



May 25, 2020

JACKSON LAFFERTY
MLA, MONFWI**Oral Question 207-19(2) Succession Planning for Interpreters Training**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised on March 13, 2020 regarding succession planning for Interpreter/Translator (I/T) training.

The *NWT Indigenous Languages Framework and Action Plan (2018-2022)* (Action Plan) establish two goals of Indigenous language revitalization and increasing access to services in Indigenous languages. The Action Plan outlines 17 specific actions for Indigenous language revitalization initiatives and building capacity in Indigenous languages.

From 2018 to 2020, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) accomplished 11 actions towards the goal of Indigenous language revitalization. Key outcomes of these actions include:

- Partnering with the University of Alberta's Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute to sponsor 130 community members to participate in language programming;
- Partnering with three regional Indigenous Governments to deliver the Northwest Territories (NWT) PILOT Mentor Apprentice Program to 60 community members;
- Partnering with Aurora College and the University of Victoria to deliver the Certificate in Indigenous Language Revitalization. Ten students were slated to graduate at a March 31, 2020 ceremony, which has been rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Awarding 29 Indigenous Language Revitalization scholarships of \$5,000;
- Training and in-servicing all NWT Indigenous language instructors in the Our Languages Curriculum (OLC) which will be implemented territory-wide in the 2020-2021 school year; and,
- Training 20 community Indigenous language instructors in the use of OLC resources and assessment tools.

For the remaining two years of the Action Plan (2020-2022), ECE will continue to advance revitalization initiatives and shift focus towards the six remaining actions to increase access to services in Indigenous languages:

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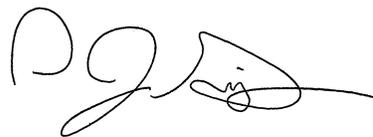
- Update official languages regulations, policy, and guidelines to improve access to public services in Indigenous languages;
- Educate GNWT employees on their role in providing Indigenous languages services as laid out in the Official Languages Guidelines;
- Develop a promotional campaign on the *Official Languages Act* and access to Indigenous language services in the NWT;
- Support and offer training on interpretation and translation to new and existing NWT interpreters and translators; and,
- Support GNWT departments to be able to offer improved public services in Indigenous languages as outlined in the Official Languages Guidelines.

Our I/Ts provide vital services to residents of the NWT. ECE is working collaboratively with other departments, Indigenous Governments, and Canadian I/T accreditation organizations to specifically address I/T training needs, and is preparing to offer I/T training in 2020-2021.

To provide immediate support to I/Ts, ECE will invite new and existing I/Ts to apply for the November 01 intake of the Indigenous Languages Revitalization Scholarship Program to receive further training and skills development at accredited post-secondary organizations. In addition, ECE will hire a new Indigenous Languages Services Project Coordinator to lead efforts in coordinating I/T services and assisting current I/Ts to access training opportunities and accreditation information. The coordinator will also work to increase service delivery and support the GNWT in fulfilling its obligations under the *Official Languages Act*.

Impacts to operations resulting from COVID-19 have had an impact on all manner of operations ranging from hiring processes to our ability to plan and deliver training. Updates will be provided to Standing Committee as the impacts of COVID-19 on programs and services, including training become clearer.

Thank you for your questions and interest in this matter.



R.J. Simpson
Minister, Education, Culture
and Employment

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Deputy Minister, Education, Culture and Employment
Legislative Coordinator, Executive and Indigenous Affairs