



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 31

15th Assembly

HANSARD

Tuesday, February 20, 2007

Pages 1013 - 1062

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Paul Delorey
(Hay River North)

Hon. Brendan Bell
(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Industry, Tourism
and Investment

Mr. Bill Braden
(Great Slave)

Hon. Charles Dent
(Frame Lake)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture and
Employment
Minister of Human Resources
Minister responsible for the
Status of Women
Minister responsible for Persons
with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Mrs. Jane Groenewegen
(Hay River South)

Hon. Joe Handley
(Weledeh)
Premier
Minister of the Executive
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and
Intergovernmental Relations
Minister responsible for the
NWT Housing Corporation

Mr. Robert Hawkins
(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. David Krutko
(Mackenzie-Delta)
Minister of Public Works and Services
Minister responsible for the
Workers' Compensation Board
Minister responsible for the
NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Jackson Lafferty
(Monfwi)

Ms. Sandy Lee
(Range Lake)

Hon. Michael McLeod
(Deh Cho)
Minister of Environment and Natural
Resources
Minister of Municipal and Community
Affairs
Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Robert McLeod
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Hon. Kevin Menicoche
(Nahendeh)
Minister of Transportation
Minister responsible for the
Public Utilities Board

Mr. J. Michael Miltenberger
(Thebacha)

Mr. Calvin Pokiak
(Nunakput)

Mr. David Ramsay
(Kam Lake)

Hon. Floyd Roland
(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance
Minister responsible for the Financial
Management Board Secretariat
Minister of Health and Social Services

Mr. Robert Villeneuve
(Tu Nedhe)

Mr. Norman Yakeleya
(Sahtu)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk
Mr. Doug Schauerte

Clerk of Committees
Ms. Gail Bennett

Assistant Clerk
Vacant

Law Clerks
Mr. Glen Boyd
Ms. Kelly Payne

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1013
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	1013
73-15(5) - NWT EDUCATION WEEK 2007.....	1013
74-15(5) - MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE	1013
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	1013
MR. YAKELEYA ON UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY TO FOSTER ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT.....	1013
MR. LAFFERTY ON MEASURES TO ADDRESS SAFETY CONCERNS ON HIGHWAY NO. 3	1014
MR. VILLENEUVE ON FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES	1014
MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON RENOVATIONS FOR DIAMOND JENNESS SECONDARY SCHOOL	1015
MR. MILTENBERGER ON SLAVE RIVER HYDRO PROJECT PROPOSAL	1015
MR. RAMSAY ON MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT SOCIO-ECONOMIC AGREEMENT	1015
MR. POKIAK ON CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF NORMA VOUDRACH	1016
MR. ROBERT MCLEOD ON TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG NORTHERNERS	1016
MR. HAWKINS ON CARIBOU MANAGEMENT.....	1017
MR. BRADEN ON LESSONS LEARNED FROM PREVIOUS RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	1017
MS. LEE ON STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL	1017
ORAL QUESTIONS	1018
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	1030
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	1030
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....	1062
ORDERS OF THE DAY	1062

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, February 20, 2007****Members Present**

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Hon. Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Hon. Kevin Menicoche, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 73-15(5): NWT Education Week 2007**

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. This week is Education Week. We celebrate Education Week to raise awareness of the importance of education. This year we are promoting the idea that all northerners have a role in education. We are also hoping to increase awareness about the importance of education outside the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, NWT high school graduation numbers are increasing. Many northern students are moving on to post-secondary studies, and excelling in college, university or the trades. Later today, I will table a document detailing high school graduation rates for the past 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, the first Ministerial Awards of Excellence were announced recently. There were over 30 applicants for these scholarships, all with good post-secondary grade point averages. In their applications, most referred to special people who had made a difference to their success in education by helping them along the way, both in school and at home.

The theme of Education Week this year is You Can Make a Difference. The intent of this theme is to convey that learning is not an activity that takes place exclusively at school between a teacher and a student. Just as it takes a community to raise a child, in the best learning situations, there are many people who help. For the best chance of student success, parents must ensure their children are rested, well-nourished and otherwise ready to learn. Across the Northwest Territories, we are seeing more and more parents who actively participate in their children's learning and school activities. Parental involvement is so important to student success. Community members, particularly elders, are helping enrich the classroom by volunteering their time and knowledge, or by ensuring that there are stimulating activities to occupy time after school hours.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, in partnership with the NWT Teachers' Association, uses NWT Education Week as an important opportunity to celebrate the work of teachers. The Thank

You for Making a Difference Campaign that takes place during this time is now in its tenth year. It provides an opportunity to thank teachers and other school employees.

Mr. Speaker, teachers do very important work in our classrooms. I would particularly like to acknowledge that many teachers invest a lot of time and energy outside the classroom and after hours. Many of our community coaches, youth group leaders, fundraisers and chaperones are teachers. Teachers tutor outside school hours and outside their own subject areas. Teachers like these make a huge difference in northern communities, and we appreciate how much they do on their own valuable time.

Mr. Speaker, Education Week is, first and foremost, a time for celebrating learning. I would like to thank all of those who make a difference to young learners. I encourage everyone to mark Education Week by taking some time to thank people who help with education in your community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Minister's Statement 74-15(5): Minister Absent From The House

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Michael McLeod will leave the House early today and will be absent for the remainder of the week to attend the Ministers of Sport and Recreation meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement On Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development**

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our aboriginal languages are essential to keep our culture alive and pass along our traditions and knowledge to our younger generation. Within the Northwest Territories, there are 11 official languages, including nine that are aboriginal languages. In the Northwest Territories, the population that is able to speak an aboriginal language dropped over 15 percent between 1984 and 2004. Mr. Speaker, we must make a commitment to protect these languages that hold our culture and traditions together.

A Phraselator, a device developed for the U.S. Military, translates English phrases into a language chosen by its

user. It uses modules, groups of phrases in a given language, designed by experts for specific use such as disaster relief, the military or law enforcement, then is translated by the linguists in the region where the language is spoken. Aboriginal groups across North America have already found this device beneficial for the people.

A member of the Siksika First Nation recently pointed out that one of the biggest problems they had when teaching their language is that the writing and reading language is so different from knowing how to pronounce it. The Phraselator provides a way for people learning the language to get the correct sound. Mr. Speaker, this is something that we could use, for example in our schools to help our children learn in a more relaxing and exciting way and an engaging way. Digital technologies and electronics are becoming more accessible to our children and appeal to this demographic. A device like the Phraselator would keep their attention and make language learning more fun.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in previous statements, I believe that preservation of language is a critical issue for the aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. The Phraselator could help us sustain our language and culture for present and future generations. This technology has potential and is worth exploring. I will ask the Minister of Education and Culture more questions on this device at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement On Measures To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

MR. LAFFERTY: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to talk on Highway No. 3, once again. As I said in a previous statement to this House, the stretch of Highway No. 3 between Behchoko and Yellowknife is extremely busy and we need to do all we can to make that road as safe as possible. The intersection of Highway No. 3 and Behchoko access road is a safety concern. Also, the mine road is open and also to Whati. Every day that road is really busy, and then they commute back and forth from Whati, and on top of that there are big trucks going back and forth towards the mine so they can resupply. That's why we all have a major concern regarding those four communities. (Translation ends)

The stretch of Highway No. 3 between Behchoko and Yellowknife is extremely busy. We need to do what we can to make the road as safe as possible. The intersection of Highway No. 3 and the Behchoko access road is a major safety concern to us. Many people commute back and forth between Rae and Edzo and between Rae and Yellowknife. That's a main highway system for us, Mr. Speaker. At the same time, there is a volume of through traffic speeding by the intersection, especially during the winter season with all the heavy trucks rushing to resupply the mines.

Mr. Speaker, as I suggested in this House last February, the installation of traffic lights so there's visibility of vehicles passing through at the intersection will go a long

way towards improving safety for all users of Highway No. 3. With the high volume of traffic at this junction, a stop sign is no longer enough, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time, there's talk about lighting that should be installed at Frank's Channel Bridge to improve safety when visibility is poor. I urge the Minister of Transportation to have these upgrades made without any delays to ensure safety of the public's travel. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Member's Statement On Financial Accountability Of Local Housing Authorities

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will use my Member's statement today to speak about some of the housing concerns that my constituents raised last weekend.

In the budget, there are more dollars requested by Education, Culture and Employment to distribute amongst the LHOs to cover wages and benefits. I don't want to downplay this request, because I believe this is a good injection of dollars to all the LHOs to assist with the rising costs of operating their public housing.

The issue I have, Mr. Speaker, is the accountability factor at the LHO level, which this government does not diligently monitor or pay much attention to how the LHOs spend their contribution dollars. I received the LHO budgets in my riding of Tu Nedhe. I noticed that wages and benefits have increased over time, and other important areas of operation, such as maintenance, have decreased during the same period. I understand that the redistribution of these dollars at the LHO level is permissible to a certain degree, and if it makes sense and improves the operation of the LHO. But when the public housing units are not receiving the maintenance they require on a regular basis because of the redistribution of funding by the LHOs, the clients start to refuse to pay their rent and this creates serious problems at the LHO level and at the Housing Corp, and it continues on today. We have massive debts at the LHO level, Mr. Speaker.

I would request that this government, through their universal partnership agreements -- the key word being "partnership," Mr. Speaker -- with these LHOs ensure that the consultation and annual reviews are conducted, and that the contribution dollars are spent on the expense items that they were intended for. If changes in the distribution or the reallocation of any dollars at the LHO level is required, then notice has to go out to all the public housing clients and it should go out to the Housing Corp headquarters and this government, and reasons why they're making the redistributions should be given to everybody, especially the public housing clients who are really concerned that maintenance dollars are going into wages and benefits and not going into maintenance of their own units which they pay exorbitant rents for, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement On Renovations For Diamond Jenness Secondary School

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, anyone who has visited Hay River will have noticed our famed high school. Built in 1972 and designed by Douglas Cardinal, Diamond Jenness Secondary School has been labelled throughout the Territories as the purple school, or the purple people eater. I have to say that.

Mr. Speaker, Diamond Jenness School is almost 35 years old and has never had any substantial renovations. I'm aware of minor renovations scheduled to take place shortly to move the change rooms from upstairs closer to the gym on the main floor. However, other major issues at the school are being overlooked.

Students and teachers complain about the air quality and the inability of controlling the extreme temperatures in the school. The heating system does not suffice in the cold weather, and the ventilation system is not enough in the warmer weather, and the windows do not open for circulation at any time. Water pipes are 50/50 soldered and, for safety reasons, water quality needs to be checked on a regular basis. Most people refuse to use the school water fountains because the water doesn't get cold enough to drink. The hot water pipes are thin from corrosion and are constantly in need of replacement. The roof collects rainwater and several leaks have occurred within the ceiling and the walls of the school, which begs the question of whether there's mould growing in the walls. The administrative offices are off to the side and almost detached from the school and there's little opportunity to control access to the school and the layout needs to be redesigned for safety and security. Classrooms are too small to handle even a moderate size class, and the junior high classrooms are beneath modern standards, making it difficult to accommodate student programming needs. These are just a few of the problems this outdated school has, and I could go on and on.

A midlife overhaul of the entire school is well overdue, yet I do not see this project on the books any time soon. The only commitment I've heard from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is to consider it for the capital planning process. The long-range capital plan dated September 2001 indicated a midlife reno for Diamond Jenness Secondary School beginning in '07-08 and finishing in '09-10 at a cost of \$12 million. Mr. Speaker, I don't know what happened to that capital plan.

I believe it is time to make a firm commitment to get this overhaul done to protect the investment of this valuable infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, I cannot stress enough the importance of the health and safety of our youth, and Diamond Jenness Secondary School is long past a midlife crises. We need a commitment to make this project happen so that our children can have a healthy and safe learning environment, and that our teachers can have a healthy and safe workplace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement On Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Slave River flows into the Northwest Territories out of the confluence of the Athabasca and the Peace River. Over 20 years or so ago, the Alberta government took a very close look and spent about \$30 million on the feasibility of a dam on the Slave River. For the last six to eight months now, Alberta, through ATCO and TransCanada Power, has decided to revisit the feasibility of that project. They've quietly been reviewing the data and information that's available and are continuing to ramp up their level of interest. Mr. Speaker, they will be coming north to Fort Smith for their first visit with their advance people to talk to the community leadership, to get to know the community, first having gone to Fort Chipewyan and Fort McMurray. I stand here today because I've been speaking about this now for the last six to eight months, when I first became aware of their interest.

Mr. Speaker, the Slave River provides 60 to 80 percent of the flow into Great Slave Lake. We now know that the flows are 30 to 40 percent below their normal flow rate. We have the concerns of what is happening in Alberta already with the resource development and the drawdown on their own water systems. This project, when it was talked about back in the '80s, was for 1,800 megawatts, about a \$7 billion project, which would have put a dam, riverbank to riverbank, on the Slave River. This time the vice-president from ATCO told me they're looking at some type of run-of-the-river option, but they're still looking at generating a maximum amount of power and the cost of that particular project will probably be well above the \$7 billion mark.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here to raise this issue because last time it was seen as something of a local or regional issue. But I think people have become much more informed over the last 20 years and recognize the damming of one of the major rivers in the world would have significant impact on the Northwest Territories, from the 60th parallel all the way to Ulukhaktok and beyond. It's something that I stand here to raise in this House so that people will pay very close attention to what is happening and what is going to unfold if the Alberta government and these companies choose to proceed. I would hope, and ask, that the territorial government, in fact, be in contact with the Alberta government and these corporations to ensure that we are fully apprised and at the table throughout all these discussions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak today regarding the Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement, the agreement that was signed last

month between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the pipeline proponents.

Mr. Speaker, I have said it before in this House, and I will state it again today for the record, that I remain in favour of the Mackenzie gas project going ahead. However, I do have some major concerns over how the socio-economic agreement was developed and why it is missing some very key elements.

The public was left out of the development of the document. There was no public opportunity to comment on the document and, also, the document was developed and signed in secret. Most troublesome for me is the fact that there is no link in the document for a long-term vision of this territory.

The Government of the Northwest Territories had no trouble issuing the so-called letter of comfort to the proponents saying that they would be able to operate in a stable tax environment here in the Northwest Territories. Why is there no support shown by the proponents in the socio-economic agreement towards the Northwest Territories' 20-year battle with the federal government over resource revenue sharing and devolution? As a government, why didn't we get or demand this support?

The proponents don't care which government they pay their royalties to, Mr. Speaker. This pipeline is not being built in the Ottawa Valley; it's being built in the Mackenzie Valley, in our own backyard. If we do not have the support of the proponents, I believe we are missing a critical bargaining chip, Mr. Speaker.

Also missing from the socio-economic agreement is any mention of a trust fund or heritage fund. I've spoken numerous times about the importance of the establishment of this fund for northerners in this House and I'm very disturbed that again the government has failed to get the proponents to agree that this is an important issue for northerners.

The Government of the Northwest Territories accepts in the agreement a lackadaisical approach to monitoring the project during construction and operation. The resources provided to the board are extremely low compared to other similar monitoring bodies in the resource sector; \$200,000 per year during construction and \$75,000 per year during operation. If you compare that to Diavik Communities Advisory Board at 400K per year, Diavik Environmental Monitoring Board at \$630,000 per year, the independent monitoring agency for BHP at \$560,000 per year, and the Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency at \$650,000 per year, Mr. Speaker, it's alarming that after construction this...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ramsay, your time for Member's statement has expired.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is alarming that after construction this NWT oil and gas socio-economic advisory board meets only three times per year

during construction and only once a year during operation, with only a \$75,000 budget. As a government, we should have negotiated a better arrangement on monitoring. Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the question, why have we failed our residents on so many fronts? Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Condolences To The Family Of Norma Voudrach

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness today that I rise again to report another death of a constituent of mine in Tuktoyaktuk. Mr. Speaker, last night, after returning to the apartment, I received a call from my wife, Lucille Pokiak, in Tuk, advising me that Norma Voudrach of Tuktoyaktuk passed away after complications from an operation at Stanton Territorial Hospital yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd just like to send condolences to Paul Voudrach and his family. I'd just like to say, Mr. Speaker, that Mrs. Voudrach was very instrumental in getting the hotel in Tuk operating in Tuktoyaktuk. I know that she will be missed by Paul and her family. I just hope that they can stand strong and that...(inaudible)... today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in a few short years construction will begin on what will be the largest project in the history of the Northwest Territories. That, Mr. Speaker, is the building of the pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley. With the building of the pipeline, Mr. Speaker, will come many opportunities for northern businesses and residents. One of the main benefactors should be the youth across the North. They have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to take advantage of the countless number of training opportunities that will be made available.

The Minister said that graduation numbers are up and more students are taking in post-secondary education, and the post-secondary education that we provide up here is one of the best in the country. I'm pleased to see that these numbers are up, Mr. Speaker. I recently heard of a young man who turned down an opportunity to take some training so that he could play hockey. We can't be doing that, Mr. Speaker. There will be plenty of time to play hockey after you get your training. When opportunity knocks, you have to open the door.

We need our young people, Mr. Speaker, to take advantage when they can, as we want to see the pipeline built by our own residents and not have workers flooding in from the South. The training will also be needed and come in handy when we start building our highway down the Mackenzie Valley.

Mr. Speaker, I urge young northerners not to miss the boat. Grab a hold of the opportunity that's before you. The NWT will benefit from the decision you make today. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Member's Statement On Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I sat in this House and listened to many Members who support the aboriginal hunting rights but not the outfitters, and to those who support the outfitters but do not support ENR's numbers. In January, I had the honour of attending the Caribou Summit in Inuvik and have to say that I was very impressed by the aboriginal groups who said that they were willing to temporarily set aside their traditional hunting rights if they had to in order to make sure that the caribou populations rebounded. Mr. Speaker, they did say not give up, but were willing to set it aside. That was a bold statement, Mr. Speaker. I was glad to see that they were truly willing to make great sacrifices.

I can also empathize with the outfitters. They've contributed to our economy, our tourism industry, and they've established great livelihoods here in the North. I can only imagine what it must feel like to have their livelihood threatened. As I see it, government needs to tread lightly when taking a position that could lead to the elimination of someone's livelihood.

As we all know, the caribou are under tremendous pressure from the cumulative effects of climate change, hunting predation, and pollution. They are literally under siege in their own environment, Mr. Speaker. It's my hope that the outfitters can stay in business, even if it means adapting some of their business to a more eco-friendly style with adventure tourism and cameras, not guns. If they need to halt some of their hunting, we need to make sure that we have a plan and we can help them diversify. We need to help our outfitters and all our northern businesses by investing into the tourism industry. I have advocated for tourism in the past on a number of issues and this, our outfitters, are no less important and they deserve respect for what they mean to our economy.

No one in the territory wants to see the caribou go the way of the buffalo, Mr. Speaker. Our thundering tundra is replaced by the echoing silence. We all want healthy viable numbers in all of our herds, and we want traditional ways of life to continue to flourish and be passed through to many generations that follow.

But before any drastic action is taken, all survey data must be up to date and beyond any question. Unclear numbers leads to unclear decisions. If we put the caribou first, as we should, we need to be totally clear on what the numbers are and to make sure we have measured decisions, not best guesses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On Lessons Learned From Previous Resource Development

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, a well-known saying about history is that those who do not pay attention to historical events are destined, perhaps doomed, to repeat them. Truer words have never been spoken, Mr. Speaker, as we look at the track record of this territorial government and the federal Government of Canada in negotiating resource revenue deals for the people of the North.

What are the legacies of major developments in the NWT? To cite a couple of them, Mr. Speaker, for 80 years now Norman Wells has pumped enormous wealth into the coffers of Ottawa. Since 1985 alone, \$4 billion worth of oil has flowed out past the communities of Tulita and Wrigley.

What's in it for those communities? Mr. Speaker, the Yellowknife goldfields, the greenstone belt here has generated enormous wealth, too. Some 12 million ounces of gold were recovered since 1938 and what is the legacy of that wealth? Two hundred thousand tons of arsenic sitting on our doorstep.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at the future with the resources that we know of, natural gas in the Mackenzie Delta at current prices, that will generate \$100 billion in product and \$700 million in royalties every year for a quarter of a century at least. Let's look back at the history lesson and match it up with what we know is the biggest potential project yet, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. What's in it for us? Well, so far we've seen letters of comfort, we've seen more deals negotiated in secret with proponents, and we see yet more unfulfilled promises from Ottawa. Such is the legacy that will continue for northerners until we have the resource and devolution deal in hand. Why do we continue, Mr. Speaker, to sign away our heritage, and our future, and our legacy on deals such as the recently signed socio-economic agreement?

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement On Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity today to speak about the issues pertaining to the Stanton Territorial Hospital. Mr. Speaker, over the years as an MLA for Range Lake, where the hospital is located, I have witnessed the facility coming under increasing pressure from limited resources, financial and otherwise. We are constantly hearing from the staff in various units and facets of the operation at the hospital, which we have been trying to work through by means of the latest human resources review at the hospital. I'm hoping that we will be able to identify the concerns through this review and address them as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we have also been hearing about the hospital's cleanliness lately, and I've also received concerns about the big-name products being used at the cafeteria, pushing out the local and northern suppliers. Mr. Speaker, my family worked at the old hospital and the new hospital and the changes in service from lack of resources at the hospital is very concerning indeed.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the most critical issue has been the dissolution of the board and there being no attempt to replace it over the last three years. While I appreciate that the hospital is a public funded agency, that doesn't mean you shouldn't have an independent management voice of the public apart from the direct involvement from the department. Mr. Speaker, such a board would be able to set longer-term goals and vision for the hospital, work on the details of the master plan, and push it along with the partners, as well as addressing some of the human and financial resource issues that ends up so often on MLAs' desks and Ministers' desks.

Mr. Speaker, the hospital needs a medium for public voice and the concerns to be addressed directly at the hospital. I support the Minister's initiative to start with an advisory committee at the hospital. I hope that this will succeed and that we will be able to move toward a full advisory board made up of representations from all the Territories, because I do appreciate that it is a territorial hospital. But I do believe that such a board would go a long way in addressing some of the issues that we're talking about lately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone in the gallery today. It's always nice to have an audience in here. Hope you're enjoying the proceedings.

---Applause

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As mentioned in my statement, the use of aboriginal languages is declining in the Northwest Territories. Some of the aboriginal groups in North America, including the Siksika in Alberta, are working with a new device known as the Phraselator to reverse this trend. Has the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment made any inquiries about the possibilities of using such a device such as the Phraselator in the Northwest Territories communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member first mentioned this item to me and I immediately went onto the web and tried to find it. Unfortunately, I was spelling the word wrong and all the sites that I could find were in Chinese and there was no machine to help me translate that. But since then I've managed to get the spelling right and, yes, with the assistance of my officials

we have become more aware of these machines and are having a look at them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are more reasons why we need a Phraselator in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister consider such a pilot project for such a device, perhaps in one of our schools, to see the potential of having this device used to serve our languages in our communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've asked my officials to get in touch with the region southeast of Calgary where these are in use to discuss with them how they're being used and what benefits they're finding. So rather than just going out and ordering the machine, we're going to do some due diligence and find out what they're like. The website for the units clearly states that these units cannot replace native speakers. It's still the native speakers that we need to have and we need to make sure that it's families that are involved in education. But we're going to take a look at the devices.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister makes a good point that you can't replace our aboriginal languages and you need the real people there. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister, would the Minister look at having one of these Phraselators in one of his departments to use them as a pilot project, if not in our communities? The common phrase, hopefully, will be do you have your Phraselator on you? Where is your Phraselator? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 364-15(5): Utilizing Technology To Foster Aboriginal Language Development

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll certainly move quickly to take a look at these devices and see whether or not they could be useful and whether or not they should become standard issue for government employees. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last February I raised the need for traffic lights at Behchoko junction, and the Minister at that time advised that his department would look into this issue and consult with the community and leadership. My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Mr. Speaker, has the department consulted with the community and looked into the need for traffic lights at the Behchoko junction and what were the findings? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Menicoche.

Return To Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There are still ongoing discussions between our Ministry, the Tlicho Government, and the NWT Power Corporation on having the lighting at the Behchoko access. It is a \$90,000 project and we're working towards that, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to see this project go ahead and I appreciate the Minister's response on working together on this.

These are my next questions to the Minister. Would the Minister also instruct his department to consult with the community and leadership on the need for lighting on the Frank's Channel Bridge and report back this spring? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Menicoche.

Further Return To Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can commit to looking at providing some lighting to the Frank's Channel Bridge, do some cost estimates. It will enhance the safety of traffic passing through that area. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. So far I'm hearing good news. That's good.

---Laughter

AN HON. MEMBER: Specifics. When, when, when?

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My final question: Would the Minister also work with his colleague, the Minister of ITI, to look at whether the upgrading of the

Behchoko junction would provide opportunity to locate a bison interpretive centre there? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Going into a different line of questioning, however, I'll allow the Minister to respond. Mr. Menicoche.

Further Return To Question 365-15(5): Measure To Address Safety Concerns On Highway No. 3

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can confirm with my colleague that is part of the plan once we start getting power to that area, that we can accomplish this project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, and a follow-up to my Member's statement about the work being done by proponents out of Alberta looking at the dam on the Slave River and the fact that they are now moving into the Northwest Territories, at least into Fort Smith and I would assume other communities. I'd like to ask the Minister what the intention is for ENR in terms of making sure that they are at every table that this project is discussed at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that are happening in Alberta that are of real concern to us in terms of water quality and quantity, the oil sands and issues around Bennett Dam and also this new project that's coming onto the horizon. There hasn't been an application formed yet. In the last while, we've made contact with the federal Ministers, the Minister of Natural Resources and also the Minister of Environment, indicating we really need to have a face-to-face meeting, some discussion over some of these issues. We've also contacted the Government of Alberta and we've received response confirming that we will have a meeting with the Minister of Environment, Mr. Rob Renner, and that will happen shortly after session is done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Alberta has now advanced right up tight to the 60th parallel with this proposal. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would consider writing to the proponents to invite them up to this Legislature to brief the Members on this project and its potential impacts and what timelines they're looking at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. We'd be glad to do that. We are in the process of requesting some additional information and a meeting with the proponents. We'd be glad to expand that once we get a better handle on what the project actually is and some of the timelines around it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Final supplementary would be in terms of timelines, the need for some urgency on this given the shortness of the life of this Assembly and the fact that there are other items on the go. I'd like to ask the Minister if he could give me a sense of what time he would envision this to happen. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 366-15(5): Slave River Hydro Project Proposal

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we've heard from a number of communities in the Northwest Territories, especially in the southern area of the NWT, Fort Smith and Resolution, also the Deh Cho has raised concern about water quality. I'm sure that concern is right across the North. We would be quite anxious to have a meeting to have a better understanding of where this project is. As to specific timelines, I'm not sure I can commit to that, but we will ensure that we will work as fast as we can on this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I noticed in the main estimates there was no new money for wildlife renewable resource officers. With the increased pressures out there to protect the caribou, I'd like to ask the Minister of ENR how the government plans to control caribou hunting without adequate law enforcement. If there is no more enforcement on the ground, we don't know what's happening to the caribou and where they are going. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have some new money in the budget. We have not gone through the budget review yet. The Minister of Finance indicated that we've got some additional dollars for caribou surveys and we also have

some new money for the biophysical assessment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But no officers. So, Mr. Speaker, can I get the commitment of this Minister to ensure that in the upcoming year there will be a total and complete survey of the caribou? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've done a number of surveys already and we're quite comfortable with our numbers that were provided for the Bathurst herd, also a number of the other herds, the Bluenose herd and the Cape Bathurst. The plan is to go forward next year and do the survey for the Beverly herd, Mr. Speaker. We have to work with the other jurisdictions, especially Nunavut, to start looking at having further consultations and discussion about protecting some of the calving grounds and things that were recommended at the Caribou Summit, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister recognize the fact that caribou herds are not being surveyed consistently just like Census Canada, although I won't speak to their efficiency, but I will say the fact that they survey Canada from coast to coast to coast, it seems unreasonable that they would do it, well, one area this year, the next area the year after, and maybe we'll get around to one eventually or we could just guess. So the fact is there's inconsistent numbers out there. Would the Minister commit to the fact that we need to look at all the numbers at once, therefore, we could have a real understanding of what the numbers are? Could he look into that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 367-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I think our government spends roughly around \$600,000 a year on issues surrounding caribou. One herd to be surveyed is about \$250,000 to \$300,000, Mr. Speaker. There are other issues that we look at. There are other ways that we monitor caribou herds: calf survival rates; calf birthrates; we look at wolf dens. All those things have to be part of the assessment and that costs money, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of other herds out there. I'm not sure if the Member wants us to start surveying the Qamanirjuaq herd, the Wager Bay herd, the Lorillard herd. Those herds are really outside of our jurisdiction and don't venture into this part of the Territories. Mr. Speaker, if we could survey all the herds across North America, that

would be the best angle to take, but we can only work with what the resources allow us to do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Recently, Mr. Dent had an opportunity to come to Hay River and have a look at the Diamond Jenness Secondary School. Mr. Speaker, needless to say, the school may look nice but it isn't all that it appears. It's functionally a very difficult building to manage.

Mr. Speaker, two of the principles of our capital planning process are the protection of people and the protection of assets. I would like to ask Mr. Dent that as a result of the functional review that was done last summer, did that review indicate that this school is in dire need of upgrade, a major upgrade and renovation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Public Works took a look at that school and provided a report to us. They do recommend that we move forward as quickly as possible with a renovation project. They recommended that we look at starting the planning in the next fiscal year, finish the planning the year after that, with construction to start two years hence, on a renovation project. They haven't identified areas where they saw that it was a danger to human occupation. We would have to deal with that immediately if they had identified some of those problems. But they did make clear to us that it is time to ensure that the project gets brought forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Ms. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

MS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister make available a copy of that review to me? I would like to see a copy of that review of that facility, because I believe there are things in that school which could potentially be dangerous, unsafe and unhealthy. I'd like to see a copy of it to see if it identifies those things. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report does identify ways in which the operations of the facility could be changed right now in order to make sure that it is a safer, more comfortable place to be. But in

talking to my colleague, the Minister of Public Works, he's agreed that that report can be made available and we'd be happy to provide that to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final supplementary, Ms. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

MS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some of the things that need to be done to make the school more functional and safer in the interim, would the Minister commit to looking at those things, identifying costs and bringing forward something in the form of supplementary funding or financing to address those deficiencies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 368-15(5): Renovations To Diamond Jenness Secondary School

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll take a look at all of the recommendations that have come in in the technical report. I believe that we are moving on those that have been identified already, but I'll review that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'm going to have questions for the Minister of ENR. Yesterday we talked about alternative energy here in the House. I appreciate the fact that Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Tuk and Paulatuk are part of the Wind Energy Development Program. I have a question for the Minister responsible for ENR. I understand that the federal government has a program called Equal Energy for Renewable Power and a program discussion paper, and one of the things that they left out, Mr. Speaker, is remote, small communities in the Arctic. I'm wondering, can the Minister responsible for ENR talk with his fellow counterparts to include the remote, small communities as part of the discussion program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the announcements by the federal government, we haven't had all the detail provided to us yet. I've had the opportunity to talk to Minister Lunn regarding some of the announcements, and he's indicated that we will have the detail, including the breakout as to the actual dollars. So we're still waiting for those things. We're hoping that some of the federal announcements that have come forward along with our new Energy and Greenhouse Gas Strategy, we'll be able to marry up and we'll be able to provide some programming for the communities in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd appreciate it if the Minister could provide that information once he gets the details, Mr. Speaker. I understand there's a small-scale renewable and alternative power facility located outside of Tuk. I understand that they are having problems with it right now and they'd like to relocate it. I wonder if the Minister can provide funding to relocate the wind power generate...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we'd have to get more information on it as to that specific project and the problems around it. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of new initiatives that we're looking at that we will be introducing in this House, and will have some new budget lines. I'm hoping that this will be able to address the problems the Member is referring to.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just wondering, can the Minister ensure that, provided it can get funds to relocate that facility, can you do that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 369-15(5): Funding For Renewable Power Generation

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to make that commitment at this point. We don't have all the detail from the federal government and we still have yet to table our energy plan and our greenhouse gas plan/strategy in this House. I'll commit to the Member that we'll take a look at it as soon as we have more detail. I'm going to require more information from the Member, also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier and it gets to the statement I made earlier on the Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement. I wanted to ask the Premier why his government would see to it to write a letter of comfort to the proponents suggesting to them a tax environment that would be stable on the one hand, and then on the other hand when we have an opportunity to get the proponents to come to our defence in a 20-year battle that this government has had with Ottawa in trying to get resource revenue sharing, it's not there. I'd like to

ask the Premier why this omission was allowed to take place. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The negotiations -- and we're in the middle of tough negotiations right now with the federal government on resource revenue sharing and devolution -- are negotiations between us and the federal government and aboriginal government. Those are not negotiations with the pipeline proponents. Mr. Speaker, they could give us a statement of support, I suppose, but I don't think they want to do that politically. I don't think they'd want to get into that. They're in the business of developing oil and gas pipelines and will stay with that. They will leave the politics to us and they've made that very clear to us, that they have no role in discussions we have with the federal government and don't intend to get into it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just think we, as a government, are missing an opportunity, a great opportunity to get the proponents to come to the table, come to our defence and say this project is being built in the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories and we need to support the Government of the Northwest Territories in their fight to get resource revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the Premier another question and that gets back to supporting the establishment of a permanent trust fund, or a heritage fund, to ensure a lasting legacy from this project to residents in the Northwest Territories. Why was this omitted? There's no discussion or talk of a trust fund of any nature in the socio-economic agreement and I'd like to know why. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I said, the negotiations on resource revenue sharing and royalties and taxes and so on are negotiations between us and the federal government. To try to add those into an agreement with the proponents would be asking them to agree to something that they have no control over, no involvement in, and would be something that, if I was in their shoes, I wouldn't agree to either. They have no role in it. It's between us and the federal government. Mr. Speaker, those negotiations are ongoing.

The idea of a trust fund is something we have to take up with the federal government in terms of our resource revenue sharing and what we do with that money eventually. This is not an issue for the proponents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's where I tend to disagree with the Premier. As I mentioned, the pipeline is being built in the Northwest Territories and I think the proponents would be wise to side with the Government of the Northwest Territories in our fight.

The last question I have for the Premier, I'd like to ask him, in terms of monitoring the project, \$75,000 a year after construction, it doesn't seem to me that that would be adequate and I'd like to have the Premier comment on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 370-15(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, again, I'm not sure exactly how much it's going to take to monitor. Once the pipeline is built, it's a pipe in the ground, it comes out of the ground every now and again, there are a few compressor stations, and there isn't a huge, active utility there that needs a lot of scrutiny in terms of its ongoing monitoring. I don't think it's going to be a huge project. I suspect that the \$75,000 is probably pretty accurate in terms of what is needed for that kind of project. It's much simpler than monitoring a mine, for example, an open pit mine where they're expanding and opening new pits and doing different things with water and so on. This is a pretty benign project, once it's built. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of MACA before he jets off to Whitehorse. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the occasion to get a briefing on the sports and recreation community and how they are funded, and I learned a lot of new things that I haven't been briefed on lately. I understand that the total budget is over \$4 million, that they get most of the money from lotteries, and, secondly, they get money from the territorial government but a very small portion from the federal government. In light of the importance of this issue, that was a new thing for me. Coincidentally last night on the news, the federal government is talking about reviving the ParticipACTION and there's a great concern about our young people not being as healthy as they ought to be. So I'd like to ask the Minister what work he's involved in, in trying to get some federal funding to fund our very expensive sports programs that are very good for the communities, and we need to do more of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have been working for a number of years now on a number of issues that are common to all the residents of Canada. There has been a lot of focus in the last while regarding the infrastructure requirements, and that includes recreation facilities and sports facilities. That's something we've raised at the federal/provincial/territorial level. We've also raised the issue of participation and getting people more active. As sports Ministers from across Canada, we've worked with the federal government, we've set a target of increasing ParticipACTION by 10 percent. So those things are coming forward and I'm expecting that some of these announcements will be as a result of some of that work that took place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The facility is one thing, and programming. It is so expensive for us to fund a lot of games that we do for our children, and we do a lot of it focusing on participation rather than elite sporting; and that, too. There was a statement about teachers, and teachers are the number one fundraisers and all the community people who need to raise money for not only programs, but for facilities. Could I ask the Minister for more detail on what he's expecting, or has he heard anything about what is our dollar amount? From what I learned, the federal government funds about \$200,000 out of a \$4 million budget. Could he give us any number as to any tables that he's working on with his federal counterparts that we could foresee? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we haven't heard from the federal government, so I'm not able to provide that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister commit to the House to contact him and see how we could get involved in this ParticipACTION plan, or any other programs, so that we could subsidize or at least help with the program we're already funding? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 371-15(5): Federal Funding For Northern Sports And Recreation Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll be glad to provide that information. We have a number of our own programs that we certainly can compile that information, the dollar amounts, the criteria for the program. We also have funding partners that we work with: Sport North. We also have the new sports council that has programs. We also have partnership arrangements with ECE and the Department of Health. So we can compile all that information, including the dollars that may be coming from the federal government. At this point, I'm expecting that it will be a lump sum for all of Canada and the breakout won't be there, but we'll certainly get as much information as we can and provide it to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, going back to my Member's statement on training opportunities available to what's turning out to be the largest and most expensive project in the Northwest Territories -- and I'm not talking about our new school in Inuvik -- I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, what's the government's strategy in development of training opportunities for northerners? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In advance of the commitment to build the project, and until the funds start flowing through our socio-economic agreement, the college is a significant player in education in the Northwest Territories. But we also have Community Futures, an organization that is a jointly funded operation by aboriginal governments, this government, the Canadian government and industry, to ensure that pipeline training is made available in advance. That's the area in which most of our training right now is being concentrated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in briefings recently, I heard the Aboriginal Futures had over 1,000 people taking generic training. Can the Minister define "generic training?" Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This could be anything from heavy equipment operator training

to WHMIS safety training, making sure that people are ready to take jobs in the pipeline area. Typically under the Aboriginal Futures, which is an Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership Program, the programs themselves are developed by a board that is made up of representatives of those funding it. So industry is a key player in determining what kind of training will take place, and they are helping us determine what training will be necessary to ensure that graduates from the courses will be able to find jobs in the oil industry.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that definition. I'd like to ask the Minister, once they're done this generic training, are they offered a chance to go into more specialized training, or do they just go from this generic training onto the jobsite? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 372-15(5): Training Opportunities For Young Northerners

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It varies. In some cases, the training that is offered is enough to allow somebody to move directly to a jobsite. In other instances, there will be other training that's required. So it's a similar model as we've seen with the mining region where we've got another aboriginal skills and employment partnership under way, and that's where the companies themselves have set the training. So it's really something that is a partnership and we can't say this is the kind of training that you need. What was happening in the past was we were doing that, and too often people weren't finding that they were ready for the jobs that were out there. What we've got now is a model that brings the employers right into the decision-making about what training is going to take place, and that has been far more successful at getting people into the job force after the training.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this morning are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, who is the principal signatory, under his watch, to the recently released socio-economic agreement on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Mr. Speaker, this agreement is 42 single-spaced pages of agreement, plus another 20 pages of appendix. You know, as I was saying in my statement, as I look through this and consider the consequences of it, indeed, I asked are we repeating history from Norman Wells, Pine Point, the Yellowknife goldfields, the diamond mines? Mr. Speaker, we're giving in to the needs in this agreement of the world's richest and most powerful corporations, and I would say to the greed of Ottawa, while we leave the real needs and the future of our own people on the backburner. Mr. Speaker, why did the government sign off on this deal before getting the coveted resource revenue sharing agreement and devolution deal from Ottawa, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, as the Premier has just answered in previous questions, we are working on a resource revenue sharing/devolution deal with Ottawa in parallel. Obviously we need economic development; we need this project, the business benefits, the opportunities that will flow from the Mackenzie gas project. The opening of the basin will be critical for much of the Northwest Territories. Some of the communities up and down the valley experience unemployment of 30, 40 percent. So, yes, it's our top priority to get devolution and resource revenue sharing. We think we can do this in parallel with support for this project, and I believe Members of this House have indicated and reiterated their support for the project through a couple of successive motions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, why didn't we hold out with the few bargaining chips that we have on this one? It would seem that one of them was our compliance with a socio-economic agreement for this project. Why didn't we hold back on that in favour of getting in-front certainty, certainty, Mr. Speaker, on a resource revenue and a devolution deal?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a regulatory process underway. If we were to stand down and refused to participate, I would suggest that the wheels of the review process wouldn't grind to a halt; we'd just be left behind and we wouldn't have the chance to ensure that it's northerners who benefit from this project, northerners who are employed, northerners who get the business benefits, Mr. Speaker. It was critical for us to participate in this. We think that the development of our economy, the development of this basin, the development going forward of a 50 or 100-year industry is critical to northerners. There is this window right now for us to get the Mackenzie gas project built. We intend to do that and make sure that it's northerners who benefit. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I think what the government has done is caved in on this one, again to the demands of a regulatory process that demands that it's in place before we're there, to the demands of big companies that want to make sure that we're not going to be a thorn in their sides when they go ahead and start stripping off the wealth of

the NWT. When are we going to stop playing nice guy, Mr. Speaker, with either the proponents of this project or with Ottawa?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 373-15(5): Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mean it's curious that Yellowknife MLAs didn't stand up and protest when we signed socio-economic agreements with the diamond mines prior to having a resource revenue sharing arrangement, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Awww. Awww. Awww.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: This project is critical for huge, huge vast tracts of this territory, Mr. Speaker. I think it's northerners who will benefit, who will get the business opportunities, the employment opportunities, and so we're not here to suggest to the Delta, we're not here to suggest up and down the valley that we don't support your economic aspirations because we have another political imperative. We're working on both of these things in parallel. We think we can walk and chew gum at the same time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can walk and chew caribou meat at the same time...

---Laughter

...because we're not going to have much caribou left here in the NWT if we don't see any kind of immediate injection into this whole caribou crises that we have here in the NWT before us, Mr. Speaker. I want to see the caribou initiative become a priority right up there with resource revenue sharing, devolution, the unequalization. I think caribou has to be right up there with anybody right here in this House. If the Minister is going to come forward with any kind of supp that we can get the money out there to get all of the caribou counted in one shot. I don't care about the high price of helicopter time or the money we need for more wildlife officers. I don't think any northerners are going to object to any of this new money that we need for that, Mr. Speaker. So I want to ask the Minister to get his cameras together, to come forward. Can he come forward with a supplementary appropriation to get those monies put into wildlife management and caribou counting this year, Mr. Speaker? Can he do that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it's probably very evident that this issue has been up there with all the other issues that we're dealing with, and I'm not surprised that some Members will contest our surveys and we're

probably never going to satisfy everybody. Mr. Speaker, we've done a lot of work in the last several years. We probably have the best information out there of any government or any organization, and we have compiled all the information that we needed to make a decision. Now, some people are going to want us to count every herd in North America to satisfy them. We can't do that. We can count the herds that are in crises in the Northwest Territories that utilize the hunting areas or the different zones in the NWT, but we can't commit right now to count every herd all at once at the same time. That's just not realistic. Even if we could come up with all the resources in terms of dollars to do that, we don't have the manpower; we don't have the helicopters and everything available to do that all in one year. That's not possible, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. VILLENEUVE: I would beg to differ, Mr. Speaker. You know, talking with all the people that are engaged in caribou monitoring and caribou harvesting, we have to get all the aboriginals engaged and assist the government. If we've got the money, I don't see where they would refuse to assist the government in doing any kind of monitoring. We can do some surveys next year, the year after and year after that, but all these numbers are always going to be contested, Mr. Speaker, and the only way that we're not going to get anybody arguing over the numbers is to get them done within a timely period, and that being one year. So I don't think there's going to be much...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Villeneuve?

MR. VILLENEUVE: ...for new money that's going to go into this initiative, and I want to see more dollars going into that. Can the Minister commit to northerners to get more money? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly can commit that we'll look for some new money for more surveys, and more harvesting numbers, and better numbers from hunters from the aboriginal side. I'm not sure that would satisfy him, Mr. Speaker. We are counting the herd in his riding next year, and I'm sure those numbers won't satisfy him either. But, Mr. Speaker, we can't commit to counting every herd in this area, in North America, so that the Member would be completely satisfied that one caribou doesn't mix with another herd. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, maybe it's unrealistic, but I think if we give it our best shot, I think that's the best that we can do. We shouldn't be worried about money. I'm worried about caribou.

MR. SPEAKER: Question, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: ...but I think this issue, it's almost got like an emergency...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Villeneuve, do you have a question?

MR. VILLENEUVE: ...I want to ask the Minister, can he commit to this House that he would come forward in the next couple weeks, or during this year, to have more money put into wildlife management to get our caribou numbers on the table? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 374-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very difficult to answer the Member's question. First of all, he's asking us if we'd commit to counting every herd in North America so that he could be satisfied. We can't commit to that. He's asking me a question about the supp, whether we're going to come back with additional money. The rules of this House don't allow me to speak about the supp; but, Mr. Speaker, I can commit that we are trying to find every avenue to get additional resources to provide the best information we can for this serious crises that we're in. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to continue where my colleague Mr. Villeneuve left off, because the fact is I'm not sure why this ENR Minister continues to talk about the North American herds. Are we talking about Quebec? No. We're talking about the NWT, Mr. Speaker, and working with Nunavut. That's the issue. So, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister says no one will be satisfied, the fact is who is the Minister satisfying on this caribou herd numbers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we're satisfied with the numbers. We're completely comfortable that we've surveyed the herds that are affected in the Northwest Territories, and we have some really good numbers and that was presented to the Members of this House. There was a lot of feedback provided that Members were not comfortable with those numbers, so we had another survey done which pointed that the herds were, indeed...the numbers had been reduced even more than initially had been surveyed. So, Mr. Speaker, we've done a number of very comprehensive surveys with all these herds. Our numbers are there. Our people have done all the work that's required. I'm not sure what else the Member is asking for. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact is the ENR Minister talks about doing a comprehensive survey, but just earlier today he said all the...(inaudible)...weren't satisfied, and he also made a clear point of saying we can't survey all the herds in a reasonable time, in the sense that we have to do them from year to year and, heck, we don't even do some of them some years. So, Mr. Speaker, we're going to kill an industry without knowing what the true numbers are. If this government had an initiative like the hotel tax or any tax, they'd make it a priority. Are the caribou numbers a priority of this government? We need a clear answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated before, we're satisfied with the numbers. We have provided them to the co-management boards, who are our partners in this whole issue over the caribou. They're satisfied with it. We've counted all the herds that we feel we need to count at this point. There's still the Beverly herd that we have to get better numbers on and we'll be doing that next year.

Mr. Speaker, all the people in the Northwest Territories except for some members of industry, have accepted our numbers, Mr. Speaker, and we're completely comfortable that we need to stake some drastic action and, of course, Mr. Speaker, that is not going to be satisfactory to everybody. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, when the ENR Minister says he's completely satisfied and we feel that we've counted what needs to be counted, well, Mr. Speaker, we've got outfitter industries that if we close their doors, we're going to be spending millions of dollars to buy them out or clean up this mess. When this Minister is saying that the fact is it costs too much to do a survey, well, we're busy, we're satisfied, that's not good enough. Mr. Speaker, will he make this a priority? Because people's livelihood is at stake right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 375-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the Member's been, but it's really been a priority over the last several weeks and over the past couple of months. We've had workshops, we've had summits, we've had debates in the public, and we've had Members in this House stand up. So I'm not sure what else he needs to see to be convinced it's a priority, Mr. Speaker. It is a priority. This government has put more resources into this

whole issue for this coming year and we will be looking for other resources on top of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, talk about all this caribou is making me hungry, so I want to ask questions to the Minister of Transportation to get off the issue here. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation not so much about more money, I think about more planning with our people in our region in terms of working and putting safety before our roads in our communities. I want to ask the Minister about what types of plans...Will his department sit down with the communities in the Sahtu region to plan out our winter roads in terms of looking at safety issues that would be and could be preventable? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Menicoche.

Return To Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The safety issues of all our roads are a priority of this government, especially our winter road systems which are so vital to linking our northern communities to the rest of the NWT and Canada. We have had discussions in the past, Mr. Speaker. In fact, this year we did allow for increases in some of the contracting for our winter roads and to allow more maintenance on those roads. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the Minister in terms of these winter roads that we have from December to March. They're very important to our people in our small communities. They look forward to it. The people in the Sahtu sure appreciate the government's efforts in putting these roads in. I'm asking the Minister in terms of planning stages between, say, April to November. Can the Minister come into our communities, talk about the safety about cutting down some of these roads, cutting down the corners, and look at some of the bridging problems that we have where people's traditional knowledge can be very valuable to the department and to this government? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Menicoche.

Further Return To Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly consultation with the communities to identify priority areas about grade improvements and road alignments on our winter roads is very important. In fact, straightening out all our winter roads is just a safer way of doing business. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I would ask the Minister, is there a concrete plan to come to my office, come to the Sahtu region and say we are going to do this and this and this in terms of the planning of the safety in our winter roads in the Sahtu region and to look at efforts made by this department to put some of these resources into helping build safety into our communities as soon as possible? I look forward to the Minister giving me a reply on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Menicoche.

Further Return To Question 376-15(5): Safety Issues Of Winter Roads

HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the Department of Transportation does have a million dollars a year that we use for grade improvements and reducing grades, improving curve radii, which means sight distances as you round corners, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to consult with the communities to see what priorities they're establishing working with us. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To continue on this theme, the fact is that the only person that seems satisfied with the survey numbers is the ENR Minister. Mr. Speaker, that alone should speak volumes. So, Mr. Speaker, if I was the ENR Minister, I'd be kicking in my Cabinet colleagues' doors and everybody I could find to say help us get more money to do the survey. What is this ENR Minister doing today to show that we can get dollars into our planning process to survey the caribou once and for all completely? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure where this Member's been if he's hasn't heard...

---Laughter

...hasn't heard the widespread support for actions to be taken on the caribou herds. Mr. Speaker, we've heard from all the co-management groups across the Territories. We've conducted workshops in the different regions. We've heard from all the different users of caribou, the people that share the land with the caribou. We've had a summit. We've had our people going into different communities that are affected by this. There's been so much discussion and information that's been flowing, I'm not sure where the Member's coming from when he asks that question, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I'm just replying to the ENR Minister's responses, which is we don't know the true numbers. We have good ideas what some numbers are, so what are we doing? Making up the numbers in some areas by guessing? Mr. Speaker, the fact is that there are no clear numbers in certain areas of the herds. Mr. Speaker, this is starting to look like a Charlie Chaplin show; a lot of action, but no words or process. So Mr. Speaker, the fact is, we need to see some clear action through a process, supplementary appropriation as alluded to by my colleague Mr. Villeneuve. The fact is, what...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Hawkins?

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the Member would rather wait until there is no caribou before we start taking action. It would be a lot easier to count if...Mr. Speaker, the Member has alluded that we made up the numbers. Mr. Speaker, that's absolutely false. Mr. Speaker, we have done two surveys and a number of other actions that have shown the numbers are correct. We stand behind them and we will confirm any other information that the Member needs. Mr. Speaker, there are some herds that have not been counted and we have pledged to do some next year, but, Mr. Speaker, some of those herds are not in our jurisdiction. We need to work with other governments to be able to come up with an action plan and have their agreement so that we can move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Minister's words, some herds have not been counted. So how can we deal with that as firm information? Because we're planning, we're setting regulations, and we're setting a process on herd numbers that have not been counted. Again, in the Minister's words. So, Mr. Speaker, how can we rest with comfort, all of us, trying to make a plan to protect the caribou without knowing the true numbers? Shouldn't we know what the true numbers are before we make rash decisions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 377-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not like Census Canada. Caribou don't just line up and get counted.

---Laughter

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, we have counted four herds, Mr. Speaker. In those four herds that we have counted, the populations have decreased by 50 percent. Mr. Speaker, we know that the other herds across North America are also in a crisis situation. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take a large amount of dollars to go out and count herds in other jurisdictions and in other areas where we don't yet have authority to do so before we make decisions. Mr. Speaker, we're comfortable with our numbers, we stand by your numbers, and we need to take action and will be doing so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll bite now. I'm hungry on this issue of caribou here.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister in regards to the caribou issues. I want to ask him a simple question that the aboriginal hunters have in terms of the caribou. The numbers will go on a long dispute, but for the people who rely for thousands of years and will continue, hopefully, for survival of their culture and their beliefs and their only livelihood, what type of protection is this government in terms of the aboriginal hunters will not be affected greatly by the questionable numbers that are out there? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as soon as the caribou numbers go down, the aboriginal people are affected. The aboriginal communities that live in the areas where the caribou roam are already voicing great concern. We have been working with the co-management boards that are in the different jurisdictions where there are settled claims and there has been a number of initiatives that we're looking at. Sahtu co-management group, for example, is looking at a voluntary quota that will be brought forward as recommendation. We're also looking at maybe no-hunting zones at certain times of the year; maybe other things, such as no-hunting areas along ice roads and those things. So there are a number of things that we have on the drawing board, Mr. Speaker. We still have a lot of work to do yet, Mr. Speaker. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've spoken to some of the people in our region and certainly with the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board volunteering to look at some of the ways that we could protect and keep our caribou. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of ENR again to look at what ways he can ensure that the people in the small communities in terms of protecting the hunting of the aboriginal people, there's land claims settlements and then there's no settlements on some of the parts of the Northwest Territories in terms of I'm looking at some of the areas that don't have a land claims settlement in terms of dealing with this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have committed to work with all the aboriginal groups that are affected by the issue of caribou reduction. We are required and bound by land claims agreements. In some areas case law also applies. Mr. Speaker, we have committed to working with aboriginal groups and have already embarked on that process and will continue to do so. That will include some of the aboriginal governments that do not have a settled claim. We've already heard from the Akaitcho government on their position regarding the issue of caribou. We've heard from other communities, such as Fort Smith, where some of the members from the Metis Nation and the Dene have come to our meetings and given us some advice. So, Mr. Speaker, we're pledging to work with everybody. It's a big issue across the Territories, but we'll continue to keep the communication lines open. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could I ask if the Minister could come into the communities in the Sahtu and talk to our community members, especially the elders and the harvesters of the caribou, and look at some of the concerns and questions they have? But the question, I guess, what I got back from my communities, is that this government has it wrong when they said shoot bulls only. My leadership is saying that's not the right message we should be giving to our people. It should be looking at the cows to shoot and not so much of the bulls. That is quite puzzling for our leadership, so I'd ask the Minister if he would ask his officials to come into our communities and get the information from our elders, the traditional users of the caribou? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 378-15(5): Caribou Management

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these decisions are not made lightly. There is a lot of discussion that takes place. Mr. Speaker, we have our experts that work with the co-management groups.

Mr. Speaker, the co-management group also brings to the table traditional knowledge. If there's concern from one community regarding the recommendations, we'd certainly be glad to have people go in and have further discussion regarding the concern. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 379-15(5): Impacts Of Caribou Management Decisions On The Outfitting Industry

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To continue once again on the caribou outfitter issue, I now have questions for the Minister of ITI, who is also responsible for the business development. Mr. Speaker, has the Minister or the department taken a look at the fact that if all these outfitter businesses go the path of the buffalo, does he have any assessment as to how much money in public money is outstanding by these businesses that we may potentially lose? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 379-15(5): Impacts Of Caribou Management Decisions On The Outfitting Industry

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I pointed out in the House prior, we're working with the outfitters. We know that Wekeezhii board is having some public hearings on the caribou tag numbers and the caribou plan going forward. We expect them to come back and provide some input to the Minister of ENR. But as I told the House, we're working with the outfitters to build their presentation to the Wekeezhii board and, at the same time, we're also sitting down to talk through some scenarios with them, because there are a number of scenarios that need to be considered. When these numbers come back, we're not sure if they'll be lower or if they'll be non-existent, or if they'll be higher. But we're considering all scenarios. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 379-15(5): Impacts Of Caribou Management Decisions On The Outfitting Industry

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister talks about scenarios. If the Wekeezhii board comes back and says no caribou, he's talked about working on scenarios, what would the scenario be if there were no tags allowed to be issued? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: That's a hypothetical question in the future, so I'm going to disallow that question. Do you have a following supplementary, Mr. Hawkins?

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, what scenario is being drawn up if no caribou are allowed to be hunted next year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Again, I'm going to rule that question hypothetical.

---Ruled Out of Order

Oral questions. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 11: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 100-15(5): Northwest Territories Graduates: 1976-2006

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Northwest Territories Graduates: 1976 to 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Tabled Document 101-5(5): Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a document entitled Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Tabled Document 102-15(5): Policy Options Article Entitled "The Resource Curse And The Mackenzie Gas Project"

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a magazine article entitled The Resource Curse and the Mackenzie Gas Project. The author is Russell Banta, an independent consultant in Ottawa, and it was published in the magazine Policy Options, December 2006 to January 2007. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bills 18, 19, 21, Committee Reports 7, 8, 9 and 10, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

ITEM 16: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee today? Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Madam Chair. The committee wishes to consider Bill 21, Appropriation Act 2007-2008, specifically dealing with the Department of Education and Transportation. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. We'll do that right after a break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We are on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I'd like to ask the Minister responsible, Mr. Dent, if he'd like to bring in his witnesses.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Yes, please, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Please, Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

Thank you. Committee, before we get started, I'd like to recognize Mr. Roger Simpson who's with us in the Gallery today from the Auditor General of Canada office.

---Applause

Welcome to our proceedings, Mr. Simpson. Thank you. I would now like to ask Minister Dent to please introduce your witnesses.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me today the deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dan Daniels; and the director of finance and administration, Mr. Paul Devitt.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Welcome, Mr. Daniels and Mr. Devitt, to our proceedings. We left off yesterday, committee, on page 8-17, activity summary, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$170.160 million. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the early childhood development, I'm not sure if I'm asking this question in the right place or not, but I have a couple of questions on the support for day care and how it's administered. I wonder if the Minister could update us on what the level of subsidy is for parents who qualify to have their children in day care. I'd like to ask the Minister about that because childcare seems to be a real challenge for parents that want to work, who may be on a relatively low income. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do provide a subsidy to low income families in order for them to be able to access childcare and because it's related to income, it's something that is tough to say what the subsidy would be in each situation. We could get that information to the Member, though.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the level of support is related to the individual's income. Could the Minister provide us with a range of what that support might look like? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In general, and the reason that I would say that it varies so much is that the subsidy would only be available, typically, for students and for people who are on income support.

That's why things vary there, because for income support we assess a family's need and then provide a top-up in order to cover what is needed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So there is no support for, say, like a single working mother, not on income support but in a fairly low income bracket, say working for an hourly wage for a private company, which, you know, could be a scenario in any given community. There is no support for that individual whatsoever? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amounts that are available are always assessed by income, so I can't say that somebody who is working might not qualify for some support. In fact, somebody who has income of \$2,400 a month could still qualify, but they may be receiving a top-up through income support. Much of our support through the Income Support Program does go to support the people who are engaged in work.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. Well, I don't sit on the Social Programs committee and probably if I did I'd be more familiar with this program and how it works. So maybe I'll just leave it at that and just say, though, that there seems to be people who could be working who are challenged by the high costs of day care or childcare who then would view that as a barrier to working, and I've seen quite a few instances of it in my community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would agree that we'd all like to see the subsidies increased more, and we actually have some money in this budget to do that. We will be expanding the availability of the program in the next program year. I would be happy to provide the Member with some examples so that she can understand how the subsidy works right now. I think once you see that, it makes it easier to understand. As we are able to expand the program, we'll bring more families into the area where they can access the support that's needed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on the list I have Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Questions under education operations and development of schools, I'm assuming that's part of the funding that ECE provides to our schools based on the formulas that we use. Over the years, over the last six or seven years, the PTR ratio has been going down quite substantially and there has been extra money put forward into the schools as well as in support services, inclusive schooling and such. However, I know that there is certain programming that schools do provide that are not funded. I can't remember all the details on that. I think I made a statement a while back but...Library services, for example, are not included,

music teachers, or any of the extra programs that some of the schools provide are not funded. They have to find the money from within. I'm just wondering if there's any plan from the department to review what is included and not in PTR and also just review in a larger perspective about are we doing better in our schools? Are we reducing the pupil/teacher ratio on the class at ground level? Is there any mechanism to do that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We report pupil/teacher ratio in the Northwest Territories the same way that it is reported by all other jurisdictions in Canada and that allows comparability between jurisdictions so that everybody can say we're comparing apples to apples and oranges to oranges. That said, Ms. Lee is right; we don't tell a school that they have to put somebody in the library. We don't tell the school that they have to have a vice-principal. The schools determine what their needs are in consultation with the DEAs in their communities, because we think it's something that parents and those who are elected to a DEA should have significant control over.

We provide the funding, but there's a considerable amount of flexibility. The boards could choose to either have specialist teachers or not choose to have specialists and reduce class size. While we say that there's, right now, an average of about 15.5 students per teacher in the Northwest Territories, again, Ms. Lee is quite right; that doesn't translate into 15.5 kids in every classroom because many classes, or in many cases, the school boards have determined there's a better way to allocate people. At this point, we don't require the boards to report to us on how large or how small their classes are. That tends to vary by the size of the community. A community like Kakisa where you've got perhaps seven or eight students in the whole school with a teacher and a classroom assistant, you've got a fairly low PTR. However, a larger high school in one of the major centres like Inuvik, Hay River or Yellowknife, may choose to concentrate students in a larger class some of the times.

It's difficult to say, in order to come up with what is actually happening on the ground. The best way to do that is through the DEAs and what parents have decided is the right way to see the school, or class size.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I do appreciate the independence and flexibility built into the funding regime, because we do appreciate that the DEAs are elected and it's another layer of government and leaders. My point is, though, we spend a lot of government money in a lot of areas and we often do try to find indicators or result reports or something to show some sort of progress or whatever. I do appreciate that we get, I don't know, I guess they are graduation rates we look at, we look at achievement tests, but I have not heard of any testing or result reporting system that would indicate whether...and I'm not really hearing that from the parents either, I'm only familiar with mostly the Yellowknife situation, although when we do go to communities we do try to visit schools and talk to educators and such. In our schools in Yellowknife we have given a considerable amount of money in six or seven years. I know that in 1999, during the 14th

Assembly election, the high PTR, pupil/teacher ratio, was a huge issue and the lack of funding for support services was also a big issue. Over the seven years we have, I think, increased our funding by 20 to 30 percent, at least. I just want to be able to tell that given the demand and the needs that were there that this extra money is showing some results. I'm sure they are, I just don't know where. If that system is not in place, would the Minister undertake to see, I don't know, maybe we need to do a survey or something because in our schools we continue to see crowded schools, we continue to see a lot of teachers, students and parents raising a lot of money to subsidize or to enhance the programming that's available. I think it's always good for the government, at all levels, to work together to see if we are spending the money in the best way possible and that we are aware of the goals that we are trying to achieve and that we set up some kind of mechanism to see that that is happening.

In areas like health, we try to look at health indicators and all sorts of issues and I do understand that it might be more difficult in education areas, but I think it would be helpful for us because if we, even for future use, you know, if we are to continue to reduce pupil/teacher ratio...I guess, I mean a basic assumption could be made that lower pupil/teacher ratio is always better than a higher one, but I think there is room for us to see, okay, what extra money do we have or what money are we operating with and are we using it as best as possible. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would work within the department to see if we could come up with some kind of result system. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Lee mentioned a couple of the ways in which we assess the progress within the system, one being graduation rates and the Alberta achievement tests that we use for grades 3, 6 and 9. We are also requiring teachers now to report the functional grade level of students to the department, so that allows us to track, year over year, our progresses as students move through the grade level at which they are performing. This spring, we will be conducting another -- I think it's actually started -- student needs assessment and we will be tabulating the results from that survey this spring, with the results being available by this August. That information has, in the past, been used to help us justify the increase in funding for student support and for helping to drive the decrease in the pupil/teacher ratio. I'm confident that through these measures that we're taking, that we will see fairly good reporting on what is happening in the classroom and what people in the classroom tell us needs to happen. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I don't think we're getting back after August, so I guess it will have to be the next Assembly that we'll have to look at that question.

I have one more follow-up question on this page, page 8-18, and it has to do with language and culture instruction, aboriginal languages. I just want to ask a general question on that because in Yellowknife, both school boards are working really hard on that programming and I think the budget has been expanding and the

programming has been expanding. I think it would be beneficial for us in order to give our kids, all our kids, not just aboriginal kids, but all our kids an opportunity to learn about the aboriginal culture and languages, at least within our areas. I know that all the programming that that gets delivered under...I'm talking about both school boards because I don't want to be pointing to one board, but I think that there is a desire on the part of students and parents to have their kids exposed to that programming, whether they are aboriginal or not. We are a big community and we should all learn about each other as much as possible and kids learn best when they are exposed to this. I'd like to know if the Minister would be willing to look at enhancing the program and expanding it so that as many kids as possible could take advantage of it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. If you look at the language and culture instruction line on page 8-18, you'll see that the numbers have increased year over year. Is it as much as we'd like to do? Perhaps not; but in looking at where we can make the investments, we felt that the investments in increased physical activity and trades training and concentrating on the PTR and the student support we're the highest ones for this year. I agree with the Member that it makes the most sense for the schools to allow everybody to participate. I believe that most of the schools have looked for ways to do that. I would agree that it's an area that we want to concentrate on and we are finding ways to do minor increases every year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Dent. Next on the list I have Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to ask the Minister some questions on curriculum development and how it is that over the years there's been a downward trend on physical education in our schools. Much of the news in the past few years has been talk of childhood obesity, the fact that as a society we're getting more obese, we're not as active. This causes me a great deal of concern given the fact that I think, and I haven't got the statistics to prove it, but I went to school from Grade 4 to Grade 12 here and when I was in school we had phys. ed. class at least three times a week. A dedicated phys. ed. teacher was there dressed in gym pants and a T-shirt instructing us in physical education, and if you go to the schools nowadays, it's a teacher in high-heeled shoes, it's a teacher in a three-piece suit, and it's just not conducive to children getting the physical education requirements that they need. I think we could do more in this area. I don't know if the Minister has a plan to try to get more funding into physical education in our schools, but I'd like to hear what the Minister has to say in that regard. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member's absolutely right that we need to get more physical activity in our schools. That's why one of the key initiatives that's been announced in this budget is a reduction over the next two years in the pupil/teacher ratio to ensure that in each school we can have somebody

whose focus is on physical activity. I guess that's the key thing I want to make clear here. We're not talking about phys. ed. and we're not necessarily talking about phys. ed. teachers in gym shorts and a T-shirt, because physical activity is something that all students should participate in every single day, but it doesn't have to be in a gym.

Last week I attended a meeting of the Education Ministers from all across Canada and at our meeting, which was hosted by the Minister from Ontario, the Minister from Ontario brought in a group from a local K to 8 school and they showed us how they were ensuring that there was at least 20 minutes of physical activity to begin every day in the school. It didn't involve gym at all. What it involved was 40 young Grade 8 students who had been trained to go into each of the classrooms at the beginning of every day and get everybody involved in a routine. It was basically done to rap music, and the teachers were all participating, too. So as long as we can get that kind of intense physical activity happening in the classroom, that's also one way in which we can ensure that we improve the physical activity of youngsters.

But I agree with the Member that we need to put more of an emphasis on it, and that's why we've said in this budget there's one-half of a PTR and that will be followed next year by another half of a PTR. We're going to ensure this money will be coffered. It has to go towards physical activity. So we'll be putting in place some regulations to ensure that in every school they're using this money to enhance physical activity for all the kids. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Dent, my curiosity begs me, the question begs to be answered, when these folks came in to show you this routine to rap music, did the Education Ministers participate? Mr. Dent.

---Laughter

HON. CHARLES DENT: Madam Chair, we were invited and we all looked to our host, the Minister from Ontario, and said we would follow him up on the floor if he led, and he declined.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): What kind of support is that for physical education? Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think physical activity is great and if the Minister did take part in the routine, he could be sweaty with the rest of the kids for the balance of the day. That's not a really good way to start out your day, is to get the activity, sweat, and then sit there and try to get instructed in mathematics or English or whatever subject you're taking and sit there. I think we need to get kids into a gymnasium, into where they can actually work up a sweat, participate in sports, and then have the ability to go in and clean themselves up, have a shower, and go back to learn some more.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he could get, and I'm sure the department has the statistics on this, but over the past 10 years has there been a decline in the amount of time that students...and you can start at Grade 1 and go through until Grade 9, I guess. That's when gym becomes an option, after Grade 9. What has been the decline in time that kids actually get to spend in a gymnasium with a dedicated physical education teacher? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member may not accept that that's physical activity, 20 minutes of physical activity at the beginning of the day is a good way to go, but I can tell you that every teacher that I've talked to thinks that it is. It doesn't mean that they have to be sitting in class all sweaty. We're not talking about the sort of intense activity that you would have in a gym, nor does this replace the time in the gym. But this is an additional 20 minutes of physical activity that right now we know that kids aren't typically getting. All of the research says that people should be active every single day and it's not enough to be active just three or four times a week. So we want to make sure that on top of gym, we're getting kids active. I'd certainly be happy to see if we can find out what's been the trend in terms of physical education in the Northwest Territories over the past few years. We'll have to see if we can get some of that information back. To the best of my knowledge, I don't think that there has been a reduction in physical education. What we're looking to do though is increase the physical activity.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Minister for that and look forward to any information that he might have in that area. That leads me into another subject and I want to talk about music. They're like the dinosaur; the music teacher has gone extinct, music teachers in our schools. For whatever reason, students aren't being instructed in music or don't have the ability to attend music classes like they were in the past. Industrial arts is another area. I know both high schools have gone to great lengths to get programs up and running, but we seem to not have the full range of subjects that were available a number of years ago. We're spending \$270 million in Education, Culture and Employment. I know there's some that goes not all to education, but it's a tremendous amount of money and to think that we don't have the full scope of subjects and teachers, it causes me a great deal of concern, Madam Chair. I'd just like to ask the Minister if there's any...and you can talk about librarians, too. I think they should be included in this as well. Where have all the librarians gone? Where have all the music teachers gone? What's happening? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Back in 1994-1995, when the federal government cut our funding so significantly, the Northwest Territories went from having the lowest pupil/teacher ratio in Canada to having the highest. After we add these two positions that we're talking about adding back in through the next three years of our budget process, we still won't be back to where we were in the mid-'90s. So when the Member talks about not having the same sort of resources available in terms of the pupil/teacher ratio in the classroom, he's absolutely right. This Legislative Assembly hasn't been able to put back in the amount of money yet that was taken out to accomplish that. So it would take considerably more money than what we're providing now to ensure that we could provide the extras like that.

However, that said, we've become aware of a way of teaching music that may be of interest. It's being used in New Brunswick. The department is taking a look at it and we may be able to, through distance education, offer something that is quite reasonable to students across the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Minister for that. Again, it's hard to imagine a \$1.2 billion budget and, like I mentioned, we're spending \$280 million in this area. I know the levels aren't up to where they were in the mid-'90s, but we have to -- I've said this before and I'll say it again today -- I think we have to take a look at our operation from top to bottom, top to bottom, to try to find ways or means to get the children -- and the children are the future here -- every available subject into the schools. Music, industrial arts, libraries, physical education. Those are the things that are important. Every time you turn around, we rush out and we're hiring policy analysts. This year alone we've grown the public service by 101 positions. Madam Chair, I really think we lose focus of the...We really need to do something with our schools and the availability of teachers for our students. If we're not doing that, we're failing the children, Madam Chair. I really do think we need a top to bottom look at our entire operation to try to find more money to get the levels to where they were in the mid-'90s. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with the Member that we need to focus on education. I think our government has done pretty well, considering the amount of growth in funding over the years and the amount of money that we've managed to put back into the classroom is pretty impressive. As Ms. Lee pointed out, since 1999 we've brought the PTR down from 18.5 to one to, after we institute these two, what will be 14 to one. That's a tremendous investment and it's taken a lot of money; and those aren't headquarters positions, those are people in the classrooms. The money that we're spending on student support, that's money that's going to the classroom as well. We've increased that funding by millions of dollars over the same period of time.

I think the Members of this Legislative Assembly have shown that they want to see the money going back into the classroom and that we are moving to get there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. I'll remind Members that we are on page 8-17, activity summary, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$170.160 million. On the list I have Mr. Pokiak and Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just following the line of my colleague Mr. Ramsay here, I guess, under curriculum. The Minister spoke this morning in regard to high school graduation numbers increasing, in his statement. I'd like to ask the Minister, in the Beaufort, are there any numbers that he can provide to me anyway with regard to how many of these graduates actually pursue post-secondary education with the level of education that's provided to them? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know that I can provide that information right now from here. I think it's important to remember that a decision that's made in Grade 9 about a course will determine whether or not a student can go on to post-secondary studies. So we have a lot of students who come through by Grade 12 who have maybe not taken the right courses to move on with their studies. So not everybody with a graduation certificate will be qualified to go on to post-secondary studies. A number of years ago, provinces and territories used to issue two different kinds of graduation certificates; one was a general and one was an academic. Typically if you had the general diploma, you didn't have the qualifications to go on to post-secondary studies. We don't issue those two anymore because it doesn't make any difference to the post-secondary institutions. They don't care if you've got an academic diploma; they only care if you've got the right prerequisites. So they take a look at what courses the student has taken and whether or not that student is then qualified to move into an area of study. So the world has gotten a lot more specialized and unless you take exactly the right courses in high school, you may find that you're going to need to take some upgrading courses after you've achieved that level of a diploma. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you. I think I was one of those students who was in that scenario the Minister just talked about earlier. But again, I think he mentioned Grade 9 would determine your next level of steps in post-education, so I'm going to ask the Minister, I know that we depend a lot on the teachers that are teaching the students in the smaller communities. I'm just wondering, if that's the case, isn't it the responsibility or the fault of the teachers in regards that they can't keep up to the level of education that they have to have once they reach Grade 9? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think what we need to do is look at what it would take to make our students, ensure that they're getting into the right program so that they can move on if that's what they want to do. That takes work, not only the teacher, the school, the DEA and the parents. That takes the whole group of people who are involved in the student's life, if you will, to ensure that the right decisions are being made. I've heard from a number of people the same sort of concern that Mr. Pokiak has expressed and I've started talking more and more to DEAs and DECAs about what we can do to ensure that kids understand, and parents understand, that they have to be thinking about the future if they want to be successful moving into post-secondary studies. It sounds to me, because of the number of times that I've heard this, that we maybe haven't done as good a job across the North as we need to. So I've started to put some emphasis on that area with schools, with DECAs, and whenever I talk to parent groups, to parents. But we're going to reinforce the fact that a student's plan by Grade 9 has to be signed by the parents. We're trying to work with schools to make sure that isn't something that

just goes home with the kids and comes back. They need to make sure that the parents understand what it is they're signing. They need to make sure that people understand that this course decision may have a serious impact four years from now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think a quick follow-up, I guess. The Minister indicated that the parents need to understand what their students are signing. I'm just wondering, let's assume, let's say that some of the parents actually didn't graduate, so they won't understand. I guess my question is how can we, as education partners, be able to assist these parents understand that their students can go one level higher than they did? Is there a way that we can work with it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's a good point. I hope that schools will make sure that they involve parents. That may mean reaching out to parents. You can't just send home a note with the kids and hope that the parents are going to come back. It may take a phone call or may take a personal visit. I'm hoping that we're going to see more outreach to make sure the parents are getting involved, because I think that if we can get more parents involved, we'll see more success. In fact, I know that if we get more parents involved, we'll see more student success. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just on another subject, under grants and contributions I'm just looking at the...I don't know if I'm going to jump ahead, but I'll let you decide that, Madam Chair. Under grants and contributions I'm looking at more specifically 8-22 and I'm just wondering, it's identified there that \$8.63 million is identified for Ecole St. Joseph renovation. It has to do with the fire in August. I'm just wondering, aren't we covered under the fire insurance, or is the government covered under that so they can replace things like that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Pokiak, do you have any other questions for page 8-17? That's five pages ahead of where we are and we'll certainly recognize you when we get to that page. Do you have any other questions for this page?

MR. POKIAK: No, I'm done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a couple of quick questions to the Minister about the education operations and development division dollars that probably takes up the majority of the whole education and culture of \$170 million. I just want to ask the Minister, what is the Department of Education doing to integrate more elders into the school system, integrate the elders into the cultural programs, on-the-land programs? If elders that are integrated into the school system, into the curriculum for whichever school that carries out the

program, are elders going to be remunerated for their services to the schools to carry out some of these programs? I know a lot of them just volunteer their time and go into the classroom to speak to kids. How is the Education department going to improve the participation of elders in our school system with regards to tradition and culture? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department encourages all divisional educational councils and DEAs to ensure that they are undertaking appropriate activities under the aboriginal language and culture instruction part of the instructional day. We've issued a directive that requires that any funding that they get for aboriginal language and culture education be used in certain ways. The use of elders in the classroom is clearly one of the ways we have identified to be a good use of the money. But just as we don't actually make the decisions about hiring teachers in communities, we don't make decisions about which elders they would hire in the community. That's left to the DEA and the DEC. They are also responsible, then, for determining the pay or remuneration or what they would find appropriate for the elders in that community. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I am just more or less leaning towards development. Can the DEAs develop a program using territorial government funding say, for instance, a trapping program? Could they develop the curriculum for a trapping program that would run all year? They would hire an elder, an instructor, to carry out the program. Is there any funding in this budget for something of that nature? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. In this overall education budget, the amount that's going out to schools this year for aboriginal language and culture is \$7.9 million. That's being divided up among all of the schools in the Northwest Territories. That sort of program would certainly fit the bill. It would be up to the individual school district to decide whether or not that's what they thought was an appropriate expenditure. The way the Member has described it, I am confident it would fit within our directive.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's good to know for DEAs to take note of that; that they have the freedom to develop whatever curriculum they see fit for their kids.

I just have a question on the department initiatives with respect to enhancing the aboriginal interest in science and engineering for aboriginal students. I know the western science view comparison to aboriginal traditional knowledge and values, there has always been some clash, I guess, of values and views on science versus traditional knowledge. How are we working towards improving and getting more aboriginal students to take up

sciences and engineering or something of that professional nature, which the economy of today really is demanding? They need more professionals of that nature with respect to the trades and industrial arts. I think we should be looking on the other side of the spectrum on getting not just doctors and lawyers out there, but more engineers and petroleum engineers and mining engineers and scientists out there for climate change here in the North. What are we doing in the education curriculum to improve on that side of things? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the recent past, we have strengthened the course offerings of the Teacher Education Program to reinforce the traditional knowledge side of things. So the teachers coming through our program are more aware of the importance of traditional knowledge.

To try to ensure that kids in school see some relevance to science or more relevance to the science courses, we've developed a new stream of the curriculum and one of the paths involves courses like Experiential Science. As that was being developed, I attended a session where elders had been brought in to talk about things in the course about how to make that more relevant to traditional knowledge and make sure that that was incorporated into the science curriculum. So we are looking for ways to ensure that our curriculum reflects the northern realities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the smaller, remote communities, I guess, there is always a challenge of getting qualified educators in the schools there...qualified educators of science. Engineering is probably even a bigger challenge. What options does this department provides for these small schools, which some of them only have two or three instructors there? Are there any course upgrades or teacher support programs that would allow an instructor who has maybe been in a community for a couple of years but wants to upgrade the interest in science, can he come back and get some funding through Education to upgrade his training? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The money in the budget we will get to somewhere down the road. There is about \$1.2 million for professional improvement across the Northwest Territories. That's a program that we run in conjunction with the NWTTA.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. This Experiential Science the Minister mentioned, could he just clarify or explain to me what kind of a science that is for my own interest? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's pretty much the same science curriculum that you would find with the 10, 11, 20 or 21 level, but it has been redesigned or reworked so that it includes...It puts the topic in a more relevant way, a more relevant manner for northerners. It's difficult to explain the difference because it's the same concepts. For instance, it brings in the concepts that you might use in trapping instead of around other things that a kid might see studying a science book from down south. We are just in the first year of piloting it. The Experiential Science 10 is being piloted this year. So we are just testing it for the first time in the classroom to see whether or not we have been successful.

We had our curriculum folks work with taking the standard science curriculum, say what are the key concepts, how can we make that more relevant to northern students, and then we brought in a group of elders and worked with them to ensure that we were on the right track. So we think we've done the right thing. It's piloting in the classroom right now. I would be happy to get some more information to the Member if he wants to see what the curriculum looks like.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Madam Chair, I would be interested and I am sure other Members might be interested to see what it involves. Is it just in the bigger schools, or is it across the board in all Grade 10 classes across the North?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am afraid I can't tell you today whether it's in all schools at this point. Actually, the pilot right now this year is for Experiential Science 20. So it's a 20 level course. The same concepts are being learned as if a student was taking Science 20, but we tried to turn it into something more relevant to northerners. I can also find out which schools it's being piloted in, if it's not in all of them.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next on my list I have Mr. Ramsay and then Mr. Lafferty.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to just mention another subject that I think has been overlooked since the funding reductions of the mid-'90s and that's home economics. Madam Chair, that's where, as a teenager, I learned to cook, I learned to sew, some pretty fundamental things for a young person to learn; also healthy eating, food groups. Those are the types of things you learned in home economics. Again, I think the home economics teacher nowadays is extinct. We don't have the funding required to have the home economics teachers around, so I just wanted to mention that again for the record.

I wanted to touch on early childhood development. Madam Chair, one of the things that really concerns me is the incident of autism in our community and what support services are out there for parents and children who have autism. There are a number of them in Yellowknife and we don't seem to have anything suited or geared towards early childhood development of children with autism. If you go back to 1970, and that just so happens to be the

year I was born, one in 2,500 kids would be born with autism. If you go 25 years later to 1995, it's one in 285 and that number is steadily creeping up. So it's more and more prevalent in our society. I would like to ask the Minister if the department has any plans to set up what would be a day care facility for children with autism. I am talking about the kids who are between the ages of two and four. They don't quite qualify for Four Plus or programs like that, but they are in that grey area. There is a definite need in the community for something like that. So I would like to ask the Minister if the department has plans to address that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am responding to Mr. Ramsay's earliest comments to courses like home economics. Currently technology studies do incorporate courses like home economics. What we are hoping is in a number of schools where they haven't been getting enough funding for student support, we are increasing dramatically this year and next year. Where they haven't been getting enough funding for physical education, we are bringing up the funding there significantly. Where they haven't been getting enough funding for trades training, many schools have been putting the money into those areas. What we are hoping is that when we provide the funding, it will provide some flexibility so that the schools will be able to expand their offerings in other areas. I expect we will see that in schools across the Territories.

In terms of early childhood development, the government, at this point, does not provide space for childcare, so we are not into providing centres. We are, as you know, talking about increasing our contributions to operators to try to make it easier for operators to be successful.

We are also looking at increasing the user subsidies. We do provide a larger subsidy to operators who provide spaces for children with challenges. So there is a recognition within our funding formula of the higher cost that may be there for children who need special services. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Given also the prevalence of FAS and autism in our community, I wonder if it would be worthwhile to look at a dedicated facility or a care mechanism for parents and children that have the learning disabilities and they need the extra help. It could be a specialized venue where they would receive the care and support that's required. I think that's something the government should take a serious look at.

Madam Chair, you will hear me talk more later this week about a constituent who has a child with autism who is caught in the social quagmire that is the Department of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment, income support. She can't work. Looking after her son is a 24-hour job and Health and Social Services wanted to suggest she get an aid, which would cost in the neighbourhood of \$3,000 a month to get an aid in, but she would have to leave the home with her other daughter. This is not a workable situation for her. She can't have that much to live on. She needs some help. You will hear me talk more about that later this week.

Again, I really think given FAS and autism, maybe it's time we looked at a dedicated centre and get the parents and children the help they need in one location so there is support there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will certainly take the time to talk to my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, about the issue. In education, our focus tends to be on inclusion. We think it's useful to make sure supports are in place where possible to include everybody in the classroom. We think it's good for the students with those special needs and for others to learn about interacting with people who have challenges too. So our society needs to focus on including everybody, and that's been our focus in education. I will certainly discuss the issue with my colleague.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. What happens, Mr. Minister, if a parent has an autistic child and there really is nowhere for them to go during the day? There is no day care that would entertain that unless there was an aid hired. There is nothing there. Between the ages of two when a child can be diagnosed with the spectrum disorder that is autism until they turn four, there is really nothing there I think that's the window that we really have to have a look at. What is there? Is there anything there for a parent with a child that has autism today between the ages of two and four? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am not sure what services Health and Social Services might make available. In terms of Education, Culture and Employment, what we offer is an increased subsidy to operators of day homes or day care centres where they provide services to children with special needs. That is the support that is provided to ECE. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to take this one step further, if the child is a danger to himself, danger to his siblings, danger to care providers -- and sometimes that's what happens with autistic children -- when you take them out of one environment and put them into another environment, they don't react very well to it. I know the Minister talks of the inclusiveness and trying to make everything nice and happy. The reality is sometimes it can't be that way. People need help, especially between the ages of two and four. Again I know the Minister has said there's increased subsidy to care providers who take in children with special needs, but what if the need is so severe? Then what?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. As I said, I am not sure what's available through Health and Social Services. In Education, at this point, we don't have a mandate to develop centres that would deal with children who have severe challenges. I would be happy to

discuss with my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, whether or not there was a role for ECE to play in that, but right now it's outside our mandate. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next on the list is Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Madam Chair...(English not provided)

Madam Chair, I have specifically three areas I want to focus on: grants and contributions, fees and payments. First I'd like to highlight the school fees charged to aboriginal students. Those fees are for after school curricular programs or during the school sports program. Some aboriginal students' parents are not working, as we all know. Most of them are really struggling to keep their kids in school and keep them out of trouble. In order to do that, they need to have them in sports, but they cannot have them in sports due to all these fees that are attached to extra-curricular activities. As you know, some of them are options for students to pursue, whether it be weight lifting, whether it be extra-curricular activities in schools. There are all kinds of sports happening, and there's clothing attached to it, too. But at the same time, we encourage our students to stay out of trouble, to stay in school, to get involved. As the Minister indicated earlier, students need to be active in schools, and we must follow through with that. I'd like to find out why this is continuing in our schools, where our aboriginal students are paying for extra-curricular activities. That's part of the school program. School sports are part of the school program. Sure, they are taught all day and at the same time they are being active in school, as well. They are representing the school when they travel as well. But we are also leaving out the poor students whose parents are not working. They're not treated the same. For individuals that may be wealthy, they're travelling, their kids are in sports, they wear top notch clothing. But at the same time, we're leaving out the lower-classed ones. Sure, they're at the same level, they're taught the same, but at the same time they cannot afford to get into a program.

I, myself, disagree with that process. I've witnessed it. My kids are Tlicho members, as well, and I had to pay the fees. I'm not talking about me, but I'm talking about future kids of those people that are living in Yellowknife or surrounding areas that are required to pay these additional fees. I certainly hope the Minister will take that into consideration and waive that fee for the goodness of all the students that are growing up.

Madam Chair, if I can continue, just wrapping up with my next item: the cultural perspective. Here in the North we're unique, quite unique compared to other provinces, other jurisdictions. The TCSA culture program, the budget is adequate in order to fund culture programming. There are subsidizations from local community governments, and all sorts of other fundings that are applied for. Many, many proposals have been submitted and drafted up. It's very time consuming and teachers certainly don't have time to write those proposals, or administrators, let alone the principals. ECE funds some of these cultural programs in school, but it's certainly not enough. We talk about education program at the community where there's a general pot for culture program, where they always tell us, well, you can take it out of your pot to hire a traditional elder, or on-the-land program.

Skidoos; without skidoos, without traps, without tents, you cannot survive on the land nowadays, and those are key to promoting on-the-land culture programs in schools. If I understand it correctly, the Department of ECE does not fund schools to purchase school equipment and supplies such as snowmobiles, four-wheelers, traps, tents, as I indicated earlier. But without this equipment, one cannot go out on the land and survive.

Most importantly, Madam Chair, the wages of the elders, they must be comparable to the teachers. They are the traditional teachers in our small, remote communities and we must recognize them as teachers as well. Sure, we can say, well, degrees. They do have degrees in the bush. But when we say we need more money, the department will come back and say, well, you've got a general pot, \$137,000, take it out of there. You know, we can't even buy 15 snow machines or equipment to cover that. So there are a lot of issues around that area. We, as GNWT, have always stressed that we support on-the-land culture programs, and we certainly do, but we must put more money, we must invest in a culture program; vis-à-vis that we, as a Tlicho Nation, send our delegation of new staff and students out on bear land. That cost alone is well beyond the \$137,000 we get a year. That should clearly show that we are a model for the North, as well, and we will continue to do that with or without ECE's assistance, because we are the new government now. But we must work with the GNWT to promote even more of that.

In our nations, we are losing our languages and we must promote our language, too. The department must realize that.

I would just like to highlight, Madam Chair, that the culture program, especially with the teachers, has been very successful with our Chief Jimmy Bruneau School back in the '70s and '80s where we hired an elderly lady and a well-respected man that taught and made snowshoes and so forth; you know, traditional garments. But that's gone because we have to take it out of the general pot.

My time is up, Mr. Chair. If I can allow the Minister to follow through with that. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Around the issue of school fees, we issued a directive to all the schools in the Northwest Territories to ensure that they are not charging fees for aboriginal students for the required school programs. So I'm fairly certain that none of the schools in the Northwest Territories are any longer charging fees for required programs.

In terms of things that are not covered in the education, we're not giving the school any money to run the programs that they're running if they're extra-curricular, if they're outside of that. So there has to be some way of paying for it, and the way they've paid for it, I guess, have been they've looked to fees to do it. So if those programs are going to be offered, the money isn't coming from ECE so somebody is going to have to pay for it along the way. But clearly, those programs are not part of the educational process and are not included in what we say that schools have to deliver as part of the education program.

In terms of culture programs and funding not being adequate, I'm quite certain that we could use double the budget we have for schools and put it to good use to educate northerners, but we don't have double that budget available. We have the money we have before us, \$170 million, and there's been a substantial growth in that amount of money for what we're providing to schools over the years. So I think this Legislature has demonstrated that it does put considerable importance on the investment around education and is putting its money in.

In terms of cultural programs, schools are not limited to the money that we provide. If they can find ways to offer other programs, perhaps they offer Experiential Science 20 out on the land for part of the year. You don't have to use just one part of the curriculum to ensure that you're involving aboriginal language and culture.

I agree with the Member that it would be nice to have more money in the program, and if we had that flexibility, it would certainly be something I'd like to see. But I don't expect we're going to see enough money in our budget, or enough of an increase in our budget, that we're going to be able to fund snowmobiles and four-wheelers for schools in the near future. It would be nice to be able to do that, but I don't see that coming.

I would congratulate the Member for the foresight that the Tlicho Government has shown in ensuring that they have contributed to language and culture programs. The government has long been involved in programs like the canoe trip every year that involves a lot of elders. The process of building canoes is something that elders work with young people from the high school and demonstrated that skill. As the Member talked about, taking teachers out on the land at the beginning of the season helps particularly the new ones get a better understanding of the culture, and I am certain that if you look at the numbers over the years, has helped ensure more continuity and kept more teachers in that region. It's one of the programs that I point to when I get together with other board chairs as an example that I would hope that other boards could follow for ensuring that new people who come into the region are exposed to the culture and have a chance to understand the importance of the land to the people that they are going to be working with.

But there's a payback here, too. If you take a look at the numbers of people who are involved in post-secondary study in the Northwest Territories, fully 50 percent of the aboriginal students in post-secondary studies now are Tlicho citizens. That means that these investments that the Tlicho Government has made and others have made in the region are really paying off. Education is more than just an ECE responsibility. It is one that is rightfully all of the community's. So the Tlicho have stepped up to the plate and have helped to make sure that more students are going to be successful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister made some comments in terms of the program delivery services. I've been listening to some of the Members and there's two points I want to make to the Minister, and one was raised by my colleague here, Mr. Chair, in terms of a new way of thinking on some of the unique situations we have to deal with in our small communities, even in Yellowknife here, in terms of the

schooling we are presenting with our children and there are some unique, special needs that our children need in terms of educating them and sometimes it's difficult for some of these teachers. They work hard in our communities and they are very dedicated to their profession. Sometimes I'm not too sure if the teachers sometimes get the amount of quality training when they are prepared to come to our smaller communities, on such issues as FAS or autism or even just family violence. It's no fault of theirs. They have a job to do and they do it well and they work hard at it. Sometimes it's very difficult for them to know that, for example, there was a loss of a family member to this young child, and how to deal with the grief issues and that. Just special things that I know they have support from counselling services and that's available. Sometimes it's very difficult with some of these issues. I think that's one, Mr. Chairman, that the department in long-term planning, looking at new ways to deal with the issues, especially the teachers now that come into our communities have to deal with cross-cultural issues. There are some good examples, Mr. Chair, that one of my colleagues talked about, the on-the-land program. The Minister responded by making a specific point to one of my colleagues in terms of that type of program. So we have some real unique needs in our communities.

I guess one thing I'm looking forward to is, is there any chance that the people in the Northwest Territories, the MLAs, professionals, people in the communities, will look at a large territorial meeting on education just in our region? Maybe it has already happened, that there's a special meeting just for careers and education and the unique challenges we have in our communities.

We also look at some of the good things we've done in the North to commend the Minister on bringing the residential school issue into our communities. That's an important part of our history that's long overdue, Mr. Chair, in these type of program deliveries in our communities that we are faced with. So that's one point I want to make. I want to ask the Minister for his comments to that, and I have one more after that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We haven't looked at holding a big public conference to talk about education in the Northwest Territories, because we think it's been more important to get the money into the classroom. What I do, though, is I meet twice a year with all of the chairs from all the boards, and what my expectation is for meetings is in their meetings they will be talking to -- remember the DECs have somebody from the community on them -- they'll be talking to the representatives from the communities, and if there are issues, that they can bring those forward and we can talk about them around the table at those meetings, and then discuss how we might resolve issues or how we might move forward with issues.

Things like what the Tlicho have done in terms of cultural awareness of new people coming in, we talk about that. We talk about different examples of how people can help teachers through the Mentorship Program. For instance in Aklavik, the DEA assigns a community member to work with a new teacher to just help them understand the community, to be integrated into the community. So there

are different approaches that are used in different communities.

What we do around the table is share those ideas for how the programs are working and how we might improve in each of our communities the way teachers feel integrated and the way teachers do their job.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the other point I want to make and stress is the communities that have extended grades 10, 11 and 12 in their communities, and their rate of graduating students in those communities have gone up, in my understanding, in terms of the graduates leaving our communities with Grade 12, and we continue to support them to go to post-secondary institutions such as colleges or universities.

Mr. Chairman, the issue I want to look at in program delivery is the amount and the quality of educating Grade 12. Some of these communities don't have Chem 10, 20 or 30, or science or biology, so because of that lack of curriculum in our smaller communities, they're not quite geared to another level of post-secondary education. They're more geared to another avenue of careers. The only way they could go into another level of careers is that they leave those small communities and come to larger centres that do have Chem 10 or Math 10 or Bio 10. I'm just asking the Minister are we not then second grading the careers that we have in our communities in terms of in smaller communities, because of the education you have and the education curriculum, you're into carpentry, plumbing and other areas. In other communities they have a little more chance, they have a little more variety of careers because of the different supplies you have in your school. You can become lawyers and doctors because you have that stuff. I hope that we can alleviate some of that in terms of having the smaller communities play catch-up to some of the larger centres that do have a chemistry lab, have a home economics place, have biology classrooms, classrooms that other communities do enjoy. I wanted to hear from the Minister on that, how we're going to resolve that type of situation that's happening now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the issue of grade extensions, when you take a look at the grad rates, the document I tabled earlier today clearly indicates that doing grade extensions has made a significant difference in terms of the numbers of young people who are staying in school through to completion. There's no question, though, that we can't offer the variety and depth of programming in our smallest communities that we can in a larger community. That's always going to be the situation, just as a high school in Yellowknife doesn't have the same variety of courses that a high school in Edmonton has. You just don't have the economies of scale to be able to offer the same range.

We've started discussing among DECs what we can do to improve on the offerings within those small communities. There are a number of ways that we need to start looking at expanding how we do business to make sure that we can improve on what's available. There's no reason that you can't offer the academic courses at a smaller school.

It may take some work by distance education. Or it may take a school district taking a look at an instructor who moves from the communities, or maybe who's in one community but we set up a video link between the other two, three or four communities in the region. I've talked to the DEAs and the DEC's in the regions about how we have to start making some moves in this area to ensure that we are offering the best opportunities possible to our students.

Some of the changes that we're making this year by providing the extra funding for student support, by decreasing the pupil/teacher ratio will also free up resources for other course offerings in the smaller schools. These monies are going to be disproportionate so that the smaller schools are going to see more of the money than the larger schools, though. It's not being handed out on a per capita basis. It should help to improve the flexibility in all schools, but it should be really evident in the smallest schools across the Territories. I'm hoping with that flexibility will come some opportunities for innovative ways to deal with the challenge that we have with broadening out our course selection.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just trying to get some more clarity on some areas of prescribed funding. When I look at the formula for some of these fundings in school, I see a funding formula that favours custodians versus support workers such as social workers. I'm just curious on why we don't look at prescribed funding that deems schools should have so many staff, such as one maintenance staff, one IT staff, one librarian staff. Why isn't this funding broken out that way? Every school needs a librarian; every school should have an IT person; every school should have at least one maintenance person, I'm sure. Why don't we look at prescribed funding in that element as opposed to a formula base that when you're one pupil short you lose that balance? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of the school districts and the board chairs and I discuss funding at least twice a year and, at this point, the agreement is that the formula is the best manner in which to divide the monies up. There are all sorts of different ways of looking at it, but what the formula does is it allows the most flexibility so that, for instance, if the schools in Yellowknife determine that they need to have a computer specialist in their classes, they can do that. If that's not seen as important in another school, they can choose to put their money into a phys. ed. teacher. The flexibility is there to allow different communities to have different priorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the Minister not agree that we should have a formula of what works and what is considered a minimum of schools, rather than basing it solely on formulas because, like I say, if you're short one student, that could have a serious effect on your funding because you don't fall into the next bracket. Therefore, have you even considered the fact

that schools need to have a base funding when it's considered representation of staff filling certain positions, like I said, maintenance, IT, librarian, rather than say, well, you don't qualify for a full body in library funding but then again you've got more funding, you figure out how to make it up. Wouldn't it be simpler? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of bases in the funding formula. There are a number of things that are base funded. We are looking at, over time, as the discussion ensues with our partners at the DEC's, the formula is moving towards one that is more gradual rather than one that has the steps. However, in some cases those steps are there because that's the, you know, if you're talking about hiring one person, you can't hire less than one person, sometimes, to do some jobs. That's why there are some of the steps that are there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I'd like to make note for the record that although I'm not going to repeat all the zeros, but school community counsellors are one-fourth of the value of the custodian. I'm not the designer of this formula, but then as you look at it, it's kind of a shame that, well maybe more along the lines of one-third but even still, the principle should still stand which is we value custodians three times as much as we value student counsellors. I don't find the formula, in my opinion and from those who I've talked to, is I think the formula holds back certain scenarios and if we want to talk about a true formula, I mean, we should base custodian staff and maintenance staff on square footage of buildings as opposed to how many bodies you can squeeze in that school for the end of September/early October head count. The fact is a school needs maintenance whether it's half-full or it's completely full and I'm telling you, from my experience, kids will wander through, staff will use the whole school and it still needs to be mopped and cleaned and stuff. So in those formulas, I think there's a real gap between what's considered real accountability in the sense that you need people under the right type of context. That's why I say that I see you looking at the formula, to me we undervalue what community counsellors offer and we certainly put a high emphasis on custodians. To me, that almost seems backwards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the building isn't kept clean enough, the public health officer will close it. If we don't have a counsellor, the public health officer doesn't close it. So in some respects a custodian is more important than the other.

The formula, Mr. Chairman, reflects what school superintendents have told us they need to see. They are the ones who are involved in helping determine what the formula looks like. The formula is also not a prescription. For instance, in Norman Wells, they chose to have a full-time school counsellor and they had the flexibility to do that. They chose to move that money from some other

place in order to be able to accomplish that. I doubt that you'll find any formula that is perfect, but the formula itself is reviewed by the superintendents and by the department in concert with them every single year and there are changes made to it every year to reflect what comes forward from the superintendents. What you have right now is a compromise based on what we've heard from superintendents from the north of the Territories to the south.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think he said Norman Wells and, if he did, good on them for making what I would describe as the right choice. However, the question is are we forcing them to cut funding in a particular area, be it maintenance or whatever, administration or whatever is required in order to make the right choice? I mean that one position alone could mean a lot to kids that don't go to school or who have home troubles or whatever the case may be. In my own mind, we should have social workers available in all school districts, therefore, we can always help deal with tardiness or lack of attendance or any family problems to ensure that kids have the healthiest opportunities before them so when they come to the learning environment, they're given the best chance that they can. When I consider other areas like healing in counselling, you have \$10,000 per community and I think there's a \$60 addition, how does that work out for Yellowknife? Yellowknife is one community; we have two school boards; we have multiple schools in our community. How does Yellowknife funding fall into that bracket? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The whole idea behind a formula is to allow flexibility so that different communities can do things differently. When I talk to board chairs they tell me that they like the way it's being done. If the Member is getting it differently from the board chairs here, I'd sure like to hear that from them. In fact, they tell me I've been too prescriptive with the funding and put too many directives and limits on how the money can be spent; they would like more flexibility. Any formula that you come up with is going to be a compromise and it's never going to suit everybody, but what it does right now is it represents the best compromise we can come up with for school districts across the Territories.

In terms of putting a social worker in every school, I agree. In fact, I chaired a committee in 1993 that reported to this Legislative Assembly that every school should have a social worker. I don't disagree with that. But you know what? We've got \$170 million that we've got to spend. We think that the formula that we have right now is the best way in which to divide that up among the schools. It allows the flexibility for those schools that see it as being extremely important to put in a social worker, and for other schools to put in a librarian if they see that position is important, as well. People can make those decisions at the local level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then I'd like to hear what the 1993 champion of social workers and school has been doing on that project since he's been the Minister for three and a half years, recognizing the importance and that social workers are important in schools. He's had three and a half years to work on this problem. Where have we progressed in the last three years to put a social worker in each school? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been able to, with the help of this Legislative Assembly, ensure that the funding has been increased to schools so that through the formula they have the wherewithal to do that, particularly when we're putting the money in that we are for inclusive schooling, that does increase the flexibility. As I said, in at least one school district, they found a way to put a full-time social worker in the school.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The problem with all this so-called flexibility is it doesn't look at a base and I think that's where the design of the system starts to fail. I mean the flexibility is where, I think, it needs to be, which is the school. The superintendents and the school boards can all say what they feel is appropriate to teach their kids the minimums as described by our Education Act. However, the fact is, what I believe, and I think a number of people believe, is the fact that schools need to start off with what's considered a minimum. As I described it, they'll obviously need a teacher of some sort, they will need a principal, they will need administration staff, they will need custodial staff. Those are the types of minimums that need to affect every school out there, whether they're in Yellowknife, Hay River, Tuktoyaktuk, Whati, wherever. My concern is we're putting choices on schools that should be using that money to deliver education programs and we're forcing them to make bread and butter decisions about well, my goodness, there's gum on the wall and we better worry about the health inspector as opposed to trying to find a way to get kids in a better social environment and making sure that they're there to learn. We have prescribed money such as inclusive money and I'd like to see us find ways to uncuff the school boards and make sure that all our funding is delivered in the most flexible manner that we enable schools to deliver programs to do the best.

I know the Minister will have a clear cut reply to all of what I've said, but the fact is that until we work to minimums, I think we are hiding behind the formula and saying, well, the formula will never be perfect but at the end of the day, well, that's the best we have to work with. If we want to provide a great learning environment, we will always ensure that each school has the potential of having a phys. ed. teacher, a librarian, et cetera, et cetera. I mean we don't have to go into, the Minister knows the details, but we need to move to that type of direction because if schools don't have the minimums, then we're now forcing them to make choices again. Like you said, a school had to make some type of sacrifice in order to come up with a social worker in their school. Well, shame on the fact that they had to make a choice in the first place. Congratulations to them that they made the right choice.

Mr. Chair, those are the types of things that I'm trying to lean into.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately in life there are limits to the amount of dollars that are available. In this Assembly we have about \$1 billion that we have to allocate out. We have a number of different priorities that are competing for some of those dollars. If we could go along and say that every school should have a phys. ed. teacher, every school should have a librarian, every school should have a maintenance person, that formula would be very welcome by the smallest communities because they would do extremely well by it. But then if you only give us \$170 million with which to work, that would mean then that the larger communities would have to suffer in order to deliver that.

What we have is a compromise that delivers the best possible education across the Territories based on what we're being told by the superintendents in the Northwest Territories and yet keeping some flexibility. If it gets to be so that we say that each school shall have this, then we're likely going to be in a situation where we're not going to be able to say that every school should have a lot of the positions the Member has talked about because we're putting a significant amount of money in this budget for physical activity, but it's not enough money to put one phys. ed. teacher in every school in the Northwest Territories, even spread out over two years what we're putting in. What we're putting in for trades training is not enough to put a shop teacher in every school in the Northwest Territories. It would take way more money than what we're putting in here. That's just the situation where we have to live within the amount of money that we have. What we've got is \$170 million and we have a formula that helps us divide that up. Based on the way this government gets its funding, that's about the only way that we can see that we'll equitably distribute the money across the schools in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. We're on page 8-17, activity summary, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$170.160 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for his answers earlier. I would like to continue along the inclusive education money and I'd like to hear how the Minister would like to describe to me on its flexibility, because I've heard from one specific school board in this community how it's very prescribed money and the Minister just touted at length about how proud he was about the flexibility of PTR money. I'd like to hear how he now says prescriptive money in this area is better.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The money is prescriptive within the directive. The directive is fairly flexible. I would be happy to give the Member a copy of the directive so that he's able to see, for instance, we don't say that if you have a student with this kind of problem that you have to do this in order to resolve the

situation. We leave that open to the educators to resolve how to address issues in the classroom.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, maybe I will accept the directive first, although I've heard from one of the school boards that they felt that the inclusive ed money is too restrictive not giving the board the ability to proceed as they feel is required. There is a concern about our achievables versus achievable being defined, achievable and outcomes, that is, Mr. Chairman, as opposed to more of a prescribed funding, which I know may be simpler from an accounting point of view to show, well, we spent X amount of dollars on inclusive ed money as opposed to building in achievable into our programming and allowing our regular tests at grade 3, 6, 9 and, of course, our graduation rates to demonstrate that inclusive ed money is being programmed. However, at this time I'll accept that guideline and leave it for now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Next I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, over the weekend a few of us Members went to Tulita and we were there on a celebration. Mr. Chairman, the speaker there at one of the sessions was a member from the B.C. Aboriginal Society out of the southern part of B.C. I don't think I could pronounce the name right. Anyhow, one of the strong messages was, Mr. Chairman, go to school or get a job. That was his plain message.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister, is responsible for education and employment and culture. The point I guess is, I want to ask the Minister in terms of if there's any type of directions or suggestions and instructions looking at something that's plain, for me, and simple that if you don't go to school, you get a job. You're not working, go to school. This is more for the younger generation. I want to ask the Minister if he's working with his other departments to look at education career counselling. A lot of our students do really well at the beginning of the year and somehow, through some process by their own means, seem to drop out of school or leave school for whatever reason. They make their way through the income support system and live in the communities. Some of them do go back to work. When they leave school, they go to work, I should say. Lately, Mr. Chairman, some of our students who have left school after many years have completed their Grade 12, they've gone back to school. I experienced that at several graduations. I believe the Minister may have some of that type of experience, also. It's really a good feeling when you see students who left at 18 or 19 who are graduating at 25 and 26 or even 30, with children. There's even a parent who graduated with her children. I mean, that's really exciting. That's very good. More power to those students.

I guess the message I wanted to get out is that for the younger students that do not want to, we do not want to see them walking around town and living off the government or living off their parents. There are lots of capable bodies here. So go to school or get a job. I think that's a really good message and I'm not too sure how we can implement something like that. That's something I'm asking and I think I want to ask more in terms of future business plans, future planning, future thinking with the

chairs of the divisional boards and give some thought to this type of message that we are doing some good things and by having this type of message, really we're going to do some good for the students who decide to leave school that it's going to be real tough and they have to get a job. They can't just live off of what we call welfare programs. When I was younger, my mother said that to me when I was going to quit school at 14 years old; she said, you're either going to go to school or you're going to get a job. So I didn't really want to get kicked out of the house and I didn't know how to get a job or where to work or live on my own, so I went back to school. So I think that type of strong message needs to be reinforced and the parents need to step to the plate, also. I know they are and sometimes it's very difficult for them. So it's that type of support that's needed. So I'm advocating for a strong message to our children. You're either going to work or you're going to get an education. It's as simple as that. But I may be wrong on that point there. So I want just to look at that point here, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any other questions. I just want to ask the Minister if he would give some thought to that type of message going across the North. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The real problem with that kind of message is that there are very few jobs available if you don't have an education now. At one point you could get a job without having a high school education. Most jobs now require more than a high school education. So what we need to do is make sure that parents, like your mom, are telling their kids how important it is to stay in school. That's the important message we have to get out there, is to parents to be involved in helping their kids stay in school. Because we can quite easily look at a Stats Bureau survey that shows us that the higher your education, the less chance there is that you're going to be unemployed. Nobody wants to be, if they're able to work, nobody wants to be sitting around not working, because we don't provide a healthy living on income support. If you want to be able to enjoy a house, you want to be able to enjoy a nice car, you want to be able to enjoy the trappings of success, you've got to be able to get a good job. We can clearly demonstrate that you need an education to do that.

We talk about that every time we get together with my colleagues from the divisional education councils. We talk about how we can get that message across to parents. At our meetings we also include the chair of the college so that we're trying to strengthen the ties between high school and the college, because we know that young people need to go on beyond high school in order to have the best chance of getting a job. So we're very aware of the importance of this. The real trick that most of us see is that we need to find the real way that we can improve on what we're achieving in getting parents involved in helping kids choose to stay in school and supporting them to get to school on time, well fed and well rested. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I fully support the Minister and his comments in terms of getting the children to school and to get them on time, get them fed. They even now have food programs in the schools

here, which is sponsored by some good companies to support the initiative of having educated children in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Chairman, the point I guess I would like to point again stresses that some students, as much as we do for them, they, today in life they have it so easy. I'm telling you, we live in a generation of easy living. You walk in the house, you flick the light on; you want water, you turn the tap on; if it's too cold, turn the button and it heats up the house. We don't even have to do anything. We've got a microwave. Instant food. Even got stores now when you're really hungry, you can go to the store and buy food. You don't have to go in the bush and shoot your caribou, and there's lots of caribou according to the Colville Lake people -- I spoke to the chief this afternoon -- lots of fat caribou out there.

So, Mr. Chairman, what I'm getting to is that the students today, the children today, through no fault of their own, live in a generation of almost luxury compared to some of the older people, where they have to work for it, earn it, and be very grateful and very humble. We want to give children a job and they quit school, they want 21 bucks, 22 bucks an hour. You offer them a job as a janitor or a custodial worker working in one of our local stores, he said, ah, 15, 16 bucks is too cheap. They complain. They work for six or seven dollars. Well, that's the choices they make in terms of not going to school. You get a job, and there's lots of jobs in the community. I guess I would agree with the Minister that there are some places that do not have very many jobs. But if they want to work, they can find work. So that's what I'm saying. True enough you get a higher education, you go further in your educational academic lifestyle, you would get a higher pay, more chance of getting work. I believe that and I've seen it work and I agree with the Minister 121 percent. I'm saying that for other messages, that we have find a to I don't know, that's the Minister's staff and his department will look at, I'm just saying, I sure would like to have some discussion later on in the time our session is over and this Assembly is concluded that we give some thought to it. At least give some thought to it. Not right now, but get the process going. That's all I have to say, Mr. Chairman. These children need it and deserve it, and I think we need to give it some thought to help them in the future. Mahsi cho.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to having a discussion about this with Mr. Yakeleya and other Members. I look forward to whatever advice I can get. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. We're on page 8-17, activity summary, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$170.160 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 8-19, activity summary, education and culture, grants and contributions, grants, \$52,000. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, I haven't asked any questions yet this afternoon. For the record.

Okay. Mr. Chairman, for, let's see, page 8-19, there's a detail line here about contributions to artists, art organizations and art projects, Mr. Chairman. It shows

that for the last or for the three years running -- last year, this year and next year -- we're budgeting \$426,000. I wanted to ask, what is the basis for this and in light of increases in so many other programs why the arts seem to be relatively flat in terms of our contribution levels, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think if you look at all the numbers on this page, you'll notice that they either go flat across the page or they go down across the page. It has been a challenge for us to find ways to increase our funding to third parties. The money the Member is referring to is specifically for the NWT Arts Council. But it has been difficult for us to find inflationary funding for any, across government, third-party funding that we offer. It's been a very big challenge.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, related to this on page 8-18, the previous page, is a line of program delivery detail in the overall area of culture and heritage. In fact, it details that if we take the three current years under review, that each year has shown a reduction from about 3.4 million last year to 3.3 this year and 3.2 next year. Mr. Chairman, this department shares with ITI shared responsibility for the NWT Arts Strategy, yet our funding here is either flat or declining and a quick scan of ITI's budget submission, Mr. Chairman, shows that they don't have anything budgeted for their share of the responsibility for the Arts Strategy. Now, what's going on here? Why is it that not only, as the Minister said, it's been very difficult to find new money, and it's understandable when this government has grown by 700 PYs in the last three years, why is it that we're actually facing a decline in our spending on culture and heritage, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department had sought one-time funding to put some money into the Canada Winter Games and that's where you're seeing the reduction for the most part in this year. We'd only applied to or were only granted the money for one year and it was for one specific purpose, and that was for the Canada Winter Games. There was another smaller cut to infrastructure contributions for community museums and, again, that was a time-limited program that came to an end. So those are the only cuts. There's been no cuts to grants that are going out to the Arts Council or to organizations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: On this page, 8-18, it shows there's been quite a bit of discussion about this already today I think. Schools, what is described as schools, and we have in the last fiscal year \$100 million allocated. This year it will be 103. Next year 116, almost \$117 million. That's a jump of about 12 percent in a year; 16 percent over two years. I guess I'm wondering if the Minister -- and forgive me if I'm going over ground we've already covered -- could give us a bit of a snapshot of what is it that's going on in this area here that's causing, as we note here, a 16 percent jump

over two years? That's quite a steep rate of increase, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Negotiated salary and benefit increases to teachers will account for about \$4 million of that. Forced growth and other areas is about \$1.2 million. Then, as Members know, there's about \$3 million in the pupil/teacher ratio reductions for phys. ed. and trades. So those are the larger numbers in there. Those are the largest categories for the increases.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay, Mr. Chairman. So the majority of this was forced growth or money that we needed to keep the same system going. I think the Minister said there was about three million and change that will go into reducing the teacher-pupil ratio. So that is where we'll see some real, I guess, impact from this extra spending. Okay. So that's about 25 percent of the increase over two years is going to actually improving something at the classroom level. Okay, Mr. Chairman. I'm done on these two pages then.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. We're on page 8-19, activity summary. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I should make one point; the biggest single item in that number that I forgot to mention to Mr. Braden is the \$8.6 million infrastructure contribution to Ecole St. Joseph. That does account for the biggest portion and I had misled him by saying that I outlined the biggest portions of it by talking about other things.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden. We are on page 8-8-19, activity summary, education and culture, grants and contributions, grants, \$52,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 8-20, activity summary, education and culture, grants and contributions continued. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to touch on the NWTTA professional improvement fund and talk a bit about recognition for teachers in the Northwest Territories. I would like to commend the department for taking part in the Thank You for Making a Difference Campaign with the NWTTA. I think oftentimes teachers don't get the recognition that they deserve. My line of questioning is going to get to the point here that perhaps we need to do more to recognize the valuable asset that our teachers are to our communities and to our children. I know this is a really good undertaking by the NWTTA and the department. I would like to see something like a teacher of the year or something to that effect. Teachers need to be recognized even more than they are and this is a step in the right direction. I am not sure if the department has given that any thought or how that might roll out, but I would like to ask the Minister that question, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are national programs that recognize outstanding principals and outstanding teachers in Canada and we've had winners from the Northwest Territories, both of the last two years, who have been recognized in those programs. We certainly take the opportunity to celebrate those wins when they happen.

We have worked with the NWTTA in terms of recognition programs. I meet on an annual or biannual basis with the president of the NWTTA. I would be happy to discuss with her if we need to strengthen our teacher recognition programs and report back to the Members.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Minister for that. If he does get a chance to raise that with the NWTTA, that would be a good first step. I feel oftentimes that teachers do not get the recognition they deserve. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I will take that as a comment. Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Madam Chair, on page 8-20, as the Minister has already referred to, a contribution this year of \$75,000 for promoting northern arts and culture for the 2007 Canada Winter Games about to start in a couple of days in Whitehorse. Madam Chair, I have seen a number of the promotions and media spots, some of the activities that have been put together with our sister territories. I am assuming that that is what this money is going for. I guess a question I had, Madam Chair, considering we are spending \$75,000 to create this marketing and imaging money, why aren't we spending any money in this coming year to follow up with it? Madam Chair, I think it's a fairly well-established principle that once you create a message, that you need to invest in repeating it and putting it out in the marketplace to get attention. So is the government picking this up in other budgets, or why is ECE not contributing to a follow-up in this marketing, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The ECE portion of support -- and this is just a part of it that you are seeing here, the total costs were about \$125,000 -- don't include any marketing. These are the costs to find the artists, to get the artist there, to support the artists in what they are doing and to help with the opening and closing ceremonies, so they can showcase the artists. The marketing was largely enhanced by ITI and our portion of the contribution was all around the artists.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the explanation. I wish all our artisans good luck over there. That's very much part of it, along with sport and competition, is that exchange of cultures.

Madam Chair, this coming year, or 2009, in March of 2009, the... Let me get this straight. No, 2008. The Arctic Winter Games are going to be hosted here in the NWT in Yellowknife. This is a bit of a milestone for the Arctic Winter Games. It will mark 40 years since they were first started and marks a return of coming back home to their origins here. Will the department be looking at similar assistance for NWT artisans, musicians and performers to be here for the Arctic Winter Games in March of next year, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Traditionally, the department has supported that kind of activity for all Arctic Winter Games. My expectation is that we will look to see what we can do for the upcoming games as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. Would that allocation be included in any of the contributions that we see outlined here? Those will be considered as and when, okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. That's all for this page.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. We don't have anything specifically in this budget for the 2008 Arctic Winter Games. We will have to look at how that might be handled as the year progresses.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden. You're good? Next on the list I have Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I wait until page 8-23?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Pardon?

MR. POKIAK: Page 8-22, that's where my question is.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Activity summary, education and culture, grants and contributions, grants \$52,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Continued on to page 8-22, total contributions, \$154.242 million, total grants and contributions, \$154.294 million. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a quick question regarding the Ecole St. Joseph renovation. There is \$8.63 million allocated for this year and \$5.7 million the previous year. I understand the reason why, because of the fire. Is it covered under insurance or can we get it back through insurance?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The planning for this renovation had started before the fire took place, so it was about a \$22 million project. What has happened is the portion of the school that was destroyed

by fire, Yellowknife Catholic Schools are the owner of the building and they had it insured. There are some proceeds available as long as we conclude replacing that portion of the school that was burned down within two years of the date of the fire. They have agreed that those funds will flow into the project. So we are hoping that will allow us, at the very least, will help us avoid an overrun on the project.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thanks, Madam Chair. I guess I was tracking the same project as Mr. Pokiak was discussing, the renovation and the fast track of that project at Ecole St. Joseph's trying to keep a handle on, Madam Chair, as we are familiar with virtually every other capital project that we undertake, escalations in the costs. I'm wondering if the Minister could give us a bit of a snapshot. What does this project look like right now? I understand that we might be looking at an increase of about \$1.6 million in the current year from what was anticipated. Madam Chair, the overall project on the information that's provided here shows that we're budgeting \$22.027 million, just over \$22 million for this project and \$8.6 million of it is for the coming year. How does this track with the estimates that have originally come through on this project, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The initial estimates were around almost \$19 million and we're now looking at \$22 million as the latest estimate in the price escalation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: So it's about 15 percent? Yes, okay, 15 percent. Madam Chair, as I say, trying to get a handle on what we should get used to in the increments in these programs and 15 percent tracks with what I've heard in the other discussions about capital projects and with discussions with contractors and builders here in Yellowknife. That's about the cost every year of inflation in a project, or if we, for instance, choose that we want to delay or defer a project, it just keeps going. So that's consistent with what we've been seeing.

Madam Chair, I was also interested, and the information shows, that last year in the last fiscal year we contributed \$750,000 to the Kimberlite Career and Technical Centre. I'm assuming that was for the capital costs of expanding that facility. I was curious, Madam Chair, in terms of the O and M. Do we also make a contribution specific to that, or is that handled more under the schools area and a contribution to the Yellowknife Catholic school system, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, there's no separate funding that flows for that. The formula funding is the funding that the Yellowknife Catholic Schools get.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: That's all for now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Total contributions, \$154.242 million, total grants and contributions, \$154.294 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed, thank you. If Members could look at page 8-27, activity summary, advanced education and careers, operations expenditure summary, \$43.045 million. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you. We're going to get both done. I heard that agreed. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a quick comment. In my general comments yesterday with regard to Aurora College, I'm just going to pursue it a little further with the Minister. As I indicated yesterday that Tuk has two nice buildings in the community that can be utilized for outside training outside of Inuvik. As a region, I'm just wondering if the Minister had thought about that since yesterday. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I've asked the deputy minister to discuss with the college and Aboriginal Futures whether or not there might be an opportunity for some oil and gas training to take place at one of those two places. So we are going to follow up on the Member's suggestion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thanks for that information, Mr. Minister. I'm just wondering if you can make sure the deputy minister can follow up with what has been decided. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, I'm confident that Mr. Daniels will follow up on that. He tells me that he tried to make a phone call this morning, but wasn't able to connect. So I'm sure that the work will be done as soon as we finish in this House.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next on the list I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I had a couple of questions specific to apprenticeships and while it's discussed in some of the narrative here, there is a detail line on page 8-28. I'm happy to wait until we get there if you chose, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Sure, let's wait until we get there. Activity summary, advanced education and careers...Oh, pardon me, on this page I have Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to follow up on some of the things I said during the general comments yesterday and about the observation made by somebody who was at a function I was at that got me thinking, and that is to do with sort of the over-expanded spreading of training programs that government funds. I think that

issue should be something that's looked at, because we do fund a substantial amount of money for the college. I think the budget we have now is about \$26 million or \$28.6 million and I think that it's very important for us to have a post-secondary higher learning education program in the North and Aurora College is the headliner in that regard. I hope that someday in the future that that college will grow to be not a full-scale university, but one that could offer programming to those who want some university programming, as well as college programs and training programs and a lot of education programs and training programs that we need to provide to our residents at post-secondary levels. But one thing I have seen lately is a number of things. One is there's a lot of training dollars that the government is spending, whether by contract services or within the government, that I'm wondering if any thought was given to whether those programs could be delivered through Aurora College. Now I want to make sure that in saying so that I am not saying anything contrary or against any of those programs, I'm not making any judgments about those programs, it's just that it's a simple observation that is that if we have a college that is primarily funded by the GNWT, then we should at least in progression of steps I'd like to know that we are least considering whether those training and delivery could happen within the umbrella of Aurora College; if not, I want to know why not. If we don't think that the college could provide this programming, I mean what are the reasons?

We also see that we have a campus for Aurora College in Yellowknife that has been overextended for many, many years and even the campus in Fort Smith I don't think is being used at the fullest extent possible. If there are issues because a campus in Yellowknife is not big enough or it can't accommodate or if there are some concerns about ability to provide programming in Fort Smith for whatever reason, I have no idea what the reasons are and I don't know what steps are in place to accommodate the deficiencies or concerns or issues that we may need to address in order to maximize the use of services we have at this college. I don't really have anything to comment on with Inuvik campus because I haven't had the privilege of visiting that campus lately. Maybe next time I am in Inuvik I will do that.

You know, we need to support the institution that we fund and we may be shooting ourselves in the foot thinking in a broad perspective. Even if we want to do regional training centres, we need to decide whether we want to do that by way of Aurora College. We could have regional campuses in other areas, but I believe that if we keep spending our training funding and disburse them in every direction possible, then I don't think that might be the best way to do that.

I am willing to be convinced that that is the best way, but I need to know that some sort of due diligence and review is going to do that. So I would like to ask the Minister whether he's aware of any situations at Cabinet level or at any level that the government is thinking about training programs, whether they even take a look at whether a program could be delivered at our college. One thing I can think of is community government training. There is extensive training going on from municipal funding and that's a whole institution in itself within our government department. I think under the NWT Tourism Strategy, there is training for tourism operators and I am sure there

is mine training going on. There is all kinds of training. There's aviation training.

I would like to know if you can tell us anything on that. If there isn't anything like that, I would like to ask the Minister to undertake a review of all the government departments that provide some kind of training. I would like to get an inventory of that and I would like to know any private contractors we are using to provide training. Lately we get a weekly report of programs being delivered at Aurora College in Yellowknife and much of that is a three-week course here, a one-day course there, and I am told that that is revenue neutral. That's not necessarily the case either. We have a concentration of employees and infrastructure there that are taking care of this. They may not be paying for the program, but the college has to fill the gap where they have to, to provide what they can. I think we need a wider view and picture of what we want to do with Aurora College and how to protect our investment and maximize the use of that. I would like to hear from the Minister in that regard.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Like Ms. Lee, I believe the college should be our primary delivery agent for training in the Northwest Territories. I would be happy to put together a list of what we are aware of in terms of training that's being undertaken or agencies that have undertaken training in the Northwest Territories and provide it to members of committee. We can perhaps have a discussion after that.

We are planning a forum to bring together people who are involved in post-secondary training to discuss ways in which we can coordinate what we are doing better. That planning is underway already to bring people together. I would be happy to share with committee the information we can find.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to follow up on that, can I get some commitment for time frame on that? Is the end of March far enough out for the Minister to put that information together and then we can put it on the agenda for Standing Committee on Social Programs? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am sure we can provide the information on who is doing what training to Ms. Lee before the end of session.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Along with that, all the dollar amounts that go with the funding and what is funded by our government and such. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Those entities that are in the private sector, we may not

be able to get the money for, but we can certainly identify money from the public sector.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Advanced education and careers, operations expenditure summary, \$43.045 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. With that, I have had a request for a break. We'll take a short break at this time. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. I will call the committee back to order. I understand we are on page 8-27, activity summary, advanced education and careers, operations expenditure summary, \$43.045 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 8-28 to 8-29, activity summary, advanced education and careers, grants and contributions, \$33.118 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Total grants and contributions, \$33.118 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 8-28 is a little bit of detail entitled apprenticeship and employment training programs, proposed to spend \$4.739 million next year, up a little bit from the \$4.7 million of last year. Mr. Chairman, what I wanted to find out about in this area here, in apprenticeships, we have invested a lot of money and effort and I understand that we have an apprenticeship system that we can be proud of, Mr. Chairman. We put a lot of people through our system and it's one that's working very well. However, I was wondering, Mr. Chairman, of this amount of money I understand that there may be quite a bit of it that actually lapses over the course of the year and I wanted to see if the Minister could provide any detail on just how fully subscribed is this \$4.7 million. Is very much of it left on the table? Anything in that nature, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was about \$600,000 in this area that was not expended last year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What's the cause of this? Is this something that is fairly consistent with the program? Has anything come to the department's attention that shows that we're not on track here, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The regional contributions for wage subsidies is the area that is being under-expended. My expectation is that because of the regional distribution of the monies, there may be some areas that we haven't had the uptake and perhaps late in the year then it's not easy to get that money used in another region. We've been reluctant to just put all the money in one pot and have it used that way because if somebody came in with a regional application, we wouldn't have the money available. We have been trying to save the money on a regional basis.

We're hoping to deal with some of that regional issue through government departments. As you know, we are going to see in this budget a growth in government actually providing positions for apprentices, and we expect that will help us to deal with the regional allocation and that may allow us a little more flexibility with this money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I'm just trying to get a handle on...I appreciate that if we allocate money on our best forecast to given regions and they're isn't an uptake of money, if the Minister could advise is there any trend or pattern in terms of allocating funds to a specific region but they just do not get taken up all the time? Is there, as I say, any pattern and which regions might be involved, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have any details to provide that level of explanation. We have undertaken a review of the Apprenticeship Program. There are some areas that haven't taken off in many areas of the Northwest Territories. For instance, the Schools North Apprenticeship Program, we found that in Hay River, for instance, that program is always fully subscribed and we know that in other provinces it's a popular program but we haven't seen the uptake in other regions. We're trying to discover how we can improve uptake in that area and look at some other areas with the Apprenticeship Program to make sure that we can fully expend the monies in the program this year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Is one area that we could be looking at is the level of assistance that we provide to employers to bring apprentices into their workshops and their workforces, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That very question is one of the questions that is being asked through the review process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay. Thank you. I'll look forward to getting some further reports on that, especially the aspect on...To the extent that we're providing supports to employers, I think, is one way of really helping to get

some uptake. Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering, in that area, to what extent is the private sector outside and, you know, in this whole career apprenticeship area does the private sector in the Northwest Territories provide an appreciable level of support? What is the nature of partnerships that we have in our apprenticeship field with the private sector, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The private sector, by and large, are tremendous supporters of this program per force. They need to see the workers and this is one very good way to get the workers into the various fields like plumbing and carpentry and so on. One challenge is that in the smaller communities there doesn't tend to be a lot of employers who can take on apprentices. They may not have enough work for another full-time employee. That's one of the reasons that we think that there should be more interest in the Schools North Apprenticeship Program which gets somebody into the workforce on a half-time basis while they're still in high school. We also believe that for the GNWT to expand back into supporting apprentices is going to be important, because we have positions in some of those smaller communities that would allow us to train apprentices, as well, to expand the program out beyond the larger centres. The program is working very well in the larger centres; our challenge has been to expand it into the smaller communities so we're looking at ways in which we can do that. We think that through this review, by putting some money in for government to take on employees, or apprentices, we think that we are on track.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. On page 8-29 is detail on where these grants and contributions are going and it shows that this year, or next year as this year, we're allocating \$763,000 to advanced training initiatives in the oil and gas industry. I wanted to ask, particularly in this area, Mr. Chairman, is the oil and gas industry coming in as well with fiscal or other contributions in advanced training initiatives in the oil and gas industry?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just about half of this money is contributions to Community Futures, the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership, and that one has definitely brought industry players' money into play, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: How much money, Mr. Chairman? This is three-quarters of a million dollars. We put it in last year, we're going to put it in next year and I know that this is the way the system works. We put some taxpayers' money on the table, it attracts some private sector money and other services in kind. How are we going here? You know, we've just signed off a socio-economic agreement that commits us all over the place in terms of what's expected of us. How is the oil and gas industry doing as we are ramping up toward this big project? Are they

matching us, at least, Mr. Chairman? Maybe I'll put that as a question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said and consider the whole program for Aboriginal Futures, I said Community Futures before, it's Aboriginal Futures is the name of the ASEP program for oil and gas. The three-year program is \$9.9 million. When you look at the amount of money that we're putting in, it's a heck of an investment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this section, I'd like to ask the Minister on what headway has been made about constituting an independent Aurora College in Yellowknife. It's been a subject that's been raised by myself as well as other Members from time to time over the last three and a half years, and I'm curious on what headway has been made. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I expect the Member is asking about a stand-alone campus as an issue. I am hoping to have a report in time for the business plan process this June that would identify the best way to move forward with either a new site or an expansion on the existing location. Once I've got that, we will try and bring it forward through the business plan process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When can the Minister make that available to Members? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'm expecting to see the report in early June, so that's the sort of timetable.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Hawkins. Thank you. Next I have Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as Mr. Dent is probably aware, through the initiative of a number of business owners and interested parties, educators, his own department in Hay River, through the Career Development Centre, have formed an organization and are working towards having a trades school in Hay River, something that has been long talked of and thought to be a good idea. To this point I don't believe there has been any requests for government funding, but I'd like to ask what would currently be available in terms of program funding or support, even capital for that matter. On a previous activity, we considered the money that had been allocated for the Kimberlite Training Centre here and I understand that was some industry and some government money, matched funds. We think that Hay River would be an obvious and likely choice for a trades school, given the amount of light industry, heavy industry, the number of apprentices that

are already trained in Hay River. But this would be something more comprehensive, it would reach out to a wide variety of people who may have potential to be employed in industry in the Northwest Territories, particularly with the pressure on the resource development companies. This is the concept that's at hand and being worked on, and I would like to be able to take back to that group information about the kind of support that this government could offer either through existing programs and funding or one-time funding, or just anything that might be available to aid in making this dream a reality. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would agree with the Member that there are tremendous opportunities for northerners in the trades. We have a lot of potential. We know that there's going to be a lot of jobs, and a lot of jobs will be in the trades area, so we welcome all sorts of partnerships when it comes to trades training. Just as the Kimberlite Centre, the Yellowknife Catholic Schools came to us and said we've managed to raise half of the money through the private sector, will you provide the other half of the money. If a similar proposal comes from another community, obviously it's something that we have to take a look at. If we've done it in one community, we have to be prepared to consider it in others. So the same sort of approach we would be prepared to see what we could do to support in a similar manner.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there any money that is identified at this time, say regarding O and M, money that's already been earmarked for things like this, program dollars? I understand that a proposal seeking support similar to what the Kimberlite Centre did will be entertained by this department, and I greatly appreciate that and thank you. I know that we have briefly discussed the possibility of a couple of different types of funding, O and M being one of them, and I'd just like to put on the record today if there is already money allocated for something like that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the budget that we're looking at, we have identified funds for over the next couple of years to increase the availability of trades training. So we're going to be putting in associated costs as well as reducing the PTR across the Territories to assist with providing instructors who can deliver in trades training.

So if the proposal comes in and is tied to a school, it makes it very easy for you to identify a means to get some of the monies towards staffing the operation. Again, if it's tied to a school, it would then fit into the school funding formula. So that would give you some of the light and the heat and the O and M costs that way.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Did I overhear the Minister, in responding to Mr. Braden's questions, saying that the government were thinking of bringing on apprentices within the government department or DPW? Did I hear that correctly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I remember from the Minister of Finance's budget speech that the Department of Transportation will be adding apprentices through the course of this next year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Minister for that. Are we carrying any apprentices now within DPW or any of the government departments?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry; I can't answer that question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the Minister can get the information and forward it on to me, it would be much appreciated.

I would also like to ask him about the subsidy that's provided to employers. Government does provide subsidies for employers to cover apprentices' wages and, if so, how much do we subsidize right now and are there any plans on maybe bringing that amount up? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We provide subsidy on a sliding scale. I believe for a first-year apprentice that the maximum we will provide is \$8 an hour. It comes down in subsequent years, or reduces in subsequent years. The sense is that the apprentice is more productive to the company and, therefore, the company requires less of a subsidy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. I understand Mr. McLeod had one other question regarding providing information on apprentices in the department. Mr. McLeod had a question earlier to provide information from other departments for apprentices. Can you provide that? Thank you.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Chairman, I could certainly ask my colleagues if they could find that information and if I can collect it, I'll forward it on to Mr. McLeod.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, and thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$4.7 million we're talking here, that is to pay for the schooling of the apprentices, sending them to school, the accommodation. Are the instructors there, or are the instructors covered under the college, I would assume?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm advised that this is just our program; it doesn't include the college costs. About two and a half million dollars of this is for wage subsidies.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Apprenticeship Program I still think is probably the best in the country and the more money we can put into it, especially with all the developments coming down, I think is a good thing. Am I allowed to ask questions on 8-29?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Yes, you may, Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Pokiak. The oil and gas industry contribution, \$763,000, is that earmarked for certain groups already? I heard you mention Community Futures. Does some of the money go to the Aboriginal Futures? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I said Community Futures, I misspoke. There is no money to Community Futures, it's to Aboriginal Futures, and then there are a number of other bodies, as well, that run training programs jointly with us that we have funded as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you and thanks to the Minister for clarifying that, because I was wondering about the Community Futures answer to one of the questions before. So this is applicant-based. Does the Aboriginal Futures get a set amount every year that they apply for? I'm pretty sure they administer the fund, they take the applications, they approve the applications. Does the department have any input into the applications that come in? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we should also say that the GNWT contribution is probably the smallest part of the contributions to Aboriginal Futures, the largest being the federal government. Aboriginal governments and the GNWT all contribute to it. Our involvement is we have one member who sits on the board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod. Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to pick up where my colleague Mr. Hawkins was talking about the need for a dedicated campus of Aurora College here in Yellowknife and I just wanted to take that one step further. I just want to know, and I know the Minister has spoken about the planning and they're trying to understand how it's going to happen, but it's not in the capital plan anywhere in future years. I just want to reiterate how important a campus, a stand-alone campus,

would be to Yellowknife. Mr. Chairman, I'm not an expert in advanced education or how it would work, but the North is maturing and maybe it's time we looked at the establishment of a university, a degree-granting, full-fledged university here in Yellowknife. This new campus could be the forerunner to a university, a university of the North. I really think the government has to give that some thought, and I'd like to get the Minister's comments on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's no argument from me that we need to do something with the Yellowknife Campus. We know that the Yellowknife Facilities Committee, or the report showed that they're already leasing more than half their space off campus now that they're using. So it makes sense to take a look at doing something to ensure that we have the space for the courses that are being offered.

The Facilities Committee identified three potential solutions to the space issue, and I'm hoping to have the next step in place, as I said, by June in order to identify a definite solution and then move forward with a proposal to get that into the facilities acquisition plan. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thanks, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering if the Minister could comment on what the genesis would be from transitioning from a college to a university and granting four-year degrees. I know the Nursing Program is now a four-year degree program and we're starting to take steps towards that. I'm just wondering if the department has any plans or a vision for the future when it comes to a degree-granting institution like a university would be. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's probably a long road that we would have to go down before we would get to seeing a university in the Northwest Territories. When you look at something like the University of Alberta, it's got more students than the Northwest Territories has residents. Even its smaller campus, the one in Camrose, has a huge number of students in comparison to what our population is, even. So we probably have a long way to go, given the costs of running a full-fledged university, but we have explored with two courses, as the Member pointed out, the Bachelor of Education and the Bachelor of Science program for nursing, various ways of granting degrees. I would think that would be a much preferred way to go in the near term; to look at how we might partner with other educational institutions, universities, to deliver the full four years in the North where we can and where it makes economic sense.

One thing that I have also discussed with my colleagues from the Yukon and Nunavut was a joint approach to a university. Looking at the population of all three territories, it's pretty tough with even 70,000 people to justify supporting a university. But I thought that it might make some sense for us to look at what we could do on a

joint approach, dividing up our specialties among the three different territories perhaps, and then knowing how much money is spent on research in the North and how much of that money is provided to university chairs by the Government of Canada, I thought that that might be an approach that we could take a look at. So there has been some interest expressed by the Minister from Nunavut. It's a new Minister from the Yukon since I last broached this subject, so I need to again talk to the Minister from Yukon. Unfortunately, the new Minister didn't attend...or I didn't have a chance to talk to the Minister. It was Nunavut that didn't attend that last meeting. But we haven't had a chance for the three of us to get together and try and move this forward, although there was at one point some interest from my two colleagues.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for that, but I just think, and I know the Minister spoke of the fact that the Northwest Territories has a small population and you can't deny that, but I think what we have to look at is the number of students that leave the Northwest Territories each and every year to attend universities in southern Canada. I was one of them. I had to go all the way to New Brunswick to get my degree. If there was an option here in the Northwest Territories, I'm sure I would have thought twice about that and stayed closer to home. I think with what's going on in the Northwest Territories today, Mr. Chairman, we should be looking at this. You know we could be a centre for excellence in climate change. Obviously our political landscape is ever-changing and there's going to be much happening here in the foreseeable future in terms of political development. There's that and I think also that it may end up costing SFA and the department less if students stayed closer to home. So I think, and the Minister mentioned it too, there's potential money from the federal government. You know, we should be looking at every possible angle to keep our children and our youth here close to home and if they can go to school here in the Northwest Territories, it makes more sense to me than sending them out.

Mr. Chairman, when we send out our youth, they're the leaders of tomorrow, we send them out; oftentimes some of them don't come back. So I think it's even doubly important that we keep them close to home. We can attract people here. They have a university in Fairbanks. They attract students from all over the continental United States. There's no reason if we had a university here in Yellowknife that we couldn't attract students from southern Canada that would want to come north and experience Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories and get their degree in the Northwest Territories. So I think it's important that as a vision looking forward I think we keep our eye on possibilities. I thank the Minister for that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said, I have looked at the idea of a university. I don't see us having a stand-alone one in the Northwest Territories, but I think there might be a way for us to get a university that really focuses on research and northern research if we can get the other two territories to come along with us. What would really help is, like Alaska, they can support a

university because they have ownership of their oil and gas. So we really need to make sure that we get ownership of our resources as well in order to make that kind of great investment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Minister is 100 percent correct in industry, and certainly given what the potential is here for oil and gas development and a pipeline I think industry plays a key part in the development and the maintenance of a stand-alone facility. I think they're obvious partners in any development in that regard. Again, I just wanted to say thanks to the Minister for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Next I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 8-29 I'd like to ask a little bit more detail on the contributions we make toward training in oil and gas; \$763,000 is booked. The Minister has given us some very positive information here that our contribution has, along with federal money and private sector, amounted to a total of \$9.9 million in investment in the ASEP program. So could the Minister describe again or fill us in what does ASEP stand for, what is the timeline for this program, and could the Minister provide that if this is a three-way partnership, federal, territorial and private sector, who or which sectors are contributing what levels of funding? Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The ASEP program is one where the largest funding partner in it is the federal government and we have two in the Northwest Territories, one for \$14.8 million around mine training, the other for \$9.9 million around oil and gas. It also involves the aboriginal governments bringing their ARDA funding to the table and other funds that they may be able to access, GNWT money and industry money. The program is, we think, very successful. Right now the oil and gas one is scheduled to sunset in March of 2008. That is something that I've mentioned to my federal colleague as something that we need to take a look at renewing. I believe that it's a good enough success story that there is something the federal government would want to hold up as an example of how to invest in training. So I started to make that argument when I had the opportunity. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. He wanted to know what the acronym was, ASEP. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. It's an abbreviation for Aboriginal Skills Employment Partnership.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. The Minister mentioned \$9.9 million. Is that an annual value, or over what period of time has this partnership been in place, Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the oil and gas agreement is going to take place over three years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, one of the things that we noticed in looking over the terms and conditions in the socio-economic agreement that was signed for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline is that we've committed to put in half a million a year and the proponents are putting in half a million a year for 10 years for training programs in I'm assuming specifically related to the natural gas industry. Now, is that commitment, assuming that we do get ASEP up and running again for another few years, is the SEA agreement for \$1 million a year for 10 years going to be on top of this, or is it going to be linked? Does the Minister have any sense of that, Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will be up to the will of the government-of-the-day. It could be on top of the money that is currently in the budget for training or it could replace the money that's in the budget for training. That stipulation was not made as part of the agreement. So legislative assemblies to come will get to make that choice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One more question on another aspect of this. In the information on this page, it tells us that this current year we spent \$510,000 to support the replacement of equipment for Aurora College's Heavy Equipment Operator Program. Mr. Chairman, I understand there are quite a number of people who are interested or lined up or signed up to take the Heavy Equipment Operator course at, I believe this is provided at Thebacha college. In fact, I understand it may be in the neighbourhood of five or six dozen who are looking to get into that program. So I was curious, Mr. Chairman, to see is the Heavy Equipment Operator Training Program fully subscribed. Have we got all the seats filled there? If we're enjoying a line up, that's a good thing, but I'm also wondering, Mr. Chairman, to what extent equipment is an issue. Are we able to keep up with current equipment and technology and subsequently, of course, the training of our students at Thebacha, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm afraid I don't have the numbers here with me to say whether or not the Heavy Equipment Operator Program is always fully subscribed. I could endeavour to get the enrolment over the past couple of years and get that information to the Member so that he can have an understanding of what the enrolment has been. In terms of equipment, the college was, for quite some time, pressing us for funding to replace their equipment and it took us a long time to get this \$500,000 into the budget. I have no doubt that if you were to ask them, they would say they could use that much again, if not more right now to replace other equipment, but apparently this money

was used to purchase I believe three pieces of equipment and I expect that they will come forward with further requests as we get closer to the next business plan process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. I guess as one of the members on the Social Programs committee that looks this kind of thing over, Mr. Chairman, it's got my attention and it will continue to get my attention. We have a big investment in Thebacha college and the instructors and the people that are there. We also have a big investment to our private sector partners for training. I would certainly like to tell the Minister that I'll give lots of consideration to a well-planned equipment and technology upgrade at Thebacha if it is warranted for us to keep up with, if not ahead of the training curve that we're going to need here in the NWT. So just a comment there, Mr. Chair; I'm done.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Next I have Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask a question of the Minister. When does the current lease expire at Northern United Place for the college here in Yellowknife? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It expires this summer. We're in the process of working to renew that for five years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So that will be for an additional five years from this summer and the last time the lease was let it was for how long? What's expiring this summer, what was the length of the period?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the current lease was a five-year lease. If memory serves me right, that will be 10 years that we've been in there. I think it was five plus five was the initial lease, but we can confirm that and get the information to the Member. So yes, we are looking at extending the lease to 2012.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the plan, I guess in a perfect world, would be to have a stand-alone college campus in Yellowknife by 2012. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In a perfect world.

---Laughter

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. We're on page 8-29, activity summary, advanced education and careers, grants and contributions, contributions, total \$32.118 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Total grants and contributions, \$32.118 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Can we now turn to page 8-32 and 8-33, activity summary, income security, operations expenditure summary, \$66.119 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions on this page. The first one is to do with income security review. Is that okay? Do I have the microphone?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Yes, you do.

MS. LEE: Okay. The income security review, and I'd like to get an update on that. The second thing is in the latest meeting I've been in in our community of Yellowknife I learned that since the housing support moved as an income security from Housing to ECE, that there have been three times as much complaints being filed to the rental office. I don't know what exactly the reasons are, but there are lots of people who are having a hard time with this new program. So I need to put this on record and tell the Minister that this program transfer is still on a very thin leg and the committee is watching this. I know the Minister is on record and in various places have been very firm that this is the right way to go, but we've heard concerns about this in terms of staff training and staff readiness and concentration of work into regional offices where previously the work was able to be done in communities. In the city of Yellowknife I think it could be that a lot of information that was not considered as income previously or for whatever reason, a lot of our people who are in public housing or housing support program are being either evicted or being reviewed or they're going through a hard time. So I need to ask the Minister to give me a commitment to review this situation and get back to me. Maybe I'll leave it at that and I have a couple of more questions on this page. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the income security review, there's a letter coming to the Standing Committee on Social Programs requesting an opportunity to get together to bring that committee up to date with where we are in the process. So I'm hoping that before the end of session we will be able to get together and go through that.

In terms of issues, if Members have issues around social housing, I would be happy to get the details and then, in concert with Premier Handley who is the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, review the situations and make sure that we are in fact being responsive, because that is our goal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe the Minister could correct me if I'm wrong and maybe my memory is wrong or maybe my understanding is wrong or something, but I seem to recall that when the proposal was made to transfer the \$40 million or whatever millions it was that used to be housed in Housing to ECE, the money was transferred first and we were given assurances that the details of the program would be worked out, that it was not a final thing. That's how it moved. I mean we could go back to Hansard, but the money was housed there for a year before the plan could be worked out, but the thing is I must have missed the steps in between because we really didn't have another chance to have an input into that process as to whether this was a good move or not. Once the money got transferred, the programs and the implementation of this new initiative have been playing catch-up ever since. It seems that we're not able to adjust or make suggestions or change anything. It's just like its gone, we have to approve extra resources and I know that even as this House was passing a motion for a review or maybe perhaps looking at whatever, like the motion we passed on and I think we might have even passed a motion to bring it back to Housing Corp. I'm told that the Minister said publicly that that wasn't going to happen, even with the motion that was on the table.

So I think it's not a bad thing for the government to admit that maybe something they did was not a good idea. It's not saying that you're a bad person if you might have made a bad decision because it was a collective decision, but it is never too late to correct that, but it's continuous, it's endless. We're hearing it in communities, we're hearing it in Yellowknife, and I think we need to review this because I don't think what is happening now is what we had in mind or if that was our goal. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he would work with the standing committee to see if we could review this transfer and to lay out the issues and see if we could do this any better and if we can't, we need to put it back where it was. The whole point of it was to improve it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government still believes that this is the right move. We support the move, but we are very prepared to work with the committee. If there are issues that are identified, we will make sure that we deal with them. I can tell you that we are hearing far fewer concerns being raised. The president of the Housing Corporation, the deputy minister, all of the staff work together to resolve issues when they are raised. The issue around the policy and how it's applied is one that the government believes that subsidies need to be seen visibly. That has bothered some people who before didn't see how much of a subsidy they were getting from government. It was our position that that is a better way to go and we haven't changed our minds about that. I would be happy to meet with the Member, to meet with the standing committee and if there are issues that need to be resolved still, we will work to resolve those.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sure I hang out in different places than the Minister and talk to different people. I am sure his staff are not going to tell him that there is a problem with these issues, but I can tell

you that I am sure the Housing Corporation staff don't know why this was transferred. I know that ECE staff that are administering this program wish that they never got it in the first place and, most importantly, the user groups are not benefiting from this at all.

I understand that we had to streamline it and make whatever process transparent or consistent. I don't have a problem with that, but definitely the people who used to get this housing program from the Housing Corporation feel that they were treated much better. They were treated with more respect and dignity than what's going on now. I am sure it's an isolated case, but there are lots of cases like that where people are being followed, tracked and being asked very personal questions about their income and such. I don't know how to revisit this, so I am going to ask the Minister for an idea as to how we review this.

Maybe he could come to us with some information as to how he is convinced that this program works. I don't know what the indicators are. Are there more people being...I don't know. He seems to be very certain that this is the right way to go and this is the better way to go, so I am prepared to receive any information he may have that would convince me of that. I would like to see that as soon as possible, instead of hearing that he is saying it really doesn't matter what motions are passed or what's being spoken here, that he is going to stay the course.

Also, the additional information that I asked, I would like to ask the Minister if you would make a commitment to inquire with the rental board, landlord and tenancies board, rental tenancies board. Inquire with them as to how many of the cases that they have been getting are having to do with this situation and also I would like to know how many people who used to qualify under the Housing Corporation are no longer able to access that program in Yellowknife as well as in communities, as much as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to check with the rentals officer to see if there has been any uptake in the number of applications and what is seen as driving them.

In terms of access, Mr. Chairman, when we took on the program from the Housing Corporation, our commitment was we wouldn't change any of the rules for access over what the policies were from the Housing Corporation. We have maintained that. There have been absolutely no changes in the rules over what the policies were for the NWT Housing Corporation. We have found some LHOs that weren't enforcing the policies in place with the Housing Corporation and that may have led to some of the issues.

The policies that we were given by the Housing Corporation are exactly what are being followed right now and we are prepared to put that through an audit. We haven't changed the policies at all.

In terms of that, there are issues that Members find, for instance I had a Member come to me and tell me that in one of their communities in their constituency there were a significant number of problems. We had staff go to that community for a full week along with the staff of the Housing Corporation and do an audit of all the files for the previous year to find out where the problems might have

come from, spend some time with members of the community explaining the policies behind the program and how it works. We are prepared to resolve the differences or the challenges where we find the challenges. So if Members have issues, if you bring them to either myself or to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, together we will follow up on that. But I need specifics. So where do you see an issue? I don't think it's something we can talk about in the House here because I need to know the specifics of an issue and I will make sure we follow up on it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: My time is up.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you for being honest, Ms. Lee.

---Laughter

We'll go to Mrs. Groenewegen next.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the issue of income security, I am not going to go on and on about this but I have a concern...Not a concern, a question. I have a theory that some people, not all people, on income support have the ability to use the money for other than the necessities of life. I think income support money gets spent on drugs, alcohol and gambling; some. I am saying isn't there a way to tighten up the system that would ensure that what we intend to give money to people for actually gets used for that? I have heard the spiel before about how we want people to make choices, be independent and we don't want to hold their hand. We want to trust them and empower them. You know, some people have problems and when you put money in their hand, sometimes it just makes those problems worse if there isn't any guidance or any restrictions on how that money gets spent. Has the department ever considered how you could assist people through income security without money being spent on things that would, in fact, not only be approved by this government, but probably cost this government a lot of extra cost and a lot of grief in our society? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our workers often encourage people to allow us to pay bills directly. So, for instance, an oil bill, rather than having cash go out, we are quite prepared to send the cheque directly to the oil company. We would be prepared to send the money directly to the Co-op or the Northern Store so it goes on an account that people can use to purchase groceries. Those offers are made quite regularly.

Even if we were to impose that kind of change, if somebody is desperate to find drugs, we know people will go to all sorts of lengths to do that. They could still wind up trading food or other goods for money to purchase the drugs. I don't know that there is a way that you can actually stop that sort of behaviour. We have to make sure that through things like a case management approach and through productive choices, that we are helping people find ways to be more productive and actually come out farther ahead. If they are using money that should otherwise go to food to purchase bingo tickets or drugs,

that means they are giving up on something pretty important. There isn't a lot of spare money they are getting. Most people will tell you it's not enough to pay for a healthy food basket.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask if a productive choice is to have children. If you have children home and you choose to stay home and you are on income support, is that classified as a productive choice? If it is, how long does that support continue while you are electing to do that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If memory serves me correctly, I believe that is a productive choice through the age of five with children.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So if you have a child at home under the age of five and you don't have other household income, you are automatically entitled to income support.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't say that it's automatic. Each case is looked at on an individual basis. We are trying to move more and more into case management. So there might be a situation where there could be some discussion about additional training. We provide funding for childcare as part of income support as well, so there may be some options available to young mothers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: When you provide support for childcare for a young mother, do you pay the service provider or do you pay the mother? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can discuss that with the client. If the client directs that we pay it directly to the care provider, or we have reason to believe that it might not get there, then we can provide it directly to the childcare provider.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the idea of having direct payments made for food, fuel, day care, these all come about as a person who would self-identify as needing that kind of help to ensure that their bills are paid. It would be totally on a basis of self-identifying. This is not something that would ever be imposed on a client should the caseworker find out that this person was having a hard time directing the funds to the appropriate thing the funds were intended for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This kind of direct payment could be imposed. We would have to have good reason. There would have to be some evidence that it was required. I guess our workers expect that in the first instance when they are seeing somebody, that they are coming in and prepared to take some responsibility for themselves. Particularly if you have somebody who has embarked on a training program, in order to be able to get a job you would expect that there is enough responsibility there to ensure that the payments are going through. So the first instance, yes, the expectation is you are dealing with somebody who will make the payments. If that proves to be wrong, that can be changed and can be imposed, but we would have to see the evidence of it needing to be imposed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to also ask, people who are on income support are required on a monthly basis to identify and prove that they have a need, but there are no people who are automatically paid except for persons with disabilities who receive support. Every other person on income support doesn't automatically receive it without some kind of an assessment process occurring on a monthly basis. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, this is on a case-by-case basis that the decision is made. It's most common for most income support recipients to be seen on a monthly basis, but we have some whose situations are stable, whether they are persons with disabilities or seniors, where we know that there isn't going to be a lot of change. They may not be seen more than twice a year or even less. For most recipients, they are seen on a month-to-month basis. One of the reasons for that is the vast majority of income support recipients cycle on and off income support. They are not on year-round. Almost all of them are off income support at some point during the year because they have enough income that for one, two or three months they don't need income support. So we tend to have people who come in whose situations vary. They may have \$400 in income one month and have \$1,000 of income in another month and \$200 the next. Because their situations change, we need to see them on a monthly basis to assess what sort of support they are entitled to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It sounds like there could be room for an element, a certain sector of people on income support that you don't expect there is going to be any change. Let's put it this way, I know people in Hay River who have been on income support since I met them when they came to Hay River and they are still on income support. Now I don't know how long ago your policy changed where you have to identify your need and your need has to be assessed on a monthly basis, but I think the Minister could admit there are people who have been on income support for years

and years and have not cycled off or on. They have just been on income support. For whatever reason, it is generally accepted that the prospects of them getting off income support are not very likely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I never meant to imply that that wasn't possible. Certainly there could be some people who have been on for years. In fact, we know there are some people who have been on for years and whose situation isn't likely to change, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on the list I have Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a couple of points I would like to make and I have a couple of questions on some of the numbers that are before us. Listening to my two colleagues talk about the housing issue and the income support issue, the housing issue is something that I have been speaking to since it happened; the transfer. I had many cases before the October session where I had concerns brought to me by constituents, by focus groups, with the problems they were running into and how they thought it wasn't working for them.

Lately, I have been seeing and hearing less and less, but I don't think it's because they are happy with it. I think it's because they think nobody is listening to them. They are just not going to do anything, so why bother? I think that's unfortunate. I wanted to make that point because it was a concern, it is a concern, but I have been hearing less and less and I think they believe we are not listening to them, so why bother wasting their breath talking to us.

The second point I want to make is on the income support. Now my understanding is that the income support funds used to be distributed by the social worker. Talking to a couple of veteran social workers who have been around for 25 or 30 years, know what they are doing, they used to administer the income support payments and they would monitor, not just give them a cheque and have them walk out the door and out of sight, out of mind. They would monitor, they would see them at the store, make sure they were buying the right type of groceries. That has been taken away from them and the funds are now administered by an income support worker who doesn't really monitor. They are just there to punch a cheque and out you go.

So if you are going to do an income review, something you should seriously look at is monitoring them. There are plenty of people out there, there are some people out there who generally need the income support and I am all for it. There are people with disabilities, especially the elders. I am going to pose a written question to the Minister tomorrow on the amount of clients between the ages of 18 and 30 who are on income support, their gender and their level of education. I always recall a story I heard a couple of years ago about a guy who was offered a summer job supervising students in one of the communities. He said, no, I am not going to take it because I am doing better on income support. So there are people who genuinely need it and those are the ones we should be helping. I also believe that we've spoiled

people; we've made people lazy. I think we have to monitor them, give them the productive choices they are supposed to be making. We talk about a highway down the valley. Have them clear brush. Get it started. That's a productive choice.

Those are just a couple of points I wanted to make on some of the comments following up on some of the comments of my colleagues. Two questions I do have on the numbers, Mr. Chairman, are the contract services, \$32.876 million. I am curious as to what that's for. Is that for the Housing Corporation?

The other number is the \$19.516 million. I am curious about that number, too. I would like to know where those two numbers are, because I think I see further on the money going to public housing rental subsidies of \$33 million, but this is a \$32 million figure. Perhaps if the Minister could give me where these two amounts are going. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$32.184 million is the contract with the NWT Housing Corporation. I'm sorry; could I get the second part of the question from the Member again, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: The second part of the question was the \$19.516 million in fees and payments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The two biggest parts in that are student financial assistance and income support.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that. I am glad he brought up the student financial assistance because that's also another concern of mine. Are there any plans to start distributing the student financial assistance based on where they live, cost of living? I think I understand that students down south are getting the same as a student in Inuvik, even though the cost of living could be 25, 30, 40 percent higher. So if there is something we can do to adjust those numbers to suit the location, I think that would be a big help. I have heard of a couple of students who have left school because it was just too expensive to try to live in Inuvik with a couple of kids and attend school at the same time. So if we could do something with that, I think it would be much appreciated by the students, because you see a lot of mature students now with families starting to go back to school, so they can make some good decisions and some good money and not have to rely on income support. Like I said, I was dealing with the Minister on the issue and I think we came to a successful conclusion and that's the type of people that these programs are designed for. So the more we can do to give them a helping hand, I will support fully.

Now, \$32 million for contract services. Is that the contract with the NWT Housing Corporation, or is that money paid to the Housing Corp for rent subsidies? It seems to be two different figures; \$32 million here and housing subsidies, \$33 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The numbers may not be exactly the same with contract services and the total amount that we are paying in public housing subsidies, but that is what all of the \$33 million is for.

In terms of student financial assistance, we are examining what other provinces are doing in terms of indexing to see if we can get some ideas for how we might take a look at indexing the student financial assistance that we provide in the Territories, I would hope that we would be able to move forward with that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the Minister for that. I think that would be a huge move to do something like that for the students. Just before I close, I want to mention again about the income support and the need to monitor how the money is spent. You said before, you offered to pay directly. We are supplying the money; I don't think there should be an offer. I think it should be mandatory, standard, I am going to pay the fuel bill. I am not going to pay you \$500 to go pay your fuel bill. We are going to pay directly from here. That way you know the fuel bill is being paid, and with paying the credit at the store, I think that's another good move. There are some people that will continue to be honest about it and use the money for what it was intended, but there are also a few of them who will ruin it for everybody else. These are the people all these policies that are made to protect the honest ones from. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will leave it at that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. I didn't hear a question there. Next on the list I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Briefly, Mr. Chairman, I just want to back up the discussion or the point we are making on the delivery on the Public Housing Subsidy Program has suffered this problem early in its implementation and it continues, and that is the tenants have to turn their cost and monthly expense reports to the income support officer. This, from my understanding, seems to be where a lot of the hold-up is. The front-line people at the income support offices were processing the rental and the cost information in order for the tenant to satisfy the housing authority; something of that nature. I think with some recent information I had through the rentals officer is that their caseload is about triple what it has been and it's almost entirely due to this administrative snag and the lags that people have in clearing their information and then in terms of falling behind in their rent. It does not seem to be the spending or the money management habits of people change, rather it's the habits of how our system has changed.

Mr. Chairman, I do want to support the Minister in holding the line to the policies and administering this program and

I think in a more responsible way. That's why I support the transition of this part of the program from the Housing Corporation to ECE because, as the Minister explained, it was so diversified across the Housing Corporation's system that we were losing some control. It needed to be somewhat centralized again. So I want to see the idea continue that we can do a better job of implementing this, but I think there is something on the customer service side that we may be missing in this. I hope the Minister can turn his attention to it on a very quick basis.

That's my only comment, Mr. Chairman, just to back up what my colleagues have said about implementation so far.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. No question there. Next on the list I have Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to speak regarding income security. We all know it's a subject that I guess a lot of us hope we can get away from sometimes. But we have to go back to reality that the reason the program is there is for people who need support, not there to help people who can work. It's there as a last resort for people who really need the assistance to get by for the month. That's my understanding of the program.

Some of my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, touched on the transfer of the funds from the Housing Corporation to income support. Again, I agree with some of my colleagues here that it's still a problem, especially in small communities. I will give you an example, Mr. Chairman. I raised it the other day. With income support clients who are going to post-secondary education outside of the communities, I understand that we have a minimum of three months that they can leave the community. Who is going to finish a program in three months if you have to leave for a six-month program? It's very clear under the policy it's a minimum of three months and a maximum of two years.

In one case the Minister is saying the mistake was made by the local housing authority. I don't think so. It depends on how you interpret the policy. If you had a program for two years, granted, understanding that people might need housing but if they have enough units, I think they should hold onto that unit. That is where the problem was encountered, Mr. Chairman. After three months, the income support worker just said I'm sorry we can't pay the O and M of the housing unit. That's why they got into the situation where they ended up \$5,000 plus in terms of payments. As the Minister indicated the other day, that's been rectified. I think it's important that these kinds of things should be looked at.

I just hope down the road that if we are going to keep the system the way it is today, we hope the transition can run smoothly.

I want to talk a bit about productive choices. Sure, you can stay home and watch your child. You can go get ice and wood for the elders. You can go hunting for the elders. These are just some of the productive choices that are identified by the department. In reality, when you look at it, how does this help you out in the long term, so you get a productive choice so that you are able to do something with what you have learned and not out shovelling snow just to make up for the house so they can get income support. To me, that's not a productive

choice. That's just doing slave labour for \$200 a month for a single person. You are not gaining any experience; you are just going out there to do something the department wants them to do. A productive choice is when you go out and work with an organization, sit in the office for eight hours or something like that. Learn something, let's have a productive choice. In the end, you learn something.

I don't know what we can do, Mr. Chairman. We've talked about it so many times. For the last three years, we've talked about it. We talked about it for the last year and a half after the transfer of money from the Housing Corporation to income support. I just hope that some day we will get it right and we don't have any more complaints about the Housing Corporation, LHOs and income support workers. These are just a few comments I want to make, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Again, there was no question there. I will go to our next speaker, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on student financial assistance. Can I ask the Minister what is the maximum amount of payable loan that a student who qualifies can get from the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the loan limit is \$47,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to state, and I have said this many times, I do appreciate and believe that we do have one of the most, if not the most, generous SFA programs probably in the country and probably around the world. I have certainly been a beneficiary of that and I don't think I could have gotten the post-secondary education that I was able to get and it would have been much more difficult to get that were it not for the program that we have.

So I know that we been increasing the budget over the years for eligible amounts for the students, but I think what is going on in the student tuition fees all across the country is just eating up all the gains we are making. When I went to university in '85-86, I think it was around \$1,000 a year to go to university. When I went back another few years later, for a three-year program, I think the tuition fee was about \$1,500 and within three years it went up to \$5,000. Now I think we are looking at over \$10,000. When the tuition fee was at \$1,500, I think the maximum amount that I was able to borrow was \$3,200. That's what I remember. So I think while we are quite generous in our program. I think there are some students who need to borrow even more than \$46,000. I know that people I know who are in post-secondary education in other parts of the country, it's not unheard of to walk out of post-secondary education with a \$100,000-plus loan. Of course, there are advantages to getting this education and they would have a better means of paying for that.

I was at that reception for the nursing grads I think the Minister mentioned yesterday. One of the students spoke to me about whether or not it was possible to increase

their loan amount. So these are not grants. It's just that if you have to do bridge programming or take any other programming to get to the post-secondary education and by the time you finish three or four years of grad degree, it's easy to end up with more than \$46,000. You are not able to have work that would give you any significant amount of income while you are at school. I would like to ask the Minister if there is any room to increase the loan amount or at least maybe have flexibility there where if a student is in their last year and if they establish that they need a bit of an increase to finish that program, could there be provisions to do that? I am talking about repayable loans. I am not talking about grants. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider looking at that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are aware that this is becoming more of a concern, because we are starting to hear about it from some people. We now have 11 people in the Territories who have hit their loan limit, which is a bit of a surprise. We are talking about proposing an increase to the overall limits of the revolving fund which would allow us to increase the loan limit, as well as taking a look at whether or not the monthly amounts are adequate. So that is something we are taking a look at right now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that answer. As always, I would like to set a time limit on that. Could I get the Minister to come back to us with his findings and give us an idea with a possibility of implementing this prior to the next school year? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: I would be happy to get that information back to the standing committee. I think I would be able to do that by April. In terms of when it could be implemented, that's going to depend on what the costs turn out to be. If we can find a way to do it within the program cost, then we could do it immediately for next year. Otherwise, I may either have to come back for supplementary funding or run it through the business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Anything further, Ms. Lee? We are on page 8-33, activity summary, income security, operations expenditure summary, \$66.119 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Page 8-36, activity summary, income security, grants and contributions, grants, total grants and contributions, \$9.051 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. An aspect of the Student Financial Assistance Program and I believe this was something that we had discussed in previous

budget cycles and it has to do with students who are attending adult basic education classes. Mr. Chairman, it came to our attention through constituents that students who are attending Aurora College's ABE Program were eligible and did receive student financial assistance money. However, students who were enrolled at the identical program at the Native Women's Association were not eligible. The Minister, in a previous discussion, committed to look into that and see that it hopefully could be corrected in this year's budgeting. How are we doing in that discrepancy, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to be clear, an individual who takes a basic education course through the college would not qualify for student financial assistance. The only way it is allowed is if it is an access program leading into a degree or a certificate program. For instance, when we are offering an access program specifically for education, they may not be at the university level for the first year but that is included as part of the access year to that program. So it is fairly highly limited.

I would agree with the Member that I had hoped to be able to come forward with some funding to broaden out the support we could offer to adult students. I was not successful finding money in this budget.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps we are in a level of detail here not easily pursued in this forum. I am disappointed that we weren't able to levelize that field, but I will take it up with the Minister in the near future and see if we can continue to go to work for helping out adults who want to pursue upgrading their education. That's all, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Next on the list I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister about the student grants and the success rate of the students who come up from the southern provinces to the Northwest Territories and suddenly they are eligible for these grants to further their education and career. How successful are we at retaining these students? I know we can't stop them from leaving the Northwest Territories once they get their education. Are we getting good value in terms of educating our people here and having them stay in the Northwest Territories to work for the northern people? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a difficult number to come up with partly because we don't have any way of requiring people to report what they do after they finish school. People don't just qualify for grants because they have lived in the Northwest Territories. They have to have gone to school in the Northwest Territories. So you qualify for one semester of post-secondary study for every year of school that you've done in the Northwest Territories. That's the only way you qualify. It used to be

that you just had to live here, now you had to have gone to school in the Northwest Territories. We think people who have lived here through kindergarten to Grade 12 are likely going to come back in any case.

I will be tabling, later in this session, a booklet that outlines our indicators of success in the post-secondary field. Some of that information, what we are able to glean from people who have graduated from post-secondary and been supported by the Territories, will be available in that book. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the Minister stating this information for further discussion at another time. I would also ask the Minister at another time for the type of tracking I am asking for. I don't need it right away, but I need this type of information. Our territory is probably one of the best programs that supports students through post-secondary education. I just want to know are we getting good value in terms of our investment. I think we are, I just want to know some numbers. I wanted to leave it at that because the Minister said he doesn't have it right now with him. I can accept that. I can wait until some time down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have an ongoing program of trying to contact graduates to find out how things are going and we will continue to do that and report as we can.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, committee. We are on page 8-25, activity summary, income security, grants and contributions, grants, total grants and contributions, \$9.051 million. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick question for the Minister. The student grant, that goes toward their tuition and all their costs associated with going to post-secondary education. That's on the student financial assistance, right? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: It's part of student financial assistance. Depending on the student's situation, they may qualify for grants, they may qualify for remissible loans and they may qualify for repayable loans. There are a number of different factors that come into play when you are talking about student financial assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Anything further, Mr. McLeod? Thank you, committee. We are on page 8-35, income security, grants and contributions, grants, total grants and contributions, \$9.051 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Page 8-38, information item, student loan revolving fund. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Page 8-39, information item detail, funding allocated to education authorities. Questions? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One question I had was for the private school, Western Arctic Leadership Program, 2007-08 funding position. We never funded any position, I take it, in that program. It's all funded elsewhere and we just provide them with \$275,000 of annual funding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The students in that program attend school at the high school in Fort Smith. So it's just a situation where we make a contribution to the residence.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: That's good enough. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. I would like to thank you, Minister Dent, Mr. Devitt and Mr. Daniels, for being with us this afternoon. See you tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 17: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 21, Appropriation Act 2007-2008, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 19: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Social Programs at adjournment today.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 21, 2007, at 11:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Petitions
10. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
11. Tabling of documents
12. Notices of Motion
13. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
14. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2006-2007
 - Bill 22, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2006-2007
15. Second Reading of Bills
16. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Education Act
 - Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Archives Act
 - Bill 21, Appropriation Act, 2007-2008
 - Committee Report 7-15(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the 2007-2008 Pre-Budget Review Process
 - Committee Report 8-15(5), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the 2007-2008 Pre-Budget Review Process
 - Committee Report 9-15(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the 2007-2008 Pre-Budget Review Process
 - Committee Report 10-15(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2005-2006 Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner
17. Report of Committee of the Whole
18. Third Reading of Bills
19. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 21, 2007, at 11:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 18:02.