

Aurora College Next Steps

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that I have directed that a foundational review of Aurora College be undertaken.

The foundational review will help inform the government's long term vision for Aurora College and position it to provide the necessary skills and knowledge our residents require to participate in, and contribute to the social and economic fabric of the NWT for decades to come.

I am confident this is the right time to undertake this review in light of our Skills 4 Success Initiative and our detailed understanding of the future needs of the NWT labour market.

The timeline for completion of this review is Fall 2017, with an implementation target of the 2018-2019 academic year. The current strategic planning process underway at Aurora College will be folded into the foundational review. The strategic review will inform the foundational review. Valuable input has been received as part of this strategic planning process which will be utilized in the review process.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure this House that Members of the Legislative Assembly will be provided with multiple opportunities to contribute to the foundational review, including providing feedback on the terms of reference.

I am also pleased to confirm that the budget reductions related to the Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education Programs identified for Aurora College will be held in abeyance until the next fiscal year, however there will be no new intakes for these programs.

The Department and Aurora College continue to have an ambitious agenda ahead in fulfilling the current and new direction of the 18th Legislative Assembly. This direction now includes ensuring both the foundational review and the strategic plan are completed and ready for implementation beginning in Aurora College's 2018-2019 academic year. Informed by these two initiatives, we will also jointly develop new innovative funding and accountability frameworks to ensure we receive value for money in our significant public investment in post-secondary education.

Additionally, the Legislative Assembly will be introducing overarching post-secondary legislation during the term of this Assembly, which will create a process of accreditation that ensures the effective governance and quality assurance of any existing and future post-

secondary institutions in the NWT, this includes Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning and Collège Nordique.

I look forward to working with all Members as we embark on this change agenda to ensure that residents have access to quality and expanded post-secondary education that prepares them for the employment opportunities of tomorrow.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.