

MAMU TSHISHKUTAMASHUTAU INNU EDUCATION



Tshishkutamuekuat
tshetshi shutshikapuit

Teach them
to stand strong

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



MAMU TSHISHKUTAMASHUTAU INNU EDUCATION

Tshishkutamuekuat
tshetshi shutshikapuit

Teach them
to stand
strong



Annual report
December 2020

Acknowledgements

A great big thank you

to our dedicated staff at the board:

Irene Rich, Office Administrator

Mary Ann Aylward-Gregoire, Executive Assistant

Leo Drake, Information Technology

Lynn Rumbolt, Payroll Clerk

Clarence Davis, Director of Programs

Faron Sheppard, Director of Student Support Services

Robert Swyer, STEM Program Specialist

Barbara Butler, Literacy Program Specialist

Shawn Rumbolt, Educational Psychologist

Keith Harbin, Director of Finance

Rena Penashue, Director of Human Resources

Kevin Smith, Senior Facility Manager

Tim Jack, Sheshatshiu Innu School Director

Katie Rich, Mushuau Innu Natuashish School Director

Janet Byrne-Turpin, Curriculum Development Coordinator

Bernadette Power, Classroom Assistant Diploma Program Coordinator

Marguerite Mackenzie, Innu Language Consultant

Camille Fouillard, Curriculum Development Consultant

Tim Jack, School Director

Katie Rich, School Director

to all the amazing people in our schools—administrators, teachers, classrooms assistants, guidance counselors, Elders, facility managers, custodians, asham workers—for all their tireless work and showing up every day to help make our schools caring and thriving places for our children to learn.

and finally to everyone who contributed to this annual report, and especially to Deniz Sariguzel for his beautiful photos.

Tshinashkumitinau nutam katshi uauitshiat.

Kanani Davis

contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Message from the Chair of the Board | 1 |
| Message from the Chief Executive Officer | 3 |
| In Memoriam | 5 |
| Our Schools | |
| Natuashish | 7 |
| Sheshatshiu | 11 |
| Programs | |
| Director of Programs | 15 |
| Student Support Services | 18 |
| Literacy | 21 |
| Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) | 23 |
| Educational Psychology | 25 |
| Innu Curriculum Development | 26 |
| Innu Language Work | 28 |
| Professional Development/CA training | 30 |
| Operations | |
| Human Resources | 31 |
| Finances | 33 |
| Health and Safety/Covid-19 | 36 |
| School Expansion Plans | 37 |
| Information Technology | 38 |

Message from the Chair of the Board

Mamu Tshishkutamashutau – Innu Education is celebrating our 11th anniversary and I am excited to share with you the accomplishments of the many people, both inside and outside our schools, working hard to help our Innu children succeed in education. The Board of Trustees would like to acknowledge all those involved for their passion, commitment, perseverance and courage on this journey.

Establishing a new education system is a huge undertaking and it is remarkable to think of everything that has happened since MT-IE was set up. Our schools are being transformed by our achievements, including:

- implementing Innu-aimun and Innu-aitun programming in the classroom and on the land;
- hiring caring and dedicated staff;
- providing more support to students with special needs;
- creating mentally-healthy schools with trained staff who know how to work with trauma, recognizing when a student needs help and able to respond to crisis situations;
- improving student performance in reading, writing and math on provincial assessments;
- accessing new technology and equipment such as Smartboards, ipads, computers and state-of-the-art learning opportunities for our students;
- increasing our number of high school graduates and grads who continue with post-secondary studies;
- setting up a classroom assistant diploma program
- implementing new and unique Innu resources and accredited curriculum; and
- adapting to our new Covid-19 world.





We want to continue to help our students succeed. We want schools to be places where they are proud to be Innu, where they can learn their language and culture, all the while meeting provincial academic standards. We want our schools to be safe, caring and respectful, where everyone feels they belong. We want to continue to build community, to nurture positive relationships within our schools and with parents, communities and partners. And we want to further develop our leadership and effectiveness as a board.

We are excited to have been able to access funding for expansions to both schools. Additions to the schools will not only provide us with the classrooms we need but also other spaces for enhanced programming in areas such as industrial arts, computers, pre-school and physical fitness. It also means our schools will be able to reclaim other spaces that are now being used for classrooms, such as the library, cafeteria and music room.

The greatest challenge we continue to face is attendance. Despite higher numbers of graduates in both schools, there are still way too many children who are not coming to school. Many of them are the most vulnerable. We need all our children registered in school, attending every day and staying in school. This cannot be solved by the board or the schools without the support of all of you. How can we encourage children to go and stay in school? How can we support parents, grandparents and guardians to ensure the children in their homes are attending school? How can we make sure our schools are places where students want to be?

This has been a very sad year for our board with the loss of a couple trustees: Mary Jane Nui and Bart Jack. It was not so long ago that we lost Ben Jonas Rich and we also remember Daniel Ashini, who fought so long and hard to establish Mamu Tshishkutamashutau. We remember these committed and dedicated advocates for our children. They are dearly missed, but our hope is that we can honour their memory by continuing to carry the torch ensuring that our students get the best possible education.

We ask you to join us in this dream. We need your help to create dynamic and viable schools that can help all of our children grow up to be all they can be, healthy and happy with the skills and knowledge to live in both worlds.

This report provides a snapshot of the important impacts and progress we have made together in recent years, as well as the many goals we still hope to achieve. We value your feedback on our work and encourage you to become more involved in our schools. It takes a village to raise a child. We are confident that you share in our belief in the unlimited potential of our students, and together we will continue to support their achievements in the years ahead.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Mamu Tshishkutamashutau – Innu Education, I am pleased to submit our Annual Report for 2019-2020.

Mary Jane Edmunds, Chair
Mamu Tshishkutamashutau – Innu Education
with the Board of Trustees
Penute Antuan, Karen Penunsi,
Gerry Pasteen, Matshias Rich



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Tshi pushukatinau nutam etatitshieku Innuat, tshishennuat kie auassat.

Nimishta minueniten umue etutamat kie katshi tshishtaiat mashinaikan tshetshi uauitamatat etatusseiat ute Mamu Tshishkutamashutau Innu Education atusseutshuapit. Eshpish minuat tshi tshitshapanian etusseian ute katshishkutamuakananit auassit tshishue mishau atushkan. Apunitu shuk tat kaitusseshit ute mashinaikanitshuapit muk shash enuet anutshish mitshetut tshetshi uauitshiat katshishkutamatshenat mak auassa nete Sheshatshit mak Natuashish ka-tshishkutamatshuapit. Nimishta minueniten e atusseshkukau auassa mak uakaumauaut mak utaumauat. Nanitam nika kutshipanitanan tshetshi minu atusseiat katshishkutamatshuapit.

Hello Elders, students, parents, leaders, and all community members.

I am very happy Mamu Tshishkutamashutau - Innu Education is able to present a report to all community members of Sheshatshit and Natuashish. It's been an uphill battle since I returned to work with MT-IE in January 2018. When I started again we were understaffed and behind on reports and financial obligations with our federal funders, Indigenous Service Canada (ISC). We had to play catch up. There is still very much to do but we are slowly getting back on track with ISC funding agreements. Thanks to our MT-IE staff. We are now fully staffed and working to meet the needs of our schools and children. Our priority is to offer the best and safest learning environment for our children and staff.





MT-IE wants to ensure our Innu children have the best education and at the same time offer Innu-aimun and Innu-eitun (culture) to all our students. We also want to make sure we train our teachers and classroom assistants to offer the best quality education. We encourage our teachers and classroom assistants to invite Elders into the schools and to also get out on the land with their students.

There have been so many changes and opportunities for growth at the board office and schools. We have hired program specialists in literacy and math. They have been a great help to both our schools. They have offered professional development training and assistance to our staff to improve their classroom teaching.

We want to encourage all Innu students in both Sheshatshit and Natuashish to attend and continue to stay in school. Education is so important for everyone – ESPECIALLY Innu. Education cannot be taken away, and education develops our future leaders. We must not expect to rely on outside help to run our own affairs forever. Education is the key.

Since our last report, we have lost several school trustees. Daniel Ashini, Ben Jonas Rich, Mary Jane Nui and Bart Jack Sr. have all sadly passed away. We

will always be grateful for their contributions to the education of our Innu students. They were all dedicated to your children's education.

2020 has been a very tough year. Schools were closed early in the spring due to COVID-19. It seems like the virus is waiting around every corner. People are anxious. Please know that MT-IE has spent a lot of time planning for every situation in case we are forced to close our schools again. Teachers are well trained to deliver online instruction, and we have invested heavily in take-home technology for our students who attend our schools.

I want to extend a special thank you to my executive assistant Mary Ann Alyward-Gregoire who has been working with us for a little over a year now. She has helped me in so many ways. She's gone above and beyond to assist with anything we need at our MT-IE office. Thank you for all you do for me and our staff.

Finally, please remember that parents and guardians are always welcome into our schools. Please bring your ideas, your knowledge and your culture to our students!

Kanani Davis, B.Ed.
Chief Executive Officer
Mamu Tshishkutamashutau Innu Education



In Memoriam

We were sad to say goodbye to dedicated board trustees this last year and since MT-IE was set up. These leaders always had the best interests of our students in mind, wanting them at once to be proud of being Innu and also able to get their education and fulfill their dreams. Their leadership is sorely missed, but we will always remember them.

Bart Jack, Sr.

This last October MT-IE lost its co-chair, Bart Jack Sr.. He is remembered for the decades he worked to advance and protect Innu rights, including education. He served as the first President of the Native Association of NL, established in 1973. He was the first elected Chief of Sheshatshiu and served in multiple positions for the Innu Nation, the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation and the Innu Development Corporation. He was a passionate and powerful voice for the Labrador Innu in both Innu-aimun and English. He advocated for Innu control of education long before MT-IE was set up. He would often say "Innu running Innu affairs is the only way to go". He loved tracking Innu graduates from both high school and post-secondary studies. He brought a wealth of knowledge, wisdom and experience to the MT-IE Board.



Mary Jane Nui

In August of 2019, we lost Mary Jane Nui, a vital and guiding force for our community. As a young nurse's aide, Mary Jane worked at Peenamin Mackenzie school, and even back then made sure students had the services and support they needed. She went on to work with Child Youth and Family Services, advocating for children in care, and the importance of returning them to our communities. After she retired, she served in various positions with the Innu Nation, the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation, health committees, as well as MT-IE. As a school trustee, she wanted to see our schools become more Innu. She believed all Innu needed to learn their culture and language. Manishan lived a true life of service. She is remembered for her kindness, generosity, respect and strength.



Ben Jonas Rich

Ben Jonas was new to the Board of Trustees when he passed away before his time in April 2018. Ben overcame great hardship and tragedy in his life, a living example of resilience, perseverance and hard work. He brought a keen interest and curiosity to many things in his life, as a welder and plumber, a musician who recorded his own albums, and an elected Councillor with the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation. He liked to help troubled youth at risk, feeding them when they were hungry and encouraging them to finish and pursue their education. He approached his work as an MT-IE trustee with the same commitment. He seemed genuinely interested in supporting our students and contributed awards for the most outstanding high school student. The Ben Jonas Rich award has been created to remember him and to continue to recognize student achievement.



Daniel Ashini

Daniel Ashini was first elected Chief of the Sheshatshiu Band Council while still in his twenties. He soon became a highly respected and visionary leader both inside and outside of Labrador. He won the office of Band Council Chief and Innu Nation Presidency more than once, and for many years served as the Innu Nation's lead land rights negotiator. During all this time he was a fierce champion and ambassador for Innu control of education, leading negotiations and supporting protests to demand changes to a school system so clearly failing the Innu. Whether a leader or activist, Daniel always drew strength from the Innu culture and way of life. In 2008 his dream of an Innu school board was realized when Mamu Tshishkutama-shutau – Innu Education was set up. At the opening ceremony of the Sheshatshiu school in 2009, shortly before his untimely passing, Daniel described the new school board and school as major achievements for the future of Innu children. A man of conviction and integrity, humility and humour, Daniel showed many of us what it means to stand up and speak out for what we believe in. When he spoke, you knew he meant what he said; when he acted, it was for his people.



MUSHUAU INNU NATUASHISH SCHOOL



Our Successes

More grads

2020-2021 may be our largest graduation class yet, with a potential of 9 grads. This would beat our last record of 8 grads set in the 2016-2017 school year.

Innu High School Course

We have offered our NL accredited Innu Studies course for three years now to high school students with great success. It is one of our most popular courses with a high percent of passing grades because students enjoy it and participate so much.

K4 Program

This is our second year running a K4 program and this year enrolment is up to 20 students, a big improvement from last year. The course also features Innu-aimun instruction from the Innu classroom assistant.

Cultural Coordinator

Agathe Rich returns this year to her role as cultural coordinator and continues offering traditional Innu experiences to many grade levels. Her Innu donuts are a hit, and her tent has already been used by 6 separate classes this year.

School Cabin

The school board invested in the construction of a cabin near the healing lodge. The cabin has taken shape over the last year. By the time this report is published, it will have been completed and used by students as a base for many trips and activities.

Technology Improvements

SMART Boards have been purchased for every classroom, as well as iPads for every student and laptops for all teachers. This equipment will help us deal with the challenges of Covid but also allows teachers unique teaching opportunities and strategies to engage students.



New Vehicles / Equipment

A truck and plow were recently purchased to help keep our facilities and apartments operating smoothly. Two Sea Cans were added to the school for extra storage. A ride-on janitorial cleaning vehicle, a steam pressure washer to remove graffiti and a skidoo were bought to address issues around the building and community.

Record Staff Numbers

In 2020-2021 school year, we were able to hire more teachers and support staff than ever before. So far this year we have not had to cancel an individual class even once. We hope to continue making MINS an attractive place to teach for certified and local staff alike.

Parent Teacher Relations

Our new strategy of hosting parent-teacher interviews through a 'carnival' like event with door prizes, games and free food in the gym has produced record turnout from parents in recent years. Covid-19 presents a new challenge this year but we hope parents feel more comfortable returning to school after a few successful years of getting parents out.

School Programs

K4 Program

Our K4 program is essentially kindergarten for 4 year-olds. It allows students to get familiar with the school building and environment at an earlier age, and with more frequency than Kinderstart, which amounted to only 6 visits to the school per year. K4 allows students to visit twice a week for a morning or afternoon. In a year, they are exposed to school 10x more than Kinderstart, and they enter Kindergarten with more confidence and skills.

Reading, Writing and Math

During the Covid shutdown, the school started programming with 3 apps, Kids A-Z, Zorbis math adventure and Class-dojo. These apps allow the kids to learn by playing games on their devices. The first 2 apps proved quite useful and teachers have continued their use in the current year. Apart from these we continue using other literacy resources, including the Fontas and Pinell benchmark assessments, leveled literacy interventions, and guided reading programming such as Literacy Place. In terms of numeracy or math, we have new subscriptions to IXL math across grade levels, that will add to the toolkit for teachers, and can be used on all the extra iPads we have this year.

Safe and Caring School Committee

A committee has been set up to look at how to make are schools safe and inclusive. We are discussing ways to do this and talking about activities that we could organize.



Our Challenges

Covid-19 protocols

To try to stay safe during the Covid-19 pandemic, we have students wearing masks whenever they are in common spaces like in the hallway. We don't allow classes to interact. We ask that students try to stay 3 feet apart from each other in the classroom. If more than one class uses the same room, we disinfect the room between uses. All classes are disinfected after lunch and after school. After-school activities are limited to 3 grades sharing the same space and we record the students' names for contact tracing.



School Space

Every room in the school is now being used. The kitchen, library and computer lab had to be turned into classrooms. Our high school classes operate out of portable trailers. Each year we need more classrooms. This is a real challenge for us this year, but hopefully construction for the proposed school expansion will begin next summer and be completed the following year.

Attendance

Attendance has improved very little year after year. Our attendance is also greatly impacted by the seasons and the outpost program. As well, we have fewer students attending as students get older. Some of the reasons for students not coming to school is due to staff shortages. When the school is short of staff and not predictably open for all students, it is easy for the habit of attending to be lost. We are curious to see if our higher staff numbers this year will cause an increase in student attendance.



Internet

The school's internet bandwidth is too small to handle all the new devices. Many times it is so slow, that we are unable to use any apps requiring the internet. Even access to our system to track attendance is frustratingly slow, creating a backlog of work throughout the day. Discussion about increasing the internet with satellite providers has begun.

Vandalism

The school building and teachers' apartments have been vandalized, with graffiti, rock-throwing and attempted arson by youths in the community. This issue became so serious that the band council began regular inter-agency meetings to discuss the issue. Many teachers expressed reservations about staying in the community with these issues ongoing. They have reported sick in the mornings due to sleepless nights. The school hired security guards to work overnight to try to stop the vandalism. It seems to have worked so far, with far fewer teachers reporting disturbances. But it remains a challenge, and cleanup of vandalism has caused school closures twice this school year.

Buses

Our school buses remain parked in Goose Bay. We are unable to have them in the community due to frequent and recent vandalism. We still hope to find a way to protect them, e.g. build a bus shelter or garage preferably.

School Events and Projects

Our school regularly participates in spirit weeks, orange shirt day, pink shirt day, Rock your Mocs, sports meets, sober-walks, awareness activities for social-emotional well-being and much much more.

Every holiday is celebrated with activities like contests, prizes, give-aways and performances, including our Halloween haunted house, our Christmas concert, parent-teacher interviews, and Aboriginal Day student awards.

In spite of Covid-19, we are still offering sports and music extra-curricular activities.

'Mushuau Uassits' Music Video

Several students in high school worked with music producers N'we Jinan to make a music video describing the life of an Innu teen in Natuashish. The video was a great success both in the community and on Youtube, garnering over 45,000 views to date.

Robotics

Grade 4B are having fun writing code to program Beebots to move around from one spot to another. Beebots are small robots that look like bees. It takes good planning and problem-solving skills to figure out all the directions and how to get the bee moving to where you want it to go.

Radio Program

The Student Radio is being organized as part of the school's music program. Each episode features different students from different grades and classes.

Professional Development

Workshops and training attended by staff in 2019-20:

- Mental Health First AID
- non-violent crisis intervention
- Powerschool
- Zorbis Math Adventure
- First Aid and CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation/Lifesaving)
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System

Teacher Training for Classroom Assistants

Many classroom assistants have signed on to the Nipissing University program to become certified CAs.

N'we Jinan Artists - "MUSHUAU UASSITS" // Natuashish



SHESHATSHIU INNU SCHOOL



Our Successes

More grads

Since the opening of the new school, the number of graduates has really gone up. We see students graduate every year, with more and more students graduating with an academic standing and some with Honours. This means our students are better prepared to continue their college or university education.

Two Innu High School Courses

For the last two years students have received credits for the high school Innu Tshissenitamun - Innu Studies 2222 course, learning about Innu culture, identity, nutshimit, history, stories, land rights and governance. This fall of 2020 the school is offering another high school credit course in Innu-aimun, taught by Anne Rich, with the support of a teacher.

Innu-aimun Kindergarten

Since September 2019 Martha Hurley has been teaching Kindergarten, spending half her days with one Kindergarten class, and the other half day with the other class. She has been teaching Innu-aimun, as well providing Innu language instruction of the English curriculum.

Cultural Coordinator

In the fall of 2019, the school hired a cultural coordinator on staff, Walter Mark. His job was to organize and facilitate cultural activities for our students. This year Kenny Rich is serving as cultural coordinator along with his job as vice-principal.

Student Support Services

The school board has hired a strong team of educators to support our students, especially those who need extra help. The team now includes an educational psychologist, a pervasive needs teacher, 4 IRT teachers and we are currently in the process of hiring a behavior management specialist.

Technology Improvements

Every classroom in the school is now equipped with new SMART Boards. As well the school board purchased new laptop computers as well as new iPads for all students. The school is also in the process of improving its internet and wi-fi connection.



Sports

The school has had a lot of successes supporting our student athletes. Sheshatshiu volleyball teams have attended provincial tournaments 7 years out of the last 10, while our hockey teams have been to 6 tournaments out of 10 years. Our wrestling team won several banners for sportsmanship at provincial competitions. We are especially proud of stellar wrestler Josh Dyke, who graduated in 2019. He wrestled at Indigenous and Canada Games, and was invited to participate in a wrestling camp overseas.

Building Improvements

All windows that were previously broken or damaged were replaced in June 2020. As well our building lacked storage and we bought a Sea Can in Sept. 2020 to provide some additional storage space.

New Vehicles

Two new buses were purchased in 2017 to ensure safe and reliable transportation for our students. A school truck was also purchased that year for school business

Sheshatshiu Innu School Programs

Culture Program

We regularly hire Elders to share their knowledge, stories and skills with our students both in the school and on the land. Our school setup a tent at the September 2020 Manishan Gathering so that students and staff could attend. The school board built a cabin about 4 kms from the school, so students have a place to learn and experience Innu culture and traditions. The school also bought a skidoo along with komatiks for winter activities.

K4 Program

The cafeteria has been converted into a pre-school K4 classroom equipped with furniture and toys to meet the learning needs of 4-year-old children. Two classes of students participate in the K4 program, one class in the morning and the other in the afternoon. The program runs Monday through Thursday, with Friday being a preparation day for the teacher. The program focuses on Innu-aimun development and preparing children for starting Kindergarten.

Asham Project

Asham is the Innu word for snowshoes. We have two Asham workers at the school, Alanis Andrew and Shirley Penashue, to help connect students with the community and outside agencies. The Asham workers also run an after-school program for students of all ages, offering activities, including sports, cultural crafts, traditional cooking, etc.



Literacy Project

The Sheshatshiu school is partnering this school year with the Martin Foundation on a Model School Literacy project to help students from K to grade 3 improve on their reading and writing.

Our Challenges

Out of space

The school is too small and we are out of space. The school board is working to expand our current building to better meet our needs. The school expansion will include a fitness room, a pre-school classroom, 8 extra classrooms, an indoor playground, a computer room, a Covid-19 room, 2 extra storage rooms and 3 more offices. We will also be joining the 2 existing industrial arts rooms into one large one.



Attendance

Too many children are not coming to school. Our attendance continues to be lower than we would want it, and COVID-19 has made the situation worse. We are always looking for new and creative ways to improve attendance. We are setting up a system to reward students who come to school regularly.



Staff shortages

The school has been struggling with hiring all the staff it needs. In the 2019-2020 school year, the school was missing IRT teachers to help students with special needs. This current year we are missing an art teacher.



Getting parents involved

More parents are getting involved with the school and their children's education, but there is still a lot more work to be done in this area. We need your support!

School Playground

Some of our students who get dropped off or walk to school head straight for the playground when the weather is nice. This means they are not coming to school or arriving late.

Buses

We continue to experience ongoing mechanical problems with our buses due to the road conditions in the community.



School Events and Projects

September 30th was Orange Shirt Day. We held 2 assemblies and purchased t-shirts for students and staff to honour Indigenous children sent away to residential schools in Canada. We all learned more about the history of those schools.

We were not able to hold our Halloween event this fall and are waiting to see what happens with Covid-19 before deciding on Christmas events.

Our School participated in the annual Terry Fox walk.

Parent teacher interviews are held twice a year. Come and catch up on what your children are doing!

In 2019 the school held its annual Halloween Carnival and also hosted a Christmas Concert, a Christmas Carnival and pictures with Santa. In March 2020 we managed to hold a Winter Carnival week and Winter Carnival Sports day before the Covid-19 lockdown.

Professional Development

Workshops and Training for Staff in 2019-20:

- Mental Health First AID
- non-violent crisis intervention
- Spire Literacy Training
- Google Classroom
- Sensitivity Training

Teacher Training for Classroom Assistants

Two of our Classroom Assistants attended Nipissing University to become certified CAs. We are also in the process of partnering with Nipissing to offer a CA program in Sheshatshiu to train 10 local community members. This is a very new and exciting program for growth within our community.

PROGRAMS

Director of Programs

Clarence Davis

The Programs Department delivers support services and professional development to educational staff and school board members in the areas of literacy, numeracy, science and technology, early learning, student assessment, leadership, health, school library and resources. Programs is committed to the revitalization, preservation, and promotion of the Innu language and culture.

Covid-19 and Back-to-School Plans

Flyers with information about Covid-19 were sent to the two schools to help them develop their plans for re-opening school this fall. The province's re-entry plan document was also sent to the schools.

Online Teaching

I worked with Robert Swyer, MT-IE's math and science specialist, to develop a strategy to support our teachers on how to plan for and teach online should the schools have to shut down because of Covid-19. In the spring, online resources were sent to teachers to help them familiarize themselves with online teaching. A formal online professional development schedule for all teaching staff was set up before schools opened in the fall. All teaching staff have been given training in Google Class & Google Meet.

School Calendars

Poster-sized school calendars for the 2020-2021 school year were produced for the two schools, and printed at Labradorian Printers.





Innu-aimun Teaching Resources

Marguerite MacKenzie, of the MUN Linguistics Lab, is working with MT-IE to develop Innu-aimun audio resources for teachers and classroom assistants. Innu staff from both schools are recording Innu books in both dialects. These digital resources can help our students learn to understand and read books in Innu-aimun.



Innu-aimun I215

An Innu-aimun high school course was developed last year and accredited by the provincial Department of Education. The course is being piloted in the Sheshatshiu Innu School this fall with Anne Rich teaching it. It is well-resourced. We are in the process of translating the Innu-aimun part of the course into Mushuau Innu. Plans are underway for MINS to offer it in February 2021. Training has been provided for Penash Rich and Elizabeth Nui.

Powerschool

This online technology has been set up in both schools. Powerschool can help school staff and parents/guardians share information about all students. School staff, parents/guardians and students can log into Powerschool and get information on each student, including registration and attendance, student assignments, assessments, grades, progress and teacher feedback for each subject area.

Literacy Program Specialist

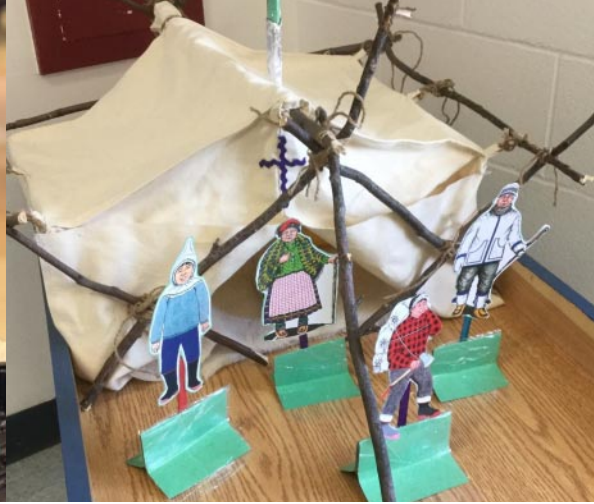
I have been working with Barbara Butler to implement literacy programs in both schools. We are providing Spire Training for the Natuashish teachers. Sheshatshiu teachers may help with the training. We are assessing literacy programs in the schools to see whether teachers need more training. Barbara has resigned from her position as literacy program specialist. She has been retained as a consultant, and we are working to replace her.

School Improvement Plans

Both schools develop school improvement plans and hold meetings throughout the year to assess progress.

K4 Program

Both schools are now offering a K4 program. This is a pre-Kindergarten program for a limited number of 4-year-olds in both communities.



Model School Literacy Project

The Sheshatshiu School is one of twelve Model Schools selected across Canada to be part of the Martin Family Initiative (MFI). The Model Schools project supports reading and writing achievement for Kindergarten to grade 3 students in First Nations schools. The goal is to ensure that every student reads and writes well enough by the end of Grade 3 to support continued school success. If students read well by the age of 9 or 10, they are more likely to graduate from high school. MTIE will be holding ongoing meetings with MFI educators and computer specialists to implement this program in the Sheshatshiu school.

Innu Culture

MTIE has built cabins outside both communities to increase both schools' cultural instruction. Each school has a cultural coordinator to help organize Innu culture programming. Cabins are nearing completion, and each principal has been given a budget for their cultural programming. A new ski-doo and komatik was purchased for the Natuashish school.

Technology

Mamu Tshishkutamashutau - Innu Education has bought new SMART Boards. If travel permits, we will send some staff to learn how to better use them and return to train other staff in the schools. New computers and iPads have also been purchased for all students. These will be useful for online learning should the schools have to lock down again due to Covid-19. We hope to upgrade the internet connection for the Natuashish school to improve the bandwidth and make it more reliable.

7 Habits Training

I will become a trainer for this leadership program and we will offer it to staff in both schools. The program may also be offered to students.

Student Support Services

Faron Sheppard, Director

My job is to help teachers meet the needs of students, especially those who need extra support. With other staff we are trying to focus on improving student: 1) literacy: reading and writing, 2) numeracy: mathematics, and 3) social and emotional learning. I try to work with teachers and other staff to find ways to help and support students in the classroom before students need to be assessed and removed from the classroom for extra help. I support teachers to try to engage all students, including those with special needs and those who are performing ahead of their grade level.

Assessments

The kinds of assessments we do are psychological and speech language. We try to make sure vision and hearing assessments happen first because we need to rule out hearing and vision problems before we can do a proper and complete assessment.

In the Sheshatshiu school we have prepared a prioritized list of students that need to be referred for assessments, to make sure those that have the greatest need get the support they need. This list has been given to the education psychologist.

We have a clearer and more streamlined referral process in both schools to make sure students can be assessed and receive the supports they need in a timely manner.

Successes in Student Services

We now have more staff to provide extra support for our students, especially those with special needs. We were short staffed last year in both schools but this school year we were able to hire:

- a special education teacher for students with severe to profound special needs at the Sheshatshiu Innu School
- a psychologist serving both schools to do assessments, consult with staff, provide counseling and help with crisis situations
- a speech language pathologist serving the two schools through video-conferencing
- a guidance counsellor in each school
- a new IRT (instructional resource teacher) has been hired in Natuashish, with training and experience working in special education

These support staff, along with administrators, are holding regular meetings in both schools. These are case management meetings, during which staff discuss the ongoing needs, supports and progress of individual students.

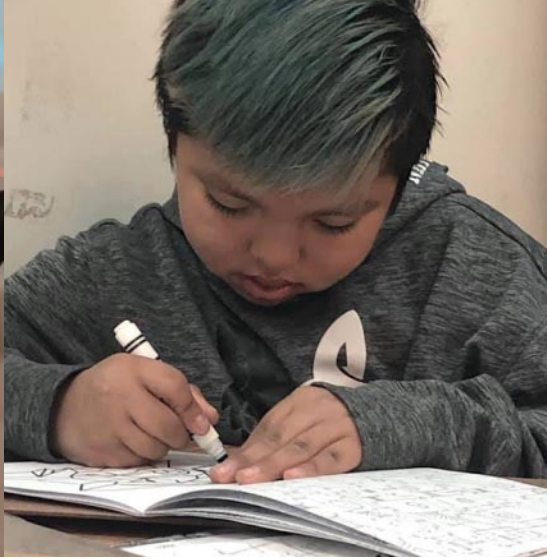
A computer is set up in both schools for students to access speech and language support through videoconferencing with the speech language pathologist.

A nominal roll was prepared for both schools. This is a list of all registered students, including students with special needs, to ensure that we are able to access Indigenous Services Canada's special education funding.

Last year we put together a school profile to give us an up-to-date and clear picture of the total number of kids with special needs and the kinds of support they need. We did this to help us with planning and funding, to ensure that we are using the resources we have—staff, materials, funding, etc.—in the best and most efficient way possible.

Counselling is being provided by a guidance counsellor and educational psychologist at the Sheshatshiu School, and by a guidance counsellor and Labrador Grenfell Health counsellor at the Natuashish School.





Challenges in Student Services

Short of Teachers:

Last year we had a hard time recruiting instructional resource teachers (IRTs). We were short of these teachers in both schools. We were also short a guidance counselor for part of last year in Natuashish. Fortunately, we were able to recruit a full slate of these teachers for the 2020-2021 school year.

Trained IRTs:

We have had difficulties recruiting trained IRT's with a background in special education, but we have recently been successful in hiring an IRT with this specialization.

Special Education Team Staff Meetings:

These meetings have been hard to organize when we have been short-staffed.

Online and Video-Conferencing Services:

It is challenging to find available staff in both schools to transport, set up and supervise students receiving online services from the speech language pathologist and education psychologist

Hearing and Vision Assessments:

It is hard to do organize all the hearing and visions assessments in a timely fashion. This affects our ability to develop programs to meet the needs of students. We also cannot access special education funding until we have a diagnosis. This High Cost Special Education funding is tied to the number of students identified with exceptionalities/special needs.

Covid -19 Pandemic

The pandemic shut our schools down in March 2020. We were not really prepared to deliver online training to staff. Most of our professional development programs have to be delivered face to face when school schedules permit.

“ We had one student last year who was reading 4 years below grade level. Before the year was over she was reading at grade level. ”

Professional Development and Training

2019-2020 Training Provided

- social and emotional learning
- special education
- tiered Intervention, differentiated instruction/responsive teaching and learning (how to teach in a way that meets the needs of all students and not just some)
- Mental Health First Aid with school board staff and 20 Sheshatshiu school staff. Some Natuashish school staff completed the training with Amanda Baillie.
- crisis response planning for the Sheshatshiu school
- Non-violent crisis intervention for staff working with the most challenging students. The training involves being caring, calm and respectful, using words to be clear and direct to help de-escalate situations and help students regain control of themselves and their behaviours before a crisis arises or worsens
- 7 Habits training for board staff and administrators in both schools

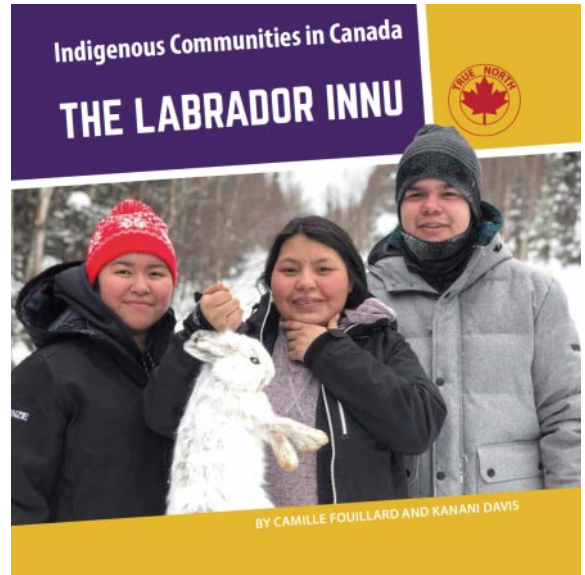
Making Schools Safe and Caring:

Training is being planned to implement a school-wide program called Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS aims to improve the behaviour of students, stop bullying and create a safe school where all students can learn and succeed. Each school develops its own PBIS plan, to make sure it is culturally-relevant and all staff buy in. PBIS is about clearly teaching about positive behaviours just as students get clear instructions on reading or math. All students learn about good behaviour, being respectful and kind, throughout the day, in class, at lunch and on the bus. Students know what behaviour is expected of them and get the chance to practise and get feedback. Good behaviour is modelled, enforced, rewarded and re-inforced. School staff encourage and praise students for good behaviour. Extra support is provided for students who continue to struggle with behaviour. The focus is on prevention of bad behaviour rather than punishment. The goal is to reduce office referrals, detentions and suspensions. The school may also provide training and support for families.

Future training being planned:

- ASIST (applied suicide intervention skills training) to have a trainer in both schools as well as in the board office (winter 2021, tentative). Additional suicide prevention training called SafeTALK will be provided in both schools once other school staff have been trained in ASIST.
- MHFA (mental health first aid) training completed in January for board staff and 20 staff in Sheshathsiu. Some Natuashish staff completed MHFA training facilitated by Amanda Baillie, and remaining staff to be trained late fall or early winter 2021)
- Trauma Informed Schools – Training planned for 2020/21 for both schools.
- Go To training (mental health) for board office staff and junior/senior high teachers in both schools
- Crisis Response Planning for the Natuashish School





Literacy Program

Barbara Butler, Program Specialist

The goal of MT-IE's Literacy Program is to work as a team to provide programming for all students to improve their reading and writing skills. The Sheshatshiu Innu school and Mushuau Innu Natuashish School follow the English School Board language arts curriculum with Innu cultural themes integrated to support literacy. The language arts program encourages students to participate in activities centered around speaking and listening, reading and viewing, and writing and representing.

We strive to incorporate Innu traditions in our program. We believe this is important to help students to grow in their language arts skills.

Language Arts Resources

The schools have the resources authorized in the curriculum guides; Literacy Place (K-3), Moving up (4-6), Literacy (7,8,9) and High School resources. Some teachers also use books from the Level Literacy Kits to help with guided reading. As well, students have access to a variety of resources from Nelson publications, Strong Nation Books, Turtle Island Voices, Eagle Crest Books, and Circle of life.

Teaching Strategies

To help improve student achievement we are using the following teaching strategies;

- a 90-minute Literacy Block
- Daily 5
- model reading and writing
- guided reading
- small group and Individual Instruction
- Listening Centers

Technology Tools

Over the past few years, we are using technology to engage and respond to the needs of all students. Some of the apps we use are:

- Jolly Phonics
- Raz Kids
- Learning A-Z
- iXL
- Education.ca and
- SuperTeacher

The use of these allows teachers to develop programs to meet specific needs of all students.

Both schools also use Google websites developed by the literacy program specialist to help improve the

parent-school connection and to reinforce topics covered in school. The websites give parents ideas to support learning at home.

Natuashish:

<https://sites.google.com/site/natuashishinnuschool/home>

Sheshatshiu:

<https://sites.google.com/site/innueducationprimary/home>

Another Google website provides teachers with ideas to help improve reading and writing:

<https://sites.google.com/innueducation.ca/mtie2020/home>





Games and Hands-on Resources

We have purchased many hands-on games used by teachers to improve literacy. Students enjoy playing games and learning at the same time. Hands-on learning is key to creating a fun and integrative learning experience. We also supplied students with their own iPad and headset, so they can listen to online stories within their 90-minute reading block.

Assessment and Intervention

Teachers are continually assessing student progress through various methods, including anecdotal notes, video clips, journals, quizzes/ tests, and observations.

Students are assessed in reading at least 3 times a year using the Fountas & Pinnell Assessment Kit. The information is analyzed to see both areas of achievement and concern. We see that if a student is attending school regularly and in the correct program, his or her reading comprehension improves. The data also allows teachers to assess which students require interventions and extra help. These students are given additional support from instructional resource teachers (IRT's). Teachers and IRTs work together with the following programs to improve student literacy skills;

- S.P.I.R.E
- Leveled Literacy Intervention, and
- Alpha Kids

A literacy file is kept on each student to track his/her progress. This file is passed on to the next year's teacher.

Innu Literacy Initiatives

Innu-aimun is a main area of focus. We try to integrate Innu -aimun into the schools by using Google Innu websites, the translation of reading resources, and Innu books written by people in the communities. We also encourage visits from Elders in classrooms. Most Google Website links (<https://sites.google.com/innueducation.ca/innu-resources/home>) are connected to the Innu language resources site (Innu-aimun.ca).

Celebration

Teachers are using many ways to engage students to improve their literacy skills:

- elders visit schools to share their knowledge with students and staff
- grade 8 students from the Natuashish School wrote an article, "Our Unique Northern Way of Life," that was published in a Labrador magazine,
- junior high students in both schools are creating and collecting writing samples to be published in a book
- students are encouraged to take home books donated to the school
- a music video was written and performed by youth in Natuashish
- Christmas card art contest- First Nation Help K-2, 3-5, 6-8, & 9-12
- after-school reading club
- students created an iMovie on Kindness shown to the whole school
- student presentations on Innu culture, customs, and traditions.
- student written work is displayed throughout both schools

The goal as stated earlier is to improve a student's literacy skills and we use all these tools to help achieve student success while keeping the Innu culture and traditions alive.

Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) Program

Robert Swyer, Program Specialist

I was hired by MT-IE in September 2019 as a STEM Program Specialist. I bring 12 years of experience as a teacher and 18 years as a STEM Specialist. My job now is to help teachers and schools in the areas of math, science and technology. This includes:

- supporting teachers with the provincial K-12 mathematics, science and technology curriculum
- supporting principals on various school initiatives
- communicating with the NL Department of Education on matters to do with math, science and technology programs
- providing teachers and schools with resources for teaching math, science and technology
- offering professional development (PD) to teachers and other staff
- supporting Clarence Davis, Director of Programs on MT-IE initiatives.

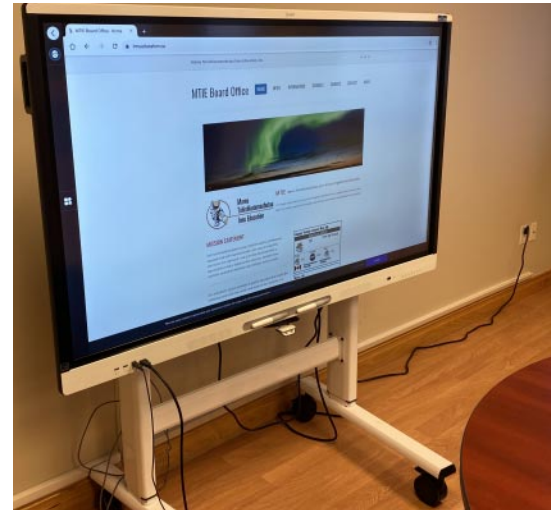
SMART Boards

MT-IE has recently installed over 30 new SMART Boards in our two schools. I support teachers to use these Boards in everyday teaching. SMART Boards allow teachers to easily incorporate video, audio, text, pictures, diagrams, etc., into their lessons. This helps teachers accommodate the different learning styles of their students.

SMART Boards have a “touch screen” that students can interact with. Teachers offer lessons in which students explore and manipulate concepts on the SMART Board. SMART Boards allow teachers to create lessons more easily understood by students versus many traditional classroom techniques. SMART boards can help build student confidence as they learn.

iPads

I am helping Leo Drake, our IT manager, to set-up the 800 iPads and classroom charging stations recently purchased by MT-IE. I will be supporting teachers as they start using these devices for curriculum purposes. There are many iPad apps available for teachers and students to use for educational purposes (reading, writing, mathematics, science, etc.).





Google for Education

MT-IE has a “Google for Education” system for teachers and students. I support teachers as they begin to use parts of this online system with their students. All students have school gmail accounts to communicate with their teachers and each other. Teachers and students also use other Google communication and collaboration tools: 1) Google Meet, 2) Google Classroom, 3) Google Drive, 4) Google Docs and 5) Google Slides.

Educational Resources

I encourage teachers to contact me about resources they need to better teach their programs. I am supporting teachers with the following resources:

- **IXL:** an online resource to enhance the teaching of math and language arts. Students access IXL on iPads to help them gain fluency and confidence in math and reading and writing. Students master key skills at their own pace through fun and interactive activities with built-in support and awards to motivate them. Aligned with the NL curriculum, this resource also allows teachers to assess students, personalize learning plans for individual students and track their progress.

- **Robotics:** Bee Bots have been supplied to primary teachers to help students learn the basic ideas of coding or programming a robot to move along in certain directions.

- **Mathematics Manipulatives:** used by teachers to help students learn and understand math concepts:

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dominos | Buttons (varied shapes/sizes) | Multiplication Games |
| Dice | Small Plastic Geometric Shapes | Small Coloured Blocks |
| Metre Sticks | Two Coloured Counters | Number Lines |
| Teddy Bear Counters | | |

- **Science Resources:** used by teachers for science activities and experiments:

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Soil/Seeds | Magnets | Measuring Cups | Balloons |
| Magnifying Glasses | Modelling Clay | Tin Foil | Small Microscopes |

- **Efoflex Draw Software:** used by 7-12 math teachers to draw math diagrams and graphs and to develop math assignments and tests

- **CNC Router:** a computer-controlled router supplied to the Natuashish School for a high school Skilled Trades course. The router is used to cut various materials, like wood, aluminum, steel, plastics and so on

- **High School Robotics Equipment** – robotics devices and laptops supplied to a Natuashish School high school science teacher to use in courses and after-school activities

Goals for 2020-2021

My goal this school year is to continue to support teachers and schools in teaching mathematics, science and technology programs. A key part of this goal is to help ensure that students in MT-IE schools have access to the same state-of-the-art opportunities available in other schools across our province.

Educational Psychology Services

Shawn Rumbolt, Educational Psychologist

As the educational psychologist for MT-IE, I work with school staff, parents/guardians and other professionals such as social workers and physicians to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally and emotionally. Referrals are made to me by teachers, parents, school board staff and students.

Services Provided

- assisting teachers and parent/guardians with ways to help students improve in academic, social, emotional, and or behavioral areas;
- helping schools with planning for and dealing with tragic events such as the death of a student or other community member;
- offering counselling to address possible student mental health concerns including depression, grief, controlling emotions, anxiety, anger, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, self-esteem, bullying, and trauma; and
- performing psycho-educational assessments to identify appropriate ways to assist students who have academic (reading, writing, mathematics) and or behavior problems, as well as the reasons for concerns such as disabilities and or disorders.

Challenges

The greatest challenges faced as the educational psychologist for MT-IE includes:

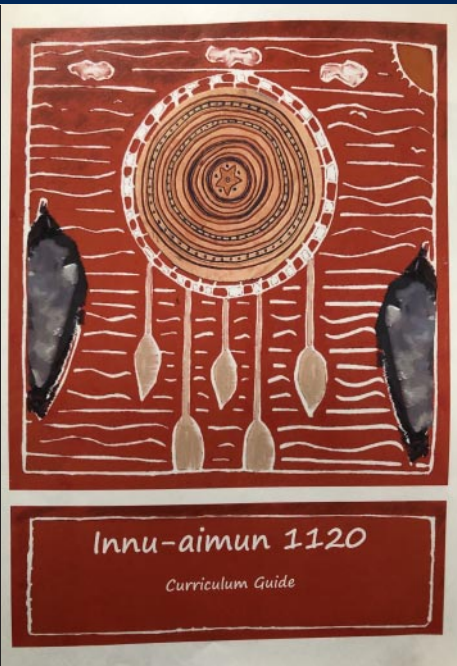
- meeting the counselling and assessment needs of a high number of students while on a part-time work schedule, and
- obtaining appropriate (private) office space from which to deliver psychological services.

Highlights

Some highlights of educational psychology services for 2019-2020 include:

- expanding my role to include counselling for students with complex issues,
- providing counselling services to a high number of students and some staff members during a community suicide crisis;
- establishing online counselling services for students if schools close because of COVID-19, and
- obtaining more training in specialized counselling techniques for students who have experienced trauma.





Innu Curriculum Development

Janet Byrne-Turpin, Coordinator

Innu Language Course

MT-IE received approval from NL's Department of Education for a 2-credit high school Innu-aimun course. In the past Innu-aimun was only offered to students from Kindergarten to junior high. I developed the course with the help of Marguerite MacKenzie in the Department of Linguistics and Sarah Kristian Perry, who works for the Innu Language Project at MUN. The course includes materials compiled by Bridget Murphy from the late Manikatinen Nuna's knowledge and passion for Innu-aimun. Anne Rich, Julianna Michel and Katie Rich had input and Daphne Antuan created the cover's beautiful art work.

The course is now being taught in Sheshatshiu by Ann Rich and will be offered in Natuashish this coming February. The course involves listening and speaking, reading and writing Innu-aimun. Dr. MacKenzie and Sarah also produced a workbook to help students build literacy skills in Innu-aimun with a focus on the Innu dictionary, spelling, vocabulary—learning words and word-building. As students learn more about Innu-aimun, they also learn about the history of the language, and aspects of life in nutshimit, including berries, animals and the land.



Innu Curriculum Resources

Camille Fouillard

Innu Culture Guide

A guide is being produced for teachers and classroom assistants to support them in making the school more of a place to be Innu. Based on input from Elders, MT-IE's Curriculum Advisory Committee, leaders, school staff and students, the guide provides suggestions for content, ways, strategies, resources and activities both on the land and in the classroom, to include Innu culture, language, experiences, worldview, stories, knowledge and history into all subject areas from K to 12. This last year workshops were held to get input from Elders from both communities as well as from Sheshatshiu school staff. Workshops are planned with the staff of the Natuashish school in the New Year, as well as with the Curriculum Advisory Committee. School staff will be provided with professional development before the guide is piloted. The guide will be a living document, that can be revised and added to as needed.



Map of Nitassinan

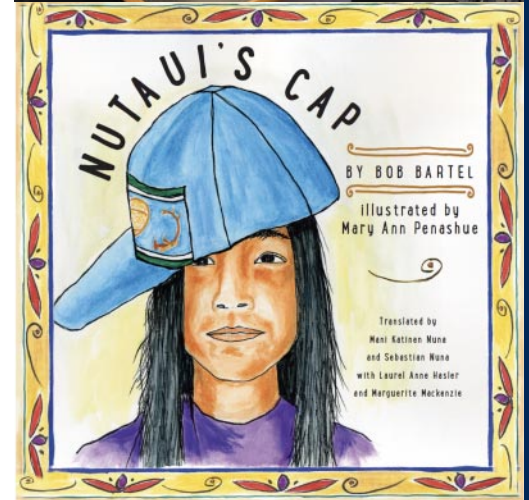
Two maps of Nitassinan were created. One map with 140 Innu places names was produced as a puzzle for elementary grades to learn Innu geography. A second map with 400 Innu places names was produced as a puzzle and as a poster for high school students. The research for the maps was conducted by Chelsea Arbour and Jolene Ashini with a number of Elders and other Innu experts in both communities. Place names were verified with maps that involved years of research with many Innu, starting in the 1970s, documenting Innu land use for the Innu Nation's land rights negotiations with governments. Jolene created gorgeous images to add to the map Chelsea produced. Vessela Brokolova did the graphic design to combine the artwork with the map. Members of the Innu Curriculum Advisory Committee and others reviewed a draft map for accuracy. The Culture Guide will include a geography section to suggest ways to use the maps as an educational tool.

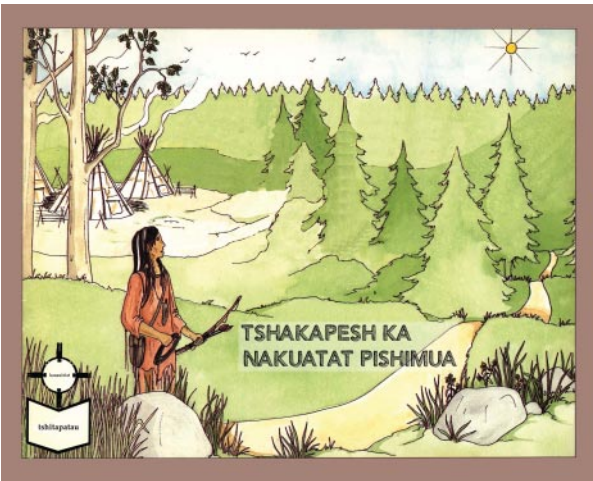
Book Projects

Nutai's Cap was co-published by MT-IE and Running the Goat Press. Written by Bob Bartel, it tells Elena Andrew's story, about a girl's experience of NATO's low-level flight training in a nutshimit camp and how the Innu came together to protest this invasion of their homeland. The manuscript was workshopped with Elena and others who remember this important moment in Innu history, to help flesh out the story and make it authentic. Mary Ann Penashue created beautiful images that bring the story to life on the page. The book includes a backgrounder on the Innu and their protests, as well as a map and a glossary. The late Manikatenan Nuna, Stella Rich, Sebastian Piwas and Marguerite Mackenzie helped with the Innu-aimun texts in both dialects.

The Labrador Innu, I co-wrote this book with Kanani Davis. It is part of a series of schoolbooks on Canadian First Nations published by Beech Street Books. The book introduces elementary and junior level students to the past and present day history and culture of the Labrador Innu. It touches on the Innu atanukan, the arrival of the French and fur trade, the Innu way of life, Innu-aitun, the importance of the caribou and the makushan, settlement and colonization, land rights and self-government.

Other books: Another book in progress is Napess Ashini's wonderful book of elders' stories. The manuscript is almost ready to submit to ISER, Memorial University's press. An MOU agreement between MT-IE and ISER has been drafted for co-publication. Work is also underway with Jodie Ashini and others at the Innu Nation on a book about the caribou and its importance to the Innu—a valuable resource for Innu students to learn about their culture.





Innu Language Work

Marguerite Mackenzie

I have been working with a number of Innu speakers of both dialects to produce Innu-aimun materials in print, as well as audio recordings. For the Sheshatshiu dialect, the following people assisted: the late Mani Katineni-pan Nuna, Ann Rich, Stella Rich, David Rich and Kanani Davis. For the Mushuau dialect resources, I collaborated with Mani Shushet Mistanapeo, Penash Rich, Ipa Nympha Byrne, Sebastian Piwas, Elizabeth Nui and Damien Benuen.

Children's Books and Literacy

We have been working on the following projects:

1. completing the printing of Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu versions of 30 Circle books with Ann Rich, Stella Rich and Penash Rich
2. preparing and printing Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu versions of 8 Naskapi children's books with Kanani Davis, Ann Rich, Ipa Nympha Byrne, Penash Rich and Damien Benuen
3. recording previously published children's books (Circle, Naskapi & Nutai's Cap) to create read-along audio files, with Stella Rich, Penash Rich, Sebastian Piwas, Brennan Coldwell, Sarah Perry and Behak Rueentan Tehrani
4. providing English pdf and recorded versions of Circle books to be used as companions to the Innu version, with Behak Rueentan Tehrani and Nora Sargent.
5. producing a high school accredited Innu language course with Janet Byrne-Turpin, Sarah Perry, Ann Rich, Penash Rich and Elizabeth Nishapet Nui

Translation

I worked on the production and verification of Innu-aimun versions of the following:

1. facilitated the translation and recording of Nutai's Cap by Bob Bartel, with Stella Rich and Sebastian Piwas
2. facilitated the translation of: RNC Intimate Partner Violence brochure and recording; Innu-aimun text for Parks Canada disclaimer panels; Heart & Stroke poster; other phrases and documents
3. verification and certification of Pien Penashue video for use in the Innu caribou court case, with David Rich and Sebastian Piwas
4. verification of Innu language for projects by MTIE consultants (e.g. posters of teachers, Innu Studies course)

Online Dictionary, Verb Conjugations and Lessons

Work continues to expand the Innu dictionary, pages of verb conjugations, as well as lessons and conversations for language learning:

1. weekly meetings online with an Innu language editorial committee convened by Institut Tshakapesh about the updating and correction of websites:
 - dictionary.innu-aimun.ca/Words; verb.innu-aimun.ca;
 - atlas-ling.ca; terminology.atlas-ling.ca/; and
 - <https://lessons.innu-aimun.ca/>
2. adding Labrador words to the online Innu dictionary, with Laurel Anne Hasler
3. adding Labrador pronunciations and examples to the online Innu lessons, with Laurel Anne Hasler
4. research on Mushuau verb conjugations with Penash Rich

Heritage and Library Projects

Other Innu-aimun related projects include:

1. work with Nicholas Welch, Canada Research Chair at Memorial University, on a joint MTIE-MUN library project to digitize Labrador Innu and Inuit materials for online access
2. work with Nicholas Welch on organizing an inventory of Innu tapes and documents in the Indigenous Languages Lab at MUN





I'M DOING IT FOR US Become a classroom assistant.

Empower your community, people, and culture.

The Indigenous Classroom Assistant Diploma Program (ICADP) will provide you with the opportunity to

- LEARN new skills and knowledge
- GROW through hands-on experience
- THRIVE within your community

"As a Classroom Assistant, I have developed new skills and I make a real difference in the lives of young people in my community."
- Kansas Gabriel

Learn. Grow. Thrive. **Apply today!**
inneducation.ca
(709) 899-4227



Innu Classroom Assistant Diploma Program

Bernadette Power, Coordinator

Late in 2019 Indigenous Services Canada provided MT-IE with funding to deliver a program for 20 classroom assistants, 10 in Natuashish and 10 in Sheshatshiu. Contacts were made with a number of universities and colleges to help us develop this program. In the end we asked Nipissing University to partner with us to offer their Indigenous Classroom Assistant Diploma Program. Nipissing was selected because they offer an Indigenous program and some of our Innu classroom assistants have already completed either one year or the full two-year program with great success.

We had plans to begin the program in May 2020 but due to Covid, we had to postpone indefinitely. We are now planning to begin in the winter of 2021, provided we are not further impacted by the Covid pandemic. Nipissing has selected students for admission and they are in the process of selecting the instructors. There is lots of excitement about this program in both Labrador Innu communities. We look forward to seeing more Innu teachers in our classrooms.



OPERATIONS

Human Resources

Rena Penashue, Director

Since returning to MT-IE in February 2018 as the Director of Human Resources, I have achieved a Bachelor of Administration degree with a major in Human Resources.

When I returned to the organization, our schools were seriously understaffed and the turnover was alarming. We worked with Indigenous Services Canada to implement, develop and work on an Integrated Management Plan. One of the components of the plan was Human Resources. Since 2019 there has been an audit of personnel files and all employee files are now current and contain all pertinent information.

We have had some challenges, more specifically with retention and recruitment of staff. We met with staff on numerous occasions to talk about key issues. We then identified that we needed to work on our recruitment strategy, staff morale, communication and employee benefits.

In 2018, we had 27 vacancies overall for both schools. It improved in 2019, during which we had 19 vacancies. We were still not where we wanted to be at the beginning of the school year, but we were in a slightly better position than in 2018. In 2020 we have been able to fully staff ALL teaching positions except for our pervasive needs and 2 instructional resource teachers IRTs in Natuashish. We still have turnover but it is not as critical as it was in 2018.

There are a lot of factors that contribute to our success. We rebranded our recruitment pamphlet, which focuses on the beauty of our communities. We have increased our teacher incentives. We continue to frequently communicate with staff from both schools. However, there are still areas that need work, including housing for teachers in Natuashish.

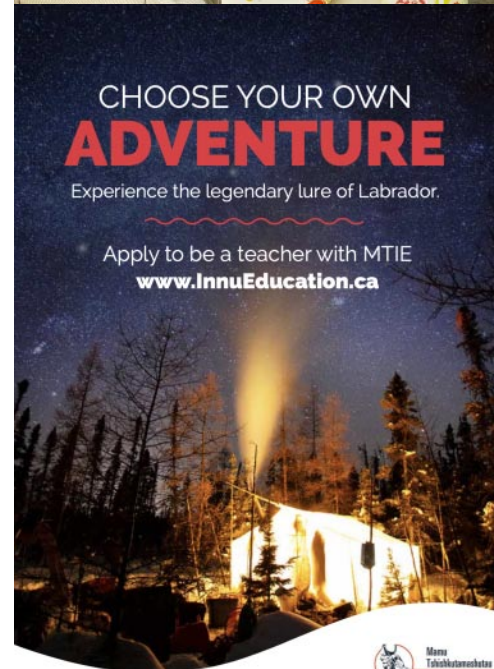


Photo credit: Ryan Wood Photography





We have done a lot in terms of acknowledging and rewarding the work of ALL of our staff which includes holding lunches and staff draws, just to name a few. Overall staff morale in both schools has improved. We acknowledge that we are always growing and there is always need for improvement hence we continue to hold staff meetings to hear from our employees about ways to improve. Frequent communication with our staff is key to our success.



When recruiting our teaching staff, we emphasize the importance of Innu culture and traditions and incorporating these into the classroom and/or on the land. This is a way that you, as a community member, can play an important role in welcoming our new teaching staff. We have found that over the years, teachers also would like the opportunity to learn. Please feel free to contact myself and/or your school's community education director to participate in any on-the-land learning opportunities for our teaching staff.



Finances

Keith Harbin, Director

I was hired in October 2019, bringing with me over 25 years of finance and accounting experience. Prior to working with MT-IE, I served as airport operations manager, manager of a national accounting firm and chief financial officer with a First Nations government.

I oversee all budgeting, monitoring and analysis of finances to support operational needs and strategic planning.

Working with other finance staff and MT-IE directors, the current priorities and plans of the Finance Department are:

1. streamlining policies and procedures and updating the accounting system to be able to provide complete, accurate and up to date financial information
2. providing quality reports so that budget managers can make informed decisions about purchasing goods and services for MT-IE
3. using existing funds in an efficient and effective manner so that MT-IE can provide the best possible education opportunities for students in our two schools
4. working with funding partners to get more resources needed to help MT-IE achieve its long-term goals.

The audited financial statement is not included in this report as it has not been completed at the time of printing, but we would like to share the following information about MT-IE's last and current fiscal year.



FISCAL YEAR from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

MT-IE expended about \$14.2 million providing education services in the last fiscal year.

Core Funding

We used our core funding from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to provide the following for our two schools:

- **Instructional & Support Services:** salaries for teachers, classroom assistants and bus drivers, costs for literacy and numeracy materials, student activities, nutritional supplies and cultural activities
- **Special Education Service:** salaries for IRTs, student assistants, costs for an education psychologist, speech language pathologist, and guidance counselor services, as well as instructional and assessment materials
- **Operations & Maintenance:** salaries for office and janitorial staff, general repairs and maintenance, insurance and telephone

Post-secondary Funding for Sheshatshiu

We provided post-secondary student support for students from Sheshatshiu attending college and university, to cover expenses such as tuition, rent, living allowances and travel.

School Board Office

We operated the board office now temporarily located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Expenses include salaries for board staff, trustee and staff travel, office rent, office supplies, insurance and professional fees.

Funding from Proposals

We submitted proposals and secured additional funding for:

- **First Nations Youth Employment Strateg:** primarily for wages for Innu youth to enhance their skills and employability
- **EPP Partnership Advancement:** monies to establish or strengthen relationships with like-minded entities to improve MT-IE's ability to deliver education programs, including the production of resources and curriculum
- **EPP Structural Readiness:** monies to improve our organizational capacity (i.e., training, professional development, etc.)
- **School Expansion Design:** design and consulting fees for the proposed school expansion in Natuashish
- **Regional Education Preparatory Activities:** consultant and travel-related costs for discussions with Indigenous Services Canada to negotiate and secure the required funding for MT-IE to meet its mandate of providing quality education to its students
- **K-4 Program:** salaries and supplies for a program to introduce 4-year-olds to the school system to prepare them for full-day Kindergarten
- **Indigenous Classroom Assistant Program:** funding for a program administrator/academic advisor and student-related costs to prepare Innu candidates to become classroom assistants and encourage them to continue their education to become classroom teachers



Payroll accounted for approximately \$10.2 million or 72% of our total expenditures. Other major expenses included:

- professional fees (legal, accounting, engineering and consulting): \$966,722
- travel : \$489,244
- supplies: \$471,883
- repairs and maintenance: \$393,828
- insurance : \$195,112
- other day-to-day expenses: \$1,446,345

FISCAL YEAR from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

We are almost through the fiscal year which will end March 31, 2021.

Core Funding

We have core funding of \$15.2 million available from Indigenous Services Canada and we are using and will continue to use this funding to provide the same types of services as outlined above. Payroll continues to be our largest expense and will likely be about 70% again this year. As well, other major expenses will likely follow a similar pattern from last year.

Funding from Proposals

We have again this year applied for and obtained additional funding for other programs including the following:

- First Nations Youth Employment Strategy
- EPP Partnership Advancement
- EPP Structural Readiness
- School Expansion Design (but this year it is for the Sheshatshiu school)
- Regional Education Preparatory Activities

The activities for these programs are similar to those of last year.

New Sources of Revenue

- \$100,000 each from Innu Nation, Innu Development Limited Partnership and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation to supplement funding from ISC for post-secondary student support
- About \$1.3 million from Indigenous Services Canada for COVID-19 return-to-school activities (i.e., personal protective equipment like masks, sanitizer, plexi-glass barriers, etc., as well as the purchase of iPads and other information technology equipment in the event that distance learning becomes necessary)
- \$140,000 from Canadian Heritage for Innu language classes in the Indigenous Classroom Assistant Program
- \$150,000 from Canadian Heritage to create books and videos in each Innu community dialect, as well as digitizing them

Covid-19

Despite the challenges that COVID-19 has presented since March, it appears our financial year is shaping up to be an efficient and effective one.



Generous Donation

MT-IE received a donation of \$20,000 from BBA Engineering and Hagerty-Penashue Holding to buy laptops and iPads for Sheshatshit and Natuashish students. This donation was also made possible through Vale and the Impacts Benefit Agreement.

“We hope this donation will support Innu children in their efforts to continue their education in the challenging time of a pandemic.”

Shawn Hagerty
& Jean-Paul Penashue
Hagerty-Penashue Holdings



Health and Safety/Covid-19

Kevin R. Smith, Senior Facility Manager/Health & Safety Covid-19 Coordinator

Covid-19

After the schools suddenly closed in March because of the Covid-19 pandemic, safety protocols for successful school re-opening were put in place before the doors re-opened to students on September 8, 2020 in Sheshatshiu and September 14, 2020 in Natuashish. Students have excelled at wearing masks and using hand sanitizer when entering the school and when moving between classes. Students are encouraged to keep 6 feet apart. A few students need to be reminded of social distancing when moving between classes.

Each school day 700 disposable face masks are handed out at both schools. Monitoring the use of masks shows that 4000 adult masks and 3500 childrens' masks are being used at each school every month. This adds up to a total of 15000 masks per school each month.

School expansions

Both schools are crowded and lacking space due to the growing population in both communities. MTIE is now in the design phase of wing expansions and construction should start during next summer 2021 for both schools.

Cloth masks trials will be conducted in December at the Sheshatshiu school with both Grade 1 classes. Teachers were briefed about mask use and masks were provided for each class. This trial will last until Christmas break. The trial will also be carried out with 2 classes in Natuashish. Teachers will monitor the students to ensure they are using the masks properly. Each student will be given up to 3 masks a day, one at a time, to wear to and from school. They will also be given a protective bag to keep the mask with their school gear or in a coat pocket. Teachers are meeting with parents to discuss and or sending messages home with information about cleaning the masks.

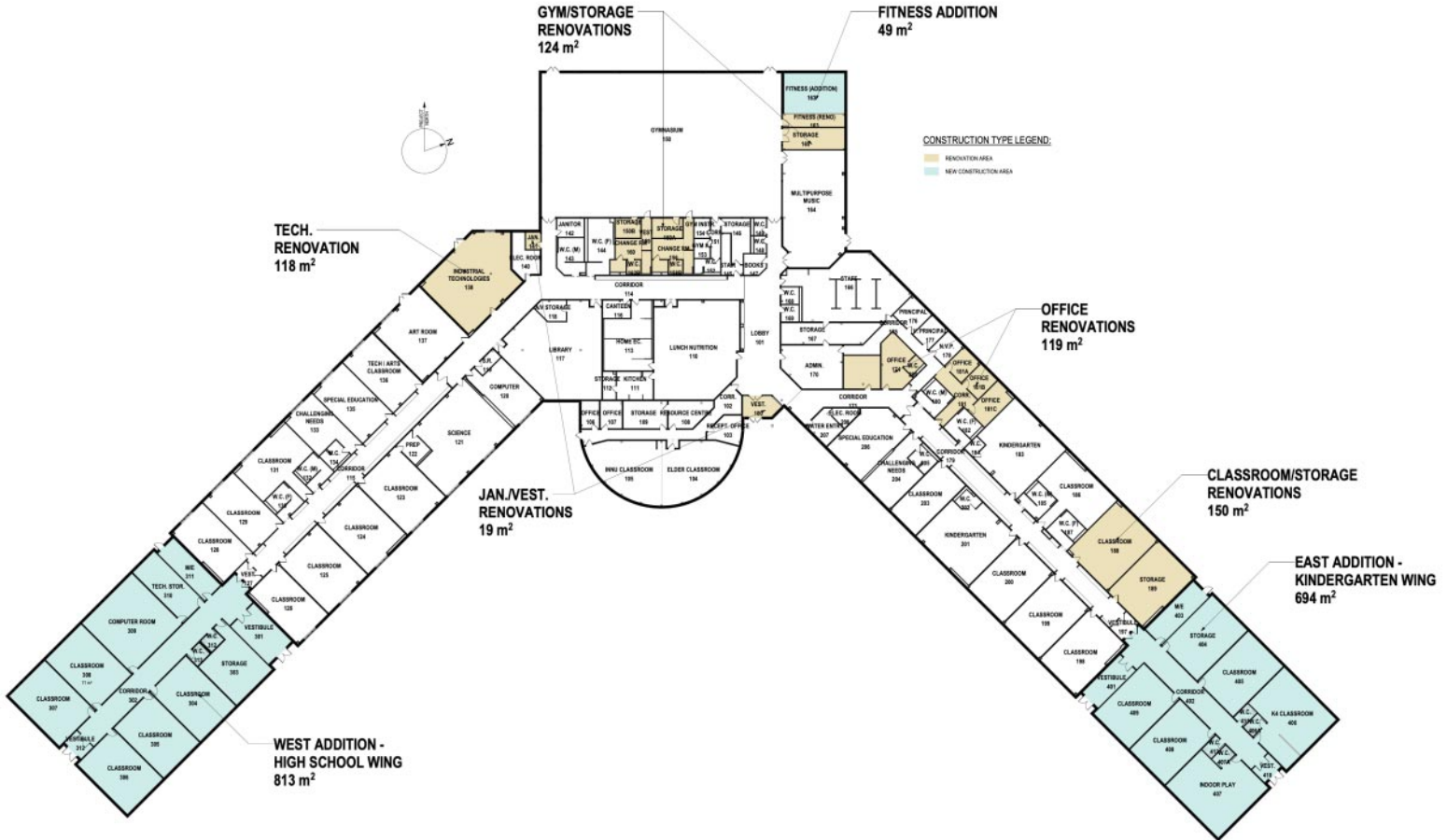
Extra sanitizing is done by janitors and assessed regularly. Extra staff has been hired in both schools to help with this.

Air quality

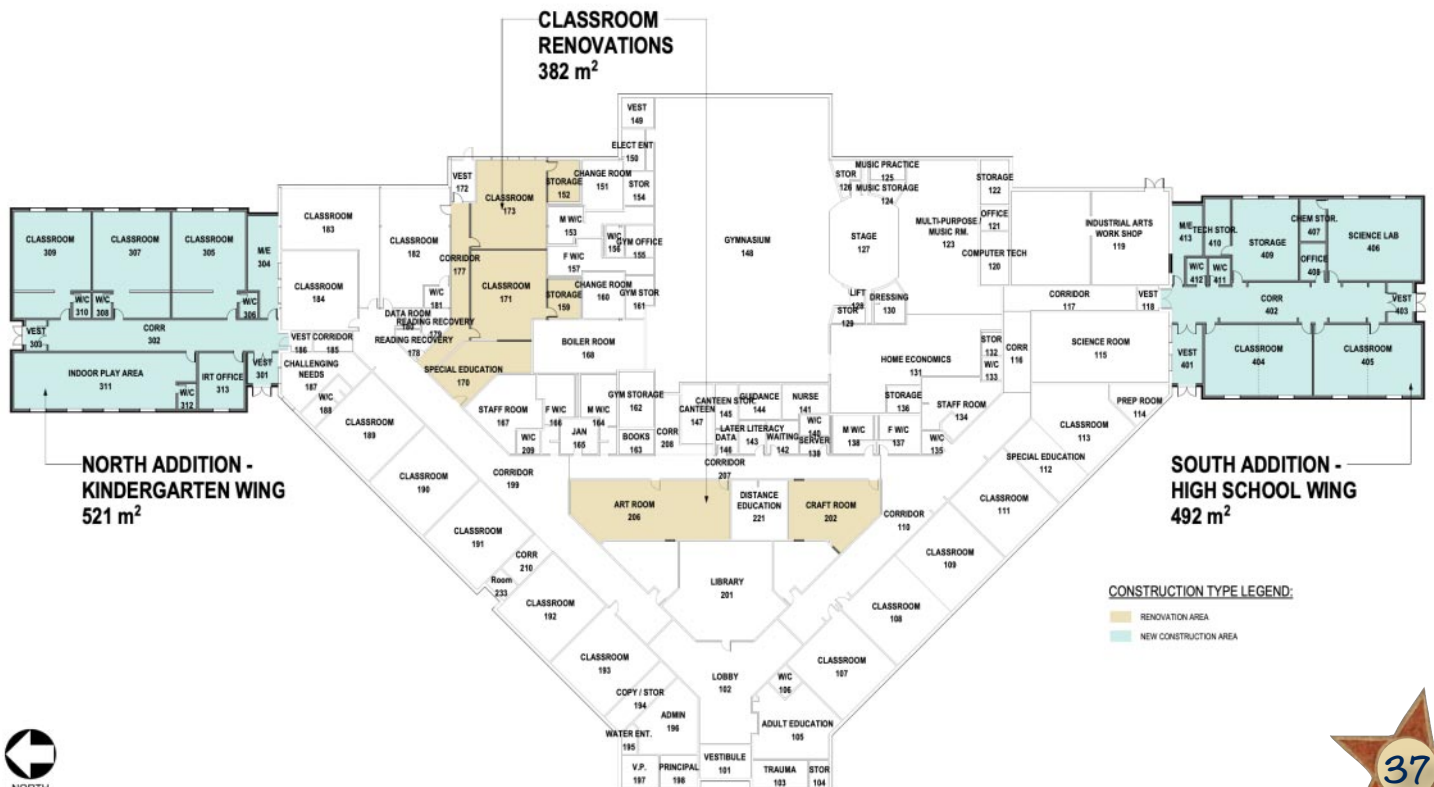
Air quality at both schools is being reviewed and changes will be made to improve the air breathed in for all students and staff. The air will be analyzed by professionals. Changes will be made should it be determined that current air exchange in the schools is not efficient or up to standard, especially to address ongoing Covid-19 transmission concerns.



Blueprint for Sheshatshiu School Expansion



Blueprint for Natuashish School Expansion



Information Technology

Leo Drake, IT Administrator

This year I have been kept very busy with the purchase and set-up of a lot of new equipment for both schools, including:

- Sheshatshiu and Natuashish both got 30 MacBook Airs for teachers
- 30 new SMARTBoards and mobile carts for each school
- new iPads for each student in both schools, as well as power stations for each classroom to charge them up
- a new iMac for both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish IRTs

- a New iMac for both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish Speech Language Pathology
- temperature check systems in both schools to screen for Covid-19

I am also working on upgrading the following in 2021:

- new iPad caching servers installed in both schools; a cache server saves internet content and web pages locally, for quicker offline access
- new network switches will be replaced; network switches allow devices to connect or talk with each, and allow for the easy sharing of resources.



