



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 20

17th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Pages 4035 – 4074

The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, February 27, 2014****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 45-17(5):
SIGNING OF RESOURCE REVENUE
SHARING AGREEMENT AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON
LANDS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, building strong working relationships with Aboriginal governments has been a personal priority of mine and of this Assembly. Our ability to work together in the spirit of respect, recognition and responsibility is what enables us to serve the common interest of all the people of this territory and will be the foundation for the successful implementation of devolution.

I am pleased to advise Members that our governments have taken another step forward in our continuing partnership with the signing of the Northwest Territories Intergovernmental Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement and the Northwest Territories Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resource Management. These two agreements mark further milestones in our journey together to create a strong, prosperous Northwest Territories that will provide opportunities to all our residents.

I want to congratulate the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Northwest Territory Metis Nation, the Sattu Secretariat Incorporated, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Tlicho Government for their work on these agreements.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ensuring all people in the Northwest Territories share in the benefits of resource development on public lands. That is why we offered to share 25 percent of the fiscal benefit from resource revenues with our Aboriginal government partners. When resource revenues are collected by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Aboriginal

government partners will receive a direct share of the benefits of resource development. We are setting a new standard for collaboration here in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. Nowhere else in Canada have revenues from public lands been offered to Aboriginal governments at this level.

Resource revenue sharing offers the promise of further fiscal capacity to Aboriginal governments. Gone are the days when resource development in the NWT offered little opportunity to Aboriginal people. Today resource development should mean jobs and investment opportunity for all residents and business in the NWT. It must be done responsibly, in a way that protects the land and water and recognizes that Aboriginal peoples have rights, including rights under land claims and treaties. Mr. Speaker, through devolution and the Revenue Sharing Agreement we also recognize that resource revenues can further benefit our Aboriginal government partners and their citizens, along with all residents of the NWT.

In addition to resource revenue sharing, our Aboriginal government partners in devolution have also helped lay the foundation for how we will cooperate and collaborate with Aboriginal governments in the area of land and resource management. Once again the GNWT is breaking new ground and setting an example for others to follow in formalizing its relationships with Aboriginal governments.

The Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resources allows us to engage with Aboriginal governments through an Intergovernmental Council. We have a shared interest in exploring harmonized management regimes, building knowledge and capacity in land and resource management, attracting investment and protecting lands and resources. We believe the best way to do these things is to work collaboratively and cooperatively. The Intergovernmental Council will let us build the best possible land and resource management policies and practices together and share ideas for legislation and policy covering our respective lands and resources.

The Intergovernmental Council is not intended to be a forum for discussing constitutional development or issues. It will not restrict or diminish the legislative authority of this Assembly, or the authority of Aboriginal governments. It will,

however, give us further opportunity to work constructively together. It allows us to build upon the best practices of this government as we assume the responsibility for the management of public lands and waters.

In recent years and months, we have worked closely with Aboriginal government partners as the Wildlife Act was developed. We have entered into government-to-government agreements with four Aboriginal governments. We have worked closely with our partners in the development of an NWT Water Stewardship Strategy, recognized as one of the most progressive in the world. We have collaborated on a Land Use and Sustainability Framework that will help guide us in land and resource management. We have clearly benefited from cooperation and collaboration with Aboriginal governments. With the Intergovernmental Agreement we commit, along with our Aboriginal government partners, to continue this approach in areas related to land and resource management.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our Aboriginal government partners for their work with us. I want to thank them for their shared leadership as we set an example for others in Canada and around the world to follow, and I know that we all look forward to working together to build a strong, prosperous NWT.

This Assembly has a stated vision that includes, "Strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories." With our Devolution Agreement, with our Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement and with our Intergovernmental Agreement we are helping to fulfil that promise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 46-17(5):
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL
EDUCATION INITIATIVE

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to share with you an exciting initiative that will move forward some of our government's top priorities, enabling Aboriginal youth to achieve their potential through quality education and developing home-grown solutions to our labour market challenges.

I am proud to announce that the Council of Ministers of Education Canada has asked me to co-lead a national initiative to improve Aboriginal education across Canada with my Alberta counterpart. This appointment recognizes our experience in developing residential school teaching resources in partnership with the

Government of Nunavut and the Legacy of Hope Foundation.

Last year I made a commitment to ensure that all NWT teachers are aware of the history and legacy of residential schools. We have now provided training to the majority of teachers and, by the end of this year, all teachers in the territory will have participated in this awareness training. We are recognized as a national leader in this area.

For the national initiative, I want to build on this experience as well as on the groundbreaking ideas in our new Education Renewal and Innovation Framework: Directions for Change. We have proposed to focus on post-secondary teacher training and the increased recruitment of Aboriginal teachers all across Canada.

We want to ensure all of Canada's teachers acknowledge and have a clear understanding of our country's past, specifically of the very real impacts of past residential schools on Aboriginal students today.

As such, we have also proposed to focus at the national level on encouraging more Aboriginal young people to pursue teaching as a career. Building a workforce of dedicated, local Aboriginal teachers will produce even greater benefits for our territory and our country.

Aboriginal teachers who are members of the community and who share the same culture and traditions are better equipped to bring the school into the community and the community into the school. Strengthening this relationship helps students understand the importance of, and builds strong bonds between, education and the community.

Mr. Speaker, Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing segment of our population and will play a key role in our country's future. They are starting to look to our young people to fill worker shortages, both north and south of 60. Aboriginal students' success stems from their sense of identity, growing up proud of themselves, their communities and their cultures. Increasing and retaining the number of Aboriginal teachers in our schools is an obvious way to support that student growth.

The support from my fellow Ministers of Education will underline the national understanding that we must offer equitable access to educational opportunities and services to Aboriginal students so they have the skills and knowledge they need to reach this potential.

It reinforces that we must do more than simply bridge the gap. We need to support young people's educational success so they can live fulfilled lives and contribute to stable, healthy and productive communities and a prosperous country.

Members of this Assembly know that investments in our children are investments in the future of the NWT and our country. I am truly encouraged by the priority being given to improving education for Aboriginal youth by my fellow Education Ministers. I am equally proud to be able to put our territory on the national stage as we lead the way in Aboriginal education. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 47-17(5):
MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, mineral exploration and development is a cornerstone of the NWT economy. Ensuring the continuing health of this sector is critical if we want to grow our economy and achieve our vision of a strong, prosperous Northwest Territories. Last fall this government reached a major milestone when it released the NWT Mineral Development Strategy. This is a comprehensive plan to ensure the long-term growth of a sustainable mining industry that will create jobs and economic opportunities for the people of the NWT.

As Members of this Assembly are aware, this strategy was a partnership effort. It was developed in conjunction with the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines with extensive input from the mining industry, local and regional governments, and NWT residents from around the territory.

Mr. Speaker, we are developing an implementation plan to put the recommendations made in the Mineral Development Strategy into place. We expect to complete our plan by the end of March, but we are not waiting to get started and have already set the wheels in motion.

Although ITI has taken the lead on the development and implementation of the Mineral Development Strategy, other GNWT departments will play a key role. As the strategy involves several recommendations related to training, Aboriginal engagement and capacity building, sustainability promotion and regulation, we are working closely with other GNWT departments to ensure a cohesive approach.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT is proposing to invest close to \$2 million in initiatives outlined in the Mineral Development Strategy. By making immediate investments in the future of mineral development and exploration in the territory, we can transform our resource potential into real opportunities for our residents, businesses and communities across the NWT.

Solid geoscience information is the foundation on which resource development is built. A good

geoscience knowledge base represents a key competitive advantage for jurisdictions that want to attract mineral and petroleum resource investment. Through the Mineral Development Strategy, we will provide better and more comprehensive geoscience information and research.

Comprehensive, accurate identification of where these resources might be found is essential to making new discoveries and fostering new development.

We are also proposing to create a Mining Incentive Program aimed at attracting mineral exploration. These types of programs have been successful across Canada. Yukon is a prime example of where this has worked.

Earmarking funds to market the NWT as an attractive place for mineral exploration and development investment is also a key deliverable in the Mineral Development Strategy. We will also make investments to enhance Aboriginal engagement and community capacity building, which will assist organizations to prepare and participate in mineral developments in their area.

Mr. Speaker, these investments will play key roles addressing the decline in exploration expenditures and firmly establish the NWT as a favourable jurisdiction for sustained mineral exploration investment.

To ensure we stay on track, the implementation plan will contain a performance evaluation framework that will help to assess our progress. I look forward to returning to this Assembly annually to share our achievements.

Mr. Speaker, this government strongly supports a balanced approach to developing and advancing economic growth. Resource development must not only be environmentally and socially responsible and sustainable, it also needs to yield real economic benefits to NWT residents, communities and businesses.

The Mineral Development Strategy is part of this government's plan to grow our economy, which also includes the Economic Opportunities Strategy, strategic infrastructure investments, and new energy and power system plans.

Alongside investments we are making in our people through initiatives like the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Early Childhood Development Framework, we are doing our part to help create a strong, prosperous Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Abernethy.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 48-17(5):
FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER
PAN-TERRITORIAL SYMPOSIUM
MARCH 4 – 5, 2014

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, investing in prevention, education and awareness, and early childhood development are priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

On March 4th and 5th, the Department of Health and Social Services will host the Canada Northwest Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Partnership Symposium. The theme is Sharing Voices, Inspiring Hope: FASD in Northern Communities - Finding Solutions that Work.

Professionals and community workers will share information on innovative approaches and initiatives that are uniquely suited to northern communities and can both prevent FASD and improve the quality of life for people living with the disorder.

The Canada Northwest Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Partnership, CNFASDP, is an alliance of the four western provinces and three territories. The goal of the partnership has been to develop a coordinated approach to the prevention of FASD and the care and support of those affected by FASD. The GNWT has been a proud partner in this work since 1999.

FASD is a major concern in our territory, and its social and economic impact has touched all of us either directly or indirectly. FASD is a preventable developmental disability that affects about 1 percent of the Canadian population. It cannot be cured and has lifelong impacts on individuals, their families and their communities.

Individuals with FASD have permanent brain damage from exposure to alcohol before birth. They need support throughout their lives to overcome challenges to their health, mental health, learning difficulties and behavioral problems that can lead to issues with addictions and involvement in the justice system. Our government is committed to preventing FASD and to supporting individuals affected by FASD.

Mr. Speaker, the symposium will give individuals affected by FASD, as well as their families, an opportunity to share their experiences and success stories. They will talk about what resources exist in their communities and how these resources can be better managed. They can then go back to their communities with new strategies to address FASD.

The symposium will help us to improve our network of community services and supports. I would like to acknowledge the work done by our partners to organize this symposium: Aboriginal governments and organizations, non-government organizations, professional associations, pan-territorial communities and the governments of Yukon and Nunavut.

With the support from these organizations, we are happy to announce a number of keynote speakers, including Dr. Sterling Clarren, who is the scientific director of Canada FASD Research Network and clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington State; and Ms. Nancy Poole, who is the director of research and knowledge translation for the BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the prevention lead for the CanFASD Research Network. These notable speakers, combined with our own local experts, will provide a great opportunity for learning.

Addressing FASD is an important step towards having sustainable, vibrant, safe communities, Mr. Speaker. This symposium will help further this goal. It also aligns with commitments made in the GNWT framework for early childhood development to ensure that expectant mothers have the support they need, whether it is help to stop drinking, to eat a healthy diet, to be protected from an abusive relationship or to get the best prenatal care possible.

This symposium will help us achieve our goal of ensuring families and individuals affected by FASD feel better supported within their communities and function more independently.

I look forward to sharing the final report from the symposium with my colleagues in this Assembly and the CanFASD Partnership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION WEEK 2014

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak on Education Week and to recognize the hard work of the Dehcho Divisional Board, the principals, teachers, assistants and all the hardworking staff that make education a success in our region and small communities.

Over the years during my tenure as MLA for Nahendeh, I've travelled to our communities and seen the teachers in our schools and admired the attention and care they give our students and the involvement they have in the communities. It really does take a special calibre of teacher to venture north and live in our small and remote communities, teach and learn with limited resources, basically, like 100 years ago with one-room schools. However, those resourceful teachers taught our best Canadians, created great minds that grew our great Canada. With these similar conditions, our

resourceful teachers are now growing our great Northwest Territories with bright, young Northerners that can, and will, lead us into the future.

I want to commend, once again, all our teachers for their great contributions in all aspects of community life, getting involved in after-hours activities such as sports, Cadets, Brownies and supporting cultural activities that are unique to us, for taking the time for fundraising, travel to tournaments, attend territorial and national championships not only with sports but in educational competitions as well. With continued support from our government, our Education Minister, we as MLAs, and all our leaders and communities, our teachers will continue to have success, inspire and support our students. We do have great educational champions in the Northwest Territories. Well done, educators and education boards. Keep up the good work.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WELLNESS CONFERENCE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past weekend I attended the second NWT Wellness Conference at Sir John Franklin High School, and joined my colleagues, Ms. Bisaro and the Premier, for a tour there. While the Premier may not be known for his flexibility in this House, you should have seen him in the yoga workshop. I had no idea the human body could do things like that. But the Premier was not the only one who put a lot of effort into this event.

There were plenty of dedicated volunteers and sponsors from the local business community, non-government organizations, talented care providers, and motivated citizens who deserve a hearty thank you for their hard work and contributions, and I should give a tip of the hat to Weledeh businesspeople Leanne Tait and Tami Johnson of Tait Communications, Wayne Guy of Guy Architects, Matthew Grogono of Old Town Glassworks, and Johanna Tiemessen, who is program coordinator.

Twenty-six trade show exhibitors included a wide variety of wellness options, medical and naturopathic doctors, traditional and natural healers, varied massage therapists, hard of hearing support, life coaches and an estate planning lawyer, to name just a few.

Besides eight informative workshops, the trade show and live demonstrations, the conference included four panels: Bridging the Gap: Allopathic and Naturopathic Medicine; Stress and Mental Health in the Workplace; Demystifying Energy Healing; Wellness-Connecting Mind, Body, Soul and Spirit.

Finally, inspirational music therapist Jennifer Buchanan was the keynote speaker and a moving music collaboration led by Weledeh VIP Pat Braden ended the conference in style.

This conference would not have been possible without the help of their very dedicated, thrifty and hardworking steering committee: Simone Goudreau, recruitment coordinator; Della Green, Aboriginal component; Tami Johnson, as I mentioned, marketing; Rhonda Miller, workshop and panel coordinator; Paul Gillard, logistics; Johanna Tiemessen, program coordinator; Peggy Holroyd, volunteer coordinator; and Sylvie Francoeur, coordinator (Ayni Conceptions). I'd like you to join me in thanking all these good, hardworking folks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Colleagues, today I would like to welcome and introduce a special group of international students that are here from Rotary International. They are joining us here in the House today from all over the world. Welcome to the Northwest Territories and welcome to Canada.

Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION WEEK 2014

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been talking a great deal about education in the last few weeks and months. This is Education Week and I would like to recognize and salute all the NWT educators among us who make a difference in people's lives.

We – and I include myself, because teachers never stop being educators – are everywhere in our lives. Yes, educators are in our schools, teaching kindergarten to Grade 12, but they are also in our gyms, our fitness centres and our yoga institutes, at the NWT Literacy Council and their workers are community workers who are in every one of our communities, and in our libraries. They are the coaches of our sports teams; the supervisors of our other extracurricular activities, both inside and outside of school; they are the professionals mentoring new employees in the workplace; supervisors in the workplace; Aurora College, day and evening instructors; visiting and/or guest speakers in schools and at community events; training course instructors; our elders; every one of our parents; and our siblings.

I have, no doubt, missed a few examples to give you; the point is: educators abound. They are in every aspect of our lives. Many of us remember one particular individual who had an impact on us, either in school, at work or in an activity that we took part in, an individual who taught us, shaped us, made us think, enhanced our lives and helped us grow.

So, now as Education Week ends, remember that person. Thank them in person if you can, give them a silent thanks if you cannot.

To my colleagues I have a request. As you return to your communities in the next day or so, take stock of those around you who are educators, not just teachers, but all kinds of educators, and thank them for making a difference, a difference to you and to all the others in the NWT that they influenced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STABILIZATION FUND PROPOSAL

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to talk today, of course, and I'm here to talk about the stabilization fund once again.

Our government builds its budget around the best guess estimates provided by the federal government, and for lack of better terms, it is a best guess. Those revenues that they predict for our territorial government are what they think they see are coming forward after last year's estimates. But what do we do when it's wrong? When the SS GNWT doesn't get the cheque it was promised, what do we do then?

Over the years I have seen a number of budgets built and it certainly hasn't met the expectations provided by the federal government, so a small territorial government like ours has limited ability to respond.

We need to build our finance estimates and a budget around a five-year rolling average. This would help stabilize our government when the money just doesn't show up. When the money doesn't show up it's sort of a sink or swim situation.

If we planned accordingly, had good fiscal policy around this particular thing, we wouldn't have the money like we do today already dreamt about and already spent before the first cheque shows up, like it already has been by this particular Cabinet.

Now, of course, I fully understand that this fiscal type of policy is exceptionally boring for the average person, because quite frankly, all they really want to know is are the lights on and will services be delivered. In most cases they are, but they don't know the behind the scenes stuff such as our government has built, over the last 16 years, budgets around the fact that estimates have been wrong eight out of 16 times. They have been built around the best guess or early estimates provided by the federal government.

May I remind this government that this is not sound fiscal budgeting; this is budgeting by Ouija board for goodness sakes. I mean, we're only waiting for some higher power to tell us what it may or may not

be delivering. When it doesn't show up, we have no other choice than to be forced with drastic changes and where do we go from there?

What's important to realize here is this: we could do something today. Now, the Finance Minister will try to distract us with his fancy words and his little fancy dancing moves and say the Government of the Northwest Territories has a triple 1A credit rating. Frankly, the average person just doesn't care. They want to know we have sound budgeting and the programs will be there.

If we built a stabilization fund over a five-year rolling average, that would protect our finances when the federal government sends that cheque and we weren't shortchanged on estimates that nobody knew what we were working off of. Best guesses don't always work and we will have that discussion in question period later today. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HISTORICAL FILM FOOTAGE OF MOUNTAIN DENE ELDERS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to read a quote from an elder. "When a community does something together, that community is very happy, jubilant, connected and unified. ... (inaudible)..." Larry Atkin, Chipewya.

The Aboriginal people have always been able to adapt. If the hunting changed, we found new hunting grounds. If the earth changed, we moved to a better place. If the river changed course, we followed the river. But with every change, we kept our Aboriginal values and culture and our spirituality. Our culture and our spirituality have always been our strength. Our culture and our spirituality taught us to live in harmony. We must change with the times, but we must maintain our culture and spirituality and always live in harmony.

Last week I had the pleasure of viewing very old footage that was taken in 1957 or so with some of the Members from the Assembly here. It was a film of the Sahtu Shuhagot'ine people. Jean Michea had that film and he came up to the Northwest Territories in 1957 to study the oil development in Norman Wells. Apparently this young fellow at the time went with the Shuhagot'ine to the mountains and to the Keele River with his camera and shot some footage of the Mountain Indians. In 1995 Tom Andrew began the fishing task of finding this footage. This is 25 minutes of early life in Yellowknife and Norman Wells and in the mountains and Tulita. The Shuhagot'ine people in Tulita saw this film and they were jam packed and they were very happy.

We saw the film, a truly emotional picture for me as I saw some people I remembered in the film. I'd like to thank this gentleman, Chris Fletcher, for helping in being the key and for bringing this film back to the Northwest Territories.

From moose skin boats to jet boats, we in the Sahtu are still the same inside. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION WEEK 2014

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is Education Week and the theme is Changing the Way We Learn. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize educators throughout the Northwest Territories for their hard work, dedication, support and commitment to our youth, but also to those who are seeking further education in post-secondary or upgrading programs.

With the constant goal to make sure our students are successful beyond the classroom, I want to make sure that our educators are, as well, and offer any type of support that I can. But I want to make a special thank you to those educators who take it one step further and go outside of the classroom, attend community events, volunteer in the community and coach our youth in sports, which also provides a lot of great life lessons.

I'd like to also send some special thank yous today. Thank you to the NWT Teachers' Association for representing our educators throughout the Northwest Territories. I'd like to give a special thank you to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for their continued support and their initiatives in this Legislative Assembly that are starting to make a difference in early childhood development, as well as revamping the education system with the Education Renewal Initiative.

I'd also like to thank the Members of this Legislative Assembly who are taking this education, running with it, putting the effort in to changing it and making it better for our students, our educators and residents of the Northwest Territories.

As I stated earlier, a lot of our educators go above and beyond, taking the education outside the classrooms and supporting our youth and our residents of the Northwest Territories. In fact, this weekend I know a lot of educators are coaching our youth in sports here in Yellowknife in the senior boys Cager Basketball Tournament. With that, I just want to say, go East 3 Secondary School Eagles! Go get 'em, have a good time and I wish you just as much success as the elementary boys last week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHERN OBESITY RATES

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obesity is a serious and growing epidemic. In 2001, census data indicates that fully one-third of the NWT population is overweight and more than one-quarter of our population is obese. This makes the NWT one of the heaviest regions in Canada.

Obesity is costly. It is linked to increased health care costs and diminished worker productivity. The economic costs associated with obesity in Canada rose from \$3.9 billion in 2000 to \$7 billion in 2011, a staggering 80 percent increase in just over a decade.

Rising obesity rates are significantly correlated with increased rates of cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer. As well, being obese or overweight can result in low self-esteem and negative impacts on cognitive and social development, which can be particularly devastating for growing children.

It is estimated that childhood obesity has tripled in the last 30 years. Now one in four Canadian children are obese or overweight. This trend is so alarming that a leading researcher in the area of childhood obesity believes children growing up in North America today are at risk of being the first generation in modern memory that will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

The factors driving this epidemic are very complex. They include kids with too much screen time, not enough time outdoors, and poverty that makes healthy eating a challenge, addictions, stress and access to high-calorie foods full of sugar and salt.

However, we are all reminded obesity can be considerably improved by increasing our physical activity, by encouraging healthy eating habits and by building a smoke-free generation. Why then is this problem so prevalent and growing in the NWT if we are encouraging these behaviours? What are we missing?

We know we have unique challenges in our lives. Remote NWT communities face high food costs and lack of variety and availability of perishable foods, especially fruits and vegetables. As well, a traditional diet might be hard to access and, of course, darkness and extreme temperatures that can curtail traditional outdoor activities. But are these our only roadblock from being "fataholics"? No, Mr. Speaker.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYUNNY: As I mentioned last week, we are also "sugarholics." So much so the average person consumes 141 pounds of sugar a year and we are getting worse.

Our GNWT's successful Drop the Pop campaign needs to be complemented by a multi-pronged approach aimed exclusively on prevention, but not a tax program and definitely not a disincentive policy.

We need to inform our people of the poisonous aspects of sugar, high fructose corn syrup and fructose in our diet. This education has to start in our homes, in our daycares, in our soon-to-be junior kindergartens, in our schools and in the workplace, otherwise the consequences we face as an obese society will continue to explode. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize my constituency assistant Wendy Morgan in the visitors gallery today, and with her is Mr. Tony Mammone from Calgary, with ATCO Sustainable Communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize all the Pages and especially the Pages from Yellowknife South: Benjamin Karstad, Hannah Schauerte, Kristin Chapman, Mackenzie Marriott, and also the Pages who were here last week: Ashley Stride and Kyra Hanninen. I really appreciate all the work that the Pages do here in the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my number one constituent, my partner, Lucyanne Kendo, and my step-daughter, Brittany Jewel. Welcome to the gallery and to the proceedings. It's great to see you here. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two Pages from Inuvik here today, Caitlyn Church and Ms. Olivia Inglangasuk, both of whose favourites sports are northern games. I asked them what did they like best about being here in the Legislative Assembly this week. They said it was fun and would definitely do it again. They also said you get to meet lots of people and all the important people, so I'm assuming that might be the Members. They also said that they get to go on TV a lot and you get free food. But most of all, they said they have a better understanding of how

the government works, and I just appreciate them for being here this week, and all Pages that were here. I know it was a long week and I appreciate all the hard work and effort that they did for the House here this week.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize a young fellow and one of our Pages here. This young fellow and I do some physical activity in the evenings. His name is Ben Karstad. He's one of the Pages. I just wanted to recognize him because he's a pretty good little fellow.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 7, acknowledgements. Mr. Yakeleya.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 4-17(5):
MOUNT FRED ANDREW SR.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge the naming of Mount Fred Andrew Sr., truly a Shuhagot'ine from Tulita. The mountain was officially announced on December 6, 2013.

Mr. Speaker, the name honours Mr. Fred Andrew Sr. for his knowledge and leadership, by guiding the U.S. army through the Mackenzie Mountains during the World War era of 1943-1944.

Today this route is now formally called the Canol Heritage Trail, considered one of the toughest hikes in the world.

Mr. Andrew is one of the many other guides who helped with the war efforts at that time.

Mahsi Cho for giving recognition to our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 8, oral questions. Mr. Hawkins.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 195-17(5):
TAXATION STABILIZATION FUND

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I'll say it was my error. I think Members agreed not to ask questions today, and I completely forgot, because I would not have done such a thrusting statement on stabilization. I'm hopeful that the Finance Minister will answer it on one question only, of course.

Everyone knows that fiscal policy isn't done by accident, and we always need a plan and the plan shouldn't be based on luck.

Would the Minister be willing to work with all Members on this side of the House to help develop a stabilization fund for a funding plan as we look

forward to the next fiscal budget that we plan for the people of the Northwest Territories? If the answer is yes, I only need one question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Extensive work has been done on the stabilization fund, and as we move forward with the final budget of the 17th Legislative Assembly, as always, we are open to discussions, and in this case, yes, we would be happy to put that information on the table and engage in a discussion with the Members.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 196-17(5):
SMOKING CESSATION
PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't make a Member's statement today because I didn't think we were doing Members' statements, but now we're not doing questions, so I'm going to do questions.

In response to my colleague from Range Lake's Member's statement about obesity and all those statistics that he put out there, I'd like to talk about smoking a little bit. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services some questions about smoking.

I'm really glad I never started smoking, because it is a really strong addiction, and I don't have very much willpower and I really, really, first of all, want to say that I do feel sorry for people who are addicted and would like to quit smoking but cannot.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, what more can we do as a government to deter people from smoking?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe it was just a couple of days ago that Member Dolynny talked about some of the statistics with respect to smoking and that we are actually finally seeing a bit of a decrease in smoking rates in the Northwest Territories. Having said that, we still have higher rates than pretty much everywhere else in the country and obviously more needs to be done.

We do have some wonderful programs. We've all heard of Don't Be a Butthead, and there are a number of programs out there as well. I know Mr. Moses actually referenced a number of them the other day.

Obviously, we are always open to new ideas. If committee has new ideas that they want to present

to us if they want to help us with reduced smoking in the Northwest Territories, we are always open to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, we always talk about the sin taxes. What is stopping this government from raising the tax on cigarettes so high that it would even make the most dedicated smokers rethink their habit? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know that in the 16th Assembly we did put a significant increase on taxes for cigarettes and in this budget we did increase the budget for loose tobacco, but as far as increased taxes on tobacco, I would certainly be willing to have that conversation with the Minister of Finance and see where we can go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Is the Minister of Health and Social Services aware of any downside of putting a really, really deterring kind of a tax on cigarettes? Is he aware of any downside to doing that? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, off the top of my head, the only one that I could think of would actually be potential smuggling and that would be something that we would have to consider as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: One last question. If I go and buy life insurance and I am a smoker, I pay a higher premium. For those that are already addicted, let's give them a break and say okay, but can't we go back to some date and say, if you start smoking after this time, you need to think that when you become an adult and you are seeking medical services, or you are going to have to pay a premium on medical services if you smoke. Not for those who are already addicted, but for those that are coming up, the next generation. Could we not create a monetary disincentive to smoke by creating some kind of a health insurance premium? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's an intriguing idea and then it could... Obviously, if something like that existed, it could stretch to sugar, it could stretch to other things as well. I don't know if we actually have the capacity to do something like that, but I would certainly be willing to have some conversations with the department and some more discussions with committee to see what options exist. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Mr. Yakeleya.

Motions

MOTION 12-17(5):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO MARCH 3, 2014,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on February 27 2014, it shall be adjourned until Monday, March 3, 2014:

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to March 3, 2014, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 13:
DEVOLUTION MEASURES ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Great Slave, that Bill 13, Devolution Measures Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Bill 13 has had first reading.

---Carried

Mr. McLeod.

BILL 14:
WATERS ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 14, Waters Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Bill 14 has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 12:
NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
SERVICES PENSION PLAN ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill sets out the legislative framework for the continuation of the Northern Employee Benefits Service Plan as a multi-employer, multijurisdictional pension plan for employees of approved public sector employers in northern Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Bill 12 has had second reading.

---Carried

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Committee, we've got a number of things to consider today: Bill 5, Bill 10, Bill 11, Committee Report 2-17(5), Tabled Document 4-17(5), Tabled Document 22-17(5). What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Committee would like to continue with Tabled Document 22-17(5), NWT Main Estimates 2014-14, continuing with Education, Culture and Employment and, time permitting, Transportation and then Environment and Natural Resources. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. We'll turn over to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty, if he has any witnesses to bring into the House.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses in.

Minister Lafferty, if you wouldn't mind introducing your visitors to the House again, please.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I have, to my left, deputy minister of ECE, Gabriella Eggenhofer. To my immediate right is Dana Heide, associate deputy minister. To my far right is Marissa Martin, director of finance and capital planning within ECE. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Ms. Martin, Mr. Heide and Ms. Eggenhofer, welcome back. Committee, we last left off on activity summary 10-17. A number of Members have gone through what I call their first rounds of questioning. Next on my list on this activity page, activity summary, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditure summary, I have Mr. Moses, followed by Mr. Blake. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm trying to get back into my frame of mind here. I know last night I was really eager to get into questions and comments, but since we left general comments yesterday I just want to open up with a couple of really quick remarks. With this department here, I know the Social Programs committee has had numerous dialogues on so many different topics that it's really great to see where we are. I feel that all committee and Members really need to do is support and monitor and continue to keep the department accountable with all the work that has been going forward.

In the opening comments yesterday, the Minister did mention that this budget represents over a year of hard work, and committee was in the same room, so we've done a lot of hard work. I always recognize the hard work of committee and staff, but I just want to say I acknowledge and appreciate the hard work that the department and your staff has done over the past year, but ever since committee has really gotten into the details of these budgets.

With that said, the work on education renewal, early childhood development, the collaborative work with mental health and addictions and anti-poverty, what wasn't said in the opening comments yesterday was the Aboriginal student achievements and updates on where we can move on this. Not a big deal, but I know we're working on bigger things.

The first area I'm going to go on to is early childhood development. There were a lot of good questions discussed yesterday. We didn't get into wraparound services. We tried passing a motion on the daycares, and there was mention of junior kindergarten and some concerns with that. What we've been hearing is that it is a three-year process

and our first target is getting into the small communities that really need that.

Maybe I can just make some references to this action plan here. You have in here... I had all these stats yesterday. I can't find them. But you have them here, numerous areas of action. I know the action plan is between the Department of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment. Are these areas of action in priority from one to the very last one is 22? Are they areas of action and you're going to go one and continue down the line, or are you just taking actions where and when you can address them? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. We've been working closely with Health and Social Services on this. It's not necessarily itemized by priority. We have to tackle each and every one of the recommendations that are brought to our attention. Between the two departments, we'll be rolling out the programming, the implementation. Number one would be at the top but we might have to deal with, say, number 18, type of deal. We have to deal with those matters at hand. The Member is asking if it's a priority; it hasn't really been set as a priority from one to 22, it's just the way it's laid out. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: I know the collaboration between the departments of Health and Education Culture and Employment, and in the opening remarks it mentions that there is \$511,000 for wage top-up and training to increase the program staff for licenced child care centres.

That got me thinking. I did have some discussions with an early childhood development specialist whose husband works up in Inuvik. We got to talking about these new initiatives and early childhood, and she mentioned that we need to have a specialist that can certify all these early childhood workers and currently we don't have that. I want to ask the Minister, how are we going to certify our early childhood workers moving forward so that they are licenced? Maybe I'll just ask the Minister that question. How are we going to licence our early childhood daycare providers, whether it's in a home, a daycare facility, junior kindergarten or any of those areas? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, part of the process will be the regs that will be before us would have to require those individuals to have the qualification. We will do our part, as a department, to provide the necessary training, necessary support mechanism that needs to be in place. Throughout the licenced early childhood programming, we talk about the daycares and junior kindergarten, a mixture. Yesterday, we got into more detail about how we can provide training.

That is information that is available and we will provide that specific training to qualify people in our education system to deal with the children of the Northwest Territories. We are moving forward and we will be putting those mechanisms in place as we start implementation. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: So some things I caught there were support mechanisms and specific training. As you heard yesterday, there was a lot of concern with stages of early childhood development. I do support the junior kindergarten programs in the small communities and the way it's coming out, but we also need the prenatal to five and six, even to there, as a strong initiative.

I want to ask the Minister, in terms of specific training, if he's familiar with the BC Early Learning Framework where they've actually developed child care licensing regulations. They have a child care sector occupational competencies. I wonder if he is familiar with that and if that could be a teaching tool for the department, a tool in terms of how we set forth since this government has really taken the initiative on early childhood development. Perhaps we can use that as a reference to develop these occupational competencies that set out things like knowledge skills, things that the early childhood educators need to demonstrate. I went through it briefly as best as I could and there's a lot of really good information in there. I would like to ask the Minister and his staff if they are familiar with the BC Early Learning Framework and whether or not they will be developing some type of occupational competencies for the child care sector. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Most definitely. Those are the areas that we are currently researching with our contacts in BC, not only BC but Alberta. As you know, Dr. Corriveau was in Alberta for a short period. He made all kinds of connections there with educators and administrators. We are taking full advantage of those resources that are available to us, but most specifically in BC, as the Member is alluding to. Those are some of the areas we want to get our hands on and start working on within our department and the Northwest Territories operators. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: I think, developing some occupational competencies, when we develop this, is going to be very handy not only for this government but it will set the future for our educators. Yesterday I was really hoping I would be able to get through all my questions and answers in the 10 minutes.

I'm a strong supporter of where the department is going. However, I've come to realize that this page alone, education and culture, is 79 percent of the overall ECE budget, so there will definitely be a lot of questions. If you look further, it's 15 percent of

the overall budget that we're going to be approving within this government. I'm looking at the time and I'm going to have to be put back on the rotation here.

Sticking with early childhood development, I would like to ask the Minister in commitment number six where they are looking to address the infrastructure challenges in the small communities, under one of the deliverables it mentions, "To ensure infrastructure is adequate for junior kindergarten in schools." Seeing as we're going to be going into our first year of junior kindergarten, has this deliverable been addressed already? Has it been identified? Do we know what the needs are and the inventory? What are the needs moving forward, so we can make sure that when we roll out this junior kindergarten we aren't stuck with challenges where the infrastructure is not there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We have already started working very closely with communities, the district education authorities and district education councils to identify the infrastructure needs in the communities. Again, we are working very closely with Health and Social Services and Public Works and Services. So those are some areas we've identified based on the numbers that have been produced by the district education authorities and councils. So we've been working with those numbers in communities. The information that has been shared with us, we are fully aware of infrastructure in the communities. Again, based on enrollment at the community level, most of the schools can accommodate junior kindergarten as an initial step. There may be some challenges with infrastructure, so we have to work with those guidelines as well. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Continuing on this activity for first round of questioning, I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to focus some of my area of concern around inclusive schooling funding. I'm not sure if anyone else has covered this particular area, but I'm just going to ask a few basic questions before we get into the detail of where we're going. Although we have the global number of \$26.5 million for inclusive schooling funding, maybe if the Minister could break out, not only just for Members but the public, how that money is broken out by school district. So let's put on the record how many school districts and how that money is spread out across the districts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Inclusive schooling, as Members know, is a territory-wide funding allocation to the school boards. I don't have the detailed breakdown of all the districts, but we cover most of the schools and

the school boards we have to work with. Based on that, there is a breakdown from the school boards to the schools and agencies they work with. It could be complex information that we can share with Members, but I just have the breakdown of the school district, whether it be Beaufort-Delta, Commission scolaire, Dehcho, Sahtu, South Slave, Tlicho, YSC, YK No. 1, Detah and Ndilo, for a combination of \$26.670 million. That's what we have on file currently. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Is it safe to say that that money is broken out evenly? I think there are 10 school boards that are represented there. Is it safe to say that it's broken out evenly amongst the school boards? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The information I shared is \$26.6 million based on the enrollment of the schools. Some school facilities are small, so they would get a smaller portion than the larger centres. It's all based on enrollment. The contribution is based on that. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: So would the Minister be correct by saying that it's based on a pupil ratio? Is that what he's saying? It's calculated down to for every student you have you get \$10, so if you have more students, you get more money, less students, you get less. What type of figure do they use for their calculation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. For that response, we'll go to the deputy minister, Ms. Eggenhofer.

MS. EGGENHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The difficulty with determining the funding levels to each education authority based on need is we've learned over the years that the smaller communities do not have the same diagnostic services that the larger centres have in the NWT. So if you were to divide the funding based on need, then you would basically provide a serious advantage to Yellowknife and other larger communities where the diagnosis could be done, whereas in the Beaufort-Delta, for example, in smaller communities they are at a disadvantage because they don't have access to the same services. So in the meantime, the funding is distributed based on the enrolment, but the inclusive schools review that the Minister spoke of yesterday is looking at a better way to divide the inclusive schooling funding pot to align it perhaps a little closer with need as opposed to just enrolment.

MR. HAWKINS: Although, of course, we're not on page 10-6, I would draw people's general attention to it, and it cites under inclusive schooling it ensures through guidelines and contributions that all NWT students are entitled to access an educational program in a regular institution setting in their home community. I appreciate the insight Deputy Minister Eggenhofer has offered, and that said, I'm just curious now about the diagnosis portion of it. I didn't realize that was actually part of

the funding of it, and if it is, can we help to figure out what the funding is and how that's broken out, because as I understood it, it was about access to educational programming and being able to be in an educational setting, so please. Thank you.

MS. EGGENHOFER: Apologies if I didn't articulate this clearly. Because there is not an equal access to diagnostic services throughout the Northwest Territories, that tool cannot be used to determine the need, because in smaller communities there aren't the speech pathologists and psychologists and other specialists available that could determine how many kids, for example, in a given school have needs for special assistance. Therefore, right now we are using what could be described as a rather crude instrument to divide out the inclusive schooling funding, but hopefully, we will look at providing a better way to divide the funding with the conclusion of the inclusive schooling review, which we hope to bring to committee in May.

MR. HAWKINS: Is it fair to assume that the money is broken out on best guess based on, I'll say, the experience and situation of these types of schools, that there is need but it hasn't been technically diagnosed? In other words, we have students we know that are there but they haven't been formally diagnosed under some type of, we'll call it, structure or professional basis. Is that a fair observation or understanding of what, in a small form, the deputy minister is trying to say? They're providing money based on that best assessment?

MS. EGGENHOFER: Yes, I think that's a fair assessment. We also, obviously, go by the individual education plans and student support plans that school education authorities submit to the department that identify where needs are required for students, and with the introduction of TINET, which is a new program, it will be a lot easier to track these individual learning plans.

MR. HAWKINS: My last couple minutes I'm going to use focusing in on assessment and in some manner or form linking it to the particular student as and when necessary. It's a good refresher here, and I thank MLA Bisaro for reminding me of telehealth mechanisms, tools, and instruments we have in many small communities, maybe not every one. I believe the funding should follow the student once we've identified them for what particular need they are so we cater appropriately for them.

Has the Department of Education used these types of tools and instruments such as telehealth in order to help identify this? Because I realize that if you're in Sachs Harbour, you may not have the ability to send someone out to a speech pathologist to be properly diagnosed, but we could use mechanisms like this so then we know which students through identifying and then we can target the money. I mean, at the end of the day, I want the money to be

targeted at the student who needs it most, not just the district to where we're just guessing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Most definitely, we are using telehealth. The Member mentioned Sachs could be a challenge, but we are fully aware that the Beaufort-Delta on the e-learning and other technology enhancement that they've had, they've been dealing with the telehealth in their schools as well. Those are some of the accessible technologies that we have, so we'll take full advantage of it. We have and we will continue to do so.

MR. HAWKINS: Is the Minister able to put on the record how many students have been diagnosed through using telehealth so, again, we can appropriately spend the right inclusive money on the students that need it most? Rather than just targeting based on estimates, I'm really a believer that the money should follow the student, and regardless of where that student is going to, so whatever institution, to me, matters little. Quite frankly, it's a matter about ensuring that appropriate funding is there for that student and the institution being able to facilitate regular instruction in a proper instructional setting.

Would the Minister be able to highlight how many times telehealth has been used in this ability? I think he just said that it's a tool they use. I'd like to know a little more detail as to how often they use it and maybe about how much money, time and effort they've been using and for how long, of course.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Obviously, I don't have the detailed breakdown because we still have to get that information from the district education council, but as soon as we get that we can share it with the Members.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Mr. Hawkins, your time is expired. If you need to get back on, let me know.

Committee, just a reminder, we've had one round of questions on this activity, and the chair recognizes that this is a fairly large activity by number and I will allow another round as needed for completion. I would ask though, committee, to shorten the preamble still a little bit more and try to get more questions in during your time allotment.

That being said, next on my list for second rounds on this activity is Mr. Bromley, followed by Ms. Bisaro and Mr. Moses.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a lot of questions. I'll see what I can get through here, and I appreciate very short, concise answers. Junior kindergarten, what's the junior kindergarten implementation dollar amount for the 29

communities scheduled in '14-15? That's the year under discussion.

Secondly, I know the Minister has agreed that a fully qualified ECE worker is needed for every junior kindergarten group. I don't call them a class because that implies teaching. We're talking child development. The Minister has agreed with that, but I still haven't heard him commit to meeting this precondition. Will he make that commitment? Two questions there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. In order to achieve the 29 communities by the 2014-15 school year on junior kindergarten, it will cost us approximately \$2.8 million on an annual basis. The Member is referring to the qualification. We've highlighted already the types of training that will be required and training that we're going to be delivering to these individuals and also the operators. More specifically, when it comes to junior kindergarten, we have to work with the kindergarten teachers as well. We're understanding of and share the Member's concerns, and we're going to be developing an action plan towards that. We do have some time to roll that out. This is an area that I've highlighted of providing various training pertaining to that, so we'll continue to push that forward.

MR. BROMLEY: Would the Minister commit to providing committee a briefing in writing or in person on the various levels of qualifications for early childhood education workers and how many of each level – I think he gave us some information on that but perhaps he could provide that in writing – that are available by community, and what level of ECE worker qualification is provided by Aurora College programs currently, number of graduates and what the plan is for the immediate future in terms of training actually fully qualified ECE workers?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: For sure, we'll provide all that information, because we want the Members to work with us, as well, with as much information as we possibly can to deliver to them. In addition, we can provide those spaces that are available that I had mentioned, I believe, yesterday. We'll provide that detailed information on all those questions that were asked.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. Very briefly, a comment, this will be my last comment hopefully on ECD, early childhood development. The premise that junior kindergarten is the way to go rather than focussing on zero to three, I know the Minister is aware that this is a contention here. Particularly on the claim that because services for zero to three age classes are fragmented, is a great leap and highly debatable, huge assumptions made there and I totally disagree with that. I think we are missing the boat. There is little evidence that the

issues we are seeing can be addressed through junior kindergarten nearly as much as a coordinated effort in the early, early years. I'll leave it at that. That's my strong belief and I believe I can back that up with evidence.

I'm just wondering: I see the Aboriginal languages section of this division is very important and I have spoken out consistently in favour of that work. I just want to point out to the Minister what I think is a kernel and that is a TED Talk by a lady, I think her name is Patricia Kuhl, entitled "The Genius of Babies." In that 10-minute TED Talk, it demonstrates, with massive amounts of data, that the window of opportunity between the ages of five and seven months, a five to seven-month-old human being, is absolutely amazing for picking up language and providing the basis for the rest of their life for multiple languages. So I would love to see the department take advantage of that opportunity, realizing that the department is not delivering all the programs, but this would be important information to get out to our partners and to use to guide at least the significant amount of our funding on languages. Can I just get a brief comment from the Minister on that? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, those are just some of the discussions that we need to have with various researchers out there, programs that have been successful, as Members indicated one of the programs on Aboriginal language, so we need to compile that information. At the same time, we are working very closely with the Aboriginal governments. As indicated in my Minister's statement, we are re-profiling funding back to the communities, back to the Aboriginal governments because they are the experts when it comes to Aboriginal language, and we are there to assist them and to support them and work closely with them. So, I agree with the Member. All that information is out there. We have been researching, and working with and enhance what's before us and if there are best practices, by all means we'll take full advantage of it. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. I find myself returning to early childhood development, probably not surprisingly. Just in terms of the work to establish family resource centres, child and family resource centres and activities in communities, I think we're a year and a half into the work in Ndilo and Detah, which already had some work already going on there. What is the outreach plan for other communities and what is the long-range plan for those centres, and particularly how are they being focused on the early years? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, we have contacted two pilot projects in two communities and that's been successful to date. We just want to find out, I guess, how it turns out and so we've been quite impressed with that.

As we move forward, we're going to be working very closely again with the Department of Health and Social Services to identify what came out of the pilot project, and based on that, part of the process will be to start implementing particular programming into other communities as well. We're at very preliminary discussions right now with the two departments, and as we move forward, we will definitely be sharing that information with the Members. If we're going to be identifying let's say a community that we're going to do another project or program delivery, then we'll definitely give a heads-up to the Members before we start that. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: A huge disappointment here, obviously. This is molasses at 40 below. The committee has been clear that we want these on-the-ground community programs in place. So, based on what I heard, if I heard it accurately, extremely disappointing.

As we know, last year at this time, when we looked at the budget, the money had not been delivered to those communities, or perhaps it was delivered during the week that we were discussing it. So within a few weeks they had to spend all that money, probably frantically and inefficiently. So, again, I'm not impressed and I think this department needs some serious tune-up in this area, if I am hearing the Minister accurately. I'm just not hearing much that makes me grin. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I didn't quite hear a question in there Mr. Bromley, is there a question?

MR. BROMLEY: I would love to hear the Minister respond and correct me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, all I can say at this point is that two pilot projects have been a success. We gave the contribution and they have expended the contribution. Future programming, we're still talking about that with the two departments, so if we move that along, we will definitely be sharing that information with the Members. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Mr. Bromley, you have a few seconds left on the clock. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Yes, just to finish that off, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Minister. Did the communities receive the same funding this year as they did last year, or did they receive the full amount last year, and are we committed, are these long-term programs now, or are we still trying to portray these as pilot projects that nobody is going to invest in?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We're still trying to figure out the numbers here. To my understanding,

through the briefings that I've received, both projects, both communities have received the fullest contribution, and if I am mistaken, then my staff can correct me if I'm wrong. That's my understanding. The Member is also referring to if this particular project will continue, and those are the discussions that we are currently having with the Department of Health and Social Services as part of the Early Childhood Development Action Plan. We need to discuss those more in detail. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Moving on with the second round of questions on this activity, I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to follow up on Mr. Bromley's comments and the Minister's response before I go into what I've got, I'm disappointed that at this point in time we don't know whether or not we're going to continue to fund the two pilots that we started in this current budget year. I guess I have to leave it at that. There's no question there, but I guess I feel really strongly that if these were pilots, we should have known before... One month before the end of the budget year, we should have been looking at evaluating these pilots and determining whether or not it's going to be ongoing funding for the next year.

I wanted to ask a further question on junior kindergarten and it's similar to the pilots that were run for the child and family resource centres. My understanding was that we had, I think, two junior kindergarten pilots in this current budget year. I'd like to know whether or not the Minister or the department can tell me if there has been an evaluation of those two junior kindergarten programs that they were running. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. The Member refers to the two pilots. Again, we are working closely with the Department of Health and Social Services on part of the Healthy Family programming, so we will do what we can to deliver similar programming as we move forward with ECD Action Plan. If there has been an evaluation of the junior kindergarten, the pre-kindergarten, at this time we haven't done a review of that, but we are fully aware of the program delivery and we're getting as much information on the deliverance of the program. So we're still compiling all that information.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I guess I would ask the Minister, once they have evaluated these two JK projects that were ongoing in '13-14 if committee could be apprised of the results of the evaluation. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Once the evaluations in occurrence, once it's completed, by all means we'll be sharing that with committee.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that commitment. I wanted to ask some questions about inclusive schooling, and I'm going to kind of follow-up where Mr. Hawkins left off. I'm really disappointed to hear the deputy minister say that we cannot fund inclusive schooling by need. It's a statement that this will not happen. My understanding is we currently fund per capita or per student, but I also have an understanding that there is supposed to be, and I think it's been about a year and a half now we've been hearing about a review of the inclusive schooling funding formula.

So the deputy minister indicated that the report on the inclusive schooling review is supposed to be coming in May, but when I hear a flat-out statement that we can't fund based on need and that we haven't got the review yet, that really sends up a flag for me and suggests that the decision has already been made. I have to point out that it may be difficult to fund on need and it may be difficult to establish need in communities, but there are many ways of doing it. You don't have to have an expert in every community in the NWT. We certainly have planes and we can fly people in and out. We certainly have planes and we can fly children in and out. I need to point out that there are magnet communities in the NWT and those communities with services attract students with special needs and those communities who attract students with special needs do not get funded to the level that they need to be to properly allow for the assistance that are required for certain students.

So I sincerely hope that what I heard is not what has already been decided. I hope that once the report is done that there will be an opportunity for committee to have some input, for school boards to have some input. I would like to just ask the Minister, when this report comes out in May, is it going to be a done deal, or is there an opportunity for input from Members and all other stakeholders? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. When it comes to inclusive schooling, this is what we have to date. There's legislation that we have to follow, but we are listening to the Members. That's the very reason we've listened to the Members, now we're going to reviewing. We're reviewing the inclusive schooling. So we want to make changes that reflect on the students' needs as well. Based on the review, based on the input from the school boards, the school boards will be actively involved and will give us options to make some decisions if this is going to be based on students' needs, the community's needs and so forth. So we're seeking out that information and it will be coming in May. We will be addressing this with the standing committee prior to May on the information that's been compiled. We can obviously present that to standing committee, get their input and then develop some action plans towards that.

The school boards are actively involved, they will be actively involved and the review will give us some options. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that info. I'm struck by the Minister saying that the school boards will be involved. I would hope that in doing any review that there would have been some canvassing of the people that are providing programs and running inclusive schooling. If that hasn't been done then I have to say I can't put much credence in the report or the review that is coming forward.

I'd like to ask a question about the amount of school contributions. On page 10-17 if I look at the '14-15 Main Estimates it indicates about \$131.7 million and yet I go to the next page and education authority contributions are \$152 million. So can I get an explanation of what the difference is, what are the school contributions on page 17, what are the school contributions on page 19? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. When I say school boards, it would consist of those experts that are in the field, the professions. So it was generic when I said school boards, but they will be involved with the professionals and experts in the field. I'll get Ms. Martin to elaborate a bit on the difference between \$131 million or \$150 million, or Mr. Heide.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 10-17 you will see program delivery details broken out. Several of them are related to school funding directly. So you'll have the \$26.573 million inclusive schooling coupled with the minority language education instruction at \$2.588 million, coupled with the \$131.705 million, which would bring us to the 150 number. Also added to that is the \$8.002 million for Aboriginal language and culture education within the schools.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to Mr. Heide for that. Okay, having learned that, that's great. That's kind of what I thought, but my other concern, I guess, or lack of understanding, is that on page 10-35 we have another number, a different number again. We've got 148. So from 152 to 148, can I understand what the difference is there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll give the Minister a second here. Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I get some clarification on the page number the Member is referring to?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Mr. Heide, the Member indicated page 10-35. Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The 148,881 number you see referenced on 10-35 is funding that flows for the school year as opposed to the fiscal year. When we shift from fiscal year to school year the numbers are somewhat changed. So when we fund for the fiscal year into the school year, 37 percent of that would be in the '13-14 portion of the fiscal year and 63 percent would be in the next portion of the fiscal year. So it's a matter of changing between fiscal years and school years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think my time is up.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'll just give you one final supplementary to this question. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: I don't know, Mr. Chair. I wasn't quite ready for that. I think I'll just leave it at that. I appreciate the explanation and I think I knew that and had forgotten. So I'll have further questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Again, I'm moving on with the second round of questioning. I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to ask the Minister about the involvement of elders in our schools. If the Minister could just briefly let me know which schools have elders in their schools and where the funding is coming from. If he could provide me with the department's plans of ensuring that all the schools will have the best opportunity to bring elders into their schools.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Beginning in 2013-14, we launched territorial Elders in Schools programming dedicating just over \$400,000 to ensure the elders are actively involved through NWT schools. Our contribution is to the school boards and they decide how many elders will be hired based on the numbers. Some are larger populations and some smaller. This is also a first for us. Obviously, over time this number will increase. We know the hours elders will be working in school will be minimal with \$400,000, but it will be increased over time. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: I want to ask the Minister how many schools and school boards on record have elders in schools. I know he provided funding. I appreciate that. That's a drop in the bucket. I want to know how many schools today. What are his plans? Can he provide the plans to us?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated, part of our contribution is to all school boards. There are approximately 37 communities, but we deal with all the school boards, the \$400,000. At their discretion,

they hire elders on an as-needed basis, as well, so this is an initial step for us as a department. We've never had this before. We feel we need to have more presence in our school systems. Our prime focus is increasing this over time. Mr. Chair, all I can say at this point is our contribution is towards all the school boards. Currently, we have 37 communities that are accessing it. Obviously, we want all schools to be captured. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: So, Mr. Chair, the funding has gone to the school boards. Is that correct?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair. We have to work very closely with the school boards. From there, they decide on hiring the elders on need and the hours that they should be working in the schools. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Just for clarification, the funding went to the schools. They are continuing working closely. This is not about working closely; this is about putting in a project that I've been harping on for a long, long time. The funding went to the schools. They have the funding. Does the Minister know today from the school boards how many elders are in the schools?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We need to get that information from the school boards, the detailed information. I don't have it in front of me today. Based on our contribution, it is specifically to hire elders in schools. In the 37 communities I have highlighted, the \$400,000 has been disbursed to the school boards and it's at their discretion to hire the elders through our contribution. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: I look forward to that information given the long, continuous push from my side, at least, to have elders in schools. I thought the Minister would have the information on hand because it's such a high priority for me to have elders in schools. I am a little bit disappointed the Minister doesn't have the information at hand to tell me how many elders are in school right now and how the education boards are working as to what ways of putting these valuable professors into our schools. I will leave it at that.

My second question I want to ask on the culture and heritage section. This afternoon I recognized a geographical name of a mountain that is bordering on the Yukon/Northwest Territories border close to mile 222 on the Canol Heritage Trail. Is this something that the department is working towards in the North that there are some original names that should be brought back into the geographical naming of our territory? There are some strong Aboriginal names that haven't been recognized, but we certainly have given recognition to other names. Certainly that has wiped off the Aboriginal identity to their area and their land. We are talking some pretty strong names that now we haven't put on to the name of our land. I can speak about the Mackenzie Valley Highway, on some bridges, river

crossings, trails. There are some hills that are given some pretty non-essential names for us like Seagram Creek. That's not the original name. I don't know where Seagram came from or Devil's Canyon.

Is there any project to recognize our traditional names in the North?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Just to touch on the first one, as the Members know, the Elders Program started just last September. We've just started our second semester now. We will be providing detailed information on the elders who are in school. At this point, we are still going through the first phase, the first year, but we will provide that information.

With respect to the geographical names, historical sites, traditional name, there has been some recent announcement with the Member's riding and even prior to that with the Gwich'in, the Degee area. There are all these different traditional names that have been highlighted. We are very proud of that work. It's continuous work we have been doing with the museum. We are working very closely with the Andrew family and other proponents, the discussions we are currently having with other regions as well. So, I can assure you that there will be more of these geographical names or sites will be announced and highlighted as we move forward. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

MR. YAKELEYA: I'll look forward to those mountains, as the Minister stated. My last question is on the adult and post-secondary education. Information I got from the department I am very appreciative of. It shows a number of technical training programs on our campuses in the Northwest Territories. Mine right now is the interest of the Sahtu students on these campuses. I have enrolment of campus and community programs in the Sahtu region of the students who are taking some form of post-secondary training or education. We have 81 students in those institutions today.

What type of career guidance do these students receive as they are going through their training programs to hook up with potential jobs? We also have, potentially, a high number of graduates in the Sahtu this year, maybe 47. What is the career guidance that we are giving these students once they finish Grade 12? Are career officers going into the school in March or April to say this is where you're going to be going to, about post-secondary trades or whatever? Are we going to be doing that, especially in the Sahtu?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We provide detailed information to the Member. He alluded to the 81 students. We should be proud of those students advancing their education whether it's through Aurora College or adult learning centres in communities. Obviously, we want them to succeed even further, whether it is trades accessing

programming or whatever. The Member asked what happens for them in Grade 12. Obviously, we want to have supporting mechanisms in place for them through the high school programming or even the college. We are currently working very closely with the college, as well, to provide those supports. Even within our department, there is a career development shop that we've been pushing those students. There are training coordinators in the Sahtu region pertaining to job placements. As the Member knows, there is a committee consisting of all these different industry representatives and we are on there as well as the community.

Job placement is very important. We're doing what we can as a department to provide those options to students. At the end on the day, we want those 81 students the Member is referring to to succeed in life. We will do what we can to push that forward with the communities. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Committee, the chair is calling for a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Committee, we are on page 10-17, activity summary, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$241.213 million. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We heard a lot of questions here about early childhood development in the last couple of days. I have a motion that I'd like to read, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Go ahead, Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 18-17(5):
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
PRIORITIES,
DEFEATED

MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the government reallocate an additional \$2 million from its existing budget to early childhood development in order to achieve the priorities set by the 17th Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I have here in my hands is the Early Childhood Development Framework of the Northwest Territories. In this framework we have seven commitments made by both the Department of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment. Within these seven commitments, we have 22 areas of action and underneath that, 39 deliverables and somewhere in the area of about 82 targets. I'm not sure if I counted them right. That's just for this year alone,

so moving forward I have a lot of questions about where we should be putting dollars.

When I look at these commitments, areas of action, deliverables and targets, I'm feeling that we're not sure if the department has enough dollars to meet the needs in this upcoming fiscal year.

There is a strong link between health and education. What's been reported from experience during the early years with education strongly influences lifelong health as well as learning.

In reading what other frameworks have shown, "Quality early learning experiences have the potential to improve children's overall health and well-being for a lifetime. Similarly, children who are healthy tend to learn better, further underlying this connection."

So, I'm just trying to support what the department is doing. I've given them acknowledgement and recognition at the start of this discussion today. We just want to continue to further support and ensure that this department and government have the necessary resources to enact this action plan with early childhood development. I am obviously in favour of the motion. I would encourage other Members to speak to it as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Next I have Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate Member Moses for bringing this motion forward. If this isn't apparently clear right now, you've heard from numerous committee members on their passion on this area of early childhood development. Now, we may not always agree on the actual steps or the age group per se, and we know that the department is working quite well in getting their junior kindergarten up and running, and I do support that initiative. You've also heard from many committee members that zero to three or the month five to month nine. I'm sure anyone who does enough research can probably dig up any study that will corroborate anything in that area of childhood development, and I think there are some good ideas out there.

That said, I can just imagine what's going through Cabinet's mind right now going, you know, we're on a fiscally tight budget, we've got a lot of initiatives on the agenda. How can we afford another \$2 million? What's going through this committee's mind that would allow us to even conceive that, given the fiscal restraints that we continuously hear when motions are brought to the floor of the House? That's a good question. This committee as well as Cabinet as well as the entire Northwest Territories have waited over two years for this early childhood development to come into play. We've heard a lot of good things, and I think over the years, this committee and individual Members have

supported the initiatives, waiting feverishly to see these actions and these steps to be put in motion.

I think we just heard from Mr. Moses, this is a fairly daunting action plan where this committee feels that we're not actually putting enough money to achieve meaningfully, the results that, I think, everyone is hoping to resolve this. This motion basically gives that direction to say, listen, we support this initiative, which I think is a good thing. No one should read negatively into this motion. What we're saying is we're supporting what is being done. We're just saying let's put a little bit more grease on that axle so that we can achieve what is meaningful to the people of the Northwest Territories.

I can tell you that in this committee structure in this very House, we will spend less time debating on \$20 million, \$30 million, \$40 million, \$300 million for new highway construction, and that goes with very little debate, and yet sometimes we'll sit here and we'll talk about a \$2 million project, a \$1 million project when really that's less than one kilometre of new highway. I always find that mindboggling in this room. What will benefit the future of our territory and we put so much debate into it, and yet other pieces of equipment or infrastructure barely see the light of day and barely get debated. It's usually just approved, because, yes, infrastructure is the right way to go. I'm not saying that it isn't. I'm just saying that this is something that will greatly shift.

This motion is setting the course of a paradigm shift in our thinking. It's saying, listen, let's put more money where we're going to get a bigger bang for our dollar. Let's put more money in something that we're going to have a tangible benefit for the future of the Northwest Territories, and nothing more.

This is not about a power struggle. This is not about a bunch of Regular Members who don't understand dollars and cents. Members on this side of the House clearly understand the budget and clearly understand the fiscal restraints that we're facing. We're saying let's put more money where it really counts, and it counts in our people. If it's not apparently clear what I'm indicating today or what my rationale is for this motion, I will be in support of this motion, and I will actually be calling for a recorded vote.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is no question, I think the record is strong and clear on the national and international front that early childhood development is the best possible investment that any government can do, that any nation can do, that any jurisdiction can do, in terms of education, reducing corrections costs, and economic development. The list goes on. Health and reducing health costs, generating local economies. The list goes on and on. Family

integrity, social structures. These are completely well documented, especially when there's a clear and consistent focus starting with the early years.

The Minister has said he would like a discussion and clear direction with committee, and I think this is an important step in trying to provide that when we talked about, for example, community family resource centres. Community family resource centres have long been a focus, a major focus for Members. We have tried repeatedly to fund these over the years, and we have put money in place and called for them repeatedly, and given the return that has been demonstrated from these sorts of investments, we are nothing less than flabbergasted that the department is not moving aggressively forward on this front. This motion is the dreary and pedantic but totally consistent next and latest attempt to get these key tools in action on early childhood development.

I will be supporting it, and I hope the Minister takes this, once again, as direction. I'm feeling like after all our input, the department is still unilaterally going forward with their own programs, and they're not totally useless. I think there's some important work being done on lots of fronts, but we don't feel there is sufficient and we don't feel the department has been listening to our call for an early years focus through, for example, child and family resource centres run by community organizations and with support from this government in at least most of our communities. I'll be supporting the motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am in support of this motion. I think my comments yesterday indicated that I believe very strongly that we need to put more effort, more consideration, more design into our early childhood development budget. The department is set on implementing junior kindergarten, and that's fine. It's a good program. I don't have a problem with that. What I do have a problem with is that we are not putting the same focus on our zero to three children, and we need to put more money into that area. Other Members have spoken to the benefit that we get from focusing on zero to three, so I don't need to repeat that, but simply to say that I strongly support the positions that they've put forward.

I think Mr. Bromley mentioned that the Social Programs committee has discussed this issue many times, and it is not just within the last six months that we've been discussing it. This has been discussed since I have come here. It's not an either or. It shouldn't be programming for four-year-olds or programming for zero to three, and that's what this motion is trying to convey. It is an issue we've been trying to convey for quite some time. We should be doing programs and we should be enhancing programs in both areas, and

unfortunately, the department has decided that junior kindergarten is early childhood development, and so four-year-olds are going to get the benefit but we're not going to put the money that is required and that is necessary into zero to three, and that is extremely unfortunate. As Mr. Bromley said, I hope that the department hears us this time around and does take our direction.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Once again, I cannot be supporting a motion that's including additional dollars to the budget. I know the mover of the motion originally said in the motion to reallocate, but it also says an additional \$2 million, so I can't support the motion with that. We've got a bigger fight coming ahead of us. We've still got a \$30 million reduction in the next fiscal year. All Members are aware that because of the late new information on deductions and taxes that we were going with the printed budget as we speak, and that further reductions will be coming next year. My experience has been that even if they add another \$2 million, that's actually a \$4 million loss of potential programs and services that will be rolling out to the regions and communities. With that, I can't support that.

The line item early childhood development already has in excess of \$8 million in it already. I know that Members on this side want to speed up the Early Childhood Strategy but all things come in time. You have to take a slow, progressive pace at it. Once again, I'm still not convinced by us giving the government \$2 million that it will be spent the way that we want it to be spent.

So with that, once again, I can't be supporting this motion. I do support early childhood development, I do support the strategy that was put forth and I'll continue to support that strategy as we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say that reading the motion very carefully, it does say a reallocation of an additional \$2 million, so there might be the appearance of, when the word is additional, it's really meant addition to the programming, not necessarily to the overall bottom line of the budget. That's the way I read it and I think that's the way it was intended. I do hear Mr. Menicoche's point, but that's why I want to reaffirm I read it and I think a lot of other folks do as well.

That said, I think it's given enough of a parameter and design with the flexibility to allow the department and certainly the government, through the – goodness, I hate to say this word – through the government's wisdom, to find a way to do that. This is committee members trying to help support

the initiative that's being led by the government and certainly by the Minister. I have yet to have a single person tell me that junior kindergarten isn't important. This is re-profiling money, and sometimes we think we can offer the best advice, we know that sometimes if we just say look, this is clearly what we want, help us help you, and this is exactly what this is, is a motion that Members want to help government further the ideals and benefits of junior kindergarten. So again, this is just about re-profiling the money, reallocation within the government and we feel like \$2 million is necessary to achieve the goals as prescribed.

We could talk at length, and as much as I would like to talk at length, we all know the benefits of junior kindergarten. Everyone is completely sold and I am an absolute believer in its benefits and I want to thank the department for building this into a giant pillar for long-term educational plans. That work is important. I admire the expertise they bring forward in the briefings. I mean, we have some top quality people providing this guidance and that should not go understated. We have got some really good insight on this. The only concern is we want to make sure that it gets off on the right start. This being, of course, good advice from Members of government, I would hope government would heed our advice and jump on it and say, my goodness, what a great idea. It's not too familiar for government to think that way. They have every opportunity to agree with us, so I would like this to be the occasion. I believe a recorded vote has already been asked for, so there's no sense in repeating that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Even though I am a major supporter of early childhood development, at this point I am not in favour of reallocating any additional money at this time. The reason being, last year, when we did ask for increases to our budget, it took away from other areas within the department and that has really been felt within the communities.

Inclusive schooling, for example, I think the department is moving ahead. I know this year is the first year we are doing junior kindergarten. Some people may not be in favour of that, but in the smaller communities it has a huge impact. I know a lot of people are very thankful and positive about that and are looking forward to how it could work better.

The department is also doing very well with the Head Start program in many of the communities. It is very successful. I know one thing we need to do is add more training and that's one area that can be done during the summer to prepare for next fall and I'm really looking forward to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Blake. To the motion. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I fully agree with the Members that we need to invest into our early childhood and that's exactly what we're doing. We're putting \$8.2 million into this budget in '14-15 for early childhood development and learning. The majority of it, \$5.1 million, is going towards daycare and day home subsidies, healthy children initiatives, small communities initiatives and also...(inaudible)...top-up.

These are key investments into our communities and I am fully supportive of that as well. Also, the Department of Health and Social Services deals with all these different deliveries into the communities to focus on zero to three, so we are working very closely with them to deliver those subsidies to support those zero to three years of age as well.

Mr. Chairman, not to elaborate further, I just want to highlight, we are currently in a process, once the budget is approved, \$8.2 million will be going towards that to the communities. As this is direction to this government at this time, Cabinet cannot support this motion. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. To the motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a few comments to this. It's really speaking about reallocating, and people are hearing us in the communities. We do that on a regular basis. We see that, we allocate a few dollars here and there, we do things that certainly we want to see projects in the communities. This is a statement from this side of the House to say that the Early Childhood Development Initiative that we have taken on and the government has been working towards is a top priority to meet the objectives of the 17th Assembly, so what we are saying is that we, as a government, could do it. I have seen some amazing things on this side in the last 10 years, how money has been moved around, reallocations, coming up with new dollars to put this, if our minds are strong, towards it.

I do agree with the Minister that \$8.2 million is a lot of money, but when you look at it, the overall number of communities, programs that we have to serve for early childhood development, it doesn't seem quite enough. Of course, we are stretched with our dollars here.

I just want to say that this motion is talking about something that we always do as a government. It's not something that cannot get done, it's something that we want this Cabinet to look at work towards and see if we can meet our objectives. We all support early childhood development, just how we do this, we have disagreements about how we go about it. That's all I want to say. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Question has been called. Call for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): All those opposed, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Blake, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Votes are six for, nine against.

---Defeated

Committee, page 10-17, activity summary, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditure summary, \$241.213 million. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know the first round that I got through I focused a lot on early childhood development. I know when we give out our funding to our education authorities, being the Member that represents Inuvik Boot Lake and the Beaufort-Delta Education Authority and discussions and talking with both educators and staff, the amount of funding that they do get in that region alone, I'm not sure how the formula is given to the students, but in that area alone when we fund the Beaufort-Delta Education Authority it does have a very high cost associated to travel. So when we want educators or people from the authority to go into the communities, especially the coastal communities, there's an added cost that really affects their budget and the amount of time they can go and support their teachers or go see how a school is doing. It does affect the budget. So it also affects the amount of programs that they might be able to do that year and might possibly be taking away positions within the authority that might otherwise be beneficial.

I think the department, when they do give out funding, has to have something in there that addresses the high cost of travel within the Beaufort-Delta region, and I'm sure it's the same with the small communities in the other regions as well. I just want to ask the Minister how is that being addressed or looked at when we're allocating dollars to these authorities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. As it stands now, I can only speak to how we're contributing to the school boards. I do have a list of just over \$146 million to the school boards and the Beaufort-Delta Divisional Education Council is top on the line. We give more money based on the enrollment and also the cost factor as well, as the Member alluded to, the high cost of living in the communities.

My deputy alluded earlier that we'll be re-evaluating the funding formula to the schools. So this is an area that could change as we develop the discussion paper on whether we're going to be changing the formula funding. That's an area that we're going to be discussing. So what I'm sharing with you is current to date and then that will obviously see some changes. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. I'm glad to hear that formula funding is something that's going to be looked at and addressed. I think it's long overdue because each authority only gets so many dollars to spend and when a lot of it goes into travel, that's a lot taken out of the education components, the support components there.

Moving forward, one way that we can affect this is through a program that the Minister is very familiar with and that's the e-learning program. I just wanted to make a little comment on the e-learning program. Committee has seen firsthand that program in action, seen the results that were given in a presentation, as well, to some Members on the increase of school marks as well as the options of doing academic classes that otherwise couldn't have been done before. So just really amazing, innovative ways of educating our youth in the small communities. In the Beaufort-Delta there are seven of them that can be affected in a positive way. In the Sahtu there are four communities that can get this type of program delivered. In the North Slave about four or five. Then in the Deh Cho there would be four communities that could get on the e-learning system and we'd get high quality education to our youth in those small communities but also provide an academic course to these classes.

I know the Minister is aware of the e-learning program. It's a great program. In fact we passed a bill in this House getting information using the e-learning system from students in Tuktoyaktuk, from the students and educators. So that e-learning system helped us pass legislation in this House. So, history, amazing.

I don't know what to say any further, except that I do have a motion that I'd like to read into the House, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Go ahead, read your motion.

COMMITTEE MOTION 19-17(5):
EXPANDING E-LEARNING SERVICES,
DEFEATED

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends that the government increase its allocation to fully fund the e-learning initiative currently provided and funded by the Beaufort-Delta District Education Council. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. A motion is on the floor. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I get into this motion specifically, the department and all Members of this Assembly have noticed that the Regular Members have introduced three motions particularly to this department. It's not that we're questioning their authority over what they're doing, we just want to support the great things that are happening in education right now, early childhood development, child daycares and, in this case, the e-learning program.

We see what's happening in the communities. We see how things are changing within the communities and throughout the Northwest Territories. This one in particular I think, the Beaufort-Delta is using its resources, a lot of its resources, actually, to get this education. I think last year it was four communities in the Beaufort-Delta. We want to set a goal of reaching all seven of those communities, but I mentioned earlier that we have communities that don't have that type of education or the academic courses. We have four in the Sahtu, about four or five in the North Slave, four in the Deh Cho where this program can really do some wonders and have an impact on the education and the health and livelihood of our youth in the Northwest Territories.

As I mentioned, we did see the success of this program firsthand and we did pass a bill, the Education Act, we did an amendment to it, getting input from Tuk educators and students. Obviously, I brought this forward because we want to support the great work that the Beaufort-Delta Education Council is doing and the innovative style they are using to get this program into the places that need it, especially the coastal communities, they're the next communities on the list and we want to look up and down the valley. We've got the fibre optic link coming in and going to be worked on and completed and that gives us a great opportunity to hit those communities in the Deh Cho, to hit those communities in the Sahtu and right across the Northwest Territories.

I don't know what else to say, but I think that it's an opportunity that we give the students from the smallest community to the biggest city here in Yellowknife equal opportunity, decent and quality education, and support our educators, support our

authorities that are making decisions at the regional levels and support the good work that the department does do, as well as support the work of standing committee and also of Members of this Legislative Assembly.

It is Education Week and it's a great way to recognize the great work that's going on out there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. To the motion, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to say that I do support this motion for a couple of reasons. One is that I have been able to personally see this initiative in action twice now and it is providing education at the high school level to communities that would not normally be able to get the range of courses that they are getting through the e-learning initiative.

Secondly, I think the fact that this is being fully funded by the Beau-Del District Education Council is patently unfair. This is an initiative on the part of this particular district education council and they are being funded on a per capita basis the way every other school board is being funded, and yet this is an initiative that is of huge benefit to the department because it's affecting the schools within this particular district, but they are also wanting to expand into the Sahtu, so it's not just for this particular education district.

The department has to realize that an initiative like this, the Beau-Del has spent a lot of money over the last three, four, five years to develop this particular program, and it really ought to be funded by the department. It shouldn't be funded by the district education council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really support this e-learning initiative, and although we are asking for more funds here, I have been contacted by the Beaufort-Delta Education Council and they're very excited for the coming year because they are getting an increase of \$500,000. They're really excited about that. I know the Sahtu is ready to come on board, and once that happens, I think that we could move forward on there and maybe increase it more next year, but at this time I can't support this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. When it comes to e-learning, I did visit the Sunchild e-learning program. A great initiative. I tried to get that same type of programming not only for youth but young adults in Fort Liard, but at that time there was a bandwidth issue, so we weren't able to pursue it any further. I know there are still some

issues in the smaller communities with bandwidth and that once those are addressed we can certainly move forward with the e-learning program on a small scale.

I'm certainly supportive of e-learning. I've seen the value of it. Like I said, I visited the Sunchild Reserve and how successful it is, but their model is quite extensive. They've got e-learning and they've got dedicated teachers to help the students and the young adults, even adults, for that matter, that participate. That's the success of that e-learning program.

I'm not too sure what specifically Beaufort-Delta District Education Council's model is based on, but I certainly wish them success and certainly Mr. Blake also mentioned that they are getting an increase of \$500,000 as additional resources for that. Once again, we're asking for more money, and I certainly can't support that. I wish the motion was different. I wish it said let's explore e-learning in all the regions and districts, and that's where the focus should be. The Member spoke about that, about the value in other regions and districts as well. With that, as the motion currently reads, I cannot support it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Just a quick note there, Mr. Chair. The motion, again, recommends that the government increase its allocations to fund the e-learning. I heard some pretty successful stories and especially for our small communities to move people into the required educational careers that they want to go into with full confidence that they're getting the required courses. Of course, the funding is being looked at through the Beaufort-Delta District Education Council, and they're looking beyond its regions, and I certainly agree with Mr. Menicoche on other regions taking full advantage of this type of initiative and that we start looking at avenues where our smaller communities can be under the same sort of level and on par with the larger regions who have some courses that we don't have in our small communities. I do support the reallocation of this type of funding. It's a very good initiative, and I certainly know that the Sahtu people, if this ever happens, it would be beneficial if Members spoke on it. So I'd like to add on my last comment to ask for a recorded vote.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I am fully in agreement with the Members that we should be investing in e-learning, and that is exactly what we had done last week since we have contributed \$500,000 to the BDEC. This motion is asking for additional funds which will be addressed through the Education Renewal and Innovation, through that action plan. This will definitely be a

topic of discussion, and at this point, the Cabinet cannot support this initiative since we are already moving forward on this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Question has been called. Members have asked for a recorded vote. Will all those in favour, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): All those opposed, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Blake, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): All those abstaining, please stand.

Results of the motion: five in favour, nine opposed, no abstentions. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Committee, we are on page 10-17. Moving on with questions, I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple comments on this page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Point of order has been... Committee, order please. Mr. Hawkins, point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could reach for my book, but I won't call the particular person out of this Chamber by name, but I will say that there was an infringement during the recorded vote that a Member in this building ran into their seat while the vote was called. I'll respect them and won't say their name, but that does break, I think, Rule 12(5) of our rules in the Chamber. For the record, they were voting against the motion, so I think the official record should read one less than it officially did. Again, I'll be a nice guy and not call out that Member's name, because I'm a nice guy.

CHAIR'S RULING

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Mr. Hawkins. You've raised what I consider an erroneous point of order. The Member in question was indeed within the purview of the vote. No point of order. Mr. Blake, you have the floor.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Moving on here, I just wanted to commend the department for

looking into the junior kindergarten. That's really needed in the communities. Over the last couple of years we've seen an increase in the demand to increase our grade levels, and I think that this is one way to start tackling that issue. I know it is a real challenge in the smaller communities to keep our grade levels up because of the shortage of teachers compared to students. A lot of times we have one teacher for two or three grades and that is very challenging, I have heard from a lot of the teachers in larger centres or even in the South. I had the opportunity to actually go to school down there when I was in junior high and high school, so I know it is a huge difference when you compare our education here in the Territories. I will use myself as an example. You know up to Grade 7 I had a 90 percent average, pretty good marks, until I went to Edmonton. It's very different. The amount of homework you get in the South compared to here in the North is overwhelming when you don't expect that, but it is a good experience. You also have a lot of other subjects down there, like automotives, as I mentioned earlier, and art, drama, all these different types of extra credits you can get. You know, that's something we have to aim towards here in the North. I know it will take time, but I think we could get there.

One thing that the grade levels don't show is how many of our students here in the North experience. That is one thing that I noticed, going to school in the South, our students here experience a lot more in their young lives than students do in the South, whether it's hunting, camping, trapping, that is a way of life and teaches them how to survive, and you can't put a grade level on that. I think, as they move on in their years, that will help out a lot. I think we are on the right track here.

One thing that I hoped to see and I would like to ask the question to the Minister, I see languages on here and I noticed in some of the presentations we have received, we are supposed to have an Inuvialuktun instructor in Aklavik and I just wanted to know where the department was with that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. The funding that we contribute to the school boards and also to the language centres, based on that, the programming and also the resources that are required. What the Member is alluding to is very specific to that riding and I can gather that information as to the status. I don't have that detail of information at this point, if that individual has been hired to deal with the language itself, but we are investing tremendously in the language centre and I just indicated that we are providing additional funding to Aboriginal governments to deal with those matters at hand

because, again, they are the language experts and we need to learn from them as well. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, that's all the questions I have right now, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Again, committee, just for reference point, we are still on 10-17. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to advise that when it comes to junior kindergarten in the communities, I have had constituents that are very supportive of it and it is something that we need in the communities, especially small communities, because the stats for progress in writing and reading is so low. In fact, it is so low that the department actually cancelled those Alberta achievement tests, but that is another story.

I certainly support junior kindergarten. I think that will give our younger preschool children a leg up as they enter our schooling system. It's too bad someone already took the words Head Start, but that certainly will give our children a head start and the results will play out in about a year, after one year is up of operations.

Much concern has been in the paper about junior kindergarten, but that's all Yellowknife-driven. That's a fight for three years from now when they actually have to implement it. They're doing the communities first, so yes, it is raising their ire, but that's certainly something that can be dealt with and I believe that they will resolve it. I just want to say that, to anybody listening out there, the Junior Kindergarten Program is not bad; it's a good thing.

Another issue that was raised, and perhaps the Minister can comment, is about the library in Fort Simpson. I have been pressing for that for many, many years. I certainly wouldn't mind an update about that and how the department has been helpful.

When it comes to reductions, like, a point five position in a small community really affects the school. I just want to ask the Minister, is there a minimum or a baseline that we use to support small communities where if attendance is lower that we won't reduce it past a certain amount of teachers for a school? I'll just ask those questions, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. If I can reflect on the library in Fort Simpson, we have been dealing with that for quite some time now. Even with the community council, town council, we are trying to find an allocation for all those materials. There has been a lot of discussion

between two of the departments, my department and also the community. We continue to have that dialogue and there are some funding allocations through various libraries and I do have here Fort Simpson, \$52,600 being proposed here, but I'll be giving more of the latest status to the Member on the Fort Simpson library and where it's at. The community has been involved and will provide the status.

The point five reduction that the Member is referring to, those are just some of the stats that we work with the district education council and authorities, based on enrollment. We provide funding based on enrollment and they decide where they should be hiring, whether it be EAs or staff teachers or custodians or administrators. It's at their discretion, but at the same time, I did commit in this House that we are currently reviewing the formula funding based on enrollment versus the needs of the community, so those are discussions we are currently having and I think this will somewhat satisfy the Member's concern. A point five in a small community is a big hit for the community; I totally understand that. That's why one of the pillars of education renewal is to focus on small communities. Mahsi, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I certainly look forward to the update from the Minister, because the library is still called a resource centre. It's kind of a shame when our children can go to the library and they cannot really look at books and sign out books. They can do it on-line, but it's kind of cumbersome for the younger children to do that. It will be a good thing once we can establish a full library in Fort Simpson.

One of the other suggestions that I did make several years ago was to classify it as a regional library and put it in legislation. It then becomes a funded facility, but that's one of the ways that we can do it, but I'm glad that the department continues to support the community of Fort Simpson and work towards an expanded and better facility that can actually house books and children can look at them. In the news, it's quite critical that our children are spending way too much time on-line, i-Pads and that kind of stuff. Getting back to just having books around is a good thing. Right now in Fort Simpson, we're right in that crux where children are depending on i-Pads and other media just to do their reading when the way you stimulate imagination is by reading and imagining as opposed to visual learning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I didn't quite hear a question there, but I'll let the Minister reply. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I totally agree with the Member. This is one area where we'll continue to focus, because it's been in the works for some time now. Formula funding,

based on the library allocation, we'll definitely be discussing further. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Next on my list I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One thing I forgot to mention earlier was along the lines of junior kindergarten. I'm really impressed by the board in the Tlicho region that they're moving ahead with actually implementing the junior kindergarten in the Tlicho language. I'm really impressed by that. I know they're working very hard to keep their culture and tradition alive. That's really great to see and I look forward to that happening in other regions as well as the Sahtu. Hopefully one day very soon it's up in the Beaufort-Delta region, whether it's in Gwich'in or Inuvialuktun. I think we're on the right path here and I just wanted to commend the department in working with the Tlicho region and hopefully very soon with other regions as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I certainly hope too. I would like to see all regions with full-fledged immersion programming. This is a great start for us. The South Slave started it off and then the Tlicho, then Gwich'in and other regions. I would like to see all of them, actually. That would be our long-term goal.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Committee, we're on 10-17. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just one more brief thing. I know the department is working on the curriculum within the Gwich'in language to hopefully bring forward very soon. I know this firsthand because I had the opportunity to travel with the Minister to Alaska to see how they operate over in Alaska with the Gwich'in language. It was very impressive to see two young students there who didn't know very much Gwich'in when they began, but within not even their first year they are very fluent and speaking with their teacher. I know that's one area that the Tlicho are moving on, because they were also accompanying us there. It's really looking positive and I look forward to the future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. With these kinds of experiences on trips, we bring back best practices and start implementing them in our region. Slowly we're doing that with the Tlicho and other regions as much as possible. The sooner the better. Mahsi.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Committee, 10-17, activity summary, education and

culture, operations expenditure summary, \$241.213 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Committee, we're going to group 10-18 and 10-21 combined. Activity summary, education and culture, grants and contributions, \$207.928 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 10-23, information item, education and culture, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 10-25, activity summary, labour development and standards, operations expenditure summary, \$10.727 million. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I find myself from time to time forwarding people to this particular office. I'm just curious on what type of outreach is provided to the everyday citizen. It's not so much the employers I'm concerned about, it's more about the employees that I find that they come to me and say, I think something is wrong, I don't know who to complain to about what's happening at our office, and I try to put them in this particular direction. I'm just wondering: are we doing enough to explain employer/employee rights? Are we giving people any awareness that they need to know where to go?

Quite often I hear the first thing is, I've got an issue at my office, it's not a government office, and they'll say it must be a human rights issue. I say, well, have you started with the employment law first to find out if that's where it falls under. They looked shocked, then I have to describe where it is and how to get there, so I guess, in short, what type of outreach do we provide the general community – and I'm talking about the whole territory – about the availability and services offered in this? Like I say, I find myself regularly pointing people in this particular direction that's not necessarily an MLA issue and it's not for me to say if it's a labour or human rights issue, but to try to give people the best advice and certainly the right advice so they can follow through with their particular concern, and if it is a concern, at least they have an avenue to pursue it properly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. For that we'll go to Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The employment standards unit do a fair amount of pamphlet-driven educational tours throughout the Territories. We have an on-line presence. Could we do more? I think we could and should do more, but at the moment we do a fair amount, but obviously

the Member suggested we should do more and I agree with him.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. If I were to ask where these pamphlets are, where do we find them? At this point, if they're sitting at the office, they're already there. Where would the general person trip across this information to know to go there?

One of the problems I often find with saying go check our website, everything is on there, it's a bit of a cumbersome and sometimes intimidating process and sometimes you really have to know what you're looking for to find it.

So where would we find some of these pamphlets, or don't we have posters, do they do an occasional – I'm not talking about every newspaper – but do they do an occasional ad? We see some of these on-line websites such as, for example, Yellowknife Trader, YK Trader. They have little ads on there. Things like that. How do we do our outreach as provided by the staff there just a second ago? Thank you.

MR. HEIDE: Again, we have the pamphlet on-line presence. The pamphlets are available through the career centres, at a variety of service centres with Service Canada as well as through the governmental liaison officers in the smaller communities. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chairman, what I'll do is finish off by asking this and certainly hoping I can get some type of positive response from the department, are there some informal websites? I'll tell you, a lot of people surf some of these common, everyday... I highlighted YK Trader as an example that a lot of people go on out of curiosity, and I would encourage the department to seize upon those types of opportunities to encourage these type of service areas that we have within our departments about we're here, to know more about labour development, click here and you end up being right where you need to be – which is probably on a government website – and allow them to pursue it as such.

It's not that easy to just say go to the website, like I said earlier. Or even as highlighted by Mr. Heide about, oh, just go to the career centre and find a pamphlet. I find it quite a daunting task as an MLA sometimes, because the last thing I want to do is turn around and send someone on another goose chase. Oh, don't worry; the person who will solve your problem is just down the road here. Call them or you may have to call this person and so on and so on. I find that sometimes – and I'm sure these folks can appreciate this when they call our office or e-mail our office – folks are quite frustrated, exhausted, concerned by that time and they're being pushed because time is of the essence on their concern. It's very dramatic the way they... The last thing I want to do is push them away and say go find it on your own. I would just encourage the

department to find new ways to reach out with people in what I would consider an everyday medium. That's all. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member that we need to be innovative and creative of sharing information and educational awareness. That's exactly what we need to do. There is always room for improvement in the programming. This is an area that we listen well with the Member and we will continue to push that forward. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question here with regards to the Minimum Wage Adjustment Committee. My understanding is that we should be getting a report fairly soon. Could I hear from the Minister? I gather this committee has met. When can we expect to see their recommendations? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, the committee met, I believe, late last year and then we have been developing a terms of reference for the committee. I just got that last week or last week and a half. We are moving forward on that. It's true that the committee has met. They are discussing options on the wage increase for minimum wage. I'm expecting a report very soon. As soon as I get that, we need to go through that. I will keep Members posted on that. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. I look forward to seeing that report. In the program delivery details, labour and career development, there's a fairly large increase from 2013-14 to 2014-15. Could I get an explanation of what the increase is funding? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, there's a variety of sections within this, the increase. Partially it's the Aboriginal Languages Secretariat, the reallocation, \$400,000 increase in new initiatives. There's North Slave and South Slave, so they all get a contribution. The Sahtu oil and gas, \$5,000 increase as part of forced growth. Collective Agreement is part of that, as well, \$48,000. Amortization. The employment and standards increased in budget of \$18,000, again Collective Agreement. There's another Collective Agreement with management and program support. These are just a variety of areas that offset the increase. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: The increase is about \$600,000, \$550,000. In listening to the Minister, I didn't quite get all the numbers, but I gather the largest amount

is about \$400,000 for the Aboriginal Languages Secretariat. Is that an increase to that secretariat or is that to set up that secretariat? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, that is the Small Communities Fund that we borrowed before. Now we are returning it, the \$400,000, so it is going back to small community to focus on small community funding. We are very happy to get that back. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Now I'm really confused. I guess I need to ask the Minister if I could get the detailed page that he read from. I thought I heard him say Aboriginal Languages Secretariat.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We will get clarification from the deputy minister, Ms. Eggenhofer.

MS. EGGENHOFER: Mr. Chair, if you recall, the \$400,000 used to be in the Aboriginal Languages Secretariat before we had looked at the reorganization of the secretariat. We have now re-profiled the funding of the secretariat and through that re-profiling and restructuring are returning the \$400,000 back to the Small Communities Fund. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Eggenhofer. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the deputy minister. I'm done. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we are on page 10-25, activity summary, labour development and standards, operations expenditure summary, \$10.727 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. 10-26, activity summary, labour development and standards, grants and contributions, \$409,000. Agreed? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, I just wanted to comment on the funding for Skills Canada. I'm very pleased to see that there. I think that this is an excellent program. The department, I think, recognizes that it is as well. I think it's only been expanding over the last number of years. We've gone from \$35,000 from 2012-13 and we skipped last year and we now have \$70,000 in 2014-15. The Skills Canada group have been doing a great deal to expand into all areas of the territory outside of just Yellowknife. I think that's a great program that we are back to funding. I was going to ask a question on the small community employment funding but apparently I don't support small communities so I won't ask that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We will treat that as a comment. 10-26, activity summary, labour development and standards, grants and contributions, \$409,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. On 10-27, information item, labour development and standards, active positions. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): There are none. Page 10-29, activity summary, income security. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, I have a question with regards to income assistance programs. My recollection is that over the last year to a year and a half to two years, our income assistance requirements have only been going up. There is an increase of about \$500,000 from 2013-14 to 2014-15 on this page. I guess I would like to know, from the department, if they are seeing any kind of a trend in the requirements under income assistance. Is this funding going to level off at some point? It has been consistently increasing for a number of years. Can I get some kind of information as to where the department thinks this program is going? Are we going to be funding millions and millions ad infinitum? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that, we will go to Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The expenditures within the Income Security Program are, as the Member notices, growing. The caseload, the actual number of people accessing the program, is staying relatively the same. However, the cost for things like utilities, fuel and rent are increasing as we move forward. The cost-drivers in this program are economic cost-drivers of the cost of things in communities and elsewhere. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, that's good. That's all I have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Continuing on page 10-29, I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. When it comes to income support with the federal Minister's recent announcement about increasing the amount of insurable hours, has the department done an assessment yet? It will affect the income support of people if it's harder for people to get on, something like that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. As you know, we just heard an announcement last week. It is a federal program. Income support obviously will be prepared for any impacts when it

comes to EI recipients. They've extended longer hours, but I believe, from my understanding maybe with Minister Kenney, there is the two-phase approach, Yellowknife and then small communities on unemployment rates. Based on that, I believe it's 8 percent hovering around Yellowknife and it's around 20, 30 or 40 percent depending on the communities. He obviously stated that there won't be much of an impact on the small communities, but for sure there will be some for Yellowknife.

I'm glad the Member is raising that issue because we are preparing for that and we are getting ready with income security for the individuals who will be impacted. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Just something to be aware of and hopefully the department tracks that. Yes, there is higher employment but that means there is low employment, meaning it will be harder for people to get jobs. I don't see the correlation here at all. I don't know if they can track it and maybe a year from now raise it, should it impact us negatively having more people on income support as opposed to unemployment insurance, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That's exactly what we'll be doing, working with our federal counterparts. They do have their stats as well. We provide our NWT stats and information to them. So, yes, I agree with the Member that we need to closely monitor this. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): We're on page 10-29, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. Just a few questions. My first question is on the Senior Citizens Supplementary Benefit Program. I know at one time – and maybe the Minister can help me out here – that some of our seniors didn't know about the Guaranteed Income Supplementary Benefit from the federal government. They weren't applying for it and it has to be applied for every year. Some of the senior citizens were wondering why, after one year, their income cheque was down low again. Is there something within the department where the workers notify, maybe through the service centres, to fill out these guaranteed supplementary benefits? I say this because, personally, my father at one time didn't know about this and didn't receive his benefit for two years. I want to know if this was being looked at to help some old-timers with this issue here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the tenets of income assistance and income security is to make sure that the clients coming to our door have access to as many other programs as possible. Part of that is looking at federal programs that an elder or anyone could be eligible to apply for. You're quite right that the service centres may

be the place for those elders who have trouble with forms and on-line services and those sorts of things. We certainly could be supportive in reminding elders of those kinds of things.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Heide. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly I'm a fan of the service centres that we established. I think that's something that this government has certainly done well within our communities. Speaking with people who manage that office, they love to work with the elders and the elders love to converse in their own language in these centres. That's a good thing. As Mr. Heide was saying about a checklist from the elders, especially at the end of the year, have you done this, have you applied for this. I check this for the seniors. Sometimes we get so busy, we forget things. If you have an elder coming around this time of the year, you know their benefits are going to be cut off, you have a checklist for them and go through it so the elders know that they are keeping on top of things and will be more efficient for our government. That's what I wanted to remind the Minister about.

The other point I want to make is with income assistance, we know that in some of our communities the employment rate is low, as the Minister stated, and to meet our goals and visions to have strong, independent Northerners, individual families, that the Income Assistance Program... Is this the type of program that we can help people go on the land or families to go on the land under this program? If you want to go on the land with your family, take your children, we have a program. Could we make it a simple matter if a family wants to go out, get their groceries, get their gas, if they aren't doing any type of work in the community and just want to spend some time in the bush with their family? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. This particular area obviously falls under productive choices within income security. We support individuals who want to go out on the land. We have to work with organizations as well. If they have to handle a chainsaw, a rifle or a snowmobile, those are some liabilities we have encountered in the past, but we have always worked around other organizations, whether it is the band council or hamlet council or other agencies in the community. Those are some areas we have assisted in. Perhaps it is two months of income assistance if they want to go out on the land, so we've done that before. We want to increase it even further. I agree with the Member that we need to encourage those individuals who are more than willing to be out on the land harvesting for their families. That is a

productive choice within our income security division area. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: The income assistance, I certainly hear the Minister will work with them to support any type of policy or regulations or assistance to get the families out to live on the land. Certainly on this page it talks about working towards a greater self-reliance. There is no greater self-reliance than having your family out on the land and relying upon each other, which also means there are risks. Families talk about those risks and talk about improving the quality of life. There is no better life than getting on the land and working, hard work but working together. I take my family out on the land seven to 10 days every spring and there are risks. It's my responsibility. The quality of life is awesome. We rely on each other. We talk to each other. We work with each other. We solve issues with each other and sometimes we don't agree, so we go into the bush for a walk to cool off.

So I want to tell the Minister within the department, I'm hoping some of the issues you've raised don't hinder somebody who wants to go. We are going to handle chainsaws. We are going to handle gas or fire, skidoo or whatever, gas lamps and that stuff is a way of life. I want to ask the Minister if he would again look at something that people have been doing for a long, long time and we want to support them and meet the goals of a greater self-reliance, improving the quality of life for them. That's all I'm asking for. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I totally agree with the Member that we need to move these obstacles that are in the way. That's why I did a Minister's statement, as well, that we are getting rid of some red tape within our department. This is an area that works well, whether it is the two-month advance for harvesting on the land where they can bring their families. We assist them. We've come around with the liability issues. We've done that in the past and we will continue to push that forward.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Committee, we're on 10-29, activity summary, income security, operations expenditure summary, \$42.115 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 10-30, activity summary, income security, grants and contributions, \$11.136 million. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few months ago I had asked the department if they had done some type of analysis on their grants and the cost of them and the sense of opportunity costs. I don't ever recall receiving any type of feedback on that initiative. I can go through the further detail of that if that doesn't jog enough of their memory to what my issue was to the Minister or the staff.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I do reflect on the Member asking that particular question. I don't have the information here, the latest status, but I can provide that as soon as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Committee, we are on 10-30 again. Activity summary, income security, grants and contributions, \$11.136 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 10-31, information item, income security, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 10-32, information item, Student Loan Fund. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 10-35, information item, details of funding allocated to education authorities. Any questions? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question here with regard to the funding for education authorities, particularly to the two authorities within Yellowknife who, I know, are very prudent in their financial management and have managed to accumulate a bit of a surplus to help them over the requirements for extra staff in September, a program that may need an extra bit of money to carry them through to the end of the school year and so on.

My concern is that over the last week to two weeks I have twice heard the Minister reference the surplus of education authorities, and I would like to know from the Minister whether or not the department and/or the government is considering putting in place the same policy that they put in place for the health authorities a while ago in that surpluses for authorities were deemed to be government funds and they were basically, they were annexed, I guess, by the government and turned back into general revenues. I'd like to know from the Minister if that is the intent of the department and/or the government with regard to the surpluses that education authorities have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. We are fully aware of the surpluses that have been accumulated within all schools, most of the school boards across the Northwest Territories. We're fully aware of the policy that's in place with the Department of Health and Social Services. We

haven't made a decision on that. There has been talk, but no decision at this point.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister for that. If you're talking about this, I guess I'd like to get some sense of where the department is wanting to go on this, and secondly, are you in conversation with the school boards at the same time that you're discussing it?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated, this will be a discussion that we need to have with the school boards. Obviously, we want the surplus funds to go to our children in the Northwest Territories, the education programming. It's very preliminary at this time, but the discussion will be happening with the school boards.

MS. BISARO: Just one last comment, and I suspect that the Minister and the department are well aware, but the two school boards in Yellowknife are not fully funded by the GNWT, so I would think that at least a portion of their surplus and perhaps all of their surplus has been garnered through taxation of Yellowknife residents. I just want the Minister to be well aware of that and to consider that in their conversations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll give the Minister an opportunity to respond. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. All those will be taken into consideration.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Committee, 10-35. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On 10-35, I have a quick question, and I'm not sure it's an easy answer. That's what I have certain fears over. When I consider the funding of the Beau-Del at \$28.5 million versus the South Slave Divisional Education Council at \$24.7 million, and then Yellowknife Education District No. 1 at \$23.4 million, I'm just trying to understand the spread of what's the funding model based on and is there a short or simple answer that we can provide to that. Because I know that other municipalities don't necessarily collect municipal taxes and forward them on to the schools, so it looks like the Beau-Del is being very well funded and I'm just trying to understand the discrepancy of what it's based on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We'll go to Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The school formula funding is the prior year September 30th student enrolment, and use prior year salaries adjusted for current year. Based on the Collective Agreement, there's an increase. There's also an adjustment to the cost difference due to freight, travel, cost of living and the program costs. I believe Mr. Moses alluded to that on the cost of living. Also, the block funded, some of the

discussions, it's within the funding formula that's highlighted.

MR. HAWKINS: Perhaps the Minister can explain why the South Slave Divisional Education Council would be funded more than, for example, a Yellowknife school, if it's based on freight and costs, because, of course, we all know that the costs of operating there is cheaper than it is in Yellowknife and they have fewer teachers by the number, 15 compared to the Yellowknife school district, yet they receive more money. Maybe we can get some clarity on that.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We can obviously share that detailed information with the Member, but it is based on formula, and you have to keep in mind that there are, I guess you can say, three school boards in Yellowknife versus one school board in the South Slave region. Those are just some of the discussions that we've been having with the formula funding. As I stated before, we are reviewing our formula funding through the education renewal and innovation, so these are the discussions that we continue to have.

MR. HAWKINS: I would have thought that the Commission scolaire would have been counted in the Hay River area or South Slave area as well. I would think that there would be two. In Yellowknife I would think we'd almost count four, considering we have paired off the Ndilo district, individually of course, and, of course, maybe five if you count Detah as well. That said, if the Minister and the department are willing to provide a detailed briefing note, I'll start with that and I'll be prepared to move on today.

But I do want to highlight one area, which is I'd like to see what taxation revenue is seen as a stream in those other authorities outside of the Yellowknife ones, and including, obviously, the Yellowknife, to ensure that it's seen as fair, because of course, we all know that the citizens in this tax-based municipality contribute to the good running of our schools and I just want to see where this is equitably and fairly transposed off to other districts.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We'll definitely provide the detailed breakdown of how the formula funding is based on per region, per community and DEAs, DECs.

MR. HAWKINS: That also includes the taxation revenue, of course?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Sorry, I forgot that part. Yes, absolutely. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Mr. Hawkins, any other questions? I am seeing none. Committee, we will continue here with 10-35, information item, details of funding allocated to education authorities. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 10-36, information item, education authorities. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 10-39, information item, Aurora College funding allocation. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions here. I'll start with the numbers on page 39. There's been about an \$800,000 increase in the budget for Aurora College from this current budget year to...sorry, the academic year to the next academic year. Can I understand what this increased funding is for? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. The increase is due to the fact that there is a Community Skills for Work, \$290,000, provided to the college; Teacher Education Program is approximately \$70,000; and also the UNW Collective Agreement, \$404,000. There are also lease costs of \$112,000, and then Geoscience Field Assistant Training program, \$54,000. So that adds up to roughly what the Member has alluded to. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Perhaps if Members could get that listing, that would be helpful.

The notes indicate that, Note 4 says, "The above excludes \$600,000 budgeted for supplementary reserves." Could I understand what supplementary reserves we are referencing? Is that the GNWT supplementary reserves or is that a reserve for the college? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, yes, we will be sharing that information with the Members, that detail. The supplementary reserve was originally allocated in 2008-2009 to cover utility costs for Aurora College. Since April 2010 the reserve fund has been used to offset expenditures mainly in the early childhood and school services section. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: So is there money in the supplementary reserve at this time? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that answer we will go to Ms. Martin.

MS. MARTIN: Yes, the supplementary reserve, right now, is under the Aurora College line item but it is being used to offset the early childhood and school services expenditures.

MS. BISARO: And the amount that's in the supplementary reserve at the moment? Thank you.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Chair, based on the \$600,000 is in the Aurora College, as I said earlier. It's not Aurora College line item under contributions to Aurora College.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Ms. Martin, could you repeat that number for Ms. Bisaro please.

MS. MARTIN: Six hundred thousand dollars that is right now in the supplementary reserve is shown in the grants and contributions under Aurora College. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Martin. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So I guess now that I know there is \$600,000 that the college is using for early childhood, and I don't disagree with that, but we've got a reserve for the college but is it not okay for a school board to have a reserve and I'm having difficulty with equating those two philosophies.

I wanted to ask the question of the department. I think it was over a year ago now, the federal government made an announcement and there was a large amount of money that was given from the federal government to the college for, I believe, adult education. I would like to know if I could get a bit of an update on how that money has been used, if it has been used, and where that program is at. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we will go to Mr. Heide.

MR. HEIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This was federal funding, the CanNor funding, of I believe it was in the neighbourhood of \$6 million. That was to fund adult basic education programming and is being used to fund adult basic education funding, I would imagine. They don't report to us on the expenditures of that money; that would be reported back to the federal government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Heide. So you're saying that Aurora College does not report to the government, they are reporting directly to the feds. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll go to Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. That's correct because the federal funding came directly from the feds and, obviously, we are still working with them on program delivery, but at the end of the day, they have to report to the federal government. They don't report to us on the federal money, but they report to us on our territorial funding that we allocate to them. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I just have one other question in the section. It's my understanding that, I think the Minister is well aware... I'll back up. I think the Minister is well aware that I have an interest in student housing at the college and the lack of it. My understanding is that the college is doing a housing

review at this point. Could the Minister confirm that and advise me where the review is at? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, that's correct. It has been under review by the program review office. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Would I be able to find out when that review might be available?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we will go to Deputy Minister Eggenhofer.

MS. EGGENHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the terms of reference was recently concluded and we hope to have a first draft of the review sometime in late spring. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Eggenhofer. Continuing on with questions on this, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, I have a question in regards to the facilities of Aurora College. I do have a 2007 report on the 10-year facility plan. The plan is for 2007-2016, and in the report it does give a list of the community learning centres on page 32 and its projection, I take it as a projection, and the go-forward planning. When will the new updated report be coming out, because it says the population projection for 2014 for Fort Good Hope is 496 and I think that's a little bit shy of what's in the community now. They also have a list of the years the learning centres were being built and how old they are by 2016 and they have a list of a category of adequate or inadequate.

I know that the Sahtu communities are going to be experiencing some heavy activity with the oil and gas industry, so I want to know, because some of the people in the Sahtu are saying they would like to have some cook preparation food training programs but our centres are not built for those. Sometimes it makes it difficult to have other organizations get involved in it, so it listed all the community centres down the Mackenzie Valley. Will this report be updated to the reality of the situation now in our communities? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Obviously, 2016 is coming very fast and I'm sure it will be looked at. We will be looking into it further. The college, again, community learning centres falls under that item, so we will be working closely with them when they are going through that review process of their facilities, so I am glad that the Member is referring to that. It will be addressed with the board of governors as well. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: I appreciate that. I am certainly looking forward to any type of correspondence from the board of governors or the Minister himself. We know that we approve the funding for Aurora

College, we approve this, this is the money that they are going to get for infrastructure. They don't come to us and ask for money, they go through the Minister. We know that. It's up to us and that's what I'm asking. The buck stops right here with this Minister and Aurora College. That's a given.

I want to ask for more, stronger, I guess you can call it, commitment, or working together or working closely, but we see that Aurora College 10-year is still to be planned, is going to be upgraded because the projection of 2014 they have in Fort Good Hope is 409. That is way off. If you are using that number to determine what kind of facility you have, then that's not being true. I just want to raise that point. That is a point. I know you guys are doing this work. I just want to raise that. Somebody didn't know about Fort Good Hope within this circle here and they're going to say, yes, this is the number we're using, so this is the number we will pull out. It should fit, but you don't have anything like Tulita built in 1994, but do they know that Tulita, Norman Wells is a hot activity for oil and gas development. We need skilled workers. We need the facilities to train those skilled workers. We are looking for a Sahtu tech institution, that type of thinking. We need to start now with the Minister. That's what I'm looking for, some type of plan. We only have so much time in this government here. That's what I want to say, Mr. Chair.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I agree with the Member that it needs to be updated. The numbers, if it's well off, then it needs to be addressed. I will be addressing that with the board of governors. I will be meeting with them. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, there's not much I can say other than wait until the Minister reports back on the updated facilities. I really want to see a region-by-region plan on the facilities. Colville Lake is not even in here. I don't know where it qualifies. Is it a learning centre or training facility? It's not a campus for sure. That's what I mean. This is outdated. I appreciate what the Minister's saying. I wish him the best that he can come back to us with an updated facility plan.

The questions I have, we could go on, but I want to leave it at that. I think that I have said what I have to say.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I will allow the Minister a comment there. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I have committed to the Member that I will be meeting with the board of governors and report back to the committee. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Continuing with questions on this activity summary, I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chair, I was just wondering: would the department be able to provide me the costs associated directly with the Yellowknife campus? What I'm after is the yearly lease costs that they pay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Part of the lease costs for NUP is approximately \$964,000 base rate. Of course, there is O and M, as well, \$1.2 million on average. Actually, per annum would be \$2.235 million a year. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chair, I appreciate that detail. Is there money in this particular budget to do a planning study for the longer term of the government of the stand-alone Aurora College campus in Yellowknife? If there is, how much? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, this particular for a stand-alone campus has been discussed for a number of years now. We have been moving towards a planning study through that part of the capital planning process. We're earmarking for 2015-16 for a planning study. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chair, it was my understanding that the department was going to proceed with the planning study in the year 2014-15. Had that been changed? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, the discussions that we've been having, there's been some changes to the direction and whatnot and talking to various organizations and the departments as well. We are committing upwards of \$500,000 as part of the 2015-16 budget as we move forward for a planning study. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chair, I am going to cut myself off because I don't have a motion to move it in this one. In all fairness, we can't be talking about the 2015-16 budget because it's not fair or relevant, so I will leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will take that as a comment. Committee, 10-39, information item, Aurora College, funding allocation. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. 10-40, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I see none. Committee, we're going to combine 10-41 and 10-42 together, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$6.277 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Committee, if I can get you to turn back to 10-7, Education, Culture and Employment, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$305.599 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Education is completed as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I would like to thank our witnesses here today, Ms. Eggenhofer, Mr. Heide, Ms. Martin. Thank you for joining us in the House today. Of course, I would like to thank the Minister as well. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses out.

Committee, we are going to continue here with Transportation. With that, we will ask the Minister of Transportation if he has any opening comments.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Go ahead, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is my pleasure to present the Department of Transportation's proposed main estimates for the 2014-2015 fiscal year for consideration.

The primary business of the department is to operate the NWT public transportation system and provide for the safe, secure, accessible and reliable movement of people and goods between communities. The activities undertaken by the department also protect the infrastructure investments already made in our transportation system. The department's work is balanced with meeting the increasing needs of communities and industry that are reliant upon our network of roads, winter roads, ferries and airports to achieve the goal of social and economic growth.

The department is proposing a budget of \$126.2 million for 2014-2015 to maintain service delivery and to provide for modest improvements. In total, the department is proposing an 8 percent increase of \$9.1 million from this year's main estimates. This figure includes an increase in annual amortization expenses of \$2.5 million, resulting from additional capital assets expected to come into service up to 2014-2015, \$3.8 million in other adjustments, and forced growth valued at \$3.8 million including Collective Agreement increases of \$800,000.

The increase to the O and M budget is primarily the result of forced growth initiatives to cover the increasing cost of delivering contracts for highway and winter road construction and maintenance, community airports, increased regulatory

requirements across our airport system, and improvements to driver and motor vehicle licensing services.

Of the \$3.8 million in forced growth initiatives, \$1.1 million will address the cost to maintain Highway No. 3, a major route into the NWT experiencing maintenance challenges due to increased traffic pressures and permafrost degradation. The proposed budget includes \$426,000 in forced growth to provide for increased operation and maintenance costs associated with the road licensing and safety computer system, called DRIVES. This important driver and vehicle licensing system enables the collection of over \$9 million in commercial revenue and provides an operating platform to continue expanding on-line driver and motor vehicle services, such as on-line registration recently announced.

A total of \$3.8 million in other adjustments were approved during the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Of that sum, a one-time allocation of \$2.4 million will provide for engineering and construction work to deliver a permanent repair required on the Inuvik Airport runway. The department implemented emergency repairs last fall when an area of the runway surface failed due to changing underground conditions. Engineering studies and design work are being undertaken to determine the cause of the surface failure and to identify a long-term solution for implementation in 2014-2015.

Other adjustments of \$1.4 million will provide for crews, equipment, fuel, and supplies required to accelerate ice bridge construction and to extend ferry operations at the Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic river crossings on the Dempster Highway during the fall freeze-up. Overall, commercial vehicles endured fewer days of interrupted service than in previous years, from historical counts of 70 to 80 days, reduced to about 30 days. The extra days of ferry service were particularly important to resupply liquid natural gas and propane to the Inuvik region. The department is currently evaluating the operations from last year to incorporate lessons learned into the future operations.

For 2014-2015, the department is projecting a total of \$74.5 million in revenue and recoveries. This amount includes a transfer payment of \$46 million from the Government of Canada for the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway Project. The department has signed the final federal funding agreement, received all land use permits and water licences, concluded land tenure and royalty negotiations, and has negotiated a design-build contract with a local company. The highway project is an important first step to realizing the long-term goal of an all-weather road through the Mackenzie Valley corridor. The department is enthusiastic to begin

constructing the largest and one of the most challenging infrastructure developments ever undertaken by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Meeting the 17th Assembly's priority of improving economic development opportunities is critically linked to investing in transportation infrastructure. The need for improvements to transportation infrastructure was highlighted last winter when the department's regional operations in the Deh Cho and Sahtu experienced a marked increase in industrial traffic due to resource development. In anticipation of increased pressure on the winter road system this coming winter, the department worked directly with industry to accelerate the construction of ice crossings, strengthen the winter road surface, and increase the level of service to extend the operating season to the latest possible date in the spring. At the same time, the department is also working to improve safety by increasing the number of enforcement patrols on the winter road, improving our Mackenzie Valley winter road driving guide, and working with industry to ensure the safe movement of heavy loads. To achieve these improvements, the Financial Management Board approved a four-year target adjustment of \$169,000 per year to fund casual highway maintenance supervisors and highway transport officers assigned to the Mackenzie Valley winter road. One supervisor will be based in Fort Good Hope, one in Norman Wells and two highway transportation officers will work out of Hay River.

The proposed main estimates also include forced-growth funding of \$570,000 to provide Wekweeti residents with annual winter access to resupply the community with food and fuel at reduced costs and provide mobility for residents.

These are very brief highlights of the Department of Transportation's proposed main estimates for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. I am confident the proposed budget will allow the department to continue providing for the safe and reliable operation of the NWT transportation system. I am looking forward to 2014-2015 and the exciting work the department will be doing, such as developing a multi-modal strategy and rolling out additional on-line driver and motor vehicle services to better serve our clients.

I am also confident that in 2014-2015, the federal government will provide support for our Corridors for Canada III funding proposal under the new Building Canada Plan to strengthen our transportation system, which is critical to a strong and prosperous future for all of us. Corridors for Canada III proposes an investment of \$600 million across all regions of the Northwest Territories over the next 10 years. Strategic investment includes upgrading and rehabilitation work proposed on all eight all-winter highways, including Highway No. 7 and Highway No. 8; completing reconstruction of

the Detah access road, replacing the Inuvik air terminal building, and moving forward on the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project including completing an environmental assessment, and construction of the Bear River Bridge. Ongoing investment to our transportation system will lower the cost of living in our communities; enable and promote economic development such as oil and gas, and tourism; create jobs for Northwest Territories residents; and maintain the safety and integrity of the transportation system into the future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Minister Beaulieu, do you have witnesses that you'd like to bring into the House?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Beaulieu, if you'd be kind enough to introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is deputy minister, Department of Transportation, Russell Neudorf. To my right, assistant deputy minister, Department of Transportation, Daniel Auger.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Mr. Auger, Mr. Neudorf, welcome back to the Chamber. Committee, we're going to open this up with general comments. To start, I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a few comments and questions for the Minister. First off, I'd like to start with the Louis Cardinal extended operations. Great idea. We had some success this fall mostly due to the mild weather in October and the first part of November. We had an extra two weeks, I believe, from what is normally experienced up in Tsiigehtchic and the Mackenzie Delta. Really mild weather, so that really helped us out a lot on the extension of the operations. I know we had a lot of challenges after the ice froze in there, as expected. I did try to caution the department that maybe the Louis Cardinal was too small, but actually, at the end of the day it did do the job. It did take a lot longer than expected, but I think the department has learned from that.

One of the things I noticed was that the department changed the contractors halfway through, halfway across the river, and that really slowed things down probably by a week. I think that was a bad move and that actually, from my own opinion, because of the inexperienced operator, it really busted up the ferry. That's just my own opinion. I'm sure the department has some answers for that.

The question I have is: In the spring, will the ferry be maintained back to its regular operation? I think we see the need to actually have the Merv Hardie moved down there in the near future. It could have been ready for operation this spring if we just maintained it over the summer. We had three or four months for crews to actually get the Merv Hardie back into shape over the summer. We had a few months there.

The other concern I had was with the Dempster Highway. It's really noticeable that there needs to be an increase in the O and M funding to resurface the highway. Because it's a gravel highway, with all the traffic, all the material that's put on the road, because it isn't packed in when it's laid down, it just goes off to the sides, and there's only so much the grader operators can do in the spring to pull it back up onto the road. It's pretty clear that we need to resurface the highway and make sure that it's actually packed down by packers when it's been done and lay calcium down right away. That way you know it's going to have a little structure.

Other than that, that's about the only questions. I know there were concerns raised by the community of Tsiigehtchic to actually work on an air strip, with all the challenges during the spring and fall, but actually, this fall there was very little disruption in the services because of the access road that was built into the community. I think that's still a good plan moving forward as an interim, and then moved back to the actual where the ice road has been for the last 20, 30 years. Those are the only comments I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Committee, we're actually going to take general comments collectively here and we'll ask the Minister to respond in one opportunity as we discussed earlier in the process. With that, I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Finally a government document that references Highway No. 7. All kidding aside, Mr. Chairman, of course I have been using my favorite two words trying to get resolution over getting Highway No. 7 reconstructed and I know that it is very, very expensive. In the capital planning that we approved last fall, we are certainly making strides towards it and I just want to highlight it once again so we can keep paying attention to it. It is part of the Deh Cho Trail, the loop that goes from BC and all the way around to the Alberta border close to Hay River. It makes for great travelling for the tourists, knowing that they have good infrastructure that they can drive their very, very expensive motorhomes on and do the loop. They do inquire in Fort Simpson, one of our great tourism people, Mr. Ted Grant. People often can call him in the springtime when they want to journey up there and he does tell them up front, he tells them in the

springtime, don't come up, the highway is very bad, it has collapsed in some places and it actually pains him to advise tourists not to come up that way. We are making strides towards it, a few places have collapsed and we have reconstructed that and it does make the case that, yes, we do have to continue our reconstruction and that is why I continue to press it as MLA for that region.

I guess I was trying to get some certainty, too, because we are all for the chipsealing of the section between the Fort Providence junction towards Fort Simpson and about 30 kilometres. The Members on this side of the House strongly supported that be done, be saved this fiscal year, it would last another year, I am afraid that we will be losing it. In fact, at the appropriate time the Minister can comment on that commitment and the commitment to save that piece of infrastructure there, because it is quite a pleasure for people from my riding and anybody driving through there, even though it is 30 kilometres, it is a nice little piece of road to drive on and look forward to more chipsealing. I think it's from Checkpoint towards Jean Marie junction. I'm not sure if they plan to do it this year. I know that one section, about nine kilometres, has sat for a year already, so I am not too sure if the department is looking at chipsealing that this year. There is a further 10 kilometres that has been widened in preparation for chipseal. So I'm not too sure what the plans for that are. I know that the plans are there to widen the highway quite a bit; I'm not sure if they plan to chipseal that this year as well.

The other issue, when it comes to transportation, of course, is the Trout Lake Airport. At the beginning of the sitting of this House, I was quite frustrated and the community of Trout Lake is quite frustrated, too, that it has taken so long to build our new runway there. It is the pride and joy of the community and they try to be involved as much as possible and get as much economic benefit about it. They saw it as a huge opportunity to continue training their residents and they have done lots of training over the year, in fact, last term I did go there and they had trained an all-female crew using heavy equipment. So they look to those kinds of projects to develop their skills and to continue on with their skills.

It saddens me every time I hear that the project has been shut down, it has been deferred, it looks like it is a five-year project now. In fact, I think I said that at the beginning of this session, that we are doing the Inuvik to Tuk highway and to be completed in four years, a \$270 million project and here we have a \$7 million airport runway and it has taken us five years, and it is not even that long, I think it is only 3,000 feet or metres, anyway, or 3,500 metres and that is something they have been looking for. We want a win-win, the community wants a win-win, the department wants to win. It pains me to no end to see it delayed and deferred continuously. The

Minister did say in the House that they are looking for completion this year. Of course, I'm looking for reaffirmation of that statement as well.

I'm supportive of the Corridors for Canada III funding proposal and hopefully the Minister can get some good news and get to our committee and look at those priorities. I know that it also has to do with the Minister of Finance's request for an additional \$1 billion added to our loan amount that we could meet these funding plans that are laid out in Corridors for Canada III. With that, I will conclude, but also I think the Minister said it in his opening remarks as well. Increased industrial traffic north of Fort Simpson does make a case for additional resources.

On Wrigley road, I'm pleased to see that is in the capital plan. There were some plans to also strengthen some of the weakened areas on Highway No. 1 north of Fort Simpson towards Wrigley. As well, I'm so glad that perhaps the Minister can comment on this as well. It also makes the department to start developing a business case for continuing all-weather roads north of Wrigley as well. I certainly support that and the more traffic that we have there, the more development happens in the Sahtu. Shale does make for a business case. We have to take that momentum and jump on that. In fact, we may even have a long-term dream is to have a larger loop that tours can travel, which is straight up the Mackenzie Valley. Then they can go down the Dempster or come up the Dempster and down the Mackenzie Valley. That will certainly increase the amount of tourism to our great Northwest Territories. There will be a lot of economic spinoffs as a result of that. With that, those are my opening comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Continuing on with general comments, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, I just wanted to comment on this. It is a very important department for us in the Sahtu region. I'm very happy to say that I have three words: Bear River Bridge. It is something that we've somehow bumped off the rails there. I'm looking forward to seeing the department work as hard as they can to move this up in the construction phase. It's going to be an important infrastructure with the winter roads past Tulita to the activity of the oil and gas exploration that wants to move into another phase of this oil and gas development.

The Minister talked about the Corridors for Canada III funding proposal. I look forward to having some information as to where we are moving this with the federal government and how they see it and how we are going to look moving this project such as the Mackenzie Valley Highway up into the communities that do not have all-weather roads. There are

1,400-or-so kilometres of winter road that we have been talking about. I would like to shorten that number, if possible, to increase the all-season road to our communities. I have certainly given my support to the Minister.

I want to make some comments on the winter road. The Minister is also pleased to see the Financial Management Board approved some funding for casual highway maintenance supervisors and highway transportation officers to work the Mackenzie Valley winter road. That was a concern by our people since the increase of oil and gas companies coming into our region and having one person in Fort Good Hope and the Wells be part of this. I would like to challenge the Minister – I'm not going to harp too much – to move it to the next level of the presence of the Department of Transportation. That would be requiring some commitment from this department. I have been at this for 10 years and I will continue to be at this to move the superintendents into the Sahtu. We have a superintendent in Fort Simpson and we have a superintendent in Inuvik. I think we need to now start bringing in a superintendent.

I think one of the concepts for us is decentralization and having the Sahtu be a stand-alone region. Decisions need to be made in the Sahtu on our winter roads and our airports. We need presence.

I've been told by people on some visits, some in Norman Wells, we need a regional office in the Sahtu. There are no superintendents in the Sahtu. Case in point, we had one of the workers drive into the Sahtu and meet one of our contractors. The workers didn't know much about our winter roads. He tried to do something that didn't make sense at all, so one of our contractors said, do you know how many snowfields we have between Blackwater and Tulita? The worker didn't know anything. The contractor said there are 57 snowfields. That's what we do.

So decisions coming outside of our region aren't acceptable anymore. I guess I'm getting a little bit frustrated that the department keeps saying it has to be proven up. When you spend over \$100 million this year, what more proving up do you need? There is a short time period. We need to start putting some of the decision-making in the Sahtu. Start putting an office in there where superintendents can make decisions in our own region. I guess I'm getting really tired of asking this government. You always say we have to prove it up, we have to prove it up.

Mr. Chair, I'm going to leave it because I'm getting pretty frustrated. I want to make this known. We do not need to have decisions made out of the Sahtu, like Inuvik and Simpson. Let's make our own decisions. I will leave it at that, Mr. Chair. I will finish up on Monday because I'm just getting going here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. As chair, I do have to note the clock. I do have to rise to report progress. Mr. Yakeleya, you will be first when we get to this activity next week. At this time, I would like to thank our guests, Mr. Auger and Mr. Neudorf. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort our witnesses out of the Chamber, and thank you to Minister Beaulieu. Thank you for your assistance tonight. I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 22-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2014-2015, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Yakeleya.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois): Orders of the day for Monday, March 3, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 13, Devolution Measures Act

- Bill 14, Waters Act

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Tabled Document 4-17(5), Northwest Territories Electoral Boundaries Commission 2013 Final Report
- Tabled Document 22-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2014-2015
- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
- Bill 10, Northwest Territories Lands Act
- Bill 11, Petroleum Resources Act
- Committee Report 2-17(5), Report on the Review of the 2012-2013 Public Accounts

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, March 3rd, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:05 p.m.