



Inuit Education Summit

13 – 15 February 2018 in Nuuk, Greenland.

Location: The Cultural Center ‘*Katuaq*’

Hosted by ICC Greenland

***Report prepared by Inuit Circumpolar Council, ICC Greenland
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INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the important role that education plays in economic, cultural, social, and political development of a people, and the critical education gaps faced by Inuit today, the delegates of the 2014 Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) General Assembly mandated the ICC Executive Council to hold an *Inuit Education Summit* prior to the next quadrennial ICC General Assembly in July 2018.

Inuit pedagogical experts and practitioners from across the circumpolar region (Chukotka, Alaska, Canada and Greenland) met for three days in Nuuk, Greenland to deal with the urgent formal education gap facing their communities, and to share successful pedagogical approaches with each other. Government ministers, Inuit political leaders, youth, and various observers also attended the summit.

At the conclusion of the three-day summit, ICC was asked to prepare this report to assist each country office of ICC to review the ideas generated and outcomes developed with Inuit educators and leaders from within their respective jurisdictions. As noted in the final outcome document, found at the end of this report, it was expected that each ICC country office “*work with their respective boards, memberships, and educational institutions to prepare Inuit-focussed recommendations to the next ICC General Assembly in Utqiaġvik (Barrow), Alaska in July 2018.*”

At the outset of the Inuit Education Summit, the following was established to guide the participants:

WHY ARE WE TOGETHER, WHAT DO WE HOPE TO ATTAIN AT THE END OF THE THREE DAYS?

Objective: To identify successes and gaps specific to Inuit pedagogy, language, and knowledge transfer systems within the formal education systems, as well as ones that are culturally/community based across the Inuit Circumpolar countries.

Expected outcomes included: **1)** Report on the status of Inuit education in the circumpolar context. **2)** Strengthen Inuit pedagogy and language through knowledge exchange with other Inuit circumpolar regions. **3)** Establish Inuit Education network systems to collaborate on desired outcomes in Inuit education through continued communication, evaluation, monitoring, and potentially establish a data sharing system on the status of Inuit education at a global level.

The Kitigaaryuit Declaration of July 24, 2014 Articles 43-45 relates to ‘*Education and Langue*’.

- 43. Mandate** ICC leadership to promote educational exchanges, share best educational practices, and host a summit of experts and practitioners from across the circumpolar Arctic to recommend ways to develop or enhance culturally appropriate curriculum;
- 44. Support** training, recruitment, and retention programs for Inuit in all professions;
- 45. Mandate** ICC leadership to continue its promotion and leadership of projects and initiatives to strengthen the Inuit language, including the *Assessing, Monitoring and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages* project through the Arctic Council;

SUMMIT, DAY 1 – TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2018

Welcome by Hjalmar Dahl, President, ICC Greenland

Hjalmar Dahl welcomed all participants and highlighted the importance of the Summit's focus on education. He expressed his wish for a productive summit and his hope that the participants would enjoy meeting old and new acquaintances.

Lighting of the Qulleq by Tukummeq Qaavigaq, Elder from Avanersuaq, assisted by ICC Chair Okalik Egeesiak

Tukummeq Qaavigaq described the ways in which the traditional Inuit oil lamp – *qulleq* – has been used as a source of heat and light, and how the oil can be obtained from many different animals, such as muskox, caribou, narwhal and fish. Okalik Egeesiak lit the *qulleq* to much applause. Okalik Egeesiak expressed appreciation for the spiritual experience of lighting such a *qulleq* for the first time, and for being able to be present with many friends.



ICC Greenland President, Hjalmar Dahl welcoming the participants to the Inuit Education Summit.

Before the opening remarks by ICC Chair Okalik Egeesiak, she assisted Tukummeq Qaavigaq from Avanersuaq in lighting the qulleq.

Opening remarks by Okalik Egeesiak, ICC Chair

After Hjalmar Dahl introduced and welcomed her, Okalik Egeesiak gave a greeting filled with spiritual meaning: “*Ullaasakkut. Quvianaq ammalu upinnaq tavvaniqataugiami ilinniaqtulirilangatilluta.*”

She described her career with the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, and how she got involved at his first General Assembly in Frobisher Bay 30 years ago. She called on the leadership and expertise at the summit to explore the five themes: the challenges of Arctic demographics; post-secondary and vocational training; a changing Arctic; Inuit pedagogy; and what we need in an Inuit educational policy, in order to best transfer *Inuktitut* and Inuit knowledge to our children and grandchildren.¹

Congratulating the ICC on its 40th anniversary, she reminded participants of how forums such as this summit help validate the unity of all Inuit and their common language and culture. She also reviewed the five themes of the summit and challenged everyone to find ways to utilize Inuit pedagogy, hire more Inuit in their school systems, and transfer *Inuktitut* and Inuit knowledge to their children and grandchildren.

¹ *Inuktitut* is the collective name for two of the Inuit languages of Nunavut: *Inuktitut* and *Inuinnaqtun*.

Welcome to Kommuneqarfik Sermersooq by the Mayor, Asii Narup Chemnitz

After warmly welcoming everyone to the capital of Greenland and her hometown, Nuuk, Mayor Chemnitz drew attention to the central importance of education in Inuit efforts to combat threats such as climate change, social problems, cultural distress and urbanization. She said ideally education should bring to Inuit the ability to become masters of their own lives; that education should bring dignity, pride, possibility, perspective, knowledge, and the ability to fight for their right to embrace their lives both as Inuit, and as full members of modern societies. *"Education remains the best gift to our loved ones."*

Mayor Chemnitz pointed out that the experience and hard-earned knowledge of adaptation gained by indigenous peoples, as they have struggled with fast-paced and often unwanted changes to their ways of life, could offer valuable insight to all people struggling with feelings of alienation and meaninglessness due to rapid technological change.

She said that, while it is extremely important for Inuit youth to learn about and take pride in their indigenous histories, traditions and languages, it would be a disservice to them to neglect the importance of learning to meet their own practical, material needs: the basic needs all human beings share for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and the ability to provide for one's family. She warned, *"We can't build a living nor identity on solely being 'native'—not even on scientific ground. Our cultural identity won't bring a roof over our head, nor meat on the table."* She stated her concern another way: *"if we let our histories, our cultures and our language be something that in the future holds us back from success."* She described the need to integrate modern expectations with the indigenous past, with Arctic youth taking power over and pride in their own lives.



Mayor Asii Narup Chemnitz said: "education remains the best gift to our loved ones." Further she described the need to integrate modern expectations with the indigenous past, with Arctic youth taking power over and pride in their own lives.

Mayor Chemnitz concluded by thanking everyone for coming to the summit, greatly regretted not being able to stay, and expressed the wish that everyone would feel at home in her city.

"Our family is your family. Our spirits are your spirits."

TUESDAY MORNING: THEME 1

Arctic demography, small, remote communities and educational challenges: statistical and sociological viewpoints

Throughout the Arctic, the small remote communities face educational challenges. These may be caused by lack of sufficiently educated teachers or other specific reasons. Each Inuit region has its own strategy to cope with the problems. We may learn from each other's experiences.

Facilitator: Jana Harcharek, Member, North Slope, ICC Alaska Education Steering Committee [Due to bad weather, Jana Harcharek with 8 others from Alaska was absent as she was delayed. She spoke on Day 3]

ICC Greenland President, Hjalmar Dahl noted that some of the agenda would be rearranged in order to accommodate those participants, mainly from Alaska, that had been delayed at several points along their way.

Alaskan Inuit Education Improvement Strategy by Pauline Harvey, ICC Alaska Education Project Manager

Pauline Harvey began with stories from her childhood, when her family lived on the land and her principal food was the muskrat hunted by her grandmother when her grandfather was very ill. She expressed gratitude to her grandparents for being her first teachers. Pauline Harvey is a retired educator and teacher trainer who has been leading a three-year project for ICC Alaska on how to improve the education and resilience of Inuit youth amid the challenges of poverty, suicide and low graduation rates.

The project includes six strategies: **1)** to promote the alignment of education frameworks with Inuit customs and values (whaling, for example, can provide context); **2)** to influence policies related to Inuit education; **3)** to promote the development and sharing of a culture-based curriculum that focuses on students' Inuit identity; **4)** to promote Inuit language education; **5)** to foster educational leadership capacity among Alaska Inuit; and **6)** to revitalize and reclaim traditional Inuit parenting skills by, for example, encouraging elders to mentor young parents.

Think Tanks in four regions of Alaska have proposed seven initiatives that reflect the priorities these four regions have in common: **1)** language immersion schools; **2)** developing Inuit researchers; **3)** developing culturally relevant curriculum; **4)** creating a system for accrediting Inuit teachers; **5)** utilizing a culturally appropriate school calendar; **6)** initiating systemic and policy changes; and **7)** building community to create unity, clarity of focus, and ownership of this project. Pauline Harvey concluded by expressing how much she was looking forward to hearing about educational initiatives in other countries.

Experiences from Alaska by Terri Walker, ICC Alaska Education Steering Committee Member [Terri Walker was among the Alaskan contingent absent due to travel delay. See Day 3.]

Discussion

Following Pauline Harvey's presentation, various issues were raised by participants from different regions, such as the challenge of dealing with different levels of government when trying to develop community-based policies in Canada. Often, government officials overlook the decisions of local Inuit officials.

ICC Alaska president, *Jim Stotts*, explained that in Alaska they have the advantage of being able to control education funding at the local level. He added that he was very moved by the mayor's welcoming address and especially wanted to highlight her point about not *"developing ourselves into a museum piece because, while I am not an educator, I feel that it's a new world out there and let's face it, we want to be part of it."*

Another challenge raised in the discussion was the language barrier that can prevent Inuit youth from accessing higher education. Inuit youth in Greenland, for example, may learn Greenlandic to the exclusion of Danish or English and then be deprived of opportunities to pursue higher degrees, whereas Alaskans have more opportunities due to their knowledge of English. A third challenge mentioned was the shortage of teachers in remote villages. In Alaska, for example, teachers brought in from the 'lower 48' states often last for only two years, or even decide to return home the minute they land in Alaska. Having to rely on non-Inuit teachers is one of the legacies of colonialism that is still a huge problem.



ICC Alaska Education Project Manager, Pauline Harvey began her presentation with experiences from her childhood leading up to her years of being a teacher, and now leading the ICC Alaska project on how to improve the education and resilience of Inuit youth.

The discussion that followed Pauline Harvey's presentation continued in the hall during the coffee break. Here: ICC Greenland President, Hjalmar Dahl in discussion with member of the municipality council of Kommune Kujalleq, Jørgen Wæver Johansen.

Experiences from Inuit Nunangat in Canada, presented by Natan Obed, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)

Natan Obed stated that approximately 65,000 Inuit live in Canada, mostly in the four regions of *Inuit Nunangat*, the Inuit homeland in Canada. Though there are colleges, there is no university in Inuit Nunangat. Canada's provincial and territorial governments set educational standards, and the curricula in the 53-community jurisdictions mirror those of Northwest Territories, Alberta (in the case of Nunavut), Quebec, and Newfoundland & Labrador (in the case of Nunatsiavut.) Inuktitut tends to be used as the language of instruction only up to Grade 3 in majority Inuktitut-speaking regions, so transitioning to a second or third language in Grade 4 presents a challenge for young students.

Socioeconomic issues pose even greater challenges in Inuit Nunangat: 39 % of Inuit live in crowded conditions; only 29 % of adults have earned a high school diploma; 70 % of households do not have enough to eat; only 46 % are employed; and the life expectancy for Inuit is ten years less than that for all Canadians. However, a great strength is that 84 % of Inuit report that they can speak Inuktitut to some degree.

Of particular concern is the rate of high school graduation, which although rising everywhere but in Nunavik it does not keep pace with the percentage of Inuit grads in the south, who are more likely to finish high school, receive a college diploma, and go on to university.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) has been working for seven years to implement its 2011 National Strategy on Inuit Education '*First Canadians–Canadians First*', with the goal of giving Inuit youth a 21st-century education without sacrificing their language and culture. The document states that an Inuit-centred education must be bilingual and founded on Inuit history, culture and worldview; be community-based and empower parents and elders to support education; restore the central role of the Inuit language; embrace early childhood education, Kindergarten to grade 12, post-secondary and adult learning; and be continually informed and improved upon by monitoring, evidence and research.

These goals have been difficult to accomplish, the ITK President said, but good progress has been made in parental involvement and investments in the early years. As well, ITK is setting up a Task Force to establish an *Inuit Nunangat University* within five years. Natan Obed concluded by thanking participants for their interest and suggesting the ITK's Task Force would benefit greatly from the help of many participants in the room.

Experiences from Greenland presented by Birthe Therkildsen, Chair of the Teachers' Association in Greenland (IMAK)

Birthe Therkildsen outlined the many educational challenges faced by children in remote Greenland villages. Many children have to leave the security of home and family to complete their primary education in towns, where there is better access to healthcare and where schools have better access to educational resources. Being far from home can be very hard on children, particularly where budget cuts have reduced the number of caregivers at boarding schools. She said that children with physical or mental health problems often can only get help in towns, and so must spend significant time away from the support they receive in their village homes and schools. The Chair of IMAK said it is important not to forget that the education budget restraints hit remote communities hardest; she cited the example of courses that should be offered there are often cancelled due to low numbers of participants.

In addition, Birthe Therkildsen noted that providing remote communities with up-to-date teaching materials could be very difficult. Sending these by mail can take a long time and electronic connectivity can be very unreliable or even impossible. In spite of these challenging conditions, exams are the same for all primary schools, making it difficult for children in remote villages to do as well in school as their urban counterparts. Among young people of all ages, she said that there is an on-going exodus from remote villages due to better opportunities in towns for education and employment.



The President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Natan Obed, stated that approximately 65,000 Inuit live in Canada, mostly in the four regions of Inuit Nunangat. Of particular concern, he mentioned, the rate of high school graduation, which is rising everywhere, but in Nunavik it does not keep pace with the percentage of Inuit grads in the south, who are more likely to finish high school, receive a college diploma, and go on to university.

Birthe Therkildsen, Chair of the Teachers' Association in Greenland (IMAK) outlined the many educational challenges faced by children in remote Greenland villages. One of many consequences is that many young people of all ages leave from the remote villages due to better opportunities in towns for education and employment.

Discussion

Aviâja Egede Lynge (children's spokesperson from Greenland) raised the issue of children living in foster care or adoptive homes outside their birth communities, and what is known about their education situation. Natan Obed responded that there is a need in Canada for a better understanding of these children; he knows that in 2017, over 400 children were in care in Nunavut.

Several participants, including Jørgen Wæver Johansen (Greenland) emphasized the importance of gathering accurate statistics in the area of education as a basis for further policy development. He also expressed the need for greater cooperation among countries to encourage language instruction as a cornerstone of both family life and school life. Natan Obed responded by outlining various ways in which ITK had been inspired by the work being done in Greenland on language pedagogy, and by Greenland's idea of having a central body responsible for Inuit language and culture.

Rebecca Kudloo (Canada) highlighted the importance of providing breakfast programs where children come to school hungry, and Lesa Semmler (Canada) explained that support workers are being used in her area to help children with learning disabilities, attendance issues or mental health issues, for example. However, these support workers are needed for many children, and current government funding for them is insufficient.



The children's spokesperson from Greenland Aviâja Egede Lynge raised the issue of children living in foster care or adoptive homes outside their birth communities.

Rebecca Kudloo and Lesa Semmler, both from Canada, highlighted problems with hungry school children and children with learning disabilities, attendance issues or mental health issues.

Experiences from Chukotka, presented by ICC Chukotka President, Tatiana Achirgina, and Elena Kaminskaya, ICC Council Member²

Tatiana Achirgina began by outlining the structure of the educational organizations in Chukotka from primary schools to adult training programs; 78 % of the schools are in rural areas. Close to 1,800 people in Chukotka are currently studying native languages, and 526 people graduated in 2017 from secondary vocational schools. The secondary vocational education system responds promptly to the demands of the regional labour market, and today over 800 students are engaged in distance training programs. The Multi-Disciplinary College in Anadyr is the first secondary, specialized educational institution in Chukotka for training skilled workers in various vocations, such as heating, engineering, geology, veterinary science, construction, computer systems and networks, meteorology, transport service, tourism and entrepreneurship. The Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University in Anadyr plays a huge role in the training of new professionals who are able to pursue higher education without leaving their homeland, and 70 % are indigenous students who will be able to contribute to the economy of Chukotka and the preservation of the unique culture of its indigenous peoples. The district educational system promotes the traditions of the Chukotka people through exhibitions, games, contests and festivals.

Tatiana Achirgina then described some of the challenges faced in the Chukotka educational system: a shortage of teachers; a lack of employment opportunities; and inadequate instruction in native languages. It was only in the past year that Chukotka finally adopted a regional law that protects the future of the native tongue, Chukchi. Public aboriginal organizations of Chukotka do their best to compensate for the lack of attention to these issues on the part of the state.

ICC Chukotka has issued a two-volume Russian-Eskimo dictionary of 19,000 words, thereby restoring the teaching of the mother tongue in the district college, has revived a radio broadcast in the language of Chukotka's indigenous people, conducted language courses, and published training videos and DVDs that record the memories of elders. The native language is popularized among children and youth using various media, contests, and games which have featured, for example, the oral folk art of the people of Yupik—old legends, tongue twisters, proverbs and songs. Tatiana Achirgina asked Summit

² Tatiana Achirgina and Elena Kaminskaya spoke in Russian through an interpreter.

participants to send best wishes to the 1st District Festival of the native languages of Indigenous Small-numbered Peoples being held in Chukotka.



Tatiana Achirgina and Elena Kaminskaya from ICC Chukotka spoke about some of the challenges faced in the Chukotka educational system: a shortage of teachers and inadequate instruction in indigenous languages. To day the indigenous languages are disappearing, and according to the 2002 census, only 410 of the 1750 Yupik living in Russia consider this language to be their native language.

Elena Kaminskaya spoke of the prospects for indigenous languages in Chukotka, which are dire. She explained that native languages are disappearing, not only in the younger generation, but also in middle-aged and elder generations. Yupik languages can be heard primarily among people who are directly engaged with traditional activities: reindeer herding, hunting of sea mammals, and fishing. In rural Chukotka, people speak their native language only rarely at home or outside the home, and in the cities even less. Even very elderly people communicate at home with their children and grandchildren in Russian, though there is no obligation.

In 2003-2004 the Chukotkan Institute for Educational Development and Advanced Teacher Training conducted a sociological survey of college students who had come from native villages to receive an education. These were Chukchi, Yupik and Even students. The results revealed that slightly more than half of the students did not know their native language, though 90 % of the students indicated that they wanted to study it and be able to speak it. Among Chukchi students this desire was greater than among Yupik students. When asked about the reason for their reluctance to learn their native language, some Yupik students indicated they felt its disappearance was inevitable.

According to the 2002 census, only 410 of the 1750 Yupik living in Russia consider this language to be their native language. According to the 2010 census, there were only 682 people out of 1738. According to linguists, most people speak the ethnic language of the older generation; the rest, for whom this language is “*native*”, can only understand it. The average generation (40-45 years old) have either completely switched to Russian, or poorly speak the native language. One of the problems was the reduction of the teaching hours of the native language and the absence of native language teachers. Out of 21 teachers, 7 teach Yupik and 14 Chukchi. Of these, 13 teachers are aged 50 and over, 4 aged from 40 to 50. As the school director said there are no successors. The government of the Chukotka Autonomous Region and a gold mining company support native languages and cultures by financing various cultural and linguistic projects, sponsoring contests, and providing funding for teaching materials and technology. However, the hours devoted to language instruction in schools are decreasing, and the shortage of qualified teachers is

worsening. The elders who can speak the native languages will soon be gone, and with them, the native languages will disappear.

Discussion

In response to a question about Chukotka's teachers, Tatiana Achirgina and Elena Kaminskaya explained that the law now requires teachers to have a higher education (years 10 and 11), which is only available at a regional educational centre in Anadyr. This means that most students who want to become teachers must leave home to complete their studies. Some students can attend primary and secondary school (up to year 9) in their home villages, but others have to go to boarding school after year 4. The village schools are small and often lack equipment and teaching materials, and it can be difficult to house staff. Nonetheless, there are many dedicated teachers who take advantage of courses offered at the institute of teaching training.

Breakout Groups

Six breakout groups discussed the educational challenges for remote communities. Here is a summary of the challenges, coping strategies and suggestions shared.

Challenges:

- Need for different pathways with small populations, in consultation with parents
- Students who have to leave home at a critical age suffer from a lack of support and often return home: adjustment problems in dormitories and bullying
- Too many students streamed toward vocational rather than academic subjects
- Course offerings do not always meet government standards, focus on grades not content. Curriculum lacks relevance to history and culture
- Insufficient materials in native languages, few native language teachers in secondary
- Social issues such as alcohol use and mental health
- Lack of connectivity in some cases for distance education
- Better compensation needed for Inuit knowledge and teachers
- Teachers unwilling to move to small settlements, high turnover, low retention
- Teachers need to be educated about challenges faced by students
- Lack of (mental) health professionals who can diagnose issues that affect learning
- Distance education hampered by lack of Internet connection
- Dealing with different levels of government
- School calendar not based around culture/harvesting season

Coping strategies:

- Acknowledge and learn about Inuit societal values and knowledge that have helped people thrive in the past, to help them move forward into a better future. Use these as basis of curriculum
- Find ways to train and hire local teachers who will stay, or non-Inuit staff with additional training. Develop incentives.
- Develop alternative accreditation for teachers, Teacher exchanges sponsored by ICC
- Including native language instruction in teacher-training programs, with ICC support
- Improve distance learning resources and access
- Develop opportunities for higher education closer to home; use parental input, home-schooling
- Balanced literacy: develop curriculum in both languages
- Land-based learning, using local materials and opportunities
- Fishing weeks and camping excursions with family should be accredited
- Use film, books, media, elders in the classroom to validate ancestral knowledge, role models and to take ownership of identity
- Build community and resource-based activities involving children
- Young people can become experts in culture and language, and then mentor younger children



From the Breakout Groups, ICC Canada President, Nancy Karetak-Lindell.

Robbie Watt, Madelyn Alvanna-Stimpfle, Not Identified, and Birthe Therkildsen.



Vivian Motzfeldt, Member of Inatsisartut and Carl Egede Bøggild, who after the Breakout Session read Minister Jensen's speech.

Experiences from Greenland – speech by Minister for Culture, Education, Research and Church, Doris Jakobsen Jensen (read by her employee Carl Egede Bøggild)

Because of the weather-related uncertainties around Minister Doris J. Jensen's schedule, one of her officials was asked to present the Minister's keynote address on her behalf that had been originally scheduled for the following day. Karl Egede Bøggild started by welcoming all delegates and summit observers to Greenland and then read her speech, which was presented in her own words. Minister Jensen is part of the first generation of well educated in her family. She stated that the primary and lower secondary school quality is poor, and the transition needs to be more flexible and appropriate. Teacher's education is being modernized. Comparatively more students finish secondary school now but a large number go no further with their education. She is working to reform this system. Maintaining the wellbeing of students living away from home will improve academic results.

Gymnasium (upper secondary school) lasting three years graduates 350 students a year; most teachers are still from abroad. Vocational schools have existed since the 1950s. They were created after Home Rule was established in 1981. Problems with finding apprenticeship positions means students can't graduate. Over 50 % of gymnasium and vocational students drop out.

There is a Greenland-based university with 600 students and more than 50 graduates a year who will contribute to their society. The challenges: a 2017 report by the Greenland Economic Council is critical of primary and secondary education, and Greenland's teacher training. The 'Naalakkersuisut' (Government) Education Plan, which has existed since 2005 in partnership with the EU, stated that from 2012-2016, only 40 % of students continued past primary school. Improving primary and lower secondary education is a priority of the action plan 2014-2020. She visited many native American schools in 2017 to find better methods. She admits that previously their educational inspiration and legacy has mostly come from looking to the south. She hopes to see an Inuit Council along the lines of the Arctic Council.

"I recommend that we in the future will be looking more east-west to each other for inspiration and collaboration."

TUESDAY AFTERNOON: THEME 2

Post-secondary and vocational education challenges–panel discussion

Students from both post-secondary and vocational educations are meeting new challenges after leaving primary school. Study material in a non-Inuit language may be one of the challenges, but there are also other challenges.

In Theme 2, the voice was given especially to the youth.

Facilitator: Madelyn (Maddy) Alvanna-Stimpfle, Youth Representative, ICC Alaska Education Steering Committee

Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle, a teacher from King Island, Alaska, introduced the other members of the panel: Ruth Koviak, President, National Inuit Youth Council, Canada; and Qivioq Løvstrøm, Chair of Ili Ili, University Students Organization, Greenland. Absent: Macy Kenworthy, Alaska.

Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle then posed the following question for panel discussion:

Who helped, encouraged and prepared you to attend post-secondary education, who supported you, and were there any organizations in place or people in your life that helped you become successful while attending post-secondary education?

To the first question, Qivioq Løvstrøm responded that his parents and family were most helpful to her, providing her with the kind of safe and secure family environment that she believes is most important. She said that open and closed Facebook groups helped students under stress have a sense of belonging, which she also believes is very important. Ruth Koviak said her role models were her grandfather and her older brother, who was the first in the family to pursue higher education. She added that her drama club helped prepare her for college and that daily phone calls to her parents provided a lot of support. Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle said that her mother influenced her the most, taking her to teaching conferences and exposing her to other cultures. ICC and her participation on the Education Steering Committee also helped her.

The second question posed for panel discussion was:

What challenges did you face while you were attending college, and how did these challenges shape your future?

Qivioq Løvstrøm responded that one of the challenges was the lack of information on what it meant to go to university and how to manage the application process, the online communications and the courses. The language barrier between teacher and student also presented difficulty because Inuit communicate differently from the Danish educators, using their hands and facial expressions in different ways that sometimes are interpreted to mean the opposite of what is intended. She expressed the wish that Danish teachers could be taught how to communicate effectively with Inuit students. Ruth Koviak said her two biggest challenges in her first semester were coping with grief when her grandmother passed away, and learning to manage her time effectively. Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle said she found it difficult that the courses she was taking at the University of Alberta did not seem relevant to her plans to teach in her home community; there were no classes focussed on her own culture. Another challenge was that she felt guilty being so far from home when a lot of elders died, and she felt she should be at home learning from them while she still could.

The third question posed for panel discussion was:

What would you like to see when your children or family members go through post-secondary education in the years to come?

Qivioq Løvstrøm emphasized the importance of having Inuit role models as educators and of addressing the social problems that hold Inuit students back. *Ruth Koviak* said she hopes for improvements in curriculum that will better prepare students for postsecondary studies. *Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle* hopes her children will have the option to speak Inupiaq all the way through school and that their language will be heard and spoken everywhere.

The last question posed for panel discussion was:

Are there any successes you would like to share?

Qivioq Løvstrøm responded that the student organization she chairs has worked hard with the university to make it easier for new students to enter university. She added that a lot of progress has been made in the area of education about abuse: teaching that your loyalty to the abuser should not be greater than your loyalty to the abused. *Ruth Koviak* said she is happy that her school life is going well, that she is learning to manage her time and her many roles as student, sibling and president, and that she can be a role model for her siblings, and that her baby nephew is doing well after heart surgery. *Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle* said she felt that this summit was already a huge success! She was also pleased about the movement to revitalize her native language, and she is in discussion with her superintendent about taking on a position as an Inupiaq immersion teacher.

Aviâja Egede Lynge (Greenland) thanked the students for offering so much hope, and for sharing their strength.



Tuesday afternoon was dedicated to the youth. Maddy Alvanna-Stimpfle, a teacher from King Island, Alaska, introduced the other members of the panel: Ruth Koviak, President, National Inuit Youth Council, Canada; and Qivioq Løvstrøm, Chair of Illi Illi, University Students Organization, Greenland.

TUESDAY EVENING: RECEPTION

The day closed with an invitation to summit participants to attend a reception hosted in Minister Doris J. Jensen's absence by Greenland Premier Kim Kielsen.



Premier Kielsen hosted a reception at Greenland's oldest European house – Hans Egedes Hus – from 1728. When the Norwegian missionary Hans Egede moved his missionary station from the 'Island of Hope' and established the new missionary station 'Godthaab', he built the house for himself, crew and for a while it was also used as a church.

Today, the house is used, among other things, when Inatsisartut (Parliament) is gathered before going to the church during the opening of the spring and autumn meetings.

WEDNESDAY ALL DAY: THEME 3

Defining Inuit pedagogy, then and now

Does a defined Inuit pedagogy exist? Facing the fact that Inuit live, not only in four different nation states, but also in such vast areas that include a variety of Inuit subcultures, which include hunting communities, fishing communities, farming communities, extractive industries, and administrative and educational centres, etc. This leaves the open question—whether an Inuit pedagogy can stand alone, or has to be supplemented with other pedagogical methods.

Facilitator: Nuka Kleemann, Vice President, ICC Greenland

Nuka Kleemann introduced the theme of the following presentations, – and said he was looking forward to hearing about the experiences of other countries in the area of Inuit pedagogy.

Experiences from Alaska by Yaayuk Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle, Member, ICC Alaska Education Steering Committee

Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle began reminding participants that her colleague, Janet Johnson had been scheduled to present with her but due to bad weather, she had unfortunately not yet arrived. She reminded those gathered that the term “*pedagogy*” refers to the practice of teaching. It is really about teaching teachers how to teach, but she said she believes Inuit pedagogy is focussed more on the learner: is the learner getting it? Education should adapt to the learner.

She continued that in Inuit culture, the assumption is that one is always learning from others and teaching others. When babies hear songs, they learn to recognize sounds. When parents go out hunting, children learn from their siblings. Becoming an adult means becoming a mentor for others. Young people learn from the experience of elders, the cultural experts in the community. Elders teach by showing you things one can’t find in textbooks. She described when a hunter learned that children in school needed to turn pages in a book to learn something, he turned to another hunter and said, “Hmmm, one day we will need to take a book along walrus hunting and open the pages to see ‘how to kill a walrus’.” Here are some of her examples in The Inuit Learning Progression:

- *Ayuqatuq*—to teach by example;
- *Ilisazaq*—to study; to learn;
- *Ilittuq*—he learned/knows;
- *Ilisimaruq*—he knows how.

Facilitator Nuka Kleemann noted the absence of Ms. Parma Sonberg Egede and postponed *Experiences from Greenland* from the Greenland Teachers Training College until after Robbie Watt presented.



Nuka Kleemann introduced the theme 'Defining Inuit pedagogy, then and now', which was followed by a presentation by Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle from Alaska and Robbie Watt from Canada.

Experiences from Arctic Canada, presented by Robbie Watt, president of the Kativik Ilisiarniliriniq School Board (KSB) now KI

Robbie Watt stated that to create an Inuit-centred education system people need to think of Inuit matters. He pointed out the need to incorporate the worldviews from the euro-centric system into the Inuit values. "*We do not live in a bubble.*" ... "*First,*" he stressed, "*we need to have our values inside the structure. Then everything else is gravy.*" He acknowledged the oral traditions, but emphasized all the written material that has helped keep all of this Inuit knowledge alive. He stated the necessity to teach the conceptual and science-based competencies to our Inuit youth.

Robbie Watt presented many compelling slides. Some of his points were as follows:

- At the school board, we develop programs in 3 languages, for learners taught in a second language environment.
- The Nunavik population is small and there are few Inuit expert resources. KI must be able to offer them advantageous work conditions, as their expertise is in demand.
- In Canada, there are few non-Inuit expert resources familiar with Inuit and Aboriginal worldview and pedagogical approaches. KI must also be able to offer them competitive work conditions, as their expertise is in demand.
- In addition, very few non-aboriginal experts are trained in indigenous worldview or pedagogy, and there is a profound colonization to be removed from our education system and mentality.
- Within the non-Aboriginal population, there is little awareness and understanding of our rights and of who we are as Inuit; the government officials and ministry employees we work with are no exception to that.

The KI president said that when Inuit employees form only 52% of our workforce, then teacher training is important. Mr. Watt said that his organization does not work alone, and gave the example of being a partner with McGill University. The courses are taught in Inuktitut, and students end up working as consultants during the training. Since 1978, 182 teachers have graduated from McGill. Overall in 2015-2016, the KI school board employed 462 teachers, of which 36.4% of whom, or 168, were Inuit. Referring to one of his slides, he said about 40% of the latter has been certified with the Quebec Ministry of Education.

Experiences from Chukotka: Tatiana Achirgina and Elena Kaminskaya³

Tatiana Achirgina stated that living conditions in the community required from each member of the community such qualities as the ability to live in one accord and harmony, self-control, and obedience to the decision of the elders without contradiction. She regretted that today in their villages one could find only traces of a harmonious past. She applauded the methods Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle discussed; learning by doing is important. She noted parents didn't really punish kids while teaching them, only made remarks when something is not right. Fishing and gathering skills were transferred from one generation to the next: the first rite is to hunt a duck or seal; this way kids were taught to respect nature and animals.

Tatiana Achirgina recounted a visit to a settlement in 2014; based on what she saw, she feels the traditional knowledge should be promoted on the federal level. The Virtual (online) club "*Tasigmit*" functions as the connection between generations. They share and take care of their Inuit roots/culture; their focus is using the native language in everyday use. She admits times have changed, that they are heading to capitalism and extinction of traditional values. Another challenge is that the educational system adopts the 'indisputable' Federal State Educational Standards - FSES, they often go against people's desires and initiatives. Parents – often back two or three generations – have become marginalized in their own villages. Ethnically, she finds they are unexpressive, colourless, assimilated and acculturated. Now only 3 elders carry on the language and cultural development. Tatiana Achirgina wants to make sure teachers are supported to use their native language and maintain the culture.

Elena Kaminskaya spoke about promoting national and regional competence, the history and culture of Chukotka in the geography lessons. Every summer they have labour camps; boys learn to hunt sea mammals, during weekends the elders teach dances. She spoke of the national festivals, the sea hunters' sports festival, and the Bering Sea games.

Before moving on, Facilitator Nuka Kleemann asked the participants to recognise and welcome Doris J. Jensen, Greenland Minister for Culture, Education, Research and Church, who had been delayed elsewhere due to bad weather. Nuka Kleemann added that he hoped that this was a sign that the Alaskans who had now made it as far as Sisimiut, a Greenland town north of Nuuk, would be joining the summit soon.

Experiences from Greenland: Britta Lohmann, Rector, of the Institute of Education of Greenland

Nuka Kleemann thanked the Rector for having agreed to replace Parma Sonberg Egede, Head of Section, Institute of Education, at short notice, and invited her to the podium.

Britta Lohmann said she would like to present the experiences of Greenland through the question, "*is there an Inuit pedagogy?*" She explained the use of the oral ways, like teaching the building of a kayak. It is perhaps part of an Inuit pedagogy, she explained, that teachers often find their own cultural materials that they can use in their teaching. She stressed that the youth need to learn things relevant to today in order to become better members of modern society, the needs of the future adjusting to the modern educational system, along with the need to innovate and find new ways of educating to prepare for the 21st century. She noted Greenland has begun to use modern ways: the schools include

³ Tatiana. Achirgina and Elena Kaminskaya spoke in Russian through an interpreter.

languages; we offer Greenlandic, English, Danish. She said if one has chosen Danish as their first and most important language, then other languages are offered in Greenland, that being Greenlandic and English. Britta Lohmann pointed out that when students are using and mixing different languages in everyday use, then education must adjust to this fact. For example, all kids in primary school, she said, will get their own iPads in the very near future, therefore the teachers would soon be trained in how these can be best used in the classroom.



"Is there an Inuit pedagogy?" asked Britta Lohmann, and explained the use of the oral ways, like teaching the building of a kayak. But she also stressed that the youth need to learn things relevant to today in order to become better members of modern society.

Minister Doris J. Jensen thanked Britta Lohmann and wished her success in her plans to further equip teachers in how to develop their own techniques in adapting the languages.

Questions & Answers

Kattie Egede Motzfeldt from Greenland asked how cultural identity was fostered in the Institute of learning, and what tools to promote identity she envisioned being used in the primary school. Britta Lohmann said she was meeting soon with some reps from the departments of education at the Institute to hear what kind of initiatives they want for that type of teaching materials. At the time of the Summit she was not able to answer specifically how practically they are being used.

Anthón Frederiksen, also from Greenland acknowledged other languages than Greenlandic were important to use. He stated he knew of many students leaving primary school who are not able to continue in the higher education systems (*he noted statistics had been presented the day before to prove this*) and thus students have very limited opportunities to go on to higher education. He asked how the Ministry of Education would deal with this large group of single language Greenlandic speakers, to equip them in other languages.

Britta Lohmann responded to his commentary that they wish to hire experts who demonstrate competencies of education, e.g. *"in my own Institute."* They offered training also in Greenlandic speaking, not only Danish, and she said that is not normally done. *"So now we do this, and we hire Greenlandic speakers and offer them other languages as well."* She expected to focus more on this in the future.

Aviâja Egede Lynge asked, given that youth use a mix of languages, how they would teach the youth to learn other languages? She commented that there are many Greenlandic-only-speaking young Greenlanders; who are often called the silent ones that they are perhaps not so pushy, and that are more often those that achieve very low grades. She

asked how the Institute prepares teachers to meet these challenges and problems Greenlandic youth face.

Britta Lohmann referred back to her presentation to the question of how the curriculum is developed and how students are able to use its contents: e.g. follow-up student questionnaires being developed so the educators can develop even better curricula. She said they were prepared to use new experimental techniques, which could meet with failures, or successes, and in this way to adopt a better technique.

Kattie Egede Motzfeldt stressed the identification of a common understanding of the curriculum we needed, and the specific methods teachers use to teach the kids. We are never able to fully teach the kids about how they exactly learn from our ways of teaching. She noted how to proceed in teaching, for instance, teaching the Danish language, as a foreign language was very important.

Britta Lohmann replied that due to their new hiring, they had now studied other ways of teaching the Danish language, for instance. She explained new techniques that we have started to use to promote more open discussions on various issues in Greenlandic.

Birthe Therkildsen agreed with the MP that a lot of kids finish primary school, but they get lost between primary school and higher education.

Britta Lohmann further stated it is important to offer higher education in Greenlandic in the future, to further develop their own materials and curricula and focus on their own problems and challenges. She said after evaluation they would plan specific courses so that teachers are equipped with specific tools to teach their students.

Minister Doris J. Jensen thanked *Britta Lohmann* and wished her success in her plans to further equip teachers in how to develop their own techniques in adapting the languages. She noted the government of Greenland was now focussing a lot on the Greenlandic-only speakers, aiming that 75 % teachers in the Institute should be capable in Greenlandic language only.

The Minister then asked *Britta Lohmann* what her expectations were for the initiatives, to which she responded that she understood teachers would impact the students in the classroom, and the importance of their techniques in teaching. Students now have specific types of needs in learning languages. Her own vision would be in the first year to 8th grade, is that students be offered different languages so that they are more able to use foreign languages rather than their own Greenlandic or primary language. In this way she said could they could continue with higher education.

Apollo Mathiassen from Greenland was pleased by the presentation in Greenlandic and his intention to introduce the iPad in schools. He hoped as a representative of a municipal council that they would be invited to meetings to develop new ways of teaching foreign languages. He said they were following the progress of children very closely and that it was very important that kids are inspired to go elsewhere and learn about the importance of seeing other countries, how they proceed with their educational system.

Britta Lohmann answered she was happy to be directly in contact with municipal councils and directly with the schools for success.

Breakout Groups – ‘Does a defined Inuit pedagogy exist?’

Nuka Kleeman, moderator, then asked participants to break into groups to ask the question as to whether an Inuit pedagogy exists and to report back.



Participants engaged in discussions during a coffee break.

Summary of Group Reports

The groups concurred that there is an evolving Inuit pedagogy, based on the traditional learning style of demonstration and observation, and not derived solely from textbooks.

They felt the wisdom of elders and parents should be incorporated, and that good examples of curricula could be inventoried and made available to other circumpolar regions. They noted elders still recall being colonized and want to see differences in the way the younger generation is treated. One big challenge stated was that unilingual speakers feel devalued, by not having the same opportunities or mobility as bilingual speakers. They felt that classroom lessons and evaluation methods did not teach children how to “*be a good Inuk*” or relate to real life. They said some Inuit-language teachers will soon retire without replacements, and younger teachers need to be recruited and trained. One example cited for teaching math in a cultural context was how to fish for char, and then smoke it, reflecting the Inuit worldview.

Some groups felt an Inuit pedagogy would take financing and changes to government policy, but would result in better grades and academic success in some regions. These success stories were deemed important to collect and store, to build self-confidence in remote communities.

Discussion on Group Reports

The breakout group reports generated a lot of interest and much discussion ensued.

A question was asked if one learns Danish in Greenland, does one have a greater chance of attending higher institutions; if kids are to be taught English, are English-only speaking teachers used? The reply was that teachers should be able to communicate in the language the students use; teachers that leave after a short stay make it challenging for students to succeed.

There was a comment that high schools exist in every community in Nunavut; all of the schools go up to grade 12. There they are finally seeing homegrown high school graduates; parents didn’t know their children spoke English; they hid it from their parents. There are higher numbers of graduates over the past 15 years or so, yet up to 70 % of

elementary graduates did not make it to higher education. The question was asked whether they are bound to a duty to develop curricula.

A response came from one of the group reporters that while they are validating curricula, it is important to understand they are facing challenges in Greenland as in Alaska; there can be students with weaknesses.

Another response by KI president, *Robbie Watt*: that teachers are already hired as professionals; he wants to create opportunities for teachers both to study together and to create local pedagogies; when one had two sets of teachers only meeting at the beginning of the school year, he felt this would create more racism.

There was a question whether to focus more to involve future teachers from the south, affirming of course there was a need among Inuit to develop their own curriculum.

The response was given that they are using the resources from their community; their members would make their own projects and then make a presentation in a foreign language;

There was a suggestion that teachers should be allowed to work together on these projects; there being a difference in using books only, or using only locally-developed curriculum.

Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle spoke about her expertise in how students learn a second language: She is a specialist in teaching English as a second language (ESL); she has taught students who speak 'survival English' academic English; she has used culturally relevant pictures, i.e. caribou, paper (tutu, kaliikkaq), songs; she uses shorter words, and encourages teenage and parental responsibilities.

The last question was whether, as the Minister of Education from Greenland had said, you need an English-speaking teacher if you want to teach English. This was addressed to Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle, being herself a teacher of culture and language, she answered that a language teacher doesn't have to come from that country; the brain goes through a different process to teach in a second language.

Concluding Remarks For Day Two By Hjalmar Dahl

The ICC Greenland President thanked the participants for a very successful exchange. He noted that there would be a report coming from this summit at a later date, which would be passed from the ICC executive council to the General Assembly in 2018, to which GA delegates could respond. However, he told participants that a shorter outcome document from this meeting was being drafted based on comments and suggestions heard, and a draft of that would be circulated first thing in the morning to be discussed, then edited by the group for release soon after the summit.

Beyond the outcome document, the more comprehensive report, Hjalmar Dahl said, was to be further discussed by the ICC executive and from that report the executive council would provide recommendations to the delegates at the General Assembly. He stressed the importance of decisions to move forward from here; that they could in fact become the starting point for the process of reforming the educational system across Inuit Nunaat. He hoped Day 3 would be fruitful for the future of education in the Arctic, and that the work would continue long after the Summit. Then he dismissed the summit participants for the day.

THURSDAY MORNING: THEME 4

Inuit cultural survival in a changing Arctic

In all Inuit regions, the Inuit culture has met many challenges over a long time span. Elements of the culture have disappeared, other elements have adapted to the new realities, and new elements from other cultures have been included. Facing the fact that today's Inuit are living in complex societies does not exclude, or at least should not exclude, the use of indigenous knowledge in the educational systems. By including indigenous knowledge, the Inuit language may be strengthened at the same time.

ICC Canada President, Nancy Karetak-Lindell served as facilitator for the day.

The missing Alaskan constituency was warmly welcomed, through applause, by all participants after braving snowstorms and travel delays to attend.

Indigenous Knowledge in the educational system, Part 1: Jana Harcharek (Alaska)

Jana Harcharek used the example of Alaska's North Slope Borough (NSB) school district in her presentation.

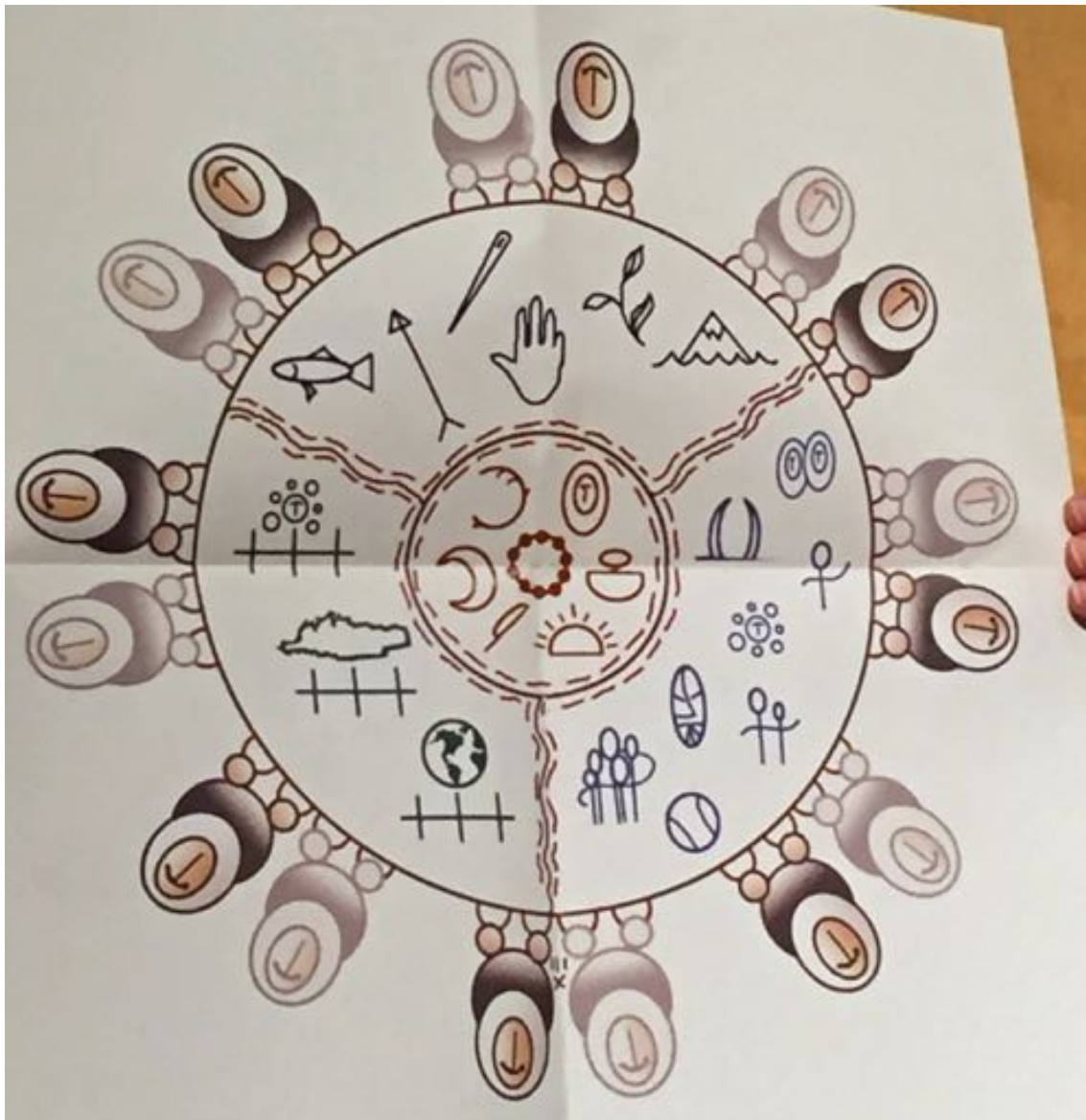
She described how in 1972, when Iñupiat finally took control of their education through the new political structures, that this was at a time when many were not able to speak their mother tongue. In spite of this new control, textbooks were ordered from the USA's lower 48 states.

It took some time, Jana Harcharek explained, but eventually and slowly decisions were taken to bring back an Inuit-centred pedagogy. It started, she said with the recognition that they were losing their elders over time, and it was their knowledge that needed to be kept alive. So, recordings were made. The knowledge so freely given by the elders was then translated into English.

Over time, they knew this, too was not enough. It was, in fact, the elders who told them so, which led them to eventually renovate the classrooms to be more culturally sensitive. That was followed by changing the 'lower 48' food to give kids the message that their own food was good enough, and in fact better. She said teachers had found kids were graduating without knowing who they were, so they used the elders' knowledge to create "*Trailbreakers for Learning*." Jana Harcharek noted that this important process or pedagogical model could be represented by an Inuit blanket toss circle, a representation of which she had pinned on the wall for summit participants.

It was this Inuit blanket toss circle, with eight pairs of people around it corresponding to the eight North Slope communities that Jana Harcharek used to explain to summit participants how the "*Trailbreakers for Learning*" was conceived and now being implemented.

She described the visual of the circle as follows – see next page:



"One of each pair is a lighter shade to represent our ancestors who underpin all we do.

The muccho is taken from the skins of the Umiaq, and the stitching on the blanket represents our language. The design depicts an outside ring divided evenly into three realms: Spiritual, Individual and Community."

"From bottom left, the Individual realm: Arrow means hunting and survival; Needle is for sewing, Plant represents medicines for healing, Mountains to Ocean our respect for the environment. Top third: in the Community realm, the love, knowledge and belief of Elders (sitting around circle with T, whale jawbones for ceremonies; a person singing and dancing (not evil), Homes, Two people for Parenting, the Mask is for our arts; the Ball for traditional athletics." (Applause was heard when she said "Let's bring that back!")

"In the very interior circle of the Tujukiullunaut ... we used to live in two worlds: here is the one and here is the other, the blanket now shows integration."

Jana Harcharek stated that in Alaska they need leadership, including the strengthening of men's roles and women's roles. She said in their teacher recruiting from the lower 48 states, their board has asserted to new teachers coming in, "*if you don't want to get with the program, then go teach somewhere else.*"

She felt in the past they didn't have their own teachers, because the students had been discouraged to become teachers one day. She stated that never again would they be left outside the classroom door, so that their students would someday desire to become teachers.

Facilitator *Nancy Karetak-Lindell* thanked Jana Harcharek and stressed how powerful a presentation she had made and could see how she conveyed her messages well with all summit participants.

Nancy Karetak-Lindell asked another Alaskan Inuk, Terri Walker, who had taken days to reach Nuuk, through airports, wind, and snowstorms.

Experience from Alaska (rescheduled from Day 1) Terri Walker, ICC-Alaska Education Steering Committee Member, North Slope

Terri Walker prefaced her slide show by sharing her sadness that her parents were punished for speaking their language and, as a result, she never learned. That was the reason, she said, she had to give her talk in English.

She continued her talk by providing some baseline statistics on slides about Northern Alaska. Here is a brief summary:

- 663,000 square miles with 740,000 people in five regions
- 11 distinct cultures, 22 dialects, 20% poverty in NW Alaska
- No roads, access by plane, snow machine or boat
- 68.5 % graduation rate among 29% that are Alaska Natives, 38.1% dropout rate

Terri Walker said one needed to understand and address policy barriers before advances could be made in education of their youth and adults. She saw the main barriers as follows:

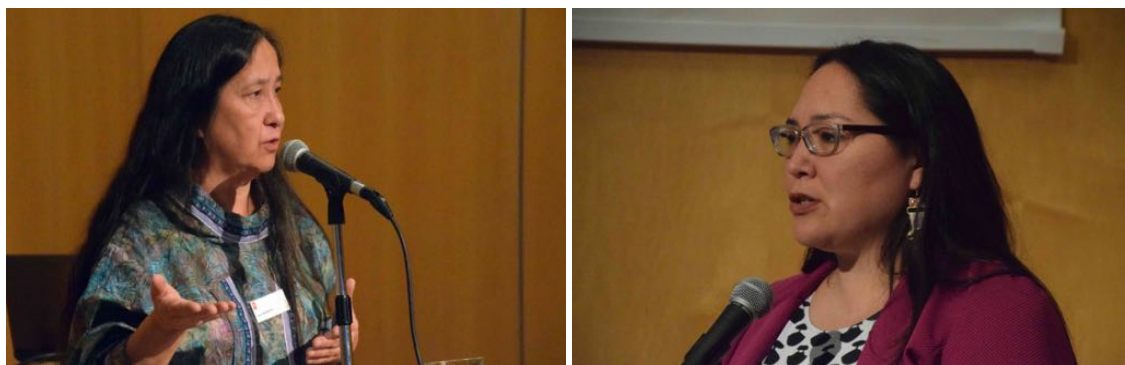
- Education geared toward Western ways of knowing;
- the State of Alaska requiring testing in English as a condition of funding;
- Impact of hiring teachers from the 'lower 48': they are often very young or about to return, wanting "*the Alaska adventure*," thereby leaving after two to three years.

Terri Walker then presented some policy successes. They included, amongst others:

- Teachers go to camps with elders and kids;
- Since 1989, 2405 following the U Alaska system have Bachelor's degrees, 553 students have Masters degrees, 16 have PhDs
- Insufficient PhDs in the field of education.

Terri Walker also addressed matters of culture and language saying there were insufficient language speakers at home. She juxtaposed this with noting the success of language immersion schools in her region. Curriculum challenges abounded, which she counterbalanced by describing the success of North Slope School Board's curriculum development initiatives. Wellness challenges such as zero employment for some, suicides,

having to leave home to go to school, low self-esteem (especially in the age bracket of 18 to 30), and lack of focus for many was juxtaposed with Terri Walker's excitement over wellness program development, the success of youth leadership programs, having developed their own education certification, and started their own community colleges.



Jana Harcharek and Aluki Kotierk.

Indigenous Knowledge in the educational system, Part 2: Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (Canada)

Aluki Kotierk prefaced her remarks by saying that the choice of words is important, that education does not just mean formal schooling. She described looking with awe to many Inuit, careful not to devalue those who have no "education," and that they have lived experience and depths of knowledge. When she would see the word "survival" as in cultural survival – the topic of this theme – her view was that the colonizer used this word to mean the Inuit were on the brink of extinction. She felt they chose this word to justify imposing their ways, and she added that she preferred the word, "thrive."

Aluki Kotierk continued by saying that in 25 years since the Nunavut Agreement they envisioned services would be in Inuktitut by this time. "But that's not happening", she added. In Nuuk, one hears Greenlandic everywhere while, she said, Inuktitut use is diminishing by 1% a year in Nunavut; there are no more boards of education, just government committees and Alberta curriculum.

She wondered if Inuit in Nunavut had been too nice. Although the number of grads is increasing, she reported that, still, 70 % of students do not graduate from high school. Her three recommendations for Nunavut in this regard were:

- Build Inuit up – Aluki Kotierk called for school to be delivered in Inuktitut in all subjects; she said it was important to develop curriculum which is Inuit-centric with messaging that affirms students' Inuit identity.
- Inuktitut-speaking teachers. – In this regard, she said Greenland was a true inspiration.

The NTI President shared some statistics: there were 9,300 Inuktitut mother tongue students Kindergarten to grade 12, 430 English, 80 French. She said there were 42 schools, all of them English except one French, the latter which was mandated by law. In the recent past, Nunavut had seen a 33% increase in unilingual English teachers, only 10 'bilingual' teachers had been added, which she underlined as a challenge. Only 10 of 41 schools provide Inuktitut up to the third grade, Aluki Kotierk said, and 37 of the 41 schools had principals who were unilingual. She stated that there were more non-Inuit English language teachers than total English

speaking students. She further stated the need to bring more Inuktitut-speaking teachers to Nunavut and, like Alaska delegates had already shared, to work toward their own credentialization. She shared with those gathered an exciting language mentorship-training program, at proposal stage and currently being considered by the Government of Nunavut. An interesting fact not many may know, she said Nunavut was the only jurisdiction in Canada where the majority speak a language other than the two official languages of Canada, that being English and French.

- Inuit-centred curriculum – The NTI President stated that students mostly did not recognize their lives in the education curriculum, which came from the Canadian province of Alberta. She recognized that participants at this Summit have shared how Inuit ways of understanding and knowledge can be used to teach all subjects, and that this sharing had encouraged her.

Aluki Kotierk concluded by speaking eloquently of the need to change the narrative about how resilient Inuit are, not being blind to the social ills but needing to speak of themselves in a constructive, forward-moving manner. She asserted their need to rely on one of their great strengths, their kinship systems, their continuing to be welcoming, but refusing to be nice to injustice, inequity, or unfairness.

Comments, Questions for Aluki Kotierk

Greenlander, *Aviâja Egede Lynge* said that as Greenland children's spokesperson, she had come to understand that without positive stories for children, change doesn't happen and, in this regard, asked how do we encourage our own politicians with positive stories?

Aluki Kotierk replied that Nunavut's own Inuit politicians would often not do something about the things they're aware of; they still needed to tell the positive stories of the youth in particular, to give them hope that they are good enough and have power to accomplish things.

Qivioq Løvstrøm said youth lack role models; that in Greenland there's a big dropout rate; that adults need to change the narrative and the way they speak, there was a need to focus on retainment, so the adults empower and not victimize students.

Aleqa Hammond asked those that had presented how to get more than 1-2 hours a week for language instruction; and how much funding they get for that purpose.

Jana Harcharek answered Aleqa Hammond by saying that in the North Slope Borough School District, their local government funds at a higher rate than the State of Alaska provides. She mentioned that some funds came directly from the federal USA government because the Inuit of the North Slope do not live on reservations as other indigenous peoples in the USA do. She said their school board determines how that the dollars will be spent, that their board has made language a priority, with Borough, State and USA federal government collaboration.

Aluki Kotierk responded by saying that the amount of time shouldn't be just a few hours a week. She stated there was a way of looking at curriculum as part of the school system, not enough just to have a subject that is called, "*Inuit culture*," say.

***Strengthening the Inuit language and foreign languages at the same time,
Part 1: Yaayuk Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle***

Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle spoke about the support she received from her elders, especially her mother and grandmother who raised her. She went to the University of Alaska in Fairbanks and became a teacher, she said, literally by mistake. She explained to the summit participants how her brain had processed answering questions in class in English, then later on her way home, how she processed the same answer in Yupik, (the same thing with Inupiaq), in another part of the brain. In that respect, things took time for her to process.

A 2018 report has been published of recommendations called Summary of Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council, of which she is one of five members.

She quoted from it -- No. 3 stresses the need for Culture-Based Curriculum. No. 4 endorsed Inuit Language Education and immersion programs.

Part 2: Aviâja Egede Lynge, Children's Spokesperson in Greenland

Aviâja Egede Lynge gave an impassioned talk entitled, "*Strengthening the Inuit language and foreign language abilities at the same time.*" She started by saying, "*I would like to call for a strengthening of both [the Inuit language and foreign language abilities], and suggest that this is best achieved by leaving the colonial shadows behind us. I will argue that, without losing our identity and language, we are entitled to learn foreign languages to best achieve a higher educational standard among Inuit.*" *Aviâja Egede Lynge* then went on to helping participants understand that Greenlanders, in her opinion, have been so focussed on promoting both the importance of having a strong sense of self-worth, including a solid grasp of the Inuit language, and at the same time promoting the idea of higher learning, that a young child often does not know how to navigate these two, sometimes contradictory goals. In response to this dilemma, *Aviâja Egede Lynge* posed several questions: "*The question then becomes whether our requirements for the new generation fit with the structures we have put them into? Have we made the best structure for them to achieve both? And can we even give them the resilience they should have from home in order to cope with all the requirements?*" She answered these questions herself by saying, "*unfortunately, I don't think so.*"

Then referring to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, *Aviâja Egede Lynge* suggested that a new vision should be based on a rights-based approach, which would ensure that a child and his/her right to an education is seen as a whole. "*A vision that is not either-or, but clearly indicates that a child is entitled to his/her language, his/her identity, but also has the right to be prepared for a higher education.*"

Nancy Karetak-Lindell thanked the presenters and gave a well-rounded summary of each of their talks. Referring specifically to *Aviâja Egede Lynge's* presentation, *Nancy Karetak-Lindell* said it showed that Inuit language speakers and advocates may have gone too far in one sense, that maybe they need to find balance and common ground, and that this is why sharing experiences through a summit such as this was a great way to do that. Related to this, the ICC Canada President then spoke of experience from her own region, saying, "*for us in Nunavut, we need to keep in mind*" the experience of Greenlanders as described by *Aviâja Egede Lynge* where "*young people often cannot go to Denmark or North America to further their studies because they lack proficiency in Danish or English.*" She continued, "*we in Nunavut need to be, therefore, careful what we wish for and keep in mind that as we push for Inuktitut to be language of the Territory... [we should] promote bilingualism or even more languages, as knowing another has never hurt anyone's education.*"

Discussion, Q&A for Aviâja Egede Lynge

ITK President, Natan Obed asked Aviâja Egede Lynge how one could craft something at the ICC level, how to translate what she said for a Canadian audience, and not at the same time give Canada an excuse to say "*too much Inuktitut is not good*," for example?

She replied that the stronger one's mother tongue is, the better one can learn a foreign language. "*That is what the research shows*", she added. She cited the example of a 16-year-old girl who knows four languages, but she is very strong in Greenlandic, that the goal can't be either/or.

Jacquie Lambert asked what kind of wellness initiatives there were in Greenland for intergenerational trauma. She noted that she was using eye movement therapy and sensorimotor therapy in Alaska.

Aviâja Egede Lynge replied that talking about trauma is still taboo in Greenland, that some say to just move on, focus on abilities, not what one feels inside.

Nivi Olsen (Greenland) remarked that elders and parents need to be at the core of revitalization, that elders lead the youth, then listen to the youth as well.

Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle cited the First Alaskans Institute (<https://firstalaskans.org/>) for putting college students together with elders, in different sessions for them to interact. She said this is how elders reach out to youth.

Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik, NTI asked how do they categorize dialects of Inuit language, as foreign languages, even though they are universal in the circumpolar region. Youth are pushing to speak Inuktitut (and that be the language of instruction, because their parents weren't allowed to speak it).

Aviâja Egede Lynge replied that she was talking about foreign language as a Greenlander and it may be hard to extrapolate beyond. She said their first language is Greenlandic, but this is not a problem, rather how to make an education system that fits Greenlanders' needs.

Carl Christian Olsen, Puju said they have one language in Greenland and, in fact, across Inuit Nunaat, but with different dialects.

Comment by *Jana Harcharek*: She quoted Samuel Simmons, president of the Inuit elders conference saying at the ICC General Assembly in Kuujuaq in 2002, "*one day you will have an ICC session where you use only interpreters from one dialect to another, and no English.*"

Vivian Korthius also commented that in Bethel Alaska she is CEO of the village council, 48 villages, 56 tribes. She said they took 4 years to survey what each village said were their problems and solutions, based on a strength model, not a deficiency one. She strongly underlined that she found parenting to be the number one solution in each village; that is teaching Yupik mothers how to be mothers, and Yupik fathers how to be fathers.

Nancy Karetek-Lindell said people need to be strong on the solutions side, to celebrate what they have. They can learn from the Russians to celebrate, and to create role models.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON: THEME 5

Considerations for a Policy on Inuit Education

Why were we together for these three days and what did we learn? Do we have so much in common that we can create a common policy on Inuit education, or are there, more likely, only elements we can use from each other. No answers are given beforehand, which means that the ideas brought forward at the Inuit Education Summit will be the platform for the six Breakout groups.

Facilitator Nancy Karetak-Lindell, ICC Canada President

Given that Mary Simon had been unable to come due to personal matters, the ICC Canada president graciously agreed to step in to continue to facilitate the ongoing discussions. She called upon Nunavut's Minister for Education to take the podium.

Keynote speaker: David Joanisie, Minister for Education, Government of Nunavut

Minister Joanisie shared with summit participants his vision for Nunavut students, that being to have more well-educated, bilingual, self-reliant Nunavummiut.

His ministry's mission, he said, was to a) improve learning outcomes and literacy; b) improve instruction quality; c) promote equal access; and d) increase Inuit employment and Inuktitut language use.

Looking to his parents as his first teachers, he gave thanks that they had such a big impact on him.

He spoke with the aid of slides, how Nunavut has a young population, half under the age of 25, with 32% under age of 15. There are 9,000 students in 44 schools spread across 25 communities. He said there that of the principals and teachers, 50% of positions were filled by Inuit; and he was happy to report that numbers of graduates are up 10 % a year.

Minister Joanisie stated that the Nunavut Education Act requires a bilingual education commitment, but then listed the challenges in achieving such a goal. These challenges, he said, included low literacy, low graduation rates, and low availability of Inuit teachers. The opportunities, however, were exciting, he said, and they included better support for school, lifelong education, Inuit recruitment and training strategies.

The Education Minister said he was looking forward to hearing more about the innovative certification process for Inuit elders and other educators that had been discussed by Alaskan and other Inuit earlier in the summit, and in bringing that back that idea to Nunavut to study it. Minister Joanisie said Inuit had formerly been in control, and described how then the missionaries, explorers, traders, came and had an impact on the way of life. He said Inuit are now back to making a strong commitment to once again determine their own destiny, create self reliance, and said that through education, he was confident that they can make an impact.

He concluded with a lesson from his own father: how he went whaling with his three brothers: *"My father picked up two rocks. He asked each brother, "what do you see?"* He continued the story by asking the summit participants this question of his father. Mr. Joanisie revealed the answer. *"These rocks are Inuit tools"—you use them for Inukshuks, for cutting meat, for cooking. He said his father's story changed his thinking forever. He concluded by saying, "in the same way, think of education as a tool. You apply tools differently in everyday life."*

Facilitator *Nancy Karetek-Lindell* thanked the Minister and commented on how Minister Joanasie's story resonated with everyone at the summit, how resourceful the people of Nunavut are, and that each of them looks through life with a very different lens. She said, "*Inuit are often the round peg in a square hole*" and when they don't fit they become innovative. She noticed that the Nunavut symbol is a polar bear moving *forward*, but as he moves forward, he is looking *behind* him.

Introduction to Theme 5 by Janet Johnson, ICC Alaska Education Steering Committee

Janet Johnson introduced herself as a Yupik from Kotlik, Alaska, who has been a teacher for 26 years. She represents the southwest region on the Steering Committee. She described how in October 2017 at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention, the first ever compact with the State of Alaska for child welfare was signed by the Governor of Alaska to lay a path for services to Alaska's 200-plus tribes. She said that parents, schools and rural communities are all getting involved in the new partnership, starting in January 2018 with three tribes in the planning process.

Breakout Groups

Looking back on the three days, what did we learn, and do we share enough to create a common policy?

When the breakout groups came back to report, they all relayed a sense of urgency at the current situation, and the need to change the lives of schoolchildren with tangible actions.

A homogeneous policy was seen as hard to achieve, but teaching materials and systems could be exchanged via a clearinghouse, possibly online and in all the languages of the circumpolar region. Goals to hold teacher education forums and improve Inuit teacher and senior staff recruitment were frequently mentioned. Breakout groups felt an ICC committee could develop policy that would help them govern their own education, connect the circumpolar nations, keep their cultural heritage alive, and unite the peoples in a common effort. They declared this policy could serve to counteract the influence of Western ways, where languages are not given official status. They noted the potential of the internet to foster communication and indigenous learning styles.

In conclusion, the proposed ICC Committee would use surveys and develop programs to show Inuit regions how to build skills and enhance wellbeing, then assess educational outcomes. The groups felt this development of their own standards and training would act to re-colonize the education process with their Inuit ways of living.

Jana Harcharek ended the discussion and made a joint conclusion of the Breakout Groups:

She said that ICC could facilitate best practices on teaching models; that the discussions started at this Summit should continue, rather than meeting every four years, each country could host a meeting. She expressed the need to form a network.

Jana Harcharek recommended that a mandate be given to the ICC executive council to create a "cultural/educational and language institute" with all Educational/Cultural materials in one place; and to create a Mind Mapping Process for Inuit Education.

Each breakout group reporter thanked ICC Greenland for hosting the Summit.



Jana Harcharek and Deanna Marie Jacobson. Aviâja Egede Lynge.



Carl Christian Olsen – Puju. Minister David Joanasie



Lesa Semmler and Anthon Frederiksen. Barbara Amorak and Mimi Karlsen

Drafting of Summit Outcome Document

After the Breakout Groups, all participants came back together in Plenary to finalize an Outcome document of the Summit, a Draft of which had been circulated to all participants on Day 2. This Draft was based upon the discussions and proposals made throughout the three-day summit. Moderated by former Greenland premier and former ICC Council member, Kuupik Kleist, the final session of the day was dedicated to discussing final drafting and edits of an outcome document.

Kuupik Kleist asked the participants to provide suggestions for any final changes or additions to the draft outcome document. This outcome document, Kuupik Kleist explained, was meant to serve as an informal summary of the meeting, and to be used in writing the final report, which will be forwarded to the ICC General Assembly in Barrow Alaska, July 2018. See Annex 1.



Kuupik Kleist and Chester Reimer finalizing the Outcome Document.

Just before everyone left the three days Summit, ICC Greenland President, Hjalmar Dahl, took the floor, and thanked everyone for his or her participation and constructive input.

ANNEX 1

OUTCOME DOCUMENT INUIT EDUCATION SUMMIT Nuuk, Greenland 13-15 February 2018

Responding to a call in 2014 by Inuit leaders from Chukotka, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland to education experts and practitioners to convene in a summit focussed on Inuit education prior to the 2018 General Assembly of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC);

Recalling specific related mandates given by Inuit leaders at the 2014 ICC General Assembly, through the *Kitigaaryuit Declaration*, as follows:

Article 43. Mandate ICC leadership to promote educational exchanges, share best educational practices, and host a summit of experts and practitioners from across the circumpolar Arctic to recommend ways to develop or enhance culturally appropriate curriculum;

Article 44. Support training, recruitment, and retention programs for Inuit in all professions;

Article 45. Mandate ICC leadership to continue its promotion and leadership of projects and initiatives to strengthen the Inuit language, including the *Assessing, Monitoring, and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages* project through the Arctic Council.

Thankful to ICC Greenland for the opportunity of meeting here in Nuuk 13-15 February 2018 to share positive Inuit-focussed education policies and strategies, as well as our education challenges across Inuit Nunaat;

Recalling the ILO Convention 169 and UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which affirm the rights of Inuit to establish and control their educational systems and institutions appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning;

Further Recalling that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child asserts the rights of children to a quality education at the highest levels;

Acknowledging that each Inuit region in Chukotka, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland have different colonial histories resulting in different educational challenges across the circumpolar Arctic;

Further acknowledging the numerous similarities facing Inuit and their educational institutions, grounded in their shared culture, history, and world views, are important starting points to share best educational practices, develop enhanced culturally appropriate curricula and learning resources, and jointly conceive and implement successful Inuit-focussed educational policies;

Celebrating the resilience of Inuit, our culture, and our demonstrated successes in educational approaches and adaptability in the midst of dominant cultures and in the face of a rapidly-changing world;

Understanding that new educational approaches by Inuit educators must include both Inuit-focussed pedagogies and innovative educational approaches adapted from wider global research and proven methods;

Agreeing that the Inuit language and the challenges it faces from second- or foreign-language speakers within our lands, territories, and culture is the key and most important component of any Inuit-focussed educational policies that Inuit may wish to further or develop;

Acknowledging that disparities are sustained through colonizing pedagogy and that institutional biases result in the predictability of student performance, Inuit lag far behind others in dominant cultures in terms of formal educational success and in some cases this lag has achieved near crisis levels;

Understanding that among the many ways of helping improve graduation rates is to address the significant socio-economic disparities faced by Inuit;

Further Understanding that other ways to improve graduation rates is to address cultural and linguistic disparities;

Celebrating the incredible depth and breadth of knowledge and wisdom held by Inuit elders and others who continue to be the most important teachers Inuit have;

Mindful of the need to find innovative ways of accrediting our elders and other Inuit knowledge holders amongst us so that they may be certified as the competent and invaluable teachers that they truly are, within the larger educational environments that all Inuit live in today;

Acknowledging that as Inuit we know best what is best for our children and as such we can and should define what teacher credentialing processes and post-secondary requirements in teacher preservice programs should consist of to ensure our worldview and perspectives is an integral part;

Building on Inuit educational approaches, pedagogies, and models that successfully integrate the sciences, arts, humanities, and other disciplines into the natural and familiar environments that Inuit children live in;

Mindful of the need to foster much greater growth in post-secondary training that is both appropriate for Inuit and which will allow Inuit individuals and communities to take advantage of wider global opportunities and to do so by gaining a better understanding of the role that mastering both primary and globally-dominant languages play in attaining this goal;

WE, THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE INUIT EDUCATION SUMMIT, AGREE THAT WE WILL:

- Transmit the Inuit worldview and knowledge to Inuit students in all the work we do, whether it be through language of instruction or Inuit pedagogical methods;
- Improve and enhance Inuit education systems at all levels, in particular early childhood, middle, secondary, and post-secondary learning in ways that reflect and strengthen our culture and give the best possible opportunities to Inuit;
- Call upon the educational authorities and political bodies in our respective regions to work with us in developing Inuit-focussed pedagogies that are sufficiently funded and allow Inuit to determine how best to implement them;
- Call upon the educational authorities and political bodies in our respective regions to provide for sufficient funding for the development of Inuit-focussed teaching materials.
- Commit to include youth, elders, and parents in the development of innovative Inuit-focussed educational initiatives;
- Commit to develop fully-funded evaluation methods that use valid measures in areas of language proficiency and knowledge acquisition across all levels of education in each of Chukotka, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, and to do so in comparable ways;
- Commit to communicate with each other after leaving Nuuk by sharing additional details of our own educational and pedagogical successes and challenges and, when requested, assist each other in attaining our respective educational and pedagogical goals;
- Ask ICC to establish a forum and committee with membership from all Inuit regions in order to help facilitate our commitment to communicate, share, and assist each other in our common and respective educational responsibilities;
- Ask ICC to develop funding mechanisms to establish a secretariat that would enable the equitable sharing of educational resources across the circumpolar regions in accessible languages or dialects and to find ways to overcome some possible barriers such as copyright and jurisdictional challenges;
- Ask ICC to prepare a report of this Education Summit to assist each country office of ICC to work with their respective boards, memberships, and educational institutions to prepare Inuit-focussed recommendations to the next ICC General Assembly in Utqiagvik, Alaska in July 2018;

***AS AGREED BY INUIT GATHERED AT THE CIRCUMPOLAR INUIT EDUCATION SUMMIT
NUUK, GREENLAND***

15 FEBRUARY 2018