News Release

For Immediate Release

Innait Inuksiutilirijiit certification supports learning in Nunavut schools

IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 25, 2012) – Today in Igloolik, 15 Elders have been certified as *Innait Inuksiutilirijiit* in Nunavut schools, acknowledging their skills, knowledge and abilities as an integral part of education in Nunavut.

The Minister of Education, Premier Eva Aariak joined Louis Tapardjuk, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Amittuq, for the certification.

“I am proud to be here in Igloolik today,” said Aariak. “Certifying and recognizing Elders and their expertise plays an important role in creating a Nunavut education system that is founded in Inuit culture, language and traditions.”

Under section 102 of the *Education Act*, District Education Authorities (DEAs) may employ Elders to assist in teaching about Inuit culture, tradition and knowledge. Elder certification means Elders are considered a part of the school education staff. Together with the principal, counselor, teachers and student support assistants, they participate in instruction of school programs by working together with the school team and classroom teachers.

“My congratulations and sincere thanks to our Igloolik Elders for their commitment to Nunavut’s learners. Many DEAs have begun this important process of certifying Elders in their communities. The teachings from the *Innait Inuksiutilirijiit* will certainly enrich the learning experiences of our students and help build a stronger foundation of Inuit societal values in our schools,” said Aariak.

The Department of Education recognizes the vision, leadership and education offered by Elders is vital in building a school system that is substantially shaped by Inuit societal values, reflects local needs and values, and supports life-long learning. The certification of Elders is one of many initiatives under the *Education Act* that help strengthen Inuit culture and language in our schools.

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