



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

3rd Session

Day 13

18th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

Pages 3305 – 3346

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)

Government House Leader

Minister of Health and Social Services

Minister Responsible for Seniors

Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities

Minister Responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe-Willideh)

Mr. Frederick Blake

(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)

Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Minister Responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Lead Responsibility for Addressing Homelessness

Ms. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. Bob McLeod

(Yellowknife South)

Premier

Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

Hon. Robert McLeod

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Deputy Premier

Minister of Finance

Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Lead Responsibility for Infrastructure

Mr. Daniel McNeely

(Sahtu)

Hon. Alfred Moses

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

Minister Responsible for Youth

Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

Mr. Herbert Nakimayak

(Nunakput)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Hon. Wally Schumann

(Hay River South)

Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment

Minister of Infrastructure

Hon. Louis Sebert

(Thebacha)

Minister of Justice

Minister of Lands

Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation

Minister Responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency

Mr. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)

Mr. Kieron Testart

(Kam Lake)

Mr. Shane Thompson

(Nahendeh)

Mr. Cory Vanthuynne

(Yellowknife North)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk

Ms. Sarah Kay

Committee Clerks

Ms. Gail Bennett

Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith (trainee)

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson

Mr. Glen Rutland

Ms. Alyssa Holland

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	3305
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	3305
33-18(3) – New Investments in Mental Health and Home and Community Care (Abernethy)	3306
34-18(3) – Strengthening Supports for Educators (Moses).....	3306
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3306
Inuvik Satellite Facilities (Vanhuayne)	3306
Medical Travel Issues (Simpson).....	3307
Remote Sensing Satellite Licensing (Testart).....	3308
Deh Cho / Mackenzie River Signage (Nadli).....	3308
Alternate Fuel Sources for Small Communities (Thompson)	3309
Waste Resource Management Strategy (McNeely).....	3309
Arctic Policy Framework (O'Reilly).....	3309
Rental Office Wait Times (Green).....	3310
Early Childhood Development (Beaulieu)	3311
Hazardous Conditions on Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway (Nakimayak)	3311
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	3312
ORAL QUESTIONS	3312
PETITIONS	3321
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	3321
FIRST READING OF BILLS	3322
Bill 5 – An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act.....	3322
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	3322
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	3345
ORDERS OF THE DAY	3346

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, February 21, 2018****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 33-18(3):
MENTAL HEALTH AND IN HOME AND
COMMUNITY CARE**

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Northwest Territories has signed a bilateral agreement with the federal government to invest new resources into mental health and addictions services, as well as home and community care. This investment will provide approximately \$6 million over the next five years, including \$2.4 million for mental health and addictions services and \$3.6 million for home and community care services.

Not only do these investments support key objectives in both our Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan and our Continuing Care Services Action Plan, they also align with the mandate of the 18th Legislative Assembly. Our government has made a commitment in the mandate to support elders to live in their homes as long as possible and to providing quality long-term care when this option is no longer available.

The investments for home and community care will be used to develop a paid family/community caregiver option for residents who manage their own care. This initiative will provide individuals with an option to meet their care needs and access home supports currently not available to them through an existing home and community care program.

It will also support the implementation of an updated, evidence-based assessment tool for home and community care, called the International Resident Assessment Instrument. This new tool will

ensure individuals receive home and community care services based on their assessed care needs, with the goal of supporting seniors and elders in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has a history of resilience, strength, and a strong commitment to helping one another. However, the impacts of colonization and residential schools continue to challenge the wellness of our people and communities.

One area where we can see evidence of these impacts is the issue of suicide. Currently there are a number of services available across the Northwest Territories to assist residents facing mental health challenges, including the Community Counselling Program, the NWT Help Line, the On the Land Healing Fund, Mental Health First Aid, and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

While these services and supports are already in place, we know that we can do more to support communities, and our government has made a commitment in its mandate to enhance access to culturally appropriate programs and services. One of the ways we will be doing this for suicide prevention is by targeting investments for mental health and addictions to the development and implementation of a Territorial Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support Network.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative will enhance culturally appropriate approaches to suicide prevention, provide support to communities to build a sense of hope and meaning, while also improving our ability to provide a timely response to community needs in the event of a crisis. This support network will complement our existing mental health and addictions options and is in line with the Strategic Framework for Mental Health and Addictions Recovery and with the recently released Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan.

I would like to thank the Government of Canada for their 10-year commitment to strengthen supports for home and community care and mental health and addictions in the Northwest Territories. These investments will improve key services for residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 34-18(3):
STRENGTHENING SUPPORTS FOR
EDUCATORS

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, this is Education Week in the Northwest Territories. I would like to celebrate the educators who have dedicated their careers, and lives, to teaching our children and youth. I would also like to share how I and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment are supporting their success.

Right now there are more than 800 educators here in Yellowknife at the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association Educators' Conference. They are working together to strengthen education in the territory by participating in workshops, professional development, and training sessions.

Mr. Speaker, the theme of the 2018 Educators' Conference is Our Students, Our North, Our Success. The conference has included the very best resources, expertise, and speakers for our educators. I encourage all my colleagues to welcome and thank the teachers they meet this week in town. Mr. Speaker, the Educators' Conference is just one example of the strong relationship between the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association.

As part of education renewal, in the 2017-2018 school year the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices three-year pilot was launched in collaboration with the Teachers' Association and the Northwest Territories Superintendents' Association to support excellence in teaching and learning.

Mr. Speaker, we know that teachers are one of the most important factors in student achievement. High-quality instruction improves student outcomes. Teachers need time to properly plan and to develop their teaching strategies and instructional practices.

While there are other factors that influence student outcomes, there is strong evidence to show that supporting teacher wellness, giving teachers more time to prepare, assess, and collaborate, and providing strategic professional development opportunities are critical in improving teacher practice and student academic success.

Mr. Speaker, the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices pilot allows schools to schedule as many hours as they feel are required to properly deliver the curriculum, subject to the legislated minimum of 945 hours of instruction. Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, schools

were permitted to submit proposals to redirect up to 100 hours of instructional time divided evenly between teachers' professional duties and collaborative professional learning. It is up to the school principal and the education authority, in consultation with the superintendent, to decide the appropriate amount of time.

Each school submits a Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices proposal outlining how their teachers will use their time. A committee made up of the department, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association, and the Northwest Territories Superintendents' Association reviewed and approved each proposal.

Mr. Speaker, all schools participating in the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices pilot this year have split their redirected hours equally between time for individual professional duties and learning, and collaborative professional learning. No resources are directed away from the students. The activities in some schools included collaborative evaluations, assessments, and goal-setting, while in others staff worked together to improve student mental wellness. For example, in the Dehcho Region, one school spent their Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices hours developing a school-wide bullying prevention strategy; another worked on positive behaviour intervention, culture, and events; and yet another, on Dene language for educators.

As we celebrate our educators this week, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association provides a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate their teachers, as well. The Thank You for Making a Difference initiative highlights the contributions of dedicated educators who make a difference in the lives of students, with students themselves submitting messages of appreciation and nominating them for individual and school prizes. All of the thank you messages will be delivered to teachers during this Education Week.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to offer my personal thank you to the teachers who made a difference in my life and to the dedicated educators who continue to teach our children and youth. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK SATELLITE FACILITIES

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on what we thought

was an emerging market in our territory, a chance at a new innovative economy, an economy our government was very proactive in nurturing and has invested heavily in public infrastructure to support it. Instead, Mr. Speaker, the federal government appears once again to be impeding our economic ambitions.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the remote sensing satellite facilities in Inuvik, the satellite antenna sites that dot the Inuvik skyline, which many of my colleagues have toured, but today remain idle and unlicensed by the Government of Canada. It has been two years since Kongsberg Satellite Services of Norway and Planet of the USA invested millions of dollars to locate to Inuvik to complement the existing federal satellite site.

Mr. Speaker, recently Prime Minister Trudeau was in San Francisco praising Canada's progressive approach to attracting the global technology sector, but it seems nothing could be further from the truth. Other competitive jurisdictions license remote sensing facilities in as little as 30 to 60 days. Canada's lengthy, outdated approach is jeopardizing our future.

Mr. Speaker, our government has invested over \$100 million in fibre optic infrastructure down the Mackenzie Valley, and even more into ongoing operating costs. We know this investment would not have been possible without support from the satellite industry in Inuvik.

Inuvik, with its unique geographic location above the Arctic Circle and full community amenities, makes it the optimal destination for remote sensing in Canada. In the last two years, a small private satellite facility constructed seven satellite antennas and is hopeful for many more to come. This is an exciting opportunity for Inuvik and the NWT, but with applications taking up to two years to process in Ottawa, it could end up economically devastating to our territory. Some within the satellite industry are already advising antenna developers to not apply in Canada due to the lengthy and arduous process to get approval.

Mr. Speaker, we have built the fibre optic line. We are investing in enhancing our geomatics centre to become participants in this rapidly growing sector. All of the proactive work by this government is at risk because of the federal government's inability to provide certainty for this industry and its future.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL ISSUES

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I once again rise to speak about the quality of medical travel services received by residents of Hay River who are not covered by the GNWT's benefit plan. Spoiler alert, Mr. Speaker: the quality is poor.

I have addressed this issue with Member's statements and in question period. I have brought it up with the department during committee meetings. I have bombarded the Minister of Health's inbox, and I have discussed this issue with him over and over again. However, Mr. Speaker, the level of service has not improved.

Last time I brought this issue up in the House, I told the story of my constituent who was informed by the medical travel office that they had booked his flight, but for the day before. Well, in the meantime, that very same constituent had to once again travel for medical reasons. This time, First Air called him and informed him that the flight was booked and it was departing in two minutes. Needless to say, that flight was missed, as well. That is the third missed flight for this one person, and they each occurred because the medical travel office failed to inform him that his flight was booked.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, getting on the flight is only half the battle. If you have a medical appointment in Edmonton, there is a good chance you have to be at the airport in Hay River before 7:30 a.m. so you can catch the flight to Yellowknife; then you have to sit in Yellowknife and wait for your afternoon flight. If you are lucky, you fly to Edmonton, but you might be heading to Calgary for another layover before you finally get on the flight to Edmonton. If either of those two afternoon flights is delayed, you might not get to where you are going until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, making for an 18- or 19-hour travel day, and then you have to make it to your 8:00 a.m. appointment.

Mr. Speaker, I hear about this happening all the time. In addition to the problems with bookings, there are problems with the flow of information. During the seven- or eight-hour layover in Yellowknife, patients are eligible to spend the day resting at Abel House, but many of them do not know because they are never informed. When you are flying home from Edmonton, you can get a wheelchair at the airport and skip some of the long lines. I have a constituent in his 80s who stood in line at the airport for over an hour the day after heart surgery because he did not know, because no one told him.

Mr. Speaker, these issues have been brought to me over and over again since I was elected. I cannot

just keep telling my constituents that I am working on it. Something has to change. I will have questions for the Minister of Health at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REMOTE SENSING SATELLITE LICENSING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also would like to express the concerns raised by my honourable friend from Yellowknife North regarding the length of time it takes to approve and issue a remote sensing licence under the current Remote Sensing Satellite Systems Act.

As it stands today, while other jurisdictions have updated their regulatory regimes to accommodate a remote sensing licence in as little as 30 days, Canada still requires two years. The space industry is evolving, and the remote sensing sector is growing all over Canada, including here in the Northwest Territories.

This is a perfect example of the knowledge-based economic development that I have advocated that this government pursue in order to create a truly sustainable and diversified economy since the beginning of my tenure as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Kam Lake.

Through the inability of the federal government to provide regulatory certainty to the remote sensing sector, it has stalled new developments, and we must continuously push forward and put pressure on our federal counterparts to approve the current licences on the ground and to streamline the regulatory process. This is a great opportunity, Mr. Speaker, that will create many more jobs and economic growth when these licences are approved and when we can gain certainty over this growing sector of our economy.

The commercial satellite sector is growing at a phenomenal pace. For Canada to effectively compete in this highly competitive global market, regulatory certainty is required. Many jurisdictions today recognize the importance of attracting and promoting the space science sector and have streamlined their regulatory regimes accordingly to become competitive. The space industry has transitioned into a highly competitive commercial market, and they will locate where conditions are most favourable. We know that Inuvik has some of the most favourable conditions in the world, not just in Canada.

Our government has made a significant public investment of over \$100 million plus operating costs to high-speed fibre optic infrastructure from Inuvik

to Alberta to support the data requirements in the satellite industry in Inuvik. When this is approved, licences, we will clearly indicate to the growing market that we in the North are open for business.

There can be no denial that in order to create the level of certainty in this new sector of our economy, the current regulatory regime must be overhauled and I hope this Cabinet will step up to the plate and advocate for a regulatory reform at the level of the Government of Canada and protect our economic advantage in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEH CHO / MACKENZIE RIVER SIGNAGE

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Tourism is a growing sector of our economy. In Fort Providence, we see a lot of traffic on Highway No. 3, and I know there is great potential to increase the tourists' experience in our area.

People used to stop on the shore of the mighty Deh Cho to wait for the ferry not far from the tiny blue sign that identifies the waterway as the Mackenzie River. Today, tourists on the highway cruise right past the sign and over the Deh Cho bridge, perhaps unaware of the significance of our greatest river. If they blink, they might miss it. The sign, I mean.

The Deh Cho is not only our greatest river, travelled by Dene people for thousands of years. It is Canada's greatest. The Mackenzie crowns the second longest river system in North America, more than 4,200 kilometres long. Our river sends more than 300 cubic kilometres of water into the Beaufort Sea. There is a lot of water under our bridge, Mr. Speaker.

The little blue sign by the road hints at none of this. The unsuspecting tourist may not know that the Deh Cho's second name comes from Alexander Mackenzie, an enthusiastic Scottish tourist and fur trader of some fame who came this way in 1793.

I'm just getting started, Mr. Speaker. I have yet to dive into the Deh Cho's cultural and economic significance. Yes, and say a few words about the great Metis riverboat captains, but first I want to note that on the north side of the river is a large display where visitors can read all about the Deh Cho bridge and marvel at the engineering feats involved in its construction. With sincere thanks to the Department of Infrastructure and the community, we now also have warning signs for pedestrians who may be walking along the road. I feel confident that this department will erect a larger, more colourful sign to note the Deh Cho for highway travellers.

Before I turn to some of the greatest Dene legends about the Deh Cho, I feel it is time to invite the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment to do its part. In fact, it is past the time we have a roadside park to commemorate the Deh Cho and Mackenzie River. Perhaps we can open it in time for the 60th anniversary of the highway.

Now I want to speak briefly about the giant beavers and the two great men with medicine powers. Oh, no, Mr. Speaker, I must have missed your sign. My time for this statement has run out. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ALTERNATE FUEL SOURCES FOR SMALL
COMMUNITIES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the GNWT has committed to implement a carbon pricing system this year. It is great that we are making headway by taking accountability for our contribution to the greenhouse gases, and a carbon tax is necessary for reducing our carbon footprint, but at the same time we want to improve residents' quality of life and not make their lives harder.

In my riding, propane and diesel are the main fuel sources used for heating, though many also try to use wood and pellet stoves to reduce costs. Most electricity is produced through diesel. This means that, in my riding, residents face a carbon tax for both heating and electricity. With costs for propane and diesel already significantly higher in the North than the rest of Canada, and still increasing, a carbon tax will add to the residents' disadvantage.

Mr. Speaker, although there are proposals to return carbon tax revenue to residents, these will not return the full amount, meaning an increased financial obligation to residents, without alternative fuels to turn to. Not in my riding, at least.

The purpose of the carbon tax is to reduce carbon emissions. This means that revenue from the tax should decrease over time as we reduce emissions. My fear? Well, it is that, while Nahendeh will see costs go up, we won't see emissions go down because there has been little planning for alternative fuel sources.

Some NWT residents can use hydro. A government discussion paper released in July stated that Taltson Hydro Facility will be expanded. This means that, for Fort Smith, Hay River, Hay River Reserve, Enterprise, and Fort Resolution, a shift from carbon-based fuel to hydro is much easier than for Nahendeh.

Other communities can turn to solar. The introduction of solar diesel plants in Colville Lake has saved the community an estimation of 37,000 litres of diesel fuel, one fifth of the community's annual fuel usage. This is a great start, but now the work seems to have stalled. Colville Lake has seen significant benefits, yet the government won't look at expanding to other small communities until they study it further.

This does not get the smaller communities in my riding the help they need. The communities that rely on diesel need the government to think big, to show leadership, and take action, and not rest on their hydro, wind, and solar laurels. We must explore alternative energy sources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tabled a document on "Waste Resource Management Strategy" and potential economic and environmental benefits resulting from household, commercial, and industrial sources at municipal landfill sites. Mr. Speaker, the strategy complements the many inventory studies completed, in particular a technical report waste inventory dated November 15, 2013, for the Sahtu communities.

Given this pre-cost inventory assessment report and avoiding waste hazard materials potentially entering into the community watersheds, this would be a meaningful portion of the action plan if initiated. Mr. Speaker, execution of the strategy would provide a variety of economic benefits and waste safety training, packaging, disposals, and the Waste Resource Management Strategy is linked to the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy Action Plan.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, implementing this strategy in collaboration with other communities only complements our government's mandate, cleaner community environment, while providing meaningful business and economic opportunities. Mr. Speaker, later I will have questions for the appropriate Minister. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. It was very disappointing to hear the Premier reject

the report and findings of the Ministerial Special Representative on Arctic Leadership, Mary Simon, in this House on February 13th.

Ms. Simon held 65 engagement meetings involving 170 people, including the Premier, and received 34 written submissions to help her prepare her report. That's a lot more than the zero public engagement that the three northern Premiers undertook in putting together the Pan-Territorial Vision for resource development. Whoops. Sustainable Development.

Ms. Simon's excellent report made a number of recommendations in the areas of education, research and Indigenous knowledge, infrastructure, broadband telecommunications, housing, reducing fossil fuel dependence, Arctic conservation, addressing the mental health crisis, and specific suggestions for the development of an Arctic Policy Framework. This balanced approach truly reflects sustainability in its broadest sense by including aspects of environment, economy, culture, wellness, and social development.

Recently the Premier tabled a document titled "We are One Mind" prepared by Dene Nahjo, Our Voices, and Qanak, who are collectives of emerging leaders from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut. This document offers their perspective on the Arctic Policy Framework. Recommendations are made under three themes: one is Northerners leading northern policy engagement; another is protecting future generations; and healthy economies is the third theme.

Specific recommendations include creation of a Northern Policy Institute and the University of the Arctic, stronger recognition of Indigenous languages, investment in childcare, development of Indigenous protected areas, and more. This report also takes a broad and balanced approach to sustainability.

The directions of these two reports stands in contrast to the narrow focus of the Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development put forward exclusively by the three northern Premiers and the direction that the Premier seems to want to take on the Northwest Territories Chapter of the Arctic Policy Framework. I will have questions later today for the Premier on these matters. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RENTAL OFFICE WAIT TIMES

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Rental Office provides recourse under the Residential Tenancies Act when landlords and renters are in dispute. One of the most common disputes, of course, is a tenant's failure to pay rent. As it turns out, not being paid is only the beginning of the landlord's troubles.

Let me explain. Let's say a landlord is owed three months' back rent for a total of \$6,000. That is big money. The landlord goes to the rental office. She files an application for a court order to recover the debt. Next step: a hearing to lay out the facts. According to figures contained in the 2016-2017 Rental Office Report, only 12 per cent of hearings take place within 60 days, 28 per cent take more than 120 days, and the vast majority, almost two thirds, take in excess of 90 days from the time of the application. The importance of this time lag is that the landlord does not get a penny until the court order is in place.

Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine filed an application last April and was lucky to get a hearing in just six weeks, but the follow-up action, the written order to recover the rent owed, was not issued until August, more than three months later. Then, there is an additional wait for the garnishee order. All told, it took almost half a year to get the legal authority to recover her debt.

Even at this point, the landlord's troubles are far from over. Now they have to collect the money. The property owner goes to the last place of employment they know of for the tenant, and they hope the tenant still works there. Of course, losing your job is a common reason for not paying your rent, so that is often pointless. The same goes for a bank garnishee on someone who is unemployed.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the point here is timeliness. Yes, landlords need to prove they are owed the money, so a hearing with a decision and a garnishee order are all necessary steps, but wait times have bloated over the last year.

The 2015-2016 report says that only 9 per cent of hearings took more than 90 days, compared to 63 per cent last year. As to the time between the hearing and the written order, we have no way of knowing, because the Rental Office Report does not include that crucial set of figures.

The rental office is an example of citizen hardship because essential government functions are starved for resources. I will have questions for the Justice Minister. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about early childhood development. I am concerned about the potential effects that certain government programs can indirectly have upon our children. Junior kindergarten and other daycare programs have a large body of research on early childhood development that has not yet produced a scientific consensus as to the meaningful benefits that children can gain and maintain in the long term.

I must also state that I do recognize that there has been much study and evidence to suggest that having a robust universal daycare program can provide many benefits to parents and the economy. Even a recent study done this by government has underscored those points. The focus of my statement, though, is about the impacts that such programs can have on our children.

Mr. Speaker, there are reports in jurisdictions that have yielded results within the concept of education-based junior kindergarten, where such programs can have the potential to impede the social and emotional development of children by removing them from family care and into a classroom setting too early.

Mr. Speaker, a jurisdiction like Finland has a play-focused universal daycare in place and the option of a Child Home Care Allowance program. This program provides a monthly allowance that is based on income and the age and number of children in each family. It is designed for family members to stay at home and care for their young children.

Mr. Speaker, I know that a strong family unit is the basis for a strong and prosperous society. I also know that children's first five years are the most crucial for social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development. I believe that this government should consider investing in other programs in order to enable children to develop the strongest possible relations with their parents. I also believe that any junior kindergarten and non-parental daycare programs that are also supported by this government should primarily emphasize play, as opposed to instruction.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many studies and organizations which state that play is critical to the development of children to foster future citizens who are happy and healthy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS ON INUVIK TO
TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been reporting hazardous conditions along the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway since it has opened. Mr. Speaker, the highway is not well-marked, and there are no turn-outs to get off the road. The lack of signage is a major hazard and should be completed or improved.

Even though residents of Tuktoyaktuk and the region have become familiar with the road, there are still many incidents, usually involving poor weather conditions. I have heard that vehicles are stranded in snow in the middle of the road. If the highway cannot be cleared on a routine basis, there should be travel warnings issued notifying the public.

A recent significant accident on the highway to Tuktoyaktuk involved the community's mayor, who was a builder of the highway and very familiar with road conditions. Mr. Gruben narrowly missed being hit himself when his vehicle was struck by an oncoming truck. Visibility was obviously poor, and the highway conditions should have triggered a travel warning.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway crosses a very windy region where strong gusts and blowing snow can cause poor driving conditions. When there is snow on the road, vehicles behind a transport truck can find themselves in whiteout conditions. The highway is not wide like an ice road, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, travellers should be aware that the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway passes an extraordinary landscape. There are few trees in some areas, and temperatures can be extremely cold in the winter. There are no shelter points between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. There is no communication. It is not the place to be stuck or broken down for very long; without help, freezing is a very real danger. There are no established first responders or communication along the highway, so people must travel prepared. Mostly, residents and travellers need to be reminded that it is not completed.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned particularly for the inexperienced northern drivers and tourists. Mr. Speaker, I strongly advise travellers to check the road condition updates on the Department of Infrastructure's website. In addition to highway improvements, Mr. Speaker, I believe we have

some work to do to safely promote our most northern highway. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to visitors in the gallery. We have with us a very good family friend, Marnie Villeneuve, also known to be the education leader of the North. With her is also Michelle Brown, both from Fort Smith and long-time dedicated teachers in the North. I would like to say welcome to our Assembly.

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great honour to recognize our president of the NWT Teachers' Association, Mr. Fraser Oliver. He did a great job this week with the Educators' Conference. It was well-attended with teachers from across the Northwest Territories, and I welcome all educators here in the gallery today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Thebacha.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to recognize Marnie Villeneuve and Michelle Brown, residents of Thebacha.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 134-18(3): LICENSING DELAYS FOR INUVIK SATELLITE FACILITIES

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier today in my Member's statement with regard to the satellite industry up in Inuvik and the benefits that it has had for the people of Inuvik and the Northwest Territories. I spoke about the infrastructure investment we've made in the fibre optic line.

We know that there has been some outside investment with regard to putting new antennas in Inuvik, but the application process seems to be arduous and long. I'd like to ask the Premier about the antenna application issue. It's been going on for a couple of years. I'd just like to know: has our government been aware of these delays, and if so,

what are we doing to let the federal government know how these delays can be severely impacting our economy in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to reinforce the tremendous opportunity that this satellite facility has, not only for Inuvik, but for the whole Northwest Territories. Inuvik is the best location for tracking satellites, and when we went on a satellite tour in Europe, we become readily aware why because, when we visited the launching facilities in Korona, we were told that to have success in launching a satellite, the longer you can talk to it, the more chance of success. In Korona, they can talk to satellite for nine minutes an hour, but if they twin to Inuvik, they can talk for 30 minutes an hour, so the chances of a successful launch is significantly improved. I just read recently that, in the next few years, there will be over 4,000 launches of satellites, so it's certainly an important area with tremendous opportunity.

We are very concerned about the delay. Certainly, we, myself, and officials, and a number of Ministers have interacted with the federal government Ministers, right up to the Prime Minister's office. I would like to take credit and say that we understand a decision will be made this week on the licence, but there have been other players, and the Member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories has spent a lot of effort on it, and the Senator chairing the Arctic Consult Senate Committee. My officials have a call with Global Affairs Canada tomorrow to obtain more information on the licences and how it applies or the impact for our planet Inuvik satellite. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Premier for his comments. It's appreciated. I know that he recognizes the importance of the opportunities this industry can provide to the Northwest Territories. It seems as though to some degree there might be some approvals imminent, and that's positive as well.

As I alluded to in my statement, Mr. Speaker, there are folks who are starting to suggest that Canada is not a friendly jurisdiction for this industry, and although there are many maybe approvals here on the horizon, these were long-standing applications. What has the federal government indicated to our government as the reasons for these delays?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: This is an area where the advances are very rapid, so it's a concern when it takes two years for a licence to be approved. However, the federal government recognizes that the legislation is old and processes that are currently in place need to be updated, given the

significant advances. Part of the delay was they have a federal government site that was developed and there was also a site that was developed by the private sector. This was the first international application that was received. They had to make sure about national security issues, and also perhaps the fact that the construction of a facility was done before the application process was approved may have had an impact on it as well.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Premier for his reply, and I hope that certainly we can continue to voice our concerns to the federal government that there needs to be some streamlining with regards to these application processes, and that there needs to be improvements made to the legislation.

With regard to approvals of these applications, what do we know? Do we know, is it now going to be just a straightforward kind of approval, or are there a number of conditions that are attached to these approvals? Do we know anything along those lines?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Our expectation is that we'll get more details when our officials talk to the Global Affairs Canada later this week, which will allow us to try to make things better going forward.

Also, we're hoping that Planet Lab with this pending approval will see fit to revisit their decision to pull out and take their antennas out.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question is: certainly, we can't expect to promote the Northwest Territories as a place to build antennas if applications take two years to approve. Other jurisdictions clearly can streamline this process. What can our government do to put pressure on the federal government so that we can start to fast-track some of these applications? Certainly we don't want to have folks who have already made investments starting to dismantle their antennas and relocating them into other jurisdictions. What are we going to do to put pressure on the federal government to start fast-tracking these applications? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think the fact is that the federal government is well aware of the potential for satellites in the Northwest Territories. Certainly, Natural Resources Canada was aware of it. They invested a significant amount in developing the federal site. The other federal Ministers, including the Prime Minister's Office, is well aware of it now, and certainly we will continue to work with the federal government to find ways to resolve the

issues so we can continue to grow the industry in the Northwest Territories. We can work with them to identify to them where we see the bottleneck so that certainly updating the current legislation would be a good start. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

QUESTION 135-18(3):
INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY
MAINTENANCE AND SIGNAGE

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about conditions on the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway. My questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I know that no matter how many signs you put on a winter road, especially up in the North in the Arctic, the chance of an accident are still very high. Mr. Speaker, my first question to the Minister is: what is the department's plan to improve signage and highway markings between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, our highway meets the national guidelines with respect to engineering, signage, and design posting limits along that highway. We've all had an opportunity and Cabinet has had a chance to drive it.

The further work that we're going to commit on signage going forward is there is going to be some information signage installed and some more delineators to add to driver comfort along the highway. We realize that this piece of highway is in one of the harshest conditions in Canada, or anywhere in the world, and people must have to drive accordingly through it. As the Member referred to the accident in his Member's statement, the RCMP are investigating that. They will determine what the causes were of that accident, and we'll have a look at it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response from the Minister. It's good to see that work is going on to improve the highway. Mr. Speaker, my second question is: under what circumstances does the department issue public alerts on road conditions for the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: We have our web page where we continually update the highway conditions of the highways in the Northwest Territories. The department also uses Twitter on a lot of occasions, because I always re-tweet out what the department is putting out there, from waits

on winter roads to closures of the Dempster and such.

On the Tuktoyaktuk to Inuvik Highway, I think a lot of people maybe even don't even realize they're driving by, because as the Member said, people don't pay attention to signage sometimes. At the beginning and at the end of both sections of the highway, there's a sign up there to say if the roads are open or closed.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: It is good to see travellers using the website. I have noticed Facebook is probably the number one user-interface for road conditions. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about winter conditions, and my question is: what will the department do to improve the information it provides to road travellers about winter safety?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: First of all, drivers must drive according to the conditions. The maximum speed is posted for optimum conditions, so if the highway is 100 kilometres per hour, that is for optimum conditions. If there is bad weather, well, then you have got to drive to those conditions. To ensure safety in the Northwest Territories, the highway system is a top priority of our department. We are always promoting safety as the number one thing. Driver education is one way that the department is working to communicate to residents in the Northwest Territories through advertising, enforcement, signage and such. Infrastructure has posted a new sign at the entrance of this highway, as well, to let residents know that they can go to the website to have a look at this stuff. We are continuing, as I have said, to update our web page and to use Twitter to do these things around road safety and guidelines.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the response. Mr. Speaker, my final question is: will the department increase the frequency of snow clearing on those sections of the highway that are subject to high winds during drifting snow? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: On this section of highway, we have a Government of the Northwest Territories employee and a maintenance contractor who inspect the highway twice a day to make sure the road is safe and cleared. If it is snowing or blizzardy and driving conditions are conditions that need to have the road closed, that will be informed and we will post that. There are protocols around highway maintenance of when the road needs to be plowed, and those are at the discretion of the maintenance contractor and the GNWT employee, and then they will follow up on that. For moving forward, being this is the very first year of this road

operating in these conditions, I think the department is already looking at certain areas of difficulty that have snow drifting. They are going to have a look at what they can do for procedures to address that, be it snow fencing or some other means of something to help address that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 136-18(3):
INUVIK SATELLITE FACILITIES

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance some questions about how we are using our potential in the satellite industry to grow the knowledge economy. My first question for the Minister is: can the Minister advise the House on what resources have been allocated by this government in its budgets to promote the NWT as a destination of choice for the global remote sensing sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do know that this government spent \$91 million in getting the fibre optic line up and running, and I think it is a very good investment. I think we expect to see a return on our investment. As far as the Member's question as to the exact number that we have in the budget towards promoting that, I do not have that exact figure at hand. I will find it and email it to the Member.

MR. TESTART: I would hazard to guess that, if I asked the same question about promoting our mineral sector, the Minister could find those facts and figures at his fingertips, so can the Minister develop the same approach to promoting investment in working with his colleagues in the mineral sector for the global remote sensing sector? If we want to grow it, we need investment, so is this work something he can do?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As far as finding the figures on investment in mining, I would not have that at my fingertips, as well. The Minister of ITI might, but I will not. I do know that this government is investing a significant amount of money in trying to promote the knowledge industry because we do recognize that it is a way forward. We have taken a couple of tours in Europe to try to promote it. I have tasked my officials with finding some industry magazines that we could possibly promote the geographically gifted area for retrieving satellite information in Inuvik, and I have also asked them to see if there are any industry type meetings that I could go to to promote the Northwest Territories. Again, we are also, as the Premier said before, working with the federal government to try to see if

they can streamline their whole legislation so that it makes the Northwest Territories an attractive place to invest because it is an attractive place to invest.

MR. TESTART: I appreciate the Minister's support for this important industry. This is another example of how we have natural advantages in the North tied to our unique geography, tied to our natural resources, and we need to use every one of them to grow the economy. On the issue of lobbying the federal government, has the Minister in his work with the fibre optic link had the opportunity to develop any regulatory improvement proposals to share those with the federal government? Has he done that work?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: In our discussions with the federal government, my discussions with the Finance Minister, we have raised the issue of our concern with the act and how improvements need to be made. As far as actual regulations and a proposal to put forward, I am not sure. I do not believe we have done those yet, other than having conversations with them and attending meetings, but I will confirm to see if we have made an official submission to this particular issue, and I will share that with the Members.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister finds that an official submission has not been made or the consultation has not been done on improvements, is that something he will undertake? Can he make that commitment to pursue this issue, working with his Cabinet colleagues so we can clear up this regulatory bottleneck and get certainty over our remote sensing opportunities in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I can assure Members of this House and members of the public that this is an issue, the Mackenzie Valley fibre optic line. We recognize that the area in Inuvik is very good for retrieving satellite information, so the decision to put a fibre optic line in and invite industry to come in and put up their satellite dishes, we recognize how important that is as we go forward. We have put a lot of effort into this. We have had a lot of discussions with the federal government. We are trying to do what we can to see if we can streamline this process and have more investment made in the Northwest Territories. As Finance Minister and our Cabinet colleagues and, actually, as an Assembly, we all do what we can to try to promote all types of investment in the Northwest Territories. If there are ways we can make Ottawa aware of some of the challenges we face, then we will certainly address those, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION137-18(3):
MEDICAL TRAVEL SERVICES IN HAY RIVER

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services about medical travel services in Hay River. The Minister is well aware of the issues we face in Hay River and has committed to look into them. The last time I raised the issue in the House, he noted that Hay River is unique in the way the medical travel services are provided. That is probably good for the rest of the territory, but not so good for us. Basically, because the services are provided through a contract, the department has little control over delivery. So, since this has been identified as a problem, what has the department done to remedy it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in September I indicated that we were going to look into this issue and try to make some improvements in Hay River. Since that time, we have done some analysis on how it is done. The Member is correct. It is the only place in the Northwest Territories where the service is provided by contract as opposed to being provided by the territorial health authority. As such, the contract is going to be expiring in March of this year. We are not going to be renewing the contract. We are going to be moving forward with creating a position in Hay River as part of the Territorial Health Authority to provide consistent quality medical travel services in Hay River and the surrounding area.

MR. SIMPSON: Not only is he addressing the issue; he is also creating a job in Hay River; well, I guess, a government job. He is taking one away, though, so I have to be careful what I say here. I appreciate that something is being done, but how can I assure my constituents that this change will actually result in an improvement in service delivery? Precisely why should we expect the Territorial Health and Social Services Authority to provide a better service than we are currently getting?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I think the Member actually answered some of his own questions in his preamble. Building upon the comments that the Member made, one of the advantages of having the territorial authority do this, as opposed to a contractor, is we'll be able to ensure that our people have the best training and are completely familiar with the processes and programs that are in place. Also, we have to recognize that people go on

holidays, people are occasionally sick; people might want to, you know, go on training or other development. Currently if that happens we're not always guaranteed that the person who is going to be backfilling is trained. By being part of the Territory Health and Social Services Authority, if one of our persons were to leave or go on holidays or be sick, we know we've got a group of competent, fully trained staff who can backfill on a minute's notice in Hay River; which means they will always have quality people, competent and qualified people, with lots of backup to continue to provide services at all times.

MR. SIMPSON: I'm a little under the weather myself, today. It would be nice to have a bit of backup here. Because of the timelines involved -- I mean, I think it's end of March you said the contract is expiring -- will there be enough time to hire and train this new employee?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We are going to move forward as quickly as possible to staff that position, but we acknowledge that it may prove difficult to get somebody. We've gone out for competitions before for lots of different jobs and not been successful on the first round, so we want to err on the side of caution here. What we're going to do is, for the first couple of months, we're going to work with the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, who is going to identify a person who can help us during the transition phase while we're out recruiting so that there is no gap in service. We also want to make sure that we have the best equipment and the appropriate equipment for our new person in Hay River to provide all the services. We want to make sure they're fully trained. So even after we hire them, they might not be full on-stream until we get them properly trained. So we figure this is going to take six months; but there's going to be no gap in service, because we're working with Hay River to provide some temporary backfill in that area.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So just to clarify, there will be a person physically in Hay River who people can go and see about their medical travel issues? Because I know sometimes, you know, with elders, it can be a little difficult if they have to speak over the phone, or those kinds of things. So I just want to confirm there will be a person who people can go see in Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: That's the plan, Mr. Speaker. Initially it will be somebody from the Hay River Authority. We're going to work on an agreement there. Our expectation is we're going to go out for staffing immediately and fill that position, get that person trained up. As for all medical travel,

I mean, it is a nine-to-five job. There will be times when people do have to call, just so that we're clear that it's somebody always available 24/7. It's a nine-to-five job, there are some after-hours calls, and we'll be able to provide that support, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 138-18(3):
RENTAL OFFICE WAIT TIMES

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Justice. The 2016-2017 NWT Rental Office Report shows an enormous increase in wait times from the norms of the previous five years. Why has the turnaround time between the dates of application filing and the dates of hearing become so long? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the period of 2016-2017, there were actually fewer applications, but there were more complex issues involved in those applications. Also, too, the long-standing rental officer retired, so that left one rental officer working there. Those two issues led to delays, which we fully acknowledge. Now, I have noticed that the numbers for the period from April 1, 2017, to January 31, 2018, do represent an improvement. So we are committed to improving those numbers further, Mr. Speaker. We knew there were also pressures on the office administrator's workload, and those procedures have been streamlined. So we think that all these adjustments will lead to improved service, which, of course, is our aim. Thank you.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the response from the Minister. Can the Minister tell us whether he has allocated additional resources to this office?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I can advise that we have allocated additional resources to the office. We have entered into a contract to have a second officer, a second rental officer, work there on a part-time basis. So we believe that that will reduce the workload.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the Minister's response that there is, in fact, more staff available. He said that service time had been improved. So, for example, what percentage of applications are now taking more than 90 days to process?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't actually have those figures, but I will undertake to provide them to the Member opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that commitment from the Minister. I'm looking for another commitment, and that is that the Minister will direct the rental office in its annual reports to track this indicator, which is not only the waiting time for applications, but the lag between applications and court orders in future reports. Thank you.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: The annual report covers the number of applications filed, the number of hearings held, and the elapsed time between filing and hearing. This information has been included as a performance measure in our departmental business plan for a number of years, and we'll continue to do that. We do recognize that justice delayed is justice denied. We do realize this is an important issue. We are taking measures to improve service to the public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 139-18(3):

WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I had mentioned in my statement, here, the resources management strategy. My first question to the Minister of ENR is: is the strategy going to be coordinated with other departments? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, yes. We do work with other departments as we work on strategies because sometimes there are times when there is cross-over; it's inter-departmental. So all the departments will usually work together as we bring these strategies forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: Thanks to the Minister for that reply. Seeing that it's a multi-department, coordinated, cost-shared effort, would the communities be involved in their particular landfill as part of the engagement?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: There is an opportunity through the engagement process with stakeholders. If there are concerns with landfills in the communities, I'm sure the community governments will bring those issues forward to the department when they're doing their consultations. There is also an opportunity for online comments, so all those factors are taken into consideration. If communities have a concern, then they have an opportunity to bring that concern to the department.

MR. MCNEELY: I'm glad to hear from the Minister that there is going to be some community consultation on describing the details of the scope for the clean-up. My next question is: when is this consultation going to occur in the Sahtu communities?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do know that there was a regional meeting held in Norman Wells, the regional centre for Sahtu, in January of 2018, so there was an opportunity there for some community input. Then there will be some public engagement on the discussion paper, and we're looking for the draft strategy and implementation plan to be ready for review and comment in the fall of 2018.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister keep my office posted so that, if time permits, I might be able to attend these community consultations? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do commit to keeping the Member informed. As I said before, I do know that they have had a number of regional meetings taking place in January and February. Actually, I think the last one was on February 14th. There was one other community that wanted to have a meeting, so I think they are trying to fit that in there, but I will keep the Member informed as to any potential meetings that are happening in his riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 140-18(3):

ALTERNATE FUEL SOURCES FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I spoke about some of the challenges in my riding for carbon taxes and green gas and energy and that. My questions are to the Minister of Infrastructure.

My first question: has the government considered expanding the Taltson hydro dam system, and are they looking at expanding that to the Nahendeh riding as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories is actively considering the transmission expansion of the Taltson system into the communities of the South Slave in particular. This will be reflected in our 2030 Energy Strategy and Action Plan.

With that being said, we are looking at expanding into the Fort Providence and the Kakisa area. That is a 140 kilometre T-line expansion, and we are also looking at possibly expanding into the Whati off the snare system, which is a 65 kilometre expansion T-line section.

As for the Member's question around the Nahendeh riding, being part of the road system, the communities of Jean Marie, Fort Simpson, and Wrigley would be technically challenging at this time moving forward, given the link to the line and the system's stability concerns, but I think it is something that we are going to look at doing in the long-term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I would like to thank the Minister for that answer. I greatly appreciate they are potentially looking at that. My next question is: what actions has the government taken to help Nahendeh communities reduce diesel usage, especially for the smaller communities?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: First of all, I want to thank the Member for giving us a heads up on this question here. There are a bunch of things we have done in his riding. In Fort Simpson, we are looking at LNG. It was a commissioned study in 2016, a liquefied natural gas vaporization study. An LNG facility in Fort Simpson is being considered as part of the Energy Strategy and Action Plan, and that is in development right now.

We have biomass wood pellet in Fort Simpson. In 2012, it's a GNWT-owned biomass central heating system for the rec centre and the elementary school. Combined heat and power in Fort Simpson; the GNWT investigated a megawatt scale of combined heat and power. I know they ended up going to a smaller pilot project. They have had to redesign the electrical system, and that is hopefully going to be installed on that part of the project this spring.

There is significant solar power in the Member's riding. There are 224 kilowatts of installed solar in six communities in his region, and in the five remaining Nahendeh region candidate communities we are looking at and have talked about a number of times in this House, a Colville Lake project and the newly installed variable speed generator, which is in Aklavik, and we will have a look at these technologies going forward if they are viable to use in his region.

MR. SPEAKER: Those are a lot of projects. Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Ministers for ITI and Infrastructure and Finance for that great information. It is good to hear all of that stuff.

Mr. Speaker, my third question is: it's my understanding the estimated direct costs for carbon taxes starts with \$10 per tonne in 2018. That increases \$10 a year until it reaches a cap of \$15,000 per tonne in 2022. It is estimated that high-use households will pay \$880 to \$1,015 per year. Will the government ensure that the Nahendeh residents are able to choose alternative fuel sources by that time?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member knows, the Minister of Finance has been working closely with the federal government to understand the full impacts of carbon tax on the Northwest Territories and the cost of living and doing business here.

In addition to that, though, the federal government tends to reflect the unique circumstances in the NWT. The Premier has had that commitment from the Prime Minister on this specific topic. Regardless of the carbon tax, our department is moving forward with our energy strategy, which will help with alternative and renewable options for people in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I realize it was kind of a unique crossover with Finance, and I appreciate the Minister working with the Minister of Finance to get this information out there. With the challenges of no alternative fuels in the short term, how will the government mediate cost-of-living increases being imposed on residents by this carbon tax? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: One of the key messages we heard coming out of the carbon tax public engagement was the concern over the cost of living, as we have said, and doing business in the Northwest Territories. The second part to considering a carbon tax is what will we do as a government with the revenue that is generated from a carbon tax.

I support using a portion of these revenues to offset the high cost of living in the Northwest Territories, for sure. The reality of the NWT is that we have a high demand and high prices already for fuel and electricity. While we want to continue to advance alternative energy projects, we will also want to mitigate the impacts on our residents and our businesses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 141-18(3):
ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. In my statement earlier today I noted the extensive public engagement undertaken by Mary Simon as the Ministerial Special Representative on Arctic Leadership. I understand that she actually met with our Premier as well. I am wondering: can the Premier tell us what he talked about when he met with Ms. Simon in her work as Ministerial Special Representative on Arctic Leadership? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The MLA for Frame Lake is on record as stating he wants no mines, no oil and gas, and in his Minister's statement, I am not surprised at the line of his questioning.

I met with the Ministerial Special Representative on Arctic Leadership in February of 2016. I spoke to her about our shared interests in closing the gap to create meaningful outcomes for people living in the Arctic, working to better the lives of residents, and building productive and collaborative relationships. We discussed lowering the costs of living by building infrastructure, education, training and capacity development, community wellness, youth development, suicide prevention, and balancing efforts to grow and diversify the economy with environmental sustainability and climate change.

I emphasized the importance of Northerners making decisions about the North, and I believe that was reflected in her final report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I am happy to take the promotion from the Premier inviting me over to that side of the House any day. What I would like to ask the Premier next, then, is if he could tell us whether GNWT prepared a written submission for the Ministerial Special Representative on Arctic Leadership, and if so, can he table it in the House?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: There were two letters written to Ms. Simon during her engagement process, and I would be pleased to table them at the appropriate time.

MR. O'REILLY: I would like to thank the Premier for that commitment, and I look forward to reading the correspondence.

The Premier confirmed earlier in February that there was no public engagement in the development of the Pan-Territorial Framework for Sustainable Development. During my questioning earlier in this sitting, I made specific suggestions for improving our focus on the Arctic Policy Framework by taking a sustainability approach that includes environment, economy, culture, and social inclusion. Can the Minister explain whether the

NWT chapter of the Arctic Policy Framework will take a balanced sustainability focus that is likely to include aspects of the environment, economy, culture, and social development?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: That is the position we have always taken, and certainly my expectation is that the Arctic chapter or the Arctic Policy Framework will reflect that, recognizing that this will be a federal document.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I appreciate the commitment from the Minister to ensure that it is going to be a broader approach than the Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development that he developed. I think, all of us in this House, we can recognize and congratulate Dene Nahjo for their hard work on "We Are One Mind" that the Premier tabled last week in the House. That document is going to be a valuable contribution to the development of a Northwest Territories chapter of the Arctic Policy Framework. Can the Premier tell this House how he intends to engage Dene Nahjo in the development of the NWT chapter of the Arctic Policy Framework? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are very pleased with the initiative and leadership shown by Dene Nahjo, and our officials have been in contact with the principals. We have been asked and been given permission to incorporate parts or sections of their report into the draft Northwest Territories paper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 142-18(3):
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT BEST
PRACTICES

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about early childhood development. I realize that we have programs, prenatal programs, and pediatricians, midwives, healthy families, other education programs, daycare, and so on. I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if he would agree to work with the Minister of Health and Social Services to look at other early childhood development initiatives to support the development of our children? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently we are committed to working with the

Minister of Health and Social Services and his department with the Right from the Start early childhood development action plan. There are 19 areas of action in there. I believe my department is focused on five of them, the Department of Health and Social Services on five, and then jointly we are working on nine of those areas of action. It is not only the Department of Health and Social Services. I think it is very important that, when we look at early childhood programming funding initiatives, that we also work with our Indigenous partners, our governments, working alongside Aboriginal Head Start and all of our partners and stakeholders who are interested and have an investment in early childhood. Yes, I am committed to working with the Minister and Department of Health and Social Services.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of programs that provide financial support to parents to stay at home to facilitate the development of their children.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I know there are some programs out there, Moms and Tots, mothers and babies, that invite all families to participate in those programs. We have made increases and improvements to the Canada Child Benefit, the NWT Child Benefit. That puts more dollars into low-to modest-income families. We also provide daycares and funding for day homes through subsidies, where, if parents want to have a day home, we can work on helping them provide that, possibly having their kids participate in the program, as well. Obviously, there are still other options. The Member did mention one in his statement. We are not aware of any of those kinds of programs here in the NWT.

MR. BEAULIEU: As the Minister just indicated, I am particularly aware of that one program that I spoke of. There are probably many all over the world. Can the Minister commit to looking at best practices from other jurisdictions in early childhood development?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Earlier I mentioned the "Right from the Start" early childhood development action plan that we have. That was based on best practices. We worked with our stakeholders, and we worked with the Department of Health and Social Services to develop that. When it comes to early childhood development and the importance of it, we are always looking at best practices throughout the country and other jurisdictions, but that action plan itself was based on best practices at the time.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister agree to begin the process of evaluating junior kindergarten as a long-term objective, but starting now with his department? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We are both just over five months into the territorial-wide implementation of the junior kindergarten program throughout the Northwest Territories. I did commit to standing committee and I have committed to the evaluation of the program on an ongoing basis, so, yes, we will commit to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 143-18(3):
DEH CHO / MACKENZIE RIVER TOURISM
OPPORTUNITIES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Earlier in my statement I mentioned the significance of the Mackenzie River being the second-longest river system in North America, but there is almost nothing to signal the Deh Cho to tourists and nothing at all to tell them about the river's history and great importance to all residents of the NWT. In my Member's statement, I suggested a larger sign, a bigger sign, and a roadside exhibit. It might also be a good picnic spot. What is the process to begin such a project? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member's point is well taken. I travel this highway quite a bit, and there is no signage there talking about the Mackenzie River. The Mackenzie River is important, not just to his region, but to the whole Northwest Territories. It is how people travelled in this country for years and years. I think it is a good idea to celebrate this type of feature, but it is not something that will happen overnight. I suggest maybe to the Member that we find someone within his riding who we can partner up with, a group or an organization. We can have a look at this thing. Contact our regional office in Hay River, and we can have some discussions.

MR. NADLI: I do not think I will be able to top off my colleague from Nahendeh's accomplishments with the previous Minister, but I will try. As the Minister might be aware, I know we did have a position before called economic development officer position, but that position was pulled. I would like a commitment to work on this roadside attraction. I think the Minister is onto something good. Will the Minister's department get started on

a roadside park? That would be a popular attraction on the south shore of the river. Mahsi.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: This question is perfect for me, for Infrastructure and ITI. We are committed to our parks system and investing in them in the Northwest Territories. Maybe this is something, again, we can have another discussion about this whole thing and have a look at how we can maybe move this thing in stages. Maybe we add it to our existing parks system, but I think it is a conversation that I am willing to support, and we can have those conversations. Again, I ask the Member to contact our regional office.

MR. NADLI: It has to be acknowledged that tourism is a growing industry, and we are trying to take advantage. That is the main point. I expect the organizations in Fort Providence, museum staff in Yellowknife, and Dene Metis organizations would have good suggestions for material to be included in the roadside exhibit about the Deh Cho. I have heard the suggestion of perhaps advising an interpretive centre. Will the department consult these parties to plan the exhibit?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Again, I agree with the Member. It's three times in a row. A project like this I think would be great for the region and will highlight travel through the Deh Cho, like I said, and highlight the Mackenzie River as such and whatever else we want to promote for the Deh Cho region. Again, I ask the Member to find someone who wants to drive this in his region and contact our department. We'll have a serious look at it.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for his enthusiasm. It's great to know. I think the key question is, you know, if he's committed, there's an interest. The key question is: when can the work on this facility begin? Mahsi.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member knows, we're in our budget process. To have a new park or something like that just doesn't slide into the budget just like that. At the minimum, at the very minimum, this project will need some planning, a consideration of costs, a project description, and these sorts of things. The Member is also, you know, asking the question if we will support that, and I gladly will support it moving forward, but he is going to have to get his constituency or people in his constituency to buy into this. I'd like to hear from them on what they have to say about it and have someone try this locally and we will look at supporting it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 144-18(3): RENTAL OFFICE WAIT TIMES

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to launching my kayak at the Michael Nadli Deh Cho Park. Not in 2018, but in 2019.

Mr. Speaker, on a more serious note, I have a follow-up question for the Minister of Justice. He talked about the importance of "justice delayed is justice denied." One way of measuring that in the rental office context is to find out how long it's taking between the hearing and the issuing of the court order. That's a metric that would be useful to have reported on an annual basis. Can the Minister commit to asking the rental office to do that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can commit to asking the rental officer to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Member for Yellowknife North.

Petitions

PETITION 1-18(3): USING LOTTERY MONEY TO FUND THE ARTS

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition supporting the matter of using lottery money to fund the arts.

Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 314 electronic signatures of Northwest Territories residents and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Government of Northwest Territories amend the Lottery Act to allow for lottery money to be disbursed to artistic endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 89-18(3): ANNUAL REPORT – NWT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PENSION PLANS, AT MARCH 31, 2017

TABLED DOCUMENT 90-18(3): NWT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PENSION

ADMINISTRATION REPORT – RETIRING
ALLOWANCES ACT AND SUPPLEMENTARY
RETIRING ALLOWANCES ACT,
AT MARCH 31, 2017

MR. SPEAKER: Members, pursuant to section 21(1) of the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowance Act and section 11.1 of the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, I wish to table the "Annual Report, NWT Legislative Assembly Pension Plans, at March 31, 2017."

In accordance to section 21(1) of the Retiring Allowances Act and section 11.1 of the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, I hereby table the "NWT Legislative Assembly Pension Administration Report, Retiring Allowances Act and Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, at March 31, 2017."

Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 5:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SUMMARY
CONVICTION PROCEDURES ACT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in support? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 5 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019,

and continuing on with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, followed by the continuation of the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, time permitting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. First, a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to continue our deliberation of Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and we will pick up where we left off yesterday, which is Education, Culture and Employment, early childhood and school services, on page 41. Minister, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my right is Sylvia Haener, my deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and to my left is Mr. Olin Lovely, assistant deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. When we left off yesterday, there was a bit of confusion, and I was wondering if the Minister or his witnesses would like to address the issue that we were discussing yesterday and perhaps try to clear some of that up. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it was in terms of the internal reallocation of the inclusive schooling dollars for junior kindergarten, and I will ask my assistant deputy minister, Mr. Olin Lovely, to go into detail for a little bit of an explanation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, in any given year, enrolments will go up and down. The funding formula will go up and down based on that because enrolments are a major component of that framework.

This past year, we saw enrolments go down by 1.8 per cent, resulting in money that would normally go back to the Department of Finance. Rather than do that, we sought direction and received approval to reallocate that money internally and put it towards including junior kindergarten students in the inclusive schooling formula.

The number of students in junior kindergarten in 2018-2019 amounts to \$881,000. As we progress further down the years, if the complement of students in inclusive schooling goes up, the funding will go up. If the complement of students in inclusive schooling goes down, that funding will go down.

We have provided that information to education authorities. They are budgeting based on including junior kindergarten students as part of their ongoing operations for inclusive schooling. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Part of the issue was that the Minister said that the mains were printed before the change was known about. Could the department elaborate on some of the timelines so we have the dates of when the number of students was known, when the Mains were printed, and so on, just for clarification? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know Members were looking for the hard-line item in the main estimates here. Maybe I will go back to the assistant deputy minister to show you where the money came from, from the program detail lines, for a little bit more clarity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we turn to page 41, the total amount that we give to the education authorities is comprised of the schools line item for \$128,822, the inclusive schooling component for \$26,724, and we also have money in the previous activity for Indigenous languages of around \$8 to \$9 million. Sorry, it's right here on this page; \$9.5 million will go to the education authorities, plus the minority-language education and Instruction of \$2.6 million.

Each one of these items that I have mentioned will fluctuate based on the enrolments in the schools, and what we ended up doing is that we took the funding from schools of 128. We took the \$881,000 out of there, and it will be moving down to inclusive schooling so that that money will now be about \$27.5 million.

The reason for it not showing up was the main estimates were printed in December. The approval

for the junior kindergarten funding reallocation was done later in January. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Since this is new information, I will allow committee Members to speak twice to this activity if they wish. First, I have Mr. McNeely on my list.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When adjustments are made, such as the 881 after the print shop is done, is it the department's standard practice to have an amendment to the numbers presented in the printed mains? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, we couldn't do the amendments, because they were printed in December and the decision was made in January. The process of when there were internal reallocations does have to go through a process and have an FMB submission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Next, I have Mr. Nakimayak on the list, to carry over from yesterday. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just on page 42, and we're looking at the healthy food for children and youth. I just have a question. I know we're getting into income security later on. I'm looking at the funding for healthy food for children and youth. I know recently the Department of ECE is giving cash to income security recipients and clients. I'm wondering if that's going to have an uptake on the breakfast program and the food for children and youth such as breakfast programs around the territory, and if that's going to have an effect. I'm just wondering if the department is going to have any forward-thinking issues to mitigate that once that becomes a possible issue across the territory, mainly in smaller communities where there are a lot of income security clients? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Minister.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's something we need to monitor. With the income assistance, we fund families for their most basic needs. As I mentioned yesterday, we fund breakfast, lunch, and snack programs throughout the Northwest Territories that do have an impact on our students. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Nothing further from Mr. Nakimayak. Next on my list is Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, what I'm wondering is: I follow now the explanation that the assistance deputy minister has given about where the money is being reallocated, and it's enrolment-based and so on. Is this page, page 41 of the main estimates, going to be changed to reflect the reality of the reallocation that the ADM talked about? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not the main estimates that we're going through right now, but it will be revised in the next 2019-2020 Main Estimates. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in terms of creating a record on this commitment, is Hansard the only thing that we have to rely on in order to capture this commitment? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. I will address that to the Minister of Finance. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my apologies to committee. I know that there were a lot of concerns about this particular issue. As far as I was concerned, it was quite straight-forward, but I didn't know that. Recognizing that the committee had a number of questions, I had sent a letter off. I'm not sure if the chair of standing committee has it yet, but I do have the letter here. I'm not sure how we want to deal with this. This gives a fairly good explanation in writing as to issue that the folks from ECE are talking about. Hopefully, this will help clarify some of that, so Hansard wouldn't be the only record. You would have it. This would be the record you would have of it here.

I think it's fairly straight-forward and it explains it, in my opinion, fairly well. I think it's gone off to the clerk of the committee, but I don't think committee has an opportunity to see it yet.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, thank you to the Finance Minister for that. Just to complete the record in Hansard, I see the letter isn't long. Could the Finance Minister just read it into the record so that we can put this issue to bed? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: If it means putting this issue to bed, I will be more than happy to read the letter; it's not very long, if that's okay with the Chair and the Minister and the Premier and the public at large.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I see heads nodding, so, Minister McLeod, please proceed with reading the letter into the record.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the letter is addressed to Mr. Tom Beaulieu, chairman of the standing committee and priorities in planning, 2018-2019 Main Estimates. As was noted in my letter of January 29, 2018, \$881,000 was approved to be reallocated to the inclusion of junior kindergarten enrolments in determining inclusive schooling funding. This amount is included in the \$154.9 million in the education authority contributions described on page 42 and 43 of the 2018-2019 Main Estimates.

As I am sure the Members can appreciate, estimates of enrolments are used for inclusion in the budgeting process from the previous year. Recently it was determined that enrolments had dropped by 1.9 per cent. What the FMB has directed is, rather than lapse the funding and returning it to general revenue, Education, Culture and Employment are to re-direct that funding to inclusive schooling. Should enrolments increase unexpectedly for 2018-2019, the department would seek supplementary funding as appropriate. Other financial commitments identified as part of our agreement will be included as part of the supplementary appropriations number 1 for 2018-2019. I trust this provides the needed clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'd like to thank the Finance Minister for clarifying. I feel like there was another nugget of information in there that we didn't have before. From my point of view, I am completely satisfied that we now understand the money, where it came from, where it's going, and that it will be in place in the next budget. I'd like to thank the Finance Minister for that.

With that, Mr. Chair, I have some other unrelated questions on this page. Is now the right time to ask those?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Since this issue has been settled and I was going to allow him to speak to this particular issue twice, I'd like it if we could move on from this issue, but I will allow your remaining time to discuss this final issue before I call the page. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there are some reports that are important to schools and educational authorities which we have not yet seen and which were promised to us prior to this time in the business planning process. I'll start with, first of all, the Yellowknife School Space Study. A draft of that report was completed in the fall and we were told to expect to see that study in January. We're now told we won't see it until April. I'm wondering what the delay is in sharing this information even on a confidential basis with committee. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That specific study, there's more than just the Department of Education, Culture and Employment that's involved. There's also the Department of Infrastructure and the Department of Finance. Collectively, we're working on the joint response to that space study here in Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I recognize that this space study is a multi-department undertaking, but that was always the case. The report was promised to us before January and we're not seeing it until April. I'm going to ask again: what is the delay in sharing this report with committee, even on a confidential basis? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, there are three departments that are working. I can't tell the Department of Finance or the Department of Infrastructure how to do their jobs. We're also working with the education authorities and making sure that they're up to date on this study. Once this study is complete and we do get a response, I'm sure that we can share that with committee after going through the formal process, and bring that back to Cabinet, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see I'm not going to get a specific answer at this point. I will register that we shouldn't be the last to know. It makes absolutely no sense that we're not going to know about this until after the deadline for getting a capital funding project application in. Related to this and still an outstanding issue is the actual plan for early childhood development with money provided

by Canada. We know that action plan is complete. There is some to-ing and fro-ing around when it's going to sign off. Are we looking at the same kind of a delay in making this information available to the committee as we've just experienced with the homecare? Meaning that there was a huge gap between finding out this money was available and then having it announced publicly today by the Minister of Health and the MP. So when exactly are we going to get this plan? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Because it is a bilateral agreement with the Government of Canada, we do have to respect our working relationships with them. Any input or influx of funding that we get towards early childhood development is great for us in the Northwest Territories; and I did mention and commit that, once we do get the agreement signed, that we would be willing to come and brief standing committee on the steps moving forward and the action plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I'm wholly unsatisfied with the fact that this committee is playing second fiddle to another order of government. We need the information. We've asked for it. The money seems to be in the budget for this, and yet we have not seen the plan. It's total unacceptable. The plan needs to be shared with the committee, even on a confidential basis, as soon as possible. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Would the Minister like to respond in the remaining 10 seconds?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll take the Member's comments, and I'll bring it to Cabinet for further discussion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Next, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister and the department and the Finance Minister for clearing up that inclusive schooling issue. So I really appreciate that. My comments are just in regard to a couple of other things in the budget, here. One, we're talking about a new stream for graduation; there are three or four or five streams. What is happening with this? It's not on this page? Okay. Thank you, that answers that question. Do you know what page that would be on? I guess I'll go back to the Minister on that one,

then, because this says early childhood and school services, so I'm trying to figure out where that is. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister, would you please, perhaps, direct us as to where the appropriate section is to discuss this issue?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My apologies. I thought it was in a section later, but in regards to High School Pathways, it is an initiative that we're moving forward with our education renewal. We have had consultations with the education authorities. My apologies to the Member for telling him it was on a different page. The High School Pathways, we're looking at five different streams, as mentioned. That won't be implemented in the school system until the 2019-2020 academic year. So that gives us a full year to do the consultations, meet with our partners, our stakeholders, our education authorities, to get that information out to families and parents. In the presentation that we did give to committee, we did hear all the concerns and recommendations on this one. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister, and I don't take any offence at it, because I'm good trying to find things in here. So I greatly appreciate it, and I appreciate that information. So I guess we're going through a process here, and I'm just trying to understand: we've already put money into the system, correct? So are we going to see the plan at some point in time, after the consultation during this fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we will share that with standing committee and all Members. This one, we want to make sure that we do give consultation throughout the Northwest Territories, as it will have an impact on our students and our teachers. So, thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we will.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that. I know the department is doing some good work on that. I just wanted to make sure we get it communicated properly and everybody is on-stream with it. So this next question, here, is just regarding Northern Youth

Abroad. I know that there's a contribution agreement with the Department of Education and the Department Municipal and Community Affairs. Is it in this area here? Because it shows a blank here, but it might be somewhere else. So can the Minister confirm if it's in this section or if it's in another section? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is in this section, our contributions to Northern Youth Abroad. We do fund them on an ongoing basis in terms of when they request the funding -- application-based, I guess you could say -- and our discussions with them. So it is in this area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. So could he direct us where the money is being allocated? Because right now, they have Northern Youth Abroad, but there's no money on that line there, but I am assuming that it's in one of these other program areas. Could he just direct us to what area, what line that is in? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have a committed line item to it. We always try to find the funding within the department to fund the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for that. I guess for the future, and the Minister is probably aware of this, it's a really good program, and I think we should be identifying the success that the department is having with these non-NGOs. Northern Youth Abroad has a huge, huge impact on our youth, and the Minister has been involved with it previously as a volunteer. So I would like to see it in the business plan or in the main estimates in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member's comments. Actually, in

fact, my counterpart in Nunavut, the Minister of Education, was one of the first participants in the Northern Youth Abroad program. It shows how big of an impact that program has on our youth in NWT and Nunavut. We can consider putting it in as a line item in future main estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to return to the issue that Mr. Thompson raised about the additional streams in schools. Now, I know that in places like Yellowknife, and even in Hay River 20 years ago, when I was in school and there were twice as many students in the high school, having additional courses was viable; but, right now, they're struggling to provide things like core French. You know, core French isn't offered in the high school in Hay River, and students are asking why, you know dash-4 courses aren't offered. Well, it's because there's not that critical mass that makes it feasible to put one of those courses on. I mean, do you, maybe, not buy any toilet paper or any supplies like that for the year, or do you hire a teacher to teach one of these courses? You know, the money is stretched thin and it's not appropriately distributed when it comes to centers like Hay River.

So my concern with these courses is that the department is trying to create; I understand what the department is trying to do, and I know they've been doing this in other places for decades, but I think this is one thing where we need a "made in the North" solution. So I know the department wants to offer these courses, but is it part of a broader plan to reform the system or is it just tacking something onto the current system and hoping it works? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've heard, on numerous occasions, that our current high school graduation requirements are not meeting many of the NWT students; and, therefore, the department has taken it on and is looking at reviewing and working towards revising the current requirements and looking at how we can assist students to create a pathway to graduation, whether it's the trades, whether it's for future post-secondary education, whether it's to get into the career field right away, or even just to get a completion of their high school, but those are discussions that we're going to have as we have those consultations throughout the Northwest Territories on this High School Pathways initiative, and as I mentioned, it is not going to be

implemented in the school year until the 2019-2020 academic year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe we are coming to the end of the education renewal. I believe that was an initiative over a period of time, and if that is wrapping up and we are trying to do these new things, is there some sort of master plan here? It is getting harder and harder to put these classes on with the way the funding is structured. I mean, the physical school itself in Hay River is not getting any smaller. Even if there are 200 fewer students, they don't need fewer janitors, and it doesn't cost less to heat. If anything, it costs more to heat. There are all of these problems, and we don't seem to be addressing the root problem of this. We just keep tacking more on, expecting the schools to do more without providing them with more. Maybe I will just leave it at that, and I can address this at a different time with the Minister, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Did you want to provide comment to that, Minister Moses? Go ahead.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, one of the main objectives of the Educational Renewal process was to improve student outcomes throughout the Northwest Territories. We have had a lot of initiatives in terms of making that happen. We are also looking at system-wide accountability.

As you have heard, we do fund over \$150 million to the education authorities. We want to make sure that they are providing the programs, the courses, and services to the students in their respective regions, and we continue to work with our superintendents, our education authorities and board chairs.

It is something that we are continuing to monitor. We have working groups that are involved in a lot of the initiatives that are within the education renewal, and we will continue to work at that. We have a lot of community people who are on these working groups, as well as people with expertise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a question about the contract services line on page 41. It seems to have increased by nearly \$1 million. Can we get some clarity on why that is? It is a substantial increase. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was just a reallocation of the ERI budget. We have moved money from contract services and reallocated it into contributions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can we have an explanation of what contract services are, then? I am still a bit confused, and this line seems to have fluctuated quite substantially in previous fiscal years. In the 2016-2017 Actuals, it was \$939,000; in the 2017-2018 Main Estimates, it was \$5,050,000; and in the Revised Estimates, it was \$2,085,000; and again, now we see this increase. Why is there so much volatility in contract services in this activity of the department? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Each year, as we run through the priorities of the Education Renewal Initiative, how we determine to best provide the support and the programs will determine where the budgets are. For 2016-2017, obviously, you can see it was \$939,000. During the course of that year, what we probably saw was that we did not need to do as much work under contract services, and that, instead, we gave more of the money to schools through a separate contribution agreement or that we did it through another venue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Again, I might not have heard clearly the response to my first question, but the \$900,000 here, what is that intended for? Is that just a placeholder, and the money will be reallocated if it is not required? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: I'm sorry. I missed the question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Just to reiterate what the assistant deputy minister said earlier with our Education Renewal Initiatives, putting funding into certain programs as we go through the process, as I mentioned earlier, we have a lot of initiatives on the go, and providing the financial resources to that shows the fluctuation from year to year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. Just for clarity, then, this increase to the contract services line is in order to support those programs going forward into this year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What you see in 2017-2018 was that we had taken \$2.165 million out of contract services and reallocated that to grants and contributions, fees and payments, materials and supplies, purchased services, and travel. That was the reason why that contract services amount goes down to \$2.93 million. That 2.1 is being allocated throughout, to better reflect what activities we are going to undertake in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. Can I get a sense of some examples of what we are contracting out with this money to support these programs? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What some of this money does entail is it includes the northern counselling services, the northern travelling team that will go out into the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry if I'm struggling with this amount. I have asked questions about what is presented before us in this budget, and I am hearing a lot of answers about how it was used previously. I understand that this number may change, but I am looking for why the department is requesting an increase of \$1 million to this. I think what I am hearing is that, the previous year, it was a considerable amount more and it was redistributed, so they are trying to harmonize it to a degree where they can still support the contract requirements that they think are going to be required for this fiscal year. I will leave it at that, but again, the clarity is helpful once we finally get there. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Did you want to provide a reply to that, Minister Moses?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I will just take it as a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay. Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. At the risk of causing mayhem, I do want to thank, though, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education and his staff for the information about the reallocation for inclusive schooling. I think the important thing to take away from this is that it is a good thing. There is now going to be extra money for JK students for 2017-2018. We are getting closer to fully funded for -- the Minister is laughing, as I am, too. In 2018-2019, the formulas are going to be changing, and that is the best solution in the long term. It is a good-news story all around.

I had a peek back at the appropriation bill that we passed for the last budget. We just ended up voting on departmental totals. If there are reallocations within a department, that is not a big deal, but the public sees main estimates. We see main estimates, and if there are changes between when the main estimates are printed and when we start to talk about them on the floor of the House, having a document that summarizes those changes would be helpful in avoiding, perhaps, some of the discussion that we had earlier. I understand now what is happening, and I thank the Ministers for their explanation. It is a good-news story, but maybe we can avoid this in the future.

I want to turn to page 41 of the departmental budget. I had the same question as my colleague about the change in contract services, but I want to move to the travel line, which, from 2016-2017, it was \$1,037,000. In 2018-2019, it has actually doubled now, more than doubled, so can I have some explanation of why there is a big increase in travel happening over a few years? Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. We will take your comments to the Finance Minister as notice. Minister Moses, if you can go back to the question provided by Mr. O'Reilly. Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Every year, we hold symposiums, conferences for teachers, and that is included in this budget line. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, are there extra events that are happening between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, or are these cyclical conferences or something? I am just trying to understand why there is a doubling of the travel budget between those years. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like I mentioned, it goes to conferences, training for our education personnel as well as staff and teachers. Just recently with this conference, we had actually brought in our student support staff for the first time, as well as our junior kindergarten teachers. So it is reflective of that, but I do not have a detailed list of all of the upcoming events for this year, if that is what the Member is referring to. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Okay, I accept that, and I believe that is important for our staff, to be able to have professional development and to bring folks who are experts together to talk about these things. I will leave it alone. I was just trying to figure out: is there a conference that happens every two or three years that results in a larger travel budget, or something? That is okay. I am going to let this one go.

I want to turn, though, to the next page, which I believe contains the contributions to the district education authorities. I know, in last year's budget and I think it is reflected in the business plan, as well -- I know it is reflected in the business plan -- there was to be a reduction of \$200,000 on school administration to the district education authorities. Can the Minister just tell us where that work is at? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was part of the reduction exercise that the department did, and this is the final year of that exercise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. I understood that there was going to be some kind of a consultant hired to look at potential for shared services amongst the district education authorities. Can the Minister tell us the status of that work and whether the district education authorities are onboard for this reduction of \$200,000? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are in the process of developing a response to those shared services and that exercise we did on

the shared services, so we are just currently developing a response to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks --

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Minister Moses?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Sorry for the confusion, Mr. Chair. Once we get that response formalized, then we will send a letter to standing committee, and we will be sharing that with the education authorities, as well. It was the discussion that we had our last education leaders meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I recognize this is work under way, but the problem is we are going to have to vote on an appropriation bill maybe before we even get the report. We are going to have to vote on whether we are ready to accept this budget for the department, so when is this report going to be made available? If the report is finished, can the Minister share the report with us and then share the response from the department afterwards? Once again, we seem to have a problem with getting information from the department. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses, to the report.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Well, before the formal response, and I understand the Member's comments about voting on the page, the preliminary results that we are seeing are that it is not feasible at this time, with the shared services. We will get something to the Members, and that is something that we will be sharing with the education authorities. What we notice is that all of the education authorities do different things in terms of how they run programs, how they fund their schools, and it is hard to keep one standardized throughout the NWT. Initially, those were some of the early, ongoing results, but we will get something formal to the Members and something that we will share with the education authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I do appreciate the Minister passing along that information. So, if the preliminary results seem to indicate that this is not likely going to work, are we still cutting the funding to the DEAs to \$200,000, or

is the Minister suggesting that we should put that money back into the budget? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The education authorities already knew this was happening. This is the second year, and it was already out of their budget coming into this process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, I guess I am concerned that we are continuing to cut if the results of the study seem to indicate that there are no costs savings. So, at the end of the day, the district education authorities are going to be left with less money to work with. That is not what I had hoped from this budget, but I think this is just part of the Cabinet's reduction strategy again, and I do not agree with this cut. I do not expect a response from the Minister. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses, did you want to reply to that?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe I will have my deputy minister just comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Deputy Minister Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The shared services exercise that we undertook with the education authorities was never intended or never had an objective of resulting in budget reductions. That was not one of the outcomes from it. It is an initial effort at trying to streamline our processes and look at ways to have common approaches to administrative processes.

As the Minister indicated, what has come out of that so far is that there are really quite disparate practices with HR management, with charts of accounts, so we really need to take a step back and do some more basic work around how we approach administrative processes and try to come to some common understandings on that front.

That is a separate exercise from the work that we undertook to achieve reductions to our budgets, so last year there was a \$600,000 reduction to administration, and this year there is a further \$200,000 reduction that is reflected. The education authorities worked with us to understand that and to implement it in a manner that was as feasible as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Deputy Minister Haener. Any further questions on this activity? If not, going back to page 41, early childhood and school services, operations expenditures summary, \$193,848,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): We will move on to page 46 to page 48, income security, operations expenditure summary, \$50,801,000. Questions to this activity? If Members want to make reference to which page their questions are referred to, thank you. Yes, go ahead, Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my questions are about page 46. The department increased the Senior Citizens Supplementary Benefit for the first time in many years last September. I am wondering if the Minister will consider indexing this benefit so that it retains its value to seniors according to the cost of living.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With that particular item, we usually work with Canada on this one, with the Senior Supplementary Benefit, so we cannot commit to that at this moment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister commit to advocating to have this benefit indexed to inflation? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This supplementary benefit here in the NWT was the first time we increased it in a number of years. We are always looking to find ways that we can get extra funding from outside governments and other governments, possibly the federal government, but at this time, we will have have discussions on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am unclear what the barrier is to the Minister advocating for indexing this benefit to inflation. Could he please elaborate on that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a number of programs that we have for seniors across the Northwest Territories. With our consultations and our discussions with the NWT Seniors Society and the Yellowknife Seniors Society, we have had discussions since the beginning of this government. They were pleased with the increase that they did receive from the Department of ECE. Those were our discussions that we had with them and their comments, and they were happy to have that increase. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this exchange underlines the problem of communication with ECE, particularly with the Minister. I'm now going to ask for a fourth time if he will advocate for indexing this benefit so that the value of it keeps up to inflation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses, to the question.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate the Member's passion for seniors and supporting seniors aging in place and throughout the Northwest Territories. We can have those discussions with the Government of Canada. It will be a bilateral agreement and discussion, but I cannot say what the Government of Canada will come back with. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that. I guess that is as close as we are going to get. The Senior Home Heating Subsidy is a popular program because it offsets one of the greatest household expenses. Is this program due for changes of any kind; income testing, increased accessibility, or any other changes? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have reviewed the Senior Home Heating Subsidy. We also had this discussion with NWT Seniors Society and the Yellowknife Seniors Society in terms of enhancements that we will be making to the program. If everything goes well, we will be making those enhancements in the new fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I note that there is no increase in money in the budget for this

item. What enhancements is the Minister talking about? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Some of them are changing from a fuel allocation to a monetary system that will ensure that seniors receive their full benefit. We are also looking at expanding to seniors who are in rental units and looking at, obviously, the income thresholds, for one, and looking at modifications to how communities are allocated to specific zones, but as I mentioned, we are still in that review process and hoping to get those enhancements passed through in the new fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell us when he is going to brief the Social Development Standing Committee on these changes? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If my memory does serve me correctly, I do believe we sent a letter to standing committee on this one. We can follow up and see when there is time to have that meeting, but I can check with the chair of standing committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I happen to be sitting quite close to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, and I am the vice chair. Neither of us have a recollection of receiving any information on this topic. We would appreciate receiving that information at the Minister's earliest convenience. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will follow up on that one, and if it was not sent, then I will make sure that we do send something to standing committee to give them a briefing.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. My final question is: if there is going to be money available in additional ways, such as seniors who are in rentals, does that mean that the threshold for income qualification is going to go up? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is the expectation, yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: I would appreciate any detail the Minister could give us at this time about how those thresholds are going to change. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not have that detail in front of me, but I can provide it to standing committee in a presentation sooner than later, I suppose. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sooner is gooder. Those are all my questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses, did you want to reply?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes. I suppose sooner is gooder. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister. You still have a few minutes left there, Ms. Green. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. My questions are going to be kind of similar to my colleague's from Yellowknife Centre, but I am going to be asking about income assistance. It is on page 46. There is an increase from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. It is maybe about \$1.75 million. Can the Minister explain this change and what, if any, parts of income assistance have been increased and why? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We did have an uptake in income assistance clients. Sometimes the rent that we do pay for income assistance clients also pays into that, and then, also, there are utility increases that are covered under the department that sometimes do increase, as well, so those are all reflected in that increase on that line item. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, as I understand it, within income assistance there is

some provision for cost of food, cost of clothing and so on. For any of those sorts of components, is there any provision in here for an increase in any of those parts of income assistance? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, there are no changes to the rates. With our income assistance clients, it is on a case-by-case basis, and it is to cover off the most basic needs for anyone who is on income assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is, I guess, what I was kind of worried about. So what triggers a review of any of those sort of rates for income assistance? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I have mentioned in the House, all the programs within ECE, we always review them. I am not sure what would trigger a review of the income assistance rates, but we believe that we do provide income assistance adequately on a case-by-case basis. Mind you, income assistance is the last resort for our residents who have tried every other avenue for getting some financial stability or other resources before coming to income assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the response from the Minister. I certainly understand that income assistance is sort of the place of last resort, but I am a bit perturbed to hear that the Minister says he does not know what triggers a review. If the Minister does not know, who does know? Are reviews done every five years, every 10 years, 30 years? Is there a regular review cycle? Maybe I will start with that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess one of the triggers that we have seen most recently was the Canada Child Benefit. That triggered us to review our income assistance, which also made us look at our own NWT Child Benefit. Those both made enhancements to the program, so, as I mentioned, our low- to modest-income

families are getting more dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that sometimes those triggers might be external. You know, I guess another example is for those people who work, the Minister does appoint a minimum wage committee that gives him some advice. There seems to be a regular cycle for that. Why don't we have some sort of regular cycle for review of income assistance rates and payments? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess we do provide a lot of funding to our most vulnerable residents in the Northwest Territories. If you look at the line item there, it is in the millions, and, if you look over the last few years, there has always been an increase. We have to make sure that we are reflective in terms of taking care of rent, taking care of utilities, food, clothing for these families. We do that on a case-by-case basis. I think the program is working well. There are triggers, external triggers, that provide us to make changes to our income assistance. Currently, we do look at it regularly, but, to make changes, I think what we have here is adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate the comments from the Minister. I am sure that a number of our citizens who are on income assistance might not agree with the Minister in terms of whether it is adequate. I realize it is \$31 million of our budget, but maybe I will just cut this short. Is the Minister prepared to look at some sort of scheduled review of income assistance rates as he does for the minimum wage? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I am prepared to take a look at it, have those discussions with my staff, but also bring that to Cabinet. This one is always one that we are always going to have a very high line item in. We have made some other improvements, as we talked about earlier in this House, with the Small Community Employment Program, getting jobs into the communities, other areas that other departments provide, such as housing and other

benefits as a government to our residents in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate that commitment from the Minister. I am sure he will be happy to work with the Standing Committee on Social Development to look at that issue. I want to thank him for the commitment. It took us a while to get there, but that is what I was hoping to hear. Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is all I have.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister, did you want to reply?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: No. Just that, as a government, we have supported our most vulnerable residents in the Northwest Territories when they needed assistance and help, and we will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for those answers. He kind of answered some of the questions that I had on my paper here. I apologize if there is a letter that we may or may not have received. I am not saying you did not send it. It is just somewhere out there, and I have not seen it. I am not blaming anybody. I guess my big concern, and I hear this all the time, is with the Senior Home Heating Subsidy and the thresholds and that. I realize that the department is looking at that, but how can we talk to the people in the smaller communities when an individual has to work so he can feed his family, look after his child who is going off to school, and, in some of my small communities, that they do not have any employment for them so they can go off to school, so, the husband or the wife ends up looking after that? Have you guys looked at that as part of the threshold, as a concern, and have you come up with a plan to deal with this in the future? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are looking at the income thresholds on this. We do know that some of our seniors do use their allocated Senior Home Heating Subsidy before the end of the winter seasons. We have been encouraging to also go to income assistance to see whether or not that can offset of the costs. As I mentioned, with income assistance and clients and families that we work with, it is on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess the question is: it goes case-by-case, but does it also include the fact that there are other costs? Like if you have a family, the father has to provide food for the family, has to look after a sick spouse, and a child is going off to school. So are those factors built into this or not? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are certain criteria for families and seniors to access the Senior Home Heating Subsidy. They can also be accessing income assistance. Other factors, such as kids going off to school, no, we don't factor those in. We factor what is in the criteria for accessing Income Assistance and the Senior Home Heating Subsidy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess the concern I'm hearing, especially for some of the smaller communities, is, as I said, the expenses for this family are here, and they make too much money, but if they didn't do it, the kid can't go off to school, they can't provide food on the table, and that. So would the Minister be willing to get the department to look at this? At least look at it and see, as he talks about case-by-case situations, if they could look at that and give some discretion to their front-line workers in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do understand there are unique situations that our residents and our families are in. We also have a great Student Financial Assistance program, so if a student is going off to school, hopefully they're able to budget within their means, allowing the seniors at home to utilize their Senior Home Heating Subsidy, as well as utilize their income assistance, if they are on income assistance, for their most basic needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess I'm going to have to try this a different way. I'm not arguing about your Student Financial Assistance program; it's probably the best in the world, and I'll give you that. I totally agree with you on that. The biggest

challenge in the small communities is for students to access or get employment; we can't do it. In the smaller communities there is sometimes job-sharing with two people and they only work four hours a day and they work for two weeks and they get off a week. So that's where I'm coming across, is that families aren't just saying, "We can't budget properly." It's just that the reality is they make this X amount of money, they get student financial assistance, there's still a gap; and for the child to go off and go to school, which we should be encouraging, and the parents are trying to be supportive in that, they're still not able to achieve this. So I guess, again, I'm going to ask the Minister: will he just look at that, talk to the staff, and look at these situations to see if that is something that can be dealt with in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses, to the question.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a lot of programs here that the Minister is referring to: Student Financial Assistance, Income Assistance, Senior Home Heating Subsidy. With the income, I'm not sure if it's something more specific, in terms of somebody that he's speaking to; but we're also doing investments, such as our career and education advisors who can work with students on things like budgeting programs, services. If they can't find a job in the community, depending on the age of the child, there's also an opportunity for that youth or young adult to look at accessing income assistance as well. If it is a youth who is living with the family, then that's taken into account when the income assistance application is being reviewed. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson, are you satisfied?

MR. THOMPSON: Not really, Mr. Chair. Okay. I'm not talking about SFA; I'm talking about Senior Subsidy, the Senior Home Heating Subsidy Program. I'm talking about elders who have to look after their family. I'm talking about elders who, if they don't work, can't do that. The Minister talked about SFA, how great it is. Yes, when the student actually applies for it, yes, they do that, but it's still not helpful for the child to go there because, if he doesn't have a summer job, our SFA does not actually help as well as we want it to. So that was where my issue was, but I'm going to have to probably come from a different avenue on that.

So my next question, though, is: if we're changing the thresholds and stuff like that, we're going to see, probably, an increase in people able to use it, especially with allowing the rent subsidy, or people who rent. I think that's a great, really great thing, and I have to applaud the department for doing

that, but do you see it as being an increase? Because we're going to see a whole bunch more people come to the door to get money for this, so are we looking at an increase for this, or is this something that you're going to look at this year and then see how it has an impact and potential increase for next year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wanted to expand the opportunities for more seniors to be able to access the Senior Home Heating Subsidy. In the past, it wasn't fully utilized. Some seniors don't fully utilize their fuel subsidy, and that's why we're changing it to a monetary, so they get the full access to what they're entitled to. So some of our elders fully utilize it, some go over, some don't even use it. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson, you have a few minutes.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I think what I heard was that it wasn't fully utilized this way, so now we are actually implementing these new changes to fully utilize this budget line; and if that's correct, the Minister can just say "yes" and that would be my last question for the day on this item. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Any further questions? Seeing none, I will call on page 46, income security, operations expenditure, \$50,801,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. We shall move on to the next activity, starting on page 50, ending on information item, page 60. I will read out the summary here: labour development and standards, operation and expenditure summary, \$50,389,000. Moving on. Questions, and could you please refer to which page your question is on. Starting with Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I did promise not to do anything in the other section. Now I'm back on this section, so I do have some questions in this area. I guess the first one to start with is, I tried to ask the question previously in another section, but this is where it is, it's about the Skills 4 Success Territorial Support Team, and we

talk about this being a new initiative, and I applaud the department for doing something like this. So we're bringing six positions; three for the north, three for the south. Three in Inuvik and three in Yellowknife. However, I guess my first question is: why are we putting the three in Inuvik and three in Yellowknife? Then we'll go from there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wanted to be reflective of the territories. We wanted three up in the North and three back in service Yellowknife and down in the southern part of the territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand being reflective of the territory. I guess I'm a little bit concerned that Beau-Del and the Sahtu are getting three. Yellowknife, Deh Cho, South Slave are only getting three, as well. Yellowknife could actually probably have one or two strictly by themselves. Can the Minister or the department explain why we haven't looked at what is collectively good for the territories and put one in each region? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a new initiative, and I think we have three positions that can travel throughout the northern part of the territory and three in the south. We also have other resources such as our career officers, client service officers, employment transition officers who do similar work in the regions and in the communities, as well as guidance counsellors in the school. We have a lot of tools right now that will help all of our regions in the Northwest Territories to help youth and young adults get on whether it's a career path or an education path. Moving forward, these positions will help promote some of the work that we're already getting within education role, our Skills 4 Success and getting information out on our labour market needs report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. However, guidance counsellors' positions in my riding, and in Mr. Nadli's riding, are being taken out and we're bringing in the child and youth mental health workers. So we're taking those positions out of the schools because those are the ones that I guess I'm seeing the Minister and Deputy Minister is

saying it's not true. Could they please explain to me, then, if those positions still exist in the Deh Cho? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They're different positions. One, a guidance counsellor helps the students as well as helps in terms of helping the students get on a path to succeed as well as in post-secondary or a career. The positions that we were working within the Department of Health and Social Services are for mental health services. They're different positions; and the education authorities in terms of the guidance counsellors, what we fund them, they go out and get those positions for their respective schools. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister confirm that we have guidance counsellors positions in Fort Providence, Fort Liard, and Fort Simpson presently? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I'd have to do is I'd have to contact the Deh Cho Education Authority to confirm if those positions are there, because we give them funding for positions, but I'll go to my DM for a little more clarity. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Deputy Minister Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What is happening right now in schools across the Northwest Territories is a bit of a mixed approach in terms of how guidance counselling is done. In some of the larger schools, there are more dedicated resources to providing guidance counselling, career advice, scheduled planning to students, but by and large across the Northwest Territories in the medium to smaller schools it's actually a teacher who takes it on and does it as part of their teaching day. They're not full-time resources and they're not ear-marked necessarily as a guidance counsellor.

What we do have, as the Minister, indicated is, through these additional six resources, what we would be doing is not just having those positions available out there to supplement what is available by the way of counselling, but also creating additional resources and supports to send out to schools so that these individuals that do exist out there that are providing the services to students

have more consistent and better, clearer resources to support students.

The other thing that I think the Minister referenced is that there is a difference between the guidance resources and the mental health or other counselling resources that exist in schools. We're not by rolling out these six positions, depleting or reducing the supports that exist in schools right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Deputy Minister Haener. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Okay, I realize I've only got two minutes and 30 seconds here, so I'm going to try to ask the question: are these positions to develop resources or are they positions that are going out travelling to work out from the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They're going to be both, really. They're going to be supporting our CDOs, getting out into the schools, into the communities to try to get our students in high school onto a right career path and support, have those extra supports. We do have some documents, the Skills 4 Success, labour market, needs assessment, and using those as part of the guiding tools that will help them do their jobs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess this still concerns me, that we're expecting three to support Yellowknife, Sahtu, and Deh Cho, which is probably about two thirds of the school population in that area, and then we have three in the North. It does concern me there, but I guess it comes down to the simple fact that we need these positions and in the regions. I still have not bought into these teams of three. We're going to have costs. We're going to have more costs to get from here to the South Slave, from here to the Deh Cho. You know, there's going to be cost to it; and the Tlicho; I forgot all about that, and I apologize. There are going to be costs to get these people out there. If we have them in the regions, it's closer to the clients and they're going to know the people there.

I support the concept of having these positions, but I do not support the fact that we're having three North and three South. Will the Minister look at this and come back to us on this? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses, to the question.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a new initiative. It's better than what we have right now. I wouldn't say better, but it's going to help complement the work that's going on right now across the Northwest Territories. It adds resources into the regions. There would be travelling. It's a new initiative. We're going to have to monitor this, and right now I'm not looking at putting one into each region. We'll do three in the North and up out of Inuvik and three here out of Yellowknife who will travel into the communities and work with our CDOs and work with the other resources that we currently have throughout the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my questions have to do with Aurora College. As we all know, there's the foundational review going on of Aurora College, and it is scheduled to wrap up at the end of March. I have some questions about timing around other things that relate to it. For example, at what point will the staff in the teacher education program and the Social Work Program be given layout notices vis-a-vis the completion of this study? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, there are no layoff notices that are associated with this foundational review, so I am not sure what the Member is getting at. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to clarify. The Social Work Program and Teacher Education Program enrolments have been frozen. As I understand it, there will be no students going in in September. We have been told that there cannot be any decision about the future of these programs until the foundational review is done, but it seems at some point the college is going to have to make a decision about hanging on to staff who don't have a program to deliver. What is that point? At which point will the Minister be able to either tell people these programs are going to continue or issue the layoff notices? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses, to the staff question.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are discussions that Aurora College senior management will need to have, and we will be making sure that we have those discussions with them and how they look at redeploying their

resources within the Aurora College. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, let me talk about the Social Work Program. It is the one of those two programs I am more familiar with. The people who are teaching the Social Work Program have expertise in social work. They cannot be redeployed to, say, heavy equipment or personal care worker. What I don't understand is when these people are going to be told whether they have a future at the college or not. I am sure there are some collective agreement considerations there. When will these people know whether they have a job with the college or not? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the onset of discussion on these two programs, we always said that we would support our students that are in the programs to completion of the programs and then supporting them once it is done, whether they want to look at going into a career or further studying in those programs. Staff at the Aurora College are also doing that support. I am sure that senior management over at the Aurora College is having those discussions with their staff currently. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: We are talking about the instructors. This is the second year of a two-year program. There was no intake this year. These people are going to be finishing their second year, and that is the end of the Social Work Program, as there are no new students in this program. At what point is the Minister going to decide whether this program is going to be reinstated or whether the staff are going to be laid off? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the onset of discussions with these programs, it was brought to us that the Social Work Program itself was the one that was looking at being slowly phased out. Those were discussions at the time with the board as well as the staff at the Aurora College, and so the Social Work Program that is currently at the Aurora College is not going to be reinstated. However, I do understand that the Aurora College has undertaken a review of that program as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Minister makes it sound like this program woke up one day and decided to phase it out. The Minister told us in this House that he made the final decision on phasing this program and the Teacher Education Program out. It was not the choice of the program to phase it out or the choice of the instructors or of the students. It is my understanding that he has the final say here. At what point will he be making a decision about the future of this program and the staff who currently are employed by it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses, to the continuance of the program and the staff.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There were recommendations that were brought to me. I had to make the decision on them, and that decision was made early on in this government. The foundational review is still in place. We are waiting to get the report back before we look at making the management response. As I mentioned earlier with the staff, I am sure that senior management over at Aurora College is having those discussions with their instructors as we go through this process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am aware that there is a separate evaluation of the Social Work Program going on. In the event that this evaluation chose the program as worthwhile, will the Minister fund its reinstatement? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I cannot make that commitment until we do see a report in front of us and a report from the Aurora College. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, thank you. What I am most concerned about is that, because this program is being starved of students, the staff will soon find other jobs, because they are not going to be able to wait for all of the wheels of government to turn ever so slowly to decide their fate. My concern is that these decisions will not be made in a way that is timely enough for the staff to stay in their positions. Does the Minister share this concern? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course, we care about all of our employees throughout the whole government. As I mentioned, those discussions I am sure are happening between the senior management over at the Aurora College and their current staff.

In terms of students in the Social Work Program, or social workers in general or educators, we continue to support students who are taking education as well in Social Work Programs in other jurisdictions, and we continue to support them and bring them back to the Northwest Territories here to work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Green, one more question.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. We heard at some point last year that there was an Aurora College Accountability Framework that was being developed in testing. What is the status of that project vis-a-vis the foundational review? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As this foundational review is coming to completion and we will get getting that report, the accountability framework will be guided by some of the feedback that we have also received through this foundational review. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister confirm what the status organizationally of Aurora College is? What I mean by that is does this department consider it a public agency, consider it a department of government, a Crown corporation? What is its position functionally to the government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): I am going to mention again here, if the questions are coming to the page, please reference the page. I will allow this question to go ahead. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Aurora College is a publicly funded institution that provides programs and services to residents of the North. We have a great nursing program that has an intake of a set number of southern students as well, but it is a publicly funded institution. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As a publicly funded institution, is it at arm's length from government as other publicly funded education institutions are? Can the Minister confirm that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, and, with the funding that the GNWT provides to Aurora College, we want to make sure that Aurora College is accountable for public dollars that are being spent. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. So, as a publicly funded independent institution, why is the Minister able to make management decisions on behalf of the college about programs that are being offered at the college? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Because that is one of the provisions legislated in the Aurora College Act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and there we have the inherent contradiction with it being both a publicly funded independent institution and yet one that the department can reach into and tinker with when they want to change the services being provided.

Why are we approaching the college, the management of the college, through providing that kind of direct approach rather than entering into funding agreements, those kinds of arrangements that can be targeted, measured, have reliable targeted outcomes that the college would have to meet? Why are we not incentivizing the operations of the college and the success and outcomes of the college through those kinds of agreements rather than the department, through the Minister's authority, actually interfering with the management, the day-to-day operations of the college? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Testart, Minister Moses, if we can be mindful of the main estimates in front of us from pages 50 to 60 and referencing the pages on the numbers provided, it

would add more clarity to the process. Go ahead, Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is not on a day-to-day operations. Aurora College does do their yearly planning, and I do sign off on that, and the department does not tell Aurora College what to do. We do look at their yearly plans and approve them. A lot of the discussions and comments that the Member has made are actually being currently looked at with this foundation review. I am glad that Members who did actually do the interview with our contractor gave good feedback, and we will be looking forward to seeing what recommendations come out of that report moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For clarity, this is page 51, the contribution to Aurora College, \$32,421,000, and the reason I asked the question on the detail of how we are spending that money is this essentially accounts for the vast majority of our post-secondary education money. It is a significant investment, and we need to make sure it is being spent right. I appreciate that, many of these comments, the Minister will say have to wait until the completion of the foundational review, but, again, we are seeing the same appropriation being proposed for Aurora College for this budget.

It does not appear to me that we are making any changes again this year, and this is after three years where this has been raised as a concern. I know the foundational review is happening, but, you know, as to my colleague's point, my honourable friend from Yellowknife Centre, decisions are being made about how this money is being spent by the government. Programs have been shuttered, the two important programs to be shuttered, and the Minister has been reluctant to consider alternative approaches to how the department delivers on this appropriation. I think that is a concern to the public, and it is certainly a concern to me.

I will just ask: if the foundational review sets the college on a new course that requires additional appropriation or an adjustment to this appropriation, how does the department plan to address that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In answer to that question, we will probably go through the business planning process. I think we are all eager, as you can hear today, to get that foundational review completed, look at that report, and then have the management response

completed. For that, if there are any appropriations that are needed, we have to go through the business planning process that we do on a yearly basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: I know that the appropriation line for Aurora College is reduced this year. What is the cause for that reduction? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am trying to find where the reduction is, what number the Member is referring to.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Testart, can I request your restatement of the question? Thank you.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not sure what the issue is. I am talking about the Aurora College line item, \$32,421,000, and there is a difference between the 2017-2018 revised estimates and what is currently being proposed in the 2018-2019 estimates. Can the Minister or the department answer why there is a decrease from \$32,655,000 to the current appropriation that is being proposed, of \$32,421,000? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. So, last year, if you recall, during the budget session the department put forward a number of reductions for Aurora College. Those were added back in through a supplementary appropriation, and, as you can see, the 2017-2018 Main Estimates goes from \$31,986,000 to the 2017-2018 revised estimates of \$32,655,000. The full amount of the reduction over the two-year period that that was to take place was added back in in the 2017-2018 supplementary appropriation, and, when you move to the 2018-2019 Main Estimates, there is another offset of the second year of reduction. It is certainly a bit confusing to understand how this budget has been adjusted. It was largely a result of the process for reinstating the funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Testart, one more question in the spirit of time.

MR. TESTART: Thank you for allowing me one more question, Mr. Chair. So, I understand that there is a confusing process around the reinstatements, but there is still less being proposed now, so what does that represent? What are the reductions in this year's proposal? I note it

is around \$300,000 that is being reduced, so what is that \$300,000? Where is that coming from? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, in 2017-2018, we had year one of the social work and the Teacher Education Program reduction. In 2018-2019, we had year two. The funding for the entire amount of that appropriation was reinstated in 2017-2018, so you are going to see a natural decrease in that, as well. We also have a sunset for a position resulting from the Sahtu Norman Wells oil and gas, a sunset associated with that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Any further questions? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions are in regards to Aurora College. We talked about the foundational review and program review. Can the Minister advise, if the two reports have different directions, which report will trump the other report? If the foundational review says we are going this way and the program review says we are going this way, which report will trump the other one? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They are two different things. The Aurora College decided to do a review of the Social Work Program. They went ahead and are doing that right now. Our foundational review is looking at so many other different things; accountability, governance, structure, operations. They are two different reviews, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When I was interviewed, part of the interview process was about the Social Work Program and the Teacher Education Program. Through the foundational review, one of the questions was in regards to that.

I guess I am a little concerned. The foundational review has this broad picture, and then the program review has a narrow picture. Is the Minister saying that the foundational review is the one that we are going to move forward with, or is it just saying that the foundational review will not be used when it comes to the social work and the TEP program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we are getting a little ahead of the game here. The foundational review, as I mentioned, is coming near to completion. There are going to be recommendations that come out of that foundational review. We are going to develop a management response and move on from there in terms of looking at those recommendations, but cannot make any commitments or decisions at this time until we see the results of that review. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. In regard to program reviews, when was the last time the Social Work Program was reviewed? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That level of detail I will have to get from the Aurora College. They do review their own programs, so I will have to get that information, and I will get it back to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess it concerns me that we are voting on the appropriation today and we are not going to get it until later on.

I guess the next question is: if the Minister is going to be talking to the college, can he get us what other programs the college has reviewed in regard to their programs and when they have done those reviews? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a meeting coming up with the president of the Aurora College, and I will be bringing some of these concerns forward. I am not sure if the Member is asking for all the programs, a list of when they were reviewed and last reviewed. Maybe he can be a little bit clearer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for asking that question. Yes, I want all of the programs that are running at Aurora College at the campuses in Inuvik, Yellowknife, and in Fort Smith. For those programs there, what

programs do they have, and which ones have they done reviews on? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, as I said, we are having a meeting with the president and the administrator coming up later this month, and we will have those discussions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the Minister for that commitment. I guess my concern is that I am looking at the college and the things that the college is doing right now. Don't get me wrong; they are doing a good job in a number of areas there. However, if we remove the Teachers Education Program and we remove the Social Work Program, we are only going to have the Nursing Program left, if it offers a degree or a diploma in that. Can the Minister verify that I am mistaken, or is that the direction that the college is going? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Early on in the session here, I had made a couple of statements in this House. We do have an ambitious post-secondary agenda moving forward. That includes legislation, looking at possibly the degree-granting programs, and also, with this foundational review that is going on, we are going to continue on that path and see how we can best make the Aurora College provide the best programs and services to our residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my concern is that I am listening to the direction that we are going with Skills 4 Success, and it sounds like we are going back to the old program of an adult vocational training centre. We are going back to the old model, and that is what is scaring me, that the college has developed to where we are and it seems to me that we are coming back to making it a vocational training centre.

Can the Minister clarify: is this the direction the department is looking at doing, or is Skills 4 Success part of that picture, or am I mistaken in looking at it this way? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, we are on an ambitious agenda with post-secondary here in the Northwest Territories. I think that the Member is trying to have me make a response saying that we are making the decisions even before this foundational review is completed.

As I mentioned earlier, I think we are all excited and eager to see that report and the recommendations coming forward and working with Aurora College, looking at the future of Aurora College and the programs and services that it will provide, and the work that we are doing right across the whole gamut of post-secondary here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My personal opinion is that is the direction that I feel it is going. Post-secondary is accreditation to develop a university. Aurora College is actually by itself, so they are not going to interlink. Maybe I am mistaken about that, but I do have one other question on here.

In regard to the budget, labour market agreement for persons with disabilities, there is no money in there presently. Can the Minister explain why? Is it sunsetted, or is it a federal program, or is there a reason for that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are currently in negotiations with the government of Canada. We are near to finalizing those agreements on the Labour Market Agreements for the Northwest Territories, and once those are finalized, we will see what the numbers are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Time has expired. Mr. Vanthuyne, then Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of questions around apprenticeship, if I can. We have got some good programs that we either undertake or support. NWT Skills Canada is one of them, and I believe it's the SNAP program that is the work experience program that allows students to be involved in the trades while still attending high school and working towards their apprenticeships; but it seems as though, in the last year, we had budgeted \$2,000,000 and almost \$800,000 for apprenticeships. This year we're doing \$2,300,000. We have about a \$500,000 difference. Is this

because we just aren't having as much uptake with apprenticeship registration? Is it a sign of the economy, that there just isn't as much construction going on? Can the department give us some commentary around apprenticeships, how many we have? Are the numbers increasing or decreasing? Why is the funding \$500,000 less than it was last year? Thank you, Mr. Chair

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There would be a number of variables, and I think the Member has alluded to a few of them, in terms of journeypersons with certificates. We have seen a decrease over the years. We continue to also look at having 389 apprentices who are current registered in the Northwest Territories. The good news is that we have developed an Apprenticeship Trades and Occupational Certification Strategy for the next five years, and that's being implemented by the working group and the steering committee. That's mainly made up of people in the industry. So hopefully we will start seeing some good improvements in that, and as, you, Mr. Chair, asked me questions in the House last week on updates on that program, we are almost a year into the implementation of that strategy, but we can look at both the steering committee and working group and try to get updates on how those are and what are some of our challenges. So we'll definitely keep an eye on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister mentioned a number of registered apprentices. I believe it was 289 - sorry, 389. Do we know if that number has been an increase, or is that a decrease over previous years? I'll just put this question out to the Minister at the same time. Are SNAP and Skills having positive effects on our apprenticeship numbers? Are we seeing benefits from those programs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I don't have the level of detail in terms of the apprenticeships from year to year. I just have the current statistics, but we can get that information for the Member. SNAP and Skills NWT, they're both excellent programs. I believe they are having a positive impact on our students who are looking at entering into the trades. We have had some really great success at the national level, as well, with NWT Skills Canada and the work that they do. The great thing about the NWT Skills Canada program is a lot of people who have gone

through NWT Skills actually go into their trade, and then they come back and are judges or they work with NWT Skills Canada during the regional and territorial competitions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, maybe just lastly, one thing that we might want to do, if it is also available, if you are going to be providing detail on year-after-year apprenticeship registration numbers to us, can you also maybe look at letting us know is there a reporting mechanism that SNAP or Skills has for tracking their apprentices and/or those who have an interest in apprenticeship? All I am trying to do is really quantify the effects that those two programs are having on our registered apprentices for the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we can definitely have those discussions. We're definitely big supporters, as well, in terms of making sure that we have apprentices in the Northwest Territories to meet our labour market demands, as well as our employer demands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Nothing further, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just while we are on the subject of apprenticeships, maybe I can ask this Minister, and I might have to ask another one: it seems to me that when we're doing big capital projects that that is an opportunity for us to promote apprenticeships and trades, and so on. Do we insert into the contract requirements that contractors hire or use apprentices? Is that something that we would find in the contracting arrangements for large GNWT projects? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Department of ECE focuses on the training and development of our apprentices across the Northwest Territories, as well as certification. When it comes to contracts, I think that might be a more suitable question for the Minister of Infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I can talk to the Minister of Infrastructure and get that information for the Member.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yes, the Minister over there was sort of like a deer caught in the headlights all of a sudden. He had to pay attention. It's a "heads up". When it comes to his turn, I will be asking those questions. Look, if we're going to spend time and money trying to encourage apprenticeships, surely to goodness we can find ways for them to work on our capital projects to get their certification and all of that kind of stuff. Anyways, the Minister is listening to me now. I am sure he is going to get ready when I ask him those sorts of questions, but I want to move on to some questions about post-secondary education. As I understand it, ECE does provide some ongoing funding to College Nordique and Dechinta, so is this the right place in the budget? Is it found in the contributions here, on page 51 of the departmental budget? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I believe so. It should be on this page. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So can the Minister confirm whether the level of support for College Nordique or Dechinta is changing from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019? I just want to know if it is changing in any way, up or down. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that recently, with Dechinta, we did increase their funding, and it was a multi-year funding agreement. With College Nordique, I don't have the full details in front of me. Okay, sorry. With the College Nordique, that funding has stayed the same. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: It's good to hear, at least one of our other post-secondary institutions is getting an increase in their funding. Can the Minister tell us what that increase is for Dechinta and what the

contribution, say, for 2018-2019 is going to be, then? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The increases that we had previously gone into agreements with Dechinta on was for \$500,000. Also, I just want to make a note that, with College Nordique, the government has gone into contracts with them for training services throughout all of our departments, so there is also an increase through other departments in terms of funding for French services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the Minister's answer. So, if Dechinta was getting \$500,000 before, what are they getting in 2018-2019? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thanks, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The previous arrangement that we had with Dechinta before we got into the multi-year agreement was \$250,000. Our current contribution to Dechinta in that multi-year agreement is \$500,000. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate that, and I think that is a good investment of funding from our government. I am sure the Minister will work with College Nordique to look at how we can support those folks, as well. I want to shift now to the post-secondary education legislation. Can the Minister just give us an update of where that is at? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, the discussion paper is before standing committee. We are also getting that information out to some of our other partners and stakeholders on that legislation to get their feedback. So I believe the discussion paper is before standing committee, and, as I mentioned, getting that discussion paper out to leadership, really, in the Northwest Territories to see how this legislation is going to work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate that. So maybe I can just ask the

Minister. So the first step is going to be a discussion paper. The usual process seems to be that there is a "what we heard" report, a legislative proposal, and then a bill arrives in the House. Is that the process that we are going to use here, and can the Minister just give us some rough ideas of the timing of those different steps? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it is important on this piece of legislation that we get good consultation on that discussion paper and make sure that all of our stakeholders and our partners have that input. We are expecting a draft bill to the Legislative Assembly by late 2018 or, if anything, early 2019. So we are going to have that consultation over the next several months, and then, hopefully, we will have a draft before the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is what I had, and I appreciate the Minister's answers, and I look forward to that discussion paper very soon. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. Any further questions on this activity? I have to apologize to committee here. I included pages 50 to 60, but I am going to separate that by calling this summary and then moving to information item starting on page 54. So, going to page 50, Education, Culture and Employment, labour development and standards, operations expenditure summary, \$50,389,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay. We shall move on and do page by page on the information items, starting with 54. Any questions to page 54? None. Page 55? Seeing none, information item on page 56, any questions? Seeing none, information item on page 57, any questions to page 57? Seeing none, information item on page 58, any questions to page 58? Seeing none, information item on page 59, any questions to page 59? Seeing none, information item on page 60, any questions to page 60? Seeing none, we should go back to the departmental total on page 29. Departmental total, Education, Culture and Employment, \$327,341,000?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. That concludes the department. Does the committee

agree that consideration of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. Thank you, Minister and your witnesses. Do you have any closing comments?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, no. I just want to say thanks for all the comments and feedback, and, moving forward to the next fiscal year, I'm looking forward to seeing some of the programs and initiatives that we will be rolling out with the approval of the main estimates for Education, Culture and Employment. We will continue to work with standing committee as we move forward with the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the chair of Committee of the Whole leave the chair and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Sahtu?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, item 23, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Kay): Mr. Speaker, the orders of the day for Thursday, February 22, 2018, 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 Commissioner's 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 5, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
 - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
 - Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan
 - Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Madam Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 22, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:48 p.m.