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News Release

For Immediate Release

Standardized Curriculum and Assessment Being Introduced in Nunavut Schools

IQALUIT, Nunavut (March 21, 2014) – Premier Peter Taptuna joined Education Minister Paul Quassa in announcing the introduction of updated, standardized curriculum and resources and new literacy and assessment frameworks that aim to improve the current education system.

“Updated curriculum and the implementation of assessments is the first step in improving the foundation of our educational structure,” said Premier Taptuna. “We have committed in Sivumut Abluqta to address education and we continue to make changes that will shape our future.”

The Department of Education has invested close to \$1 million to update school resources by purchasing math and science text books, intervention materials and literacy program and assessment systems for all schools in Nunavut. The department continues to develop Nunavut specific resources to complement curriculum.

“We are adopting and adapting curriculum from the NWT and Alberta in the areas of math, science and English language arts,” said Paul Quassa, Minister of Education. “At present our schools are using a number of sources to deliver programs of study and this change guarantees updated, standardized curriculum and resources that will ensure consistent and relevant learning experiences for all Nunavut students.”

The Education Act requires that the Department of Education establish and maintain a program of Nunavut-wide assessments to assess the literacy of students in each language and their numeracy skills.

“A common set of assessments allows for standardized teacher instruction and helps assess the performance of our students, ensuring that our students, regardless of community receive the schooling they deserve,” said Quassa.

Student achievement data is used to provide feedback to teachers, students and parents on how well an individual student is meeting expectations and standards. The new assessment framework includes the collection of three types of data: formative, benchmark and summative.

The Department of Education is introducing a literacy framework that complements the assessment framework. This framework provides a consistent way to teach and assess student literacy skills.

“The framework is being introduced in phases, starting with kindergarten to Grade 4 this school year,” said Quassa. “It allows students to experience a balance of direct and indirect instruction that carries them through to a level where they become independent in word study, reading and writing.”

Balanced Literacy is a comprehensive approach to literacy development and includes strategies that use leveled reading and writing and word study.

The first phase of the literacy framework begins with kindergarten to Grade 4 in the 2014-2015 school year and moves into Grades 5 to 8 and 9 to 12 in successive years.

To help promote healthy living and healthy lifestyles the high school physical education requirement will increase from three credits to five credits.

The requirement to complete the Grade 12 Aulajaaqtut course has been removed to give students greater flexibility of program choices, creating the option to add more Grade 12 math and science courses or courses of a particular interest to support their career program path.

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