

## **News Release**

For Immediate Release

## Opening of the expanded Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik Child Care Centre in Apex

**Apex, Nunavut (February 28, 2025) –** Today, Premier P.J. Akeeagok, Minister of Education, Pamela Hakongak Gross, federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Jenna Sudds, and guests celebrated the official opening of the newly expanded Iqaluit Inuktitut Daycare – Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik, Iqaluit's only Inuktitut daycare, located at building 3044 in Apex.

The new location of Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik marks a significant step in increasing access to culturally-relevant and affordable child care in Nunavut. The project, spearheaded by Y.W.C.A. Agvik in partnership with Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik, received over \$1.8 million in funding from the Canada-Nunavut Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement through Nunavut's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) <a href="Infrastructure Funding Program">Infrastructure Funding Program</a>. The relocation of the existing daycare to the newly-built facility preserves its original 20 child care spaces and provides an additional 16 new licensed spaces.

"This daycare signals another important step towards reinvesting in education, one of the pillars in the Government of Nunavut's Katujjiluta mandate," said the Honourable P.J. Akeeagok, Premier of Nunavut. "Affordable, culturally grounded early childhood education in Inuktut is a gamechanger – setting up children for success and providing parents and caregivers opportunities for advancement in training, post-secondary education and employment."

The Government of Nunavut is committed to creating 238 new licensed spaces by March 31, 2026. The expansion of Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik brings the total number of new spaces created to 181 since signing the Canada-wide agreement.

The Government of Canada is providing Nunavut nearly \$66 million over five years (2021-2026) to support a variety of early learning and child care initiatives that will

provide greater access to high quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care throughout the territory.

"Children deserve to grow up proud of who they are and where they come from," said the Honourable Jenna Sudds, federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. "Early learning and child care designed and delivered by Inuit communities ensures that Inuit children, especially at the youngest ages, can learn and celebrate teachings that reflect their values, language and traditions."

"The Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik Child Care Centre provides a nurturing environment where Inuit language and culture are embedded, embraced and celebrated," said the Honourable Pamela Hakongak Gross, Minister of Education. "These crucial child care spaces enable more parents to go to school or work and provide additional support to their family. I'm proud of the dedicated team who have made this expanded child care centre a reality."

The Iqaluit Inuktitut Daycare – Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik offers early learning in Inuktitut, fostering a strong connection to Inuit culture and language. This expansion aligns with the goals of ELCC's *Quality Framework Action Plan (2024-2033)* and the *Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion and Equity*, which emphasize accessibility, inclusion, and cultural preservation in early learning programs across the territory.

For more information on the ELCC Infrastructure Funding Program, please visit: https://www.gov.nu.ca/en/education-and-schools/infrastructure-funding-program

To learn more about Tumikuluit Saipaaqivik, please visit: https://www.nccie.ca/story/tumikuluit-saipaaqivik/

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