and sharing stories. Filmmakers like Zacharias Kunuk have already established a rich tradition in terms of using video to reach Inuit, Canadian, and international audiences. As indicated previously total Internet viewings of the three documentary videos completed to date is 5,678. In addition a total of 5,500 DVD copies of the films are in circulation across Nunavut and elsewhere. The numbers of people who have been engaged, coupled with the ability to reach a non-scientific audience means that important messages about Nunavut high school education are being widely heard and viewed.

Videos Posted Online

Sharing research knowledge online helped to ensure data were accessible to remote communities in Nunavut. Ratios showed that when videos were posted on sites accessible in the North such as Isuma.TV, people were more likely to view the video than when it was posted on Youtube.com. These results should encourage future researchers to take internet bandwidth limitations into consideration when designing their research mobilization plans. Posting full-length research interviews online shared the broader scope of the research with communities. As well as being consistent with current SSHRC policy, open access to research information gathered in

Nunavut may become standard practice in the future, as it has a strong ethical base that involves returning the data to the participants and the communities. Our research team encourages this practice. Total views of the raw interview footage reveal that community members are also interested in accessing the original project data.

Highlighting Local Leaders to Engage Stakeholders

Millie Kuliktana was nearing the end of her long career in formal and informal education when Millie's Dream was produced. Analysis of interviews with youth in 2012-13 indicated that high school graduates regretted that they no longer spoke their Inuit language fluently. In 2013-14 the research team drew on the skills of Naullaq Arnaquq, a UPEI Inuit PhD student who is an expert in Inuit languages, to focus research on language revitalization efforts in Nunavut. The Inuinnaqtun language, though in decline, still has speakers, like Millie, who are passionate about its preservation and continuity in Inuit communities in western Nunavut. The documentary reminds the community of the value of ancestral languages in today's changing world. Video views are high to date even prior to its formal launch. The current popularity of the video also pays tribute to Millie's status as a community role model for decades and acknowledges her expertise and contribution as an Inuk who applied her knowledge to making change.

Historical and Statistical Reports

Historical and statistical reports may not engage community members, but they do provide detailed snapshots of educational indicators and outcomes over a ten-year period of time in four different high schools across Nunavut. These reports have synthesized significant amounts of data to create a baseline never before available in Nunavut. In the future these reports may demonstrate the importance of establishing more rigorous data tracking systems in schools that will the development and implementation of evidence-based policies and practices by the Department of Education and DEAs to support improved student success in Nunavut high schools.

Conclusion

Education is a key determinant of health; raising high school graduation rates leads to improvements in the overall health and well-being of Inuit in Nunavut. Documenting and analyzing the opinions of Inuit education stakeholders provides valuable findings that address the priorities of the National Strategy on Inuit Education and the Government of Nunavut. Improving access to research results based on Inuit perspectives on education through bilingual documentary video reaches a wider audience.

Enhancing research skills of Inuit educators and leaders facilitates conversations about educational improvement in Inuit Nunangat, builds the capacity of emerging community-based Inuit research leaders and creates a long-term ArcticNet legacy in Nunavut. Research in the extended project will engage stakeholders in discussions of the findings and their impact on educational change in Nunavut. The research has identified several factors that contribute to success for high school students and considering how these contribute to long-term change in the system requires careful interpretation, analysis and strategic consideration in consultation with Inuit educational leaders. Stepping back to consider the findings with a group of Northern educational researchers and identify the specific approaches and strategies can enable high school teachers to provide supports identified by Inuit students in this research project. By continuing to engage Inuit researchers who were closely involved in this research over the last four years, and expanding the team to include experienced Inuit and non-Inuit high school educators in an extended dialogue, the stage is being set for the development more specific findings based on the research results.

The overall purpose of this research was not to speak on behalf of Nunavummiut, but to present research findings in an accessible way that educates and informs a wide audience and generates important findings related to the achievement of success in high schools in Nunavut.

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This research was conducted successfully because of the commitment and support from the Coalition of District Education Authorities (CNDEA) and particularly Nikki Egeesiak (Executive Director) and Katherine Trumper (Coalition Researcher). Thank you to the dedicated individuals from the DEAs in communities that supported this research and continue to encourage the research team.

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We would like to thank the principals, teachers, DEA members, parents, students, and community members in the four Nunavut research communities who extended such a warm welcome and provided us with kind hospitality and interesting dialogue related to high school education. We are particularly grateful to Lena Metuq and Cathy Lee, who were co-principals in the high school in Pangnirtung when this research started; to Jukeepa Hainnu who was the principal of the school in Clyde River until January 2012; to Jesse Payne, Principal of the High School in Rankin Inlet; and to Gary Kennedy who was principal of the High School in Kugluktuk and has now moved to Igloolik. Without this support provided for our research initiatives, none of this work would have been possible.

Our in-community researchers were the key facilitators of the success of this ArcticNet funded project. A particular thanks this year to Millie Kuliktana for sharing her vision and passion for Inuit language, as well as her hopes for the future of Inuit education in Nunavut.

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