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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Barnabas, Honourable Charles Dent, Mr. Erasmus, Honourable Sam Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Don Morin, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Steen, Honourable Manitoak Thompson, Honourable John Todd.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

Oh, God, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for peace and justice in our land and for the constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Good morning. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 81-13(5): Ministers Absent From the House

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Kelvin Ng will be absent from the House today and tomorrow to attend a meeting of Ministers responsible for Seniors in Victoria, British Columbia. As well the Honourable Goo Arlooktoo will be absent from the House for today and tomorrow to travel to Russia and Alaska to discuss trade opportunities and to promote the export of northern housing materials and expertise in the design, financing, construction and expediting of housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 82-13(5): NWT Leadership in Developing Social Studies Curriculum

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good Morning. Mr. Speaker, as the only jurisdiction in the country that has a majority of aboriginal people, the NWT is in a

unique position to provide leadership in developing school curricula that reflects aboriginal perspective. Education, Culture and Employment staff have been providing this leadership in developing a social study curriculum under the Western Canadian Protocol. Under this agreement, ECE staff are working with departments responsible for education in the four western provinces and the Yukon to develop common school curricula.

The Northwest Territories has strongly promoted the involvement of aboriginal people in developing the social study's curriculum and in ensuring that aboriginal perspective is included. As a result of the NWT's efforts and with the agreement of the other jurisdictions, aboriginal staff from the two territories and four western provinces took part in a recent meeting of the social studies working group in Edmonton. Aboriginal staff are now part of the team designing the document which will provide a foundation for the social studies project. The participation of aboriginal people in this kind of curriculum project signals a change in the way curriculum is written in our country.

The social studies curriculum will reflect issues which have become important across the NWT and Canada. A few of the major issues are: the protection and promotion of cultural identity, the development of a more truly representative and accurate history of Canada and citizenship and Canadian unity. The NWT delegation took a collaborative approach involving aboriginal, Francophone and English language representatives to develop an NWT perspective on these issues. This position was presented at the recent meetings in Edmonton. This is an exciting opportunity for the NWT to lead the country in curriculum development that is appropriate for all learners. We see particular promise in these developments for aboriginal learners, whose rich history and culture will be a valuable addition to the curriculum delivered in Canadian schools. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ministers' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 83-13(5): Arctic Winter Games

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today it gives me great pleasure to speak to the Members about the young people from the Northwest Territories who will compete at the 1998 Arctic Winter Games being held here in Yellowknife from March 15th-21st. Sport has always been a positive way to develop healthy people and to build strong communities in the Northwest Territories.

Within a few weeks time, NWT athletes will be coming together to compete in this important circumpolar event. They will be joining athletes from Alaska, Yukon, northern Alberta, Greenland and Russia. In all, a total of nearly 2,000 athletes, coaches, officials and visitors will be participating in this important celebration of sport, culture and Arctic friendship.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide Members with some information about our NWT Team. The team is selected through regional and territorial trials. The selection process differs for each sport. The 1998 Arctic Winter Games Team consists of 352 participants, including athletes, coaches and mission staff from 35 different communities across the north. In addition, 120 officials from across the NWT will also be involved. Team NWT will be competing in all 19 sports including traditional events such as dog sledding, Inuit and

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Dene games, snowshoeing and Inuit wrestling. I will be sharing with Members of this Assembly, a list of the athletes from each constituency, who have earned the right to represent the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the efforts of the hundreds of volunteer coaches, managers, chaperons and organizers whose time and commitment create this wonderful opportunity for our young people. I wish to also thank all the parents and other adults who provide the family support for our youth to reach their athletic potential, pursue personal excellence and develop socially and culturally within the context of fair and honest competition. There is still much to be done in these last few weeks leading up to the games. Volunteering is a great way to experience the games and to extend our famous northern hospitality to our visitors. I encourage potential volunteers to please contact the Arctic Winter Games Office and they will find a job for you.

I hope that all Members of this House will be able to enjoy the Arctic Winter Games and support the young athletes from your constituencies. Later on, I will be

providing Members with souvenir pins of the games which I encourage you to wear with pride.

Mr. Speaker and Members of this Assembly, please join me in congratulating the organizers, coaches, officials, staff and above all the athletes who will represent the Northwest Territories at the Arctic Winter Games. We wish Team NWT the best of luck in their competitions. May they compete in the spirit of friendship and goodwill? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 84-13(5): Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the creation of a Protected Areas Strategy for the Northwest Territories (NWT) is one of the priorities of this government. Once the strategy is in place, it will provide a framework for the overall development and management of a system of protected areas in the NWT.

Much work has been done in developing information on protected areas issues for community groups and the general public. A quarterly newsletter keeps interested parties up-to-date on the development of the strategy. It also highlights the participation of various regions of the NWT and the roles different government departments can play.

Two other publications, which I will table later today, provide information on the various eco-zones of the north. This system of land classification is used across Canada and will help contribute to the framework for a system of protected areas. Entitled Naturally North, one publication focuses on the western Northwest Territories and the other on Nunavut. These booklets define the natural regions by describing the plants, animals and landscapes that make up each of the seven eco-zones in the Western Territory and the six eco-zones in Nunavut.

The Nunavut edition is available in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun. These publications will be distributed throughout the NWT to encourage participation in this important initiative. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 348-13(5): Appointment of Cindy Caudron to the National Parole Board

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before the House recesses, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize one of my constituents, Cindy Caudron, who was recently appointed to the National Parole Board. I would like to extend my congratulations to Cindy and wish her every success with her new appointment. Cindy, her mother Doris and one of her older sisters have all been social workers in my riding of Hay River. Another sister is a social worker in Fort Smith. Mr. Speaker, Cindy and her family have displayed a commitment to social work in the north.

Cindy is a long-time northerner and has been a resident of Hay River since 1969. She attended school in Hay River and completed her post secondary education at Arctic College and the Nechi Institute outside of Edmonton. The curriculum at the Nechi Institute combines community addictions, counselling services, suicide intervention and organizational development with an aboriginal cultural perspective.

After obtaining her social work diploma, Cindy was assigned to the community of Fort Providence. It was here where she came to the attention of the National Parole Board. Cindy had developed a unique parole system incorporating the concept of community empowerment in the parole process. This innovative model is now in use in many other communities in Canada. Cindy represents the Northwest Territories, the Yukon Territory, Saskatchewan and Alberta on the National Parole Board. Although the parole board is headquartered in Saskatchewan, Cindy chooses to remain and fulfil, as much as possible, her board obligations from her home town community of Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 349-13(5): Success in Addressing the Deficit Situation

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we should conclude the 1998-99 budget. This will be the last joint budget of this territorial Assembly. Mr. Speaker, of late, we have been consumed and I think somewhat diverted by some of the tempests that have swirled about in this Legislative tea pot. It has detracted a lot from the good work we have

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accomplished in the last three years. We have gone from a \$150 million deficit to ending up this year with a surplus. That is good work on our part. There were a lot of hard work and decisions that were made by everybody, a lot of restructuring and other activity that had to take place to accomplish this. We could not have done it if we had not worked as an Assembly. Mr. Speaker, this is the last major initiative, in my opinion, of this Assembly. From here on in we are going to tend to operate as eastern and western Caucuses getting ready for division. I see the focus now for myself, and I think, for western MLAs for nailing down adequate formula financing arrangements with the federal government and to do the strategic planning that is going to be necessary for us as a Western Territory to be ready and up and running smoothly April 1, 1999. As we labour these next long days ahead of us until tomorrow night, we should not forget that we have done good work here and we are leaving the budget in a lot better shape than when we first found it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 350-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Yearly Maximum Insurable Remuneration

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I issued a constituency newsletter recently and in it I had a statement about the Workers' Compensation Board's YMIR, or Years Maximum Insurable Earnings. Members will recall that last fall we had legislation to change the YMIR from \$49,000 to \$52,000. In my newsletter I stated that an injured worker could collect up to \$52,000 per year. I

received some feedback on that statement from several people and it appears the true picture of the YMIR needs some explanation. The most an injured worker can collect is 90 percent of the net of \$52,000 after deductions of such items as CPP, UIC and income tax. For example, a typical northern worker who earned \$52,000 or up, would see deductions of about \$17,000 for a net pay total of about \$34,000. The YMIR would be 90 percent of that \$34,000. In fact, even the same worker earning \$90,000 could only collect on a base of \$52,000 less the deductions of UIC, CPP, income tax, et cetera and would only end up with about \$34,000 or \$31,000, about one third of his previous pay.

Many people up here in the north earn great high incomes. Should they become injured and go on compensation with a 100 percent disability, their standard of living would plummet dramatically. The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, people should understand exactly what it is that they can expect and my statement today is to give people a sense of what the actual coverage is. Workers and especially employers here in the north need to be informed about this. Hopefully, later today during question period I can ask the Minister responsible some questions on this.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 351-13(5): Alcohol and Drug Tragedies in Smaller Communities

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today with a heavy heart and a lot of stress which I have been under during the last week for the community of Fort McPherson which had to face a tragic death that was headline news in some newspapers in regard to a murder that took place. Along with that, we also lost a very respected elder. On Saturday, there was a passing of a young lady who was in the long-term care unit in Inuvik. Within the last week, we have lost three people in the community of Fort McPherson.

The reason I stand here today with a heavy heart is because, as an elected leader, I came to this House hoping to make a change and make life better for the people I represent. I have passed many motions in this House. I have made many long, drawn out speeches in regard to the Tl'oondih Healing Program and the help it did for the few individuals who had the

opportunity of taking it. I believe without that facility, I see a real increase in the number of crimes and violent deaths occurring in my community.

Since I was elected, Mr. Speaker, I have had to deal with four violent deaths in my riding, all alcohol related. It is a tragedy, especially when a young life is being taken. The thing that upsets me the most, Mr. Speaker, is that I have passed motions in this House and in committee of the whole. I have made several statements in this House in regard to the alcohol and drug problems we see in our communities and health problems we see in the lives of aboriginal people in aboriginal communities. The cycle that we find our young people in is, where they are stuck in institutions, such as jails, young offenders' facilities and also group homes, they take the problem from the community and they allow the problem to go back home. These two young individuals who were involved in the incident in Fort McPherson were stuck in that cycle of life where they were stuck in institutions ever since they were young, 12, 13 year-old children. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member from Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Krutko, you have unanimous consent.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. We have to break that cycle as leaders. I thought coming to this House, I was going to improve the life of the people in the communities I represent and not have to hear about a young friend of mine being buried at age 33, a young man who was a member of our band council, was involved in the community and was the radio operator at the airport, to see this young man on Friday and hear that he passed away on Sunday.

I ask for all of your support here today and the people across the north to hear this message: when are we going to change the lives of those people in the communities when it comes to alcohol and drugs which affect everybody in the community? We cannot continue to stand up and make statements every time an incident happens. We have to find a way to prevent these things from happening in our communities. I ask all my colleagues here today and the people out there in the other communities, we all

have to work together to resolve this issue. It has affected me greatly in regard to issues I have been

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raising for the last three years and now have to stand up in this House and make this statement again.

Please, help those people that need the help the most, those people who are desperate, those people who are without jobs, without any hope in the communities of going anywhere because they are unemployed. They are on welfare. There is no hope of jobs being developed out there and they look at all the younger people whom we are putting through our school systems. What opportunity do we have to get a better life for them if there are no economic opportunities in our communities? We have to look at the communities as a part of an overall community of the Northwest Territories. We cannot look at one area where oh, there are diamonds in the ground, so let us go great guns over there. There is oil in the Beaufort; let us go crazy over there. Everything comes down to dollars and cents in this world, but what is the value of one person's life. With that, please, think about the people in those communities. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 352-13(5): Construction of the Wha Ti Fire Hall

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Lac La Martre Development Corporation, Department of MACA and Public Works for the two-bay fire hall that will be constructed this year.

After several weeks of hard negotiating between the parties at the final hour last week, all parties came to an equitable agreement. This is good news for Wha Ti, as it will bring badly needed employment, training opportunities and, of course, a new fire hall. With many years experience the corporation will provide an efficient and hardworking team to the project, which will give the community a foundation of good fire protection.

I again, would like to congratulate all the parties involved and will celebrate the grand opening in a few months time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 353-13(5): Kids Help Phone-line Bowlathon

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the Yellowknife Bowling Club on raising \$62,000 for the Kids' Help Phone-line on Saturday.

--Applause

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every year, there is a bowlathon that is held Canada-wide for the Kids' Help line. There is participation across the Northwest Territories, too, of course. The phone line is open for all children who have problems at home, at school or whatever. You can phone in anonymously. It is a 1-800 number. You do not have to tell your name. It does not matter what your problem is there are trained people who will help children. I understand there were more than 400 calls from the NWT last year.

This year, Mr. Dent, myself and Alex Arychuk bowled, and we had the good fortune to be graced with the presence of the Premier, who was not able to bowl last year because of his wounded knee. We played two games. The first game was a regular bowling game. The second game was what they call, glow bowling. You have flashing lights, glowing balls, loud dancing music, that type of thing. I do not really know what the Premier did as a youth, Mr. Speaker, but he really came into his own during the psychedelic game. He was bouncing around with eyes flashing and he doubled his score from what he got in his first game. Mr. Speaker, the bowlers themselves got pledges for \$31,000. This was matched by the Elk's Hall with an additional \$31,000, for a total of \$62,000. The league pledges have still not come in. They hope to get \$64,000.

Our team would like to thank BHP, Diavik and all the individuals who also pledged. We would also like to thank Debbie Euchner, who has been the coordinator for the past two years, as well as all the volunteers who helped across the Northwest Territories. They

are all to be congratulated. They have done a wonderful job and keep up the good work. Our kids need the help line. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 354-13(5): National Math Testing Results

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recent testing done nationally in the area of math demonstrated a concern with the functional level of our students with the results. Mr. Speaker, results of national tests sometimes do not reflect the cultural diversity of the north. However, it would be interesting to note, if the tests that were done could be broken down by territorial region and location. For example, the majority of students at the testing level would have been tested in their second language in Nunavut. As a result, the assessments may not reflect the true level of our students.

However, as noted by Mr. Dent last week, there is some concern with the results. Are the results reflective of a problem with the curriculum or are they reflective of other problems? Mr. Speaker, later today, I will ask the Minister responsible for Education some questions on this matter. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Oral Question 254-13(5): Legal Requirement for Contract Reporting

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return

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asked by Mr. Picco on February 6, 1998, legal requirement for contracting reporting.

The requirement to publish a list of payments to contractors which exceed \$5,000 was a decision of

this government and is not a requirement of the Financial Administration Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Returns to oral questions. Mr. Todd, you can proceed with all three.

Return To Oral Question 270-13(5): Custom Adoption Commissioner for Inuvik

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you. On behalf of Mr. Ng, if I may, Mr. Speaker. There was a question asked by Mr. Roland on February 10th, with respect to custom adoption.

The Department selected a candidate for the post of custom adoption commissioner for Inuvik following nominations from the community. On February 13, 1998, the custom adoption commissioner training package was mailed to the candidate. The Minister will make an appointment once this person successfully completes the training package. This appointment is expected to be made in the near future.

Return To Oral Question 284-13(5): Need for an Elders' Home in Broughton Island

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Enuaraq on February 11, 1998 asked with respect to an elders' home in Broughton Island.

The Department of Health and Social Services supports the promotion of independence for elders by providing home care services which enables the elder to stay in his home community for as long as possible.

We recognize that at times the needs of elders become much greater than can be provided for by the family and the home care supports. Sometimes, it is necessary for the elder to move to a facility which can provide the necessary care.

As it is not economically feasible to construct long-term care homes in each community, we are promoting the use of regional long-term care facilities for such a service. In the case of the Baffin region, the facility would be the Iqaluit Elders' Home or for an even higher level of care, the Baffin Regional Hospital in Iqaluit.

We have consulted with the regional health care providers on the current status of the needs of the

elders in Broughton Island. At this time, there are elders who are receiving minimal support services, such as medicating or supported living. We are pleased that the elders are successfully being supported in this way, enabling them to remain in their home.

Return To Oral Question 371-13(5): Organ Donor Identification

HON. JOHN TODD:

Last, Mr. Speaker, if I may, with respect to a question asked by Mr. Henry on organ donor identification.

Some provinces use the driver's licences for organ donor information. In Alberta, the organ donor agreement is incorporated on the health care card. This system has been in place for the last three years and has not caused any confusion with other jurisdictions.

The Department of Health and Social Services are looking at the possibility of including organ donor information on health care cards. Currently, only 25 percent of the entire NWT population hold a valid driver's licence, whereas the majority of residents hold a valid NWT Health Care Card. This approach would provide greater coverage of NWT residents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today, I made a statement about the amount of money a person on 100 percent disability gets in the case of an accident from the Workers' Compensation Board. There seems to be little knowledge by many people out there of the fact that because we set the YMIR at \$52,000, the impression is that the person may get \$52,000. I do not think that is the case. Can the Minister instruct the Workers' Compensation Board to provide a better explanation or a publicity program to let both workers and employers know what the actual amount will be

that a worker may receive in the event of an accident? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Ootes is correct. This is a frequently asked question, what exactly is the net take-home pay, et cetera, for injured workers as it relates to the YMIR. I will speak, once again, to the Chairperson, Joanne Deneron, of the Workers' Compensation Board, and see, as they have done in the past, if they can continue to explain, both to employers and workers, what the net impact of YMIR means, what the recent increase was and how it affects the injured workers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

MR. OOTES:

The concern also is the amount of money that a potential high earner ends up with. Those who may have been in the \$60,000, \$70,000, \$80,000 range, really take a drastic cut. With the help of the Workers' Compensation Board, does the Minister have any intention of addressing this particular issue, of changing the YMIR again down the road in a short

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while? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

HON. JOHN TODD:

The current fiscal position of the Workers' Compensation Board is really a full credit to not only the management of the Workers' Compensation, but

to the board of directors. I would only caution my colleague by saying that has only happened in the last four or five years. Prior to that, of course, they were in fairly difficult times because it is all contingent on how successful their investment policy is, what the markets are, et cetera, because they are not only in North American markets, they are in offshore markets. Their ability to compensate is based upon, in my opinion anyway, their fiscal positions, at least their investment side. The YMIR itself is a recommendation made by the board of directors to the Minister, who then has the House approve it. I have said on a number of occasions my preference would be that the board of directors would make that decision and it would require legislative approval. However, I know the board of directors meets or reviews the YMIR, as they do pensions and everything else, on an annual basis. I will bring the concern raised by my honourable colleague to the Chairperson and to the board later next week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

MR. OOTES:

I just caught a comment by the Minister at the end. Is it possible for the board to change the YMIR or does it have to be done through legislation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 473-13(5): WCB Yearly Maximum Insurable Renumeration

HON. JOHN TODD:

Unfortunately, in my opinion, as the Minister responsible, it has to be done through legislation. As Mr. Henry and others spoke about earlier last week, there is clearly a need to revamp the legislation that covers the Workers' Compensation Board. I have said that. Unfortunately, I have also said that our legislative agenda is choked. Certainly, right now, the board of directors provides the Minister with the recommendation, who then moves forward on legislation for the YMIR. I know the board does review YMIR as it does all its others, both in the accident and pension funds, on a yearly basis, based upon their

need, financial ability, et cetera. Certainly, this board has acted in a fair and reasonable way. I do concur with my colleague the cost of living in this part of the country is very, very high and difficult to live on the kinds of net dollars that come about here. I would say, from my experience as the Minister for some time, there are a significant number of our injured workers who now, understandably so, reside in the south. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following up on my earlier Member's statement about the national test results in math. Can the Minister of Education let us know what areas or regions of the Northwest Territories were included in that test? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all regions of the Northwest Territories were included. Almost all schools participated. Out of 50-some schools in the territories, there were eight or nine that did not participate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, is it possible to break out the results by region and community? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the School Achievement Educators Program, testing, the territories to date has been treated as one jurisdiction, and there is no way to identify the results by what region of the territories they come from.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, the testing results just became public last week. Has the department had an opportunity to analyze or will they be analyzing the reports and the findings of the national test?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The work has started to review the results of the test. In about six or eight weeks there will be a more detailed, technical report that will be issued, which will provide us with more opportunity to develop some plans for the future.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, the analysis that will be done by the Department of Education, would that be made available to the Members, the NWTTA and other interested parties so they would be able to review the

information and maybe work pro-actively and hopefully, change and turn around those test scores? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 474-13(5): National Mathematics Testing Results

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The detailed report to which I referred, Mr. Speaker, is actually prepared by the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada. The report that came out last Thursday or Friday was just a summary report and there is a much more detailed report that comes out in six or eight weeks. The department will involve its partners, the divisional education councils in assessing where we go from here. It is important to mention, that this year we have across the Northwest Territories introduced a new math curriculum. This test would not reflect that new curriculum because these tests we are getting the results for now were conducted in the Northwest Territories last April. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Mr. Speaker, this morning I heard an interview on CBC with a woman from a company working in the diamond-related industry. I am not exactly sure what the nature of their business is. However, she certainly sounded much more familiar with the north, with the nature of the work aboriginal people do in terms of art and that type of thing than the gentleman from De Beers had, when he spoke to us in England. Can the Minister expand on the nature of business this Calgary company is doing and why we would like them to set up shop here in the north?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the company is in the business of buying rough diamonds to get into cutting and polishing, which is the business they are in. They are based out of Calgary, with a subsidiary in Antwerp. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister elaborate on how large an organization this is? Is it a small company or one of worldwide reputation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot give details on the company. They are one of many companies that are interested in accessing rough diamonds in the north, in setting up a cutting and polishing industry. We are discussing this with a number of other interested companies and entrepreneurs. The positive thing about it is, they had thought about setting operations in Calgary. We contacted them and invited them to come up and look at the option of setting up operations here in the north. As they said publicly, they are now reconsidering their original decision. There is a positive note in the newscast. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What types of advantages could we look forward to by getting them to actually

set up shop here in Yellowknife, rather than in Calgary? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the possibilities are companies can train and/or just hire experienced workers in the diamond industry, workers who know how to cut, polish and work with diamonds. We think there are possibilities for setting up operations either on a factory basis or on a cottage industry basis. It certainly means there are spin-off opportunities, if such possibilities are realized through support industries such as the sale and maintenance of tools, possibly other activities that would be required as a result of operations like those being set up here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of us have spoken about the benefits of having a secondary diamond industry in the north here, including the honourable Minister. Could the Minister indicate what we, as a government, would be willing to do in order to either assist and to woo this particular company or some other similar company to set up

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shop here in the north, in terms of concessions or training? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 475-13(5): Calgary Based Diamond Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The companies that we have contacted and the diamentaires whom we have talked to, we have been having general discussions with them for the last year or so. It is important to note that many of the things that are required before firm commitments are made are not in place yet. However, we have made it known that we will do what we can to create a positive work environment for the diamond industry to be established here in the north. It means looking at areas of taxes, training dollars, providing monies either in terms of loans or contributions, to ensure it has a positive environment in which to be established. We have made no definite or extraordinary commitments other than those we use conventionally to encourage businesses to start up here in the north. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 476-13(5): Assistance to Tl'oondih Healing Society

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. It is in regard to my Member's statement, the circumstances where we find ourselves in the Mackenzie Delta with these violent deaths we are seeing, where there seems to be an increase. I would like to ask the Premier if he could possibly assist me in regard to the motion that was recently passed in committee of the whole of previous motions which have asked for support to the Tl'oondih Healing Society. I would like to ask the Premier if it is possible, as the Premier and the leader of this government, that they can try to find some sort of financial arrangement between the regional health board and the Department of Social Services and Health, to sit down and look at a possible, viable way of maintaining that operation.

In the last year, the Tl'oondih Healing Society has put forth four proposals to hold different types of workshops to assist people in the community with different healing matters. To date, they have only received one approval which will be a program run later on this week. Can the Premier possibly assist me in this matter, in regard to the motions that have been passed in this House, and if there is a way to find some workable financial arrangement with the regional health board and the Tl'oondih Healing Society? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 476-13(5): Assistance to Tl'oondih Healing Society

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all realize the problems that we have in the Northwest Territories with drugs and alcohol. I will request the Minister of Health to work with the health board, as well as the Member's community, in the Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Beaufort-Delta area, to see how they can make use of that facility and work together to deliver programs in the region that are needed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 477-13(5): Addressing Social Problems

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The communities, in regard to the government, were seeing a real increase in costs, especially when you look at the \$1 million we had to come up with through supplementary to offset the costs of the overtime that we are paying guards and people transporting inmates from the communities to Yellowknife, or wherever. We have to find a more workable solution to deal with the young offenders and how they are dealt with, not just by putting them in group homes, but deal with the anger and frustration that these people take with them and try to find a way to deal with them in the communities. In the case of these two young men, we have to find a way to work it through. I would like to ask the Premier if he could also keep that in mind with all the money being spent elsewhere, if we can keep as much of those resources in the communities to assist with these types of problems? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

That is a new question. I will ask the Premier to respond.

Return To Question 477-13(5): Addressing Social Problems

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Member. We have to try to solve our problems at the community level. We have to work with our community members as leaders to try to solve our social problems. We are committed as a government to do that. I know before there was a travelling program for rehab in our communities. Our young people, who are in our educational system where we have to work, with our leaders in the community, our education societies, our divisional boards of education, as well as our divisional health boards to make sure there is proper programming in the school, so people are aware of problems that exist, and they come up with solutions together to solve these problems at the community level. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for WCB. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister give us a status report or rather an update on the plans the WCB has as it relates to division? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is there were discussions earlier last week, with

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What is important for everybody to understand is the WCB is slightly different from everybody else. WCB members are funded by the employers and not by the government. We have to be extremely cognizant of that. Any additional expense, for example, that may come about because of it, has to be paid through the fiscal condition of the WCB or an increase in the rates et cetera.

My understanding at this stage of the game is, there is a desire to look at the possibility of two boards. However, there seems to be some legal, jurisdictional problems associated with that. That was the advice I received earlier last week. There is the desire possibly to expand, not necessarily to put a Nunavut WCB in place, but to expand some of the jobs that are currently in place. For example, the two jobs in Rankin Inlet and two in Iqaluit on the Occupational Health and Safety side of things, not necessarily on the WCB side of things, but on the Safety Officers and Mining Inspectors. There is some desire there to look at moving some of those jobs out east.

The whole thing boils down to, who is going to pay and what the cost is. It is a little early in the process for me to really give my colleague a clear indication of how I think it is going to unfold. I know that significant discussions will be taking place by the officials and by the players and the Interim Commissioner's office and the Western Coalition. It would be fair to say, there is some disagreement as to how we should go about this. Probably, in the next two or three weeks, we will have greater clarity, and I would be prepared to communicate with my colleague by letter on that. I do not have much more to report than that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the fact that we are looking at two separate wings or organizations for east and west, would the Minister see some of these jobs going into the smaller communities like Arviat and Baker Lake? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do not want to give my colleague the impression this is going to happen because it is too early in the process. As discussions unfold, I would be prepared

to keep him abreast of what is happening. Right now, there are some fairly intense discussions and there are differences of opinion amongst all the players. Until I get a little more clarity at the official's level as to what their desire is, I am not trying to avoid the question, I just do not have the answer because it is still in fairly serious negotiations. What I will say is that contributors to the fund, employers, have to pay the bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

MR. O'BRIEN:

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us who are the parties involved in these discussions and negotiations and, in particular, who are the individuals who are negotiating from the east?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 478-13(5): Workers' Compensation Board Division Plan

HON. JOHN TODD:

The parties who were negotiating are the same parties negotiating all of the division: the Interim Commissioner's office, the Western Coalition, ourselves in terms of the WCB, the GNWT. These are the players who are sitting down trying to work out an appropriate compromise for Workers' Compensation. Both the Workers' Compensation and the NWT Power Corporation are issues that I red-flagged months and months ago. Somehow, we have to try to come to some consensus as to how we are going to deal with it. Again, I am not trying to avoid the question. At this time, in fairness to my colleague, I cannot give him any real clarity as to how it is going to unfold because it is still very much early in the process in terms of trying to determine an appropriate course of action. We have to take a look at what the legal ramifications are, and we also consistently have to remember who pays at the end of the day. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently NTI had a meeting in Cambridge Bay and they were discussing the Keewatin pilot project. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the Minister responsible for MACA, who is also responsible for the Keewatin pilot project. NTI recently passed a motion with their opposition at this time to the Keewatin pilot project. Also, Baker Lake pulled out of this proposal. Can the Minister of MACA update us as to the current status of the project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware of the motion that was passed at the NTI/Cambridge Bay meeting. I cannot speak to that. The pilot project is just a proposal and it is still going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

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MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently NTI had a news release. In the news release, there is opposition to the Keewatin pilot project. My next supplementary question is, has the office of Interim Commissioner written support for this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to say that the Keewatin pilot project is just a proposal. I have not had any response from either NTI or the Interim Commissioner that I know of, that have been directed to me personally, as the Minister responsible for this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in their press release they said they have written to the Minister. I do not understand why the Minister is saying she never received a letter from NTI opposing the Keewatin pilot project when their press release states they have written to the Minister opposing the Keewatin pilot project?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize the meeting in Cambridge Bay just happened last week, so that letter is probably on its way and will come to me. I am just not aware of it today. It might be on my desk or in the department. I do not know why NTI would be opposing the Keewatin pilot project and not give me any detailed information why they opposed it up until today. When I see the letter, then I will know why and what their reasons are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 479-13(5): Status of Keewatin Pilot Projects

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand NTI is not opposed to the Keewatin pilot project. The NTI recommends maybe the government should wait until division to get this project going. What will be the status if this goes on? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I will rule the question out of order because it is hypothetical. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 480-13(5): Proposal to Meet in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. I would like to ask the Premier in light of the incidents that have happened in Fort McPherson, is it possible for him, along with the Minister of Health and Social Services and Justice, to work into their schedules a public meeting next month in Fort McPherson with the people to talk about the different areas I have mentioned? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier

Return To Question 480-13(5): Proposal to Meet in Fort McPherson

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the travel plans for the Minister of Justice or the Minister of Health and Social Services in the next month. I am aware of mine and I am booked solid for the next month. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 480-13(5): Proposal to Meet in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier make an attempt to travel to the Mackenzie Delta to deal with the concerns of the people in the Mackenzie Delta within the next couple of months if he cannot do it next month?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 480-13(5): Proposal to Meet in Fort McPherson

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will check my travel plans and work with the Member to see if I can get up there in the near future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 70-13(5): Naturally North: The Natural Regions of the Western Northwest Territories

Tabled Document 71-13(5): Naturally North: The Natural Regions of Nunavut

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following documents entitled, "Naturally North, the Natural Regions of the Western Northwest Territories" and "Naturally North, the Natural Regions of Nunavut". Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mr.

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Barnabas.

Tabled Document 72-13(5): NTI News Release: Opposition to Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document, NTI press release from February 26, 1998. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 14-13(5): Coordination of Inter-Jurisdictional and Inter-Departmental Initiatives

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the motion.

Coordination of Inter-Jurisdictional and Inter-Departmental Initiatives

WHEREAS the responsibility for the preparation of strategies to address intergovernmental and international issues and maintaining official contracts between the Government of the Northwest Territories and federal, provincial, Yukon and circumpolar governments rests with the Executive under the Intergovernmental Affairs Program;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs coordinates Government of the Northwest Territories participation at comprehensive aboriginal land claims, self-government and treaty entitlement negotiations, monitors Western Constitutional development and represents the Government of the Northwest Territories in related processes and fosters good aboriginal relations;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has the broad responsibility to respond effectively to economic, natural resource and environmental issues of concern to the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development undertakes to develop trade and investment strategies and provides advice and acts as a link nationally and internationally in business, arts and crafts, manufacturing and marketing;

AND WHEREAS there is an apparent lack of a coordinated effort on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories to address inter-jurisdictional issues of concern and development initiatives in the western Arctic region, taking into account the interests and participation of all affected aboriginal organizations and territorial and national governments.

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kivallivik that the Government of the Northwest Territories formulate, in consultation with all affected parties, a policy to effect the interagency and inter-jurisdictional cooperation necessary to facilitate the development of comprehensive agreements between governments and land claimants respecting, but not limited to, the environment, wildlife management, economic development, trade and tourism and social and cultural development;

AND FURTHER, it is recommended that a comprehensive management board, consisting of all party participation, be established to coordinate the negotiation and implementation of these agreements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the motion I believe there is a lot of inter-jurisdictional work that has to go on, especially when it comes to aboriginal people who are related to other aboriginal people living in Alaska, the Yukon, Greenland, northern Quebec or Labrador. There is always that link to aboriginal groups regardless if it is the Cree in the southern territory, northern Alberta or Manitoba. There has to be more efforts made by this government to entice the economic opportunities of aboriginal groups and governments, to start pulling their policies together to recognize there is an economic opportunity here for aboriginal groups to form joint ventures and start dealing with environmental issues such as the Porcupine Caribou or dealing with the seal hunt in eastern Canada or hydro development.

We have to start formulating our policies so they are simpler and easier to understand. Right now you go from one department to another to try to find information on who is responsible for aboriginal people when you talk about international or inter-jurisdictional issues. Through this motion, I am hoping that the different departments and agencies within the government can sit down and identify all these different policies and responsibilities and can consolidate them into one policy that can oversee everything. With that, I seek the support of my colleagues on this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while I can appreciate the intent of the motion, I see it as a very complex sweeping motion. We have had no real time to look at or consult with the partners referred to in the motion. I do not know what the impact would be on all the current processes and negotiations currently underway. I do not know what type of board the motion refers to and of course the issue of potential cost. Given those factors, but the main one is the shortage of time and lack of opportunity to discuss this and look at the impact and implications, I cannot support this motion. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no doubt the intent of this motion is very well meant, but I have difficulty like Mr. Miltenberger, in grasping the impact of this motion, without having a lot more time to digest it, look into it and to discuss it. I feel it is a very complex and sweeping motion like Mr. Miltenberger has said. That gives me a certain amount of concern. I would like to have, perhaps in the future, the Member

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address this again if it does not go forward. At this time I cannot support this particular motion simply because of the dramatic impact it could potentially have and without consulting various organizations and individuals, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this motion. I would have hoped that we had more time to discuss this and perhaps make a few minor changes. However, there is a lot of work that has to be done in this area. There are land claims and other agreements that have been made between various aboriginal governments, between

ourselves as the GNWT and the federal government and they do need to be coordinated in some fashion. Hopefully, this motion will wake up various people such as the Cabinet and perhaps the federal government that something has to be done. It may not be exactly as outlined in here, but I am in favour of this motion because I believe that something has to be done and time is not standing still, Mr. Speaker. Just because we are working towards division, does not mean that we cannot work on other things as well. For that reason I am supporting the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in favour of the motion as presented by Mr. Krutko. Although Mr. Miltenberger is correct, it does seem broad sweeping in a scope. It is only a recommendation being brought forward by this House. In the Infrastructure Committee we had identified on numerous occasions the problem with overlap within different government departments dealing with Aboriginal Affairs. For those reasons, I will be supporting Mr. Krutko and his motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my honourable colleagues. It is important. We have a lot of policies and economic programs in this government that are outdated. We have to somehow pull them together, looking at the economic circumstance we find ourselves in and the land claims being settled with division coming up. We have to find ways of looking at these old policies and the way economic programs are run in the territories as to how they fit the uniqueness of the territories and uniqueness of the people it represents for the majority of the people in the territories who are aboriginal people.

There is a real close tie between aboriginal people and the different cultural groups they are part of. For myself, I am a Gwich'in person. The group I represent is originally from Alaska, the Yukon, Northwest Territories. It is the same thing with the Cree in the southern part of the territories. They go into

Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. It is the same thing with the Inuit in the east. There is a connection between Greenland, Labrador and northern Quebec. We have to keep in mind that, when we talk about people, we talk about a group of people, in regard to aboriginal people. Just because they put boundary lines up around us, does not mean we are cut off from the people we represent. It is important we take those boundary lines down and have people working closer together. Hopefully, through this motion, the government can see that and try to foster a relationship between aboriginal people in North America in general and not just restricting us to the Northwest Territories. This is the intention of the motion. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for a recorded vote.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Mackenzie Delta has asked for a recorded vote. Question has been called. To the motion. All those in favour?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Picco, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Erasmus and Mr. Steen.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those opposed?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Ningark. All those abstaining? Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Dent.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The results of the motion, for: 7, against: 3, abstentions: 4. The motion is carried. Motion 15-13(5). Mr. Picco.

Motion 15-13(5): Reallocation of Departmental Surpluses

MR. PICCO:

Thank you. Relocation of departmental surpluses.

WHEREAS, the 13th Legislative Assembly has identified its main priorities through the public release of the document entitled, "Agenda for Change;"

AND WHEREAS, the Legislative Assembly's Agenda for Change and Vision for the Future speaks of a healthier, better educated and more self-reliant citizenry;

AND WHEREAS, the Agenda for Change affirms that the old and expensive way of doing things must be changed;

AND WHEREAS, the fiscal year-end is quickly approaching and a number of GNWT departments have experienced and might anticipate budget surpluses;

AND WHEREAS, the Minister of Finance has indicated in the House that the Cabinet will reallocate any surpluses according to the priorities established by both Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for the High Arctic, that this House recommends that the Cabinet reallocate any departmental surpluses that may exist after fiscal year-end 1997-98 to the Departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services;

AND FURTHER, that the Standing Committee on Social Programs be consulted and fully involved in discussions regarding the redeployment of surplus funds to educational, health and social service initiatives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question has been called. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reason for the introduction of this motion is indeed the concerns that have been raised many times in this House over the last couple of months concerning problems in health and funding in the Department of Education, especially when we look at teacher/student ratios and concerns with curricula and tests and responses that we heard that there is no more money.

What we are hoping for here in this motion, Mr. Speaker, is that if, indeed, the departments find a surplus, that money in this 1997-98 current fiscal year

be reallocated to those departments to help them out with that shortfall in education and social services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. To the motion. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you. Just supporting the motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

In regard to this particular motion, once again, I appreciate the intent, but it is somewhat vague and imprecise. I am not sure whether we are talking about the surplus, before or after pay equity. What about our accumulated debt? As the honourable Member from Iqaluit mentioned in the previous motion, it is just a recommendation. So based on that particular approach, Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the intent, that we do have to put more money into education, very clearly. I will be supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to see that in this motion it states that the Standing Committee on Social Programs be consulted and fully involved in discussions. I would hope there is some direction there that it be to specific programs such as the Mammography Program. That way, I feel that I can support the program. I have continually spoken here in the House about the need for us to put some money into job creation programs and I would have liked to have seen that in here, but I will support the motion. However, next year, I would hope that we could reword a motion of this nature to also include job creation as much as health and social services areas. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I would like to remind the Members to speak to the motion. To the motion. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, although I like the intent of the motion, and I talked to him this morning about it in the Ordinary Members' Caucus, we do have the accumulated deficit in the system. There is the pay equity payment dispute. Mr. Speaker, there are other programs that people, in my riding, want access to, programs and services. At this time, I am not able to make a commitment in one department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion for that matter. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting the motion. I believe we do have to consider putting in some policies or regulations to control the spending of this government, especially when it comes to the end of fiscal year, where we find there are surpluses where it seems to be a real spending spree, where people take this mad money and try to spend it before it runs out, so they do not have a surplus. This is not the way we should be running our monies. We are always being told by the Minister of Health and Social Services, show me where you can get new dollars. This is one small way we can identify those surplus dollars and put it into education and health. It is critical that we give direction to the Cabinet and the Ministers so they realize we have identified an area where they can consider looking at new sources of funding. With that, I will be supporting the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to see so many people are going to vote in favour of such a far-sweeping motion. Obviously, as a Member of the Social Programs Committee, I will be voting in favour of this motion.

I particularly feel that we do need more money in the area of education and health. One of the main reasons that I have been advocating this for some time, of course, is the fact that without proper education, the first people of this land that we live in, cannot participate properly in the workforce and

cannot participate fully in the economic development and other opportunities that abound for other well-educated people. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in favour of this motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I have been given enough time to consider the total overall result this motion might produce. There were some very informal discussions in the Ordinary Members' Caucus. There were no overall decisions made at this point in time as to which specific part of education or health and social services, we would be directing these funds toward. I would prefer, Mr. Speaker, to deal with this specific issue when we see the surpluses being redirected through the supplementary appropriations. This is the way I am going to go. I am going to abstain from this motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question has been called. To the motion. Final comments, Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you colleagues. I appreciate some of the comments that were made. I just wanted to touch base on some of them. There is some concern there would be no surpluses, but we saw within one department last month, where there was more than a million dollars in surpluses and was redirected within the department. This is what we were trying to address in the motion. On the pay equity situation and the reallocation of funds to the surplus that has already been targeted by Mr. Todd in his Budget Address for 1998-99, and I am talking about 1997-98, which is the fiscal year ending March 31st. With that, Mr.

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Speaker, I thank the comments and because we only had two sitting days left, there was a shortness in preparing the motion, but I did bring it forward last Friday when I introduced it. This gave Members four or five days to think about it. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This is the appropriate time to request it. Are you requesting it?

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am requesting a recorded vote on the motion at this time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Iqaluit is asking for a recorded vote. Question has been called. To the motion. All those in favour?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Picco, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. O'Brien.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Ningark.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those abstaining?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Dent, Mr. Steen.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The results of the motion, for: 8, against: 1, abstaining: 5. The motion is carried.

--Applause

Motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

BILL 15 Adoption Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe that Bill 15, Adoption Act be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill reforms family law respecting statutory adoption in the Territories by:

- setting out the purposes of the act, the paramount one being to promote the best interests of a child being adopted;

- setting out a test to assist courts in determining the best interests of a child and providing that the determination must be made with a recognition that differing cultural values and practices must be respected;

- allowing a stepparent to adopt a child of his or her spouse without requiring the spouse to adopt the child as well;

- allowing certain couples who are not married to adopt a child together;

- requiring the director of adoptions or an adoption worker to provide certain information to expectant parents, at their request;

- requiring the placement of a child for a private adoption, whether within or outside the territories, to have the approval of the director of adoptions, where the placement is not with a relative of the child;

- setting out how and when a consent to an adoption (by a parent, a child or the director of child and family services) may be revoked;

- allowing the Supreme Court to make an order respecting access to the child when making an adoption order;

- establishing an adoption registry in which the following information will be maintained:

- the name and sex of the adoptive child, the names of the natural, adoptive and any previous adoptive parents of the child and of the siblings and adoptive siblings of the child,

- the records of the director of adoptions in respect of a child who has been adopted,

- the personal information provided by the child, the natural and adoptive parents of the child, the grandparents and the siblings and adoptive siblings of the child;

- allowing an adoption worker to collect personal information from the following persons, which information will be maintained in the adoption registry:

- a natural parent, an adoptive parent and any previous adoptive parent of a child, if the parent consents,

- a grandparent of a child, if the parent and grandparent consent,

- the siblings, adoptive siblings or the adoptive child, if the parent consents (where the sibling or child is under 12-years-old) or if the sibling or adoptive child consents (where the sibling or child is 12-years or older);

- allowing the registrar of the adoption registry to disclose the information contained in the adoption registry and facilitate a reunion between children, parents, grandparents and siblings in the circumstances set out in the bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 15, Adoption Act has had second reading and accordingly stands ordered to a standing committee. Second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99; Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99; Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1997-98; Bill 12, Write-off of Debts Act, 1997-98; Bill 13, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98; Committee Report 2-13(5); Committee Report 3-13(5); Committee Report 4-13(5); Committee Report 5-13(5);

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Committee Report 6-13(5); Tabled Document 15-13(5) and Tabled Document 19-13(5). Before I call Mr. Steen, by the authority given to the Speaker by Motion 3-13(5), the House will resolve into committee of the whole and may sit beyond 6:00 p.m. until it is prepared to report progress. With Mr. Steen in the Chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I would like to call the committee to order. For consideration by the committee we have a fair number of items on the agenda. Mr. Ootes could you

give me some direction here on how the committee wishes to proceed.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That we proceed with Bill 8, and Committee Report 2-13(5), 3-13(5), 4-13(5) and 5-13(5) and that we continue to consider the Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development followed by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. We will then deal with the various bills and leftover tabled documents. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development if he would like to bring in his witnesses. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Will the Sergeant-at-Arms please bring in the witnesses and seat them? Mr. Kakfwi, could you introduce your witness please?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have on my left the deputy minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Joe Handley and on my right the director of finance, Mr. Jim Kennedy. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Welcome to the committee. We are on Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99, Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, page 11-12 and 11-13. Building and works, Baffin region. Total region is on page 11-13. Total region \$330,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Keewatin region, total region, \$67,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Kitikmeot, total region, \$255,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total building and works, \$2.449 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, headquarters. We have total region on page 11-14, \$151,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Fort Smith region, total region, \$204,000. Mr. Rabesca.

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The replacement of the big tent in Yellowknife. What is the big tent all about for \$10,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree that we move back to acquisition of headquarters?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Mr. Rabesca.

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 11-14 regarding the replacement of Yellowknife tent for \$10,000 that is my question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the tent is a large insulated tent that is used by the department in various research projects and it requires replacement. It is an insulated tent. It is not a conventional canvas tent. That is the reason for the large cost. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Total region acquisition of equipment, headquarters, total region, \$151,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Fort Smith region, total region, \$204,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Inuvik region, total region, \$114,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Baffin region, total region, \$99,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Keewatin region, total region, \$58,000. Agreed:

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment on page 11-15, Kitikmeot region, total region, \$59,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total acquisition of equipment, \$685,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total activity, \$3.134 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 11-16, activity summary, forest management, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$27.761 million. I recognize Mr. Krutko and Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the forest fire management, one of the things that we seem to spend a lot of time and effort and money fighting fires, but with a lot of these forest resources we have, we are not really using them as a product where we can develop a lot of our own infrastructures in the communities. We are importing a lot of lumber materials from southern Canada. We do have timber

resources here in the north. I would like to ask the Minister a question in regard to the forest management area. If you look at the traditional communities which originate up and down the Mackenzie valley, a lot of them had some sort of a sawmill operation. Traditionally in the past, in my riding there were sawmills in Aklavik, Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic where at one time these were thriving businesses, in which people built the communities with raw materials from the local surrounding area in regard to cutting their own timber locally and constructing a lot of the old buildings that were built one time in the communities. We seem to have become so dependent on southern resources that we do not use the timber that presently exists in a lot of our regions, where at one time it generated a lot of jobs where a lot of people were able to supply the sawmills with raw materials such as logs.

One thing I see lacking in the north is we have to rehash that industry to where it was at one time. If we go back in history, we will realize a lot of these communities were based on building a lot of their infrastructure by the raw materials in the area. Has the Minister looked at the possibility of investing in local sawmills that communities can start developing their own wood products so that they can go back to the whole notion of constructing and building your own houses with the materials that are around the communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been trying to complete forest inventories in as many parts of the Mackenzie Valley as we can. We have also been encouraging communities to look at ways in which they can support milling operations, in places where timber is being cut and harvested. We try to make it a condition of the licence that some milling is done within a certain time period. It is my view the private sector is probably in the best position to get into the milling operation that we would try to continue to work with communities to see that jobs are created.

In the business of trying to use our own materials for building, we can continue trying to do that. Rough lumber is supplying and meeting our own needs. In the area of rough lumber, it is probably the best option we have right now having the finished lumber for actual construction framing. We need to meet

national standards and that requires the set-up of a kiln, to dry and finished lumber to be produced in the north. It requires a kiln and right now we do not have that available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to inventories that have been done, I know that one happened in my riding. How soon will those studies be concluded and the possibility of looking at accessing these resources to start producing wood products in the different ridings, so that we can try to find some way of stimulating our economy by finding a new source of job creation, such as in this area? In my riding, there is that potential. We do have a lot of large stands of timber, especially in the headwaters to the drainage systems. How soon does he feel those studies will be concluded and how soon can we possibly look at going into production with resources in the communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The two areas we are going to put priority on are to try to finish proper inventory which would be conducted jointly with the communities involved and those would be in the areas of Cameron Hills, north of the Cameron Hills and the Gwich'in area. We will work with the communities affected to get those done and to try to find some money to make sure this work is done and completed as soon as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, as well, have some questions in regard to the whole area of the economic potential of harvesting timber. Before we can do that accurately, there is a need for a clear inventory in the different areas of some sections in the South Slave, Cameron Hills and in the Fort Liard area. In fact, there has been lumbering for some time. The Minister has indicated they are working in Cameron Hills and

up in Mr. Krutko's riding. Are there current inventories already done in the South Slave or Liard area, where there is already fairly intensive lumbering?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Handley.

MR. HANDLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are some inventories that have been done in the South Slave and also in the Fort Liard area, as well as Cameron Hills. Some of the data though is becoming outdated because as trees grow and change, inventories have to be done. In the 20 or 25 years

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when they were originally done, they have to be repeated again. It is an ongoing process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister or Mr. Handley indicate whether there is an overall plan with time lines, say a five-year plan? How do you approach this so it is done in a coordinated way to ensure that all the inventories are done and it is not forgotten, that it is up-to-date and renewed when appropriate? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Handley.

MR. HANDLEY:

As Mr. Kakfwi mentioned, we are going to try to identify extra dollars to be able to put into forest inventory. Up until now, we have been playing catch up with trying to keep ahead of the ongoing needs for inventory. It is possible that within five years, we could have a complete inventory of all commercial forest in the territories, but I would think it would take at least that long.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question is in regard to the harvesting of timber. Is there a clear position by the government and this department to the type of cutting and the process that is deemed acceptable? I am thinking of select logging as opposed to clear-cutting so we do not have to see situations like those that have occurred in BC, where they have sort of plundered the land and left. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The communities affected are the ones that helped us put together these forest management plans. They can get right down to actually selecting the places that should be harvested, and the type of cutting that should be done. Those are the kinds of management plans we and the communities came up with. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman. I would like to switch subjects briefly if I may, in regard to firefighting. My recollection was that can so bombers were brought on stream and there was going to be a review done after last year, in fact, to see how effective they were and is that the best investment considering their age and small capacity as opposed to say, CL-215's or helicopters or whatever other options there were. Has that type of assessment taken place?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department feels that because of the low level of activity in the last year, there has not been enough time to do a proper, accurate assessment of the benefits that come from the type of arrangement we have with the company. We will be looking at asking for additional time, perhaps recommending an extension to the present arrangement in order to get a more accurate assessment done. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Resource management, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$27.761 million. I have questions on this particular item, so in recognition of the clock, we will break for lunch and perhaps, Mr. Ningark will relieve me. I would like to remind Members that there is a Government Operations Committee meeting in Committee Room A at noon. Break for lunch and return at 1:00 p.m. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee back to order. Forest Management. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question to the department is, are there large tracks of lands containing forests that are owned by aboriginal groups through claims?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are timbered areas in the Gwich'in and Sahtu settlement regions. Outside of that, there are no claims in the Mackenzie Valley, particularly in the southern part. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gwich'in and Sahtu and I also understand there are some lands that are identified in the southern Mackenzie under the claims. Would these aboriginal groups have exclusive right to harvest timber?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no legislation that provides for exclusive harvesting by aboriginal people in the southern part of the territory to harvest timber.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Does that include the Sahtu and the Gwich'in, no exclusive right to harvest timber?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know the exact provisions or wording in the claims, but on exclusively owned lands, they would have the right to harvest those timbers.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

My question is, Mr. Chairman, are these large tracks of land whereby they would have the exclusive right to harvest this timber?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can give the Member the exact size of lands that are owned exclusively by these two groups and exactly what harvesting rights they have to timber in those areas and what provisions are made for managing and regulating the harvesting of timber in those areas under the claims provisions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Are you stating you will give information to Mr. Steen at a later date?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

We are going to be sitting here for a long time, so we would try to get it as quickly as we can. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, if groups have the exclusive right to harvest, do they have the exclusive right to fight forest fires in those lands too?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The provision for fire fighting is provided by our government under criteria that sets out which are priority areas the beneficiary under those claims have exclusive ownership over certain tracks of land. As private land owners, they would have the right to fight their own fires within those areas as they deem necessary. We would fight fires only in areas that were deemed to be more or less in the public interest and set out as priority areas by communities and under our own policies. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Forest Management. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

For clarification, Mr. Chairman, those lands privately owned and where aboriginal groups own the surface rights and presumably the timber, do they have the responsibility of fighting forest fires on that particular land and not this government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, the government fights fires in areas that are considered to be high priority areas. They might be for harvesting because of timber resources, those things that are deemed to be in the public interest. We also try to protect private property. Those are the general criteria we use for determining

where and when we should be fighting fires. The aboriginal groups would not be excluded from this policy. Their lands would not be excluded from this policy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, the point I am trying to make here is on public lands that have forest on it, anybody harvesting the forest would pay to the government, a certain fee to harvest that forest. Therefore, it stands to reason that the government would in fact benefit, to some degree, from the timber, but on private land, this government does not stand to gain anything. The total forest product for forest would go to the ownership of private groups. It stands to reason then that this government is giving money to fight fires on public land to protect public interests. That is why I bring up the question of whether or not this government has the mandate to fight forest fires to protect private interest.

I also bring this question up in relation to that area of the forest that is burnt on private land and whether or not we pay to reforest that land. I do not know why we would pay to reforest the land since we do not benefit from the harvesting, only the private group would. That is the line of my questioning, Mr. Chairman. The second part of the question obviously would be, do we have reforestation projects on private land?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The only way we can go on those lands, if we felt we had reason to go on to fight fires, is with the prior agreement of the land owners. If we felt it was in the public interest, so to speak, to go fight fires on those private lands, we would do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Would the same apply to planting trees on private land?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would not be doing that type of activity on private lands. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Forest management, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$27.761 million. Agreed? Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, if that is going to be the policy of the government, then it would be to the benefit of the government and the residents of the territories to know just what lands are identified as public whereby we would undertake reforestation or forest fire fighting and those lands that are private. It would be the responsibility of the land owners to do such things? Mr. Chairman, with the movement toward more and more land claims in the southern Mackenzie, obviously this is going to have to be identified at some point in time, where to identify the governments' responsibilities versus private land owners' responsibilities.

This has a big effort on our forestry budget. So I would think the department would identify these areas starting on the existing areas, at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, would you like to respond to Mr. Steen?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you look at the map of the Mackenzie Valley and the total land mass and the actual areas where fires had started, that we respond to, Members would see that, we, in fact, respond to a very small area. That is, we do not fight fires 200 miles out of communities, generally speaking. We only do it 100 miles out of communities. There are certain priority areas we have. Just so the Member is

aware, some of the lands selected are not necessarily areas where we have responded to fires previously, in any case. I agree with the Member, with the conclusion of claims, it is the government's responsibility to make sure we do not carry on incurring costs for responsibilities that are not ours. The question of government liability in terms of claims negotiations as Members are aware, we would be aware of the changes that happens as a result of claims as they are negotiated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I bring this up in relation to the number of articles over the past month or two in regard to different groups claiming forestry rights, either through treaty or claims. At this point in time, they are not referring so much to claims, because the claims are not in place, but there is, if I recall correctly in the correspondence I have seen, some reference to priority harvesting rights through treaty rights. Obviously, this whole issue, and it is controversial, would be more easily addressed if people and groups were aware that as they claim the forest rights, they also claim the responsibility to reforest and protect their forest, at their cost.

If this government is not gaining any revenue from the product, from the forest, then obviously, whoever is gaining the revenue from the resource should to some degree, have the responsibility of protecting and reforesting. This would seem to address who owns what timber in the southern part of the Mackenzie. My main concern with the aboriginal groups claiming forestry and the preferential right to harvest that forest, is along with that comes the responsibility to protect it and replant if they do cut down the timber. They should be responsible to replant. That is my point to this whole question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

When we talk about this area, we have to talk about priority in regard to safety, environment, et cetera. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been recent court cases that support some of the aboriginal positions that have been advanced, over the years, in

regard to the scope of aboriginal or treaty rights and what it encompasses.

It is not for me to give them a sermon on what the downside or liabilities are if aboriginal groups should decide to negotiate certain provisions within their claims or treaty negotiations. I am sure they are acutely aware of those things and as the Member knows, when you negotiate an agreement, you have to know absolutely what it is you are agreeing to. There are things you will gain and things you will have to put aside or give up as a result of those negotiations. In many cases it is forever. You cannot come back to it and make changes. I am sure all the groups are aware of it. The Gwich'in, the Inuvialuit and the Sahtu have been quite willing to negotiate and conclude agreements. Further south they have not, for whatever reason, reached any type of agreement. The ambiguity is all there. I am sure they appreciate the advice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I do not think I was suggesting the Minister go down and give anybody any sermons on the pros and cons of their claims, but what I am suggesting here is that I would like to see those lands which are identified as private lands and the forest resource that go with that particular group, and I would like that identified in relation to where we are reforesting. I do not believe we should be paying for reforesting on private lands. That is one point.

The other point is going to be a little harder to address, where do we fight forest fires. I am not sure how you would address it, whether it is on private lands or whether private land owners are required to pay a portion of the cost or what? Perhaps, the Minister would consider looking at other jurisdictions, other provinces as to how they handle this type of issue? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We agree we should not be involved in reforestation on private lands. Secondly, we will look at the concern the Member has brought up to make sure our policies on fighting forest

fires does not have us incurring costs, fighting fires on private lands that should rightfully be the responsibility of private owners. If we did, we should provide clear reasons or substantiation for doing that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Forest management, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$27.761 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On page 11-17, forest management, building and works, Fort Smith region, total region, \$125,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Inuvik region, total region, \$50,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total building and works, \$175,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, total region, \$225,000, total acquisition of

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equipment, \$225,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

Total activity, \$400,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you. Financial contribution, detail of grants and contributions, grants on page 11-19, total grants, \$1.436 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you. Contributions, on page 11-22, total contributions, \$28.769 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you. Total grants and contribution, \$30.205 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

An information item on active positions, page 11-23. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you. For marketing service, revolving fund, an information item on page 11-24. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick question and clarification in regard to the issue of those moosehides that are apparently left in the bush and possibly making arrangements with the hunters of South Slave, around Thebacha and Fort Resolution, to bring them in so it could be put into service in the north, where there is a shortage of moosehides.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working to try to have this implemented by this fall. As to finding a way to make it economical for hunters to bring moosehides back into the community, as opposed to disposing or discarding them in the bush.

We are doing it by two means. One is to provide some monetary incentive. That is, we will find some way to purchase them or have them purchased at the community level. Secondly, to look at reintroducing the tradition to all communities teaching women, children and men how to prepare and tan moosehides the traditional way and perhaps, even more recent methods of tanning hides. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman. It is good to hear those specifics. Mr. Chairman, I was just wondering if the arrangements to provide incentives would it be under this particular information item on page 11-24 or would it be done somewhere else?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

There are no specifics on how we are going to get the program running. We are going to be talking to communities with hunters and trappers and other community groups to give us some advice on how we can best do it that meets the interests of the communities and ourselves. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Information item, marketing service, revolving fund, page 11-24, page 11-25, detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Agreed? Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I get a breakdown on what the \$2.6 million on Inuvialuit participation costs are? What exactly is that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Inuvialuit participation costs, I do not have the details on, but there are certain commitments that were made by governments to conduct studies and to carry on work that fell under the responsibility of this department within the Inuvialuit settlement area. We are funded by the federal government to carry on this work within the settlement region. This is the money that is provided. As to how it breaks down, I do not have the detail. We will have to provide it to the Member at a later date, probably tomorrow. I do not think it is difficult to get, but I do not think I can access it this afternoon. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

It is page 11-26. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's response. I would appreciate a copy of that particular breakdown. Mr. Chairman, would it include population surveys of grizzly bears?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They may be included in there, yes. There are certain commitments on conducting wildlife studies which are provided for under the agreements. Again, we can provide that detail to the Member. By tomorrow afternoon, we should be able to provide it to him.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Details of work performed on behalf of third parties. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I am asking it at this point in time is, I am trying to clarify whether it is the responsibility of the game council or whether it is the responsibility of this government to implement those particular surveys, for instance, surveys of Peary caribou or surveys of the grizzly bear population. There was a wolf survey going on at one point in time under the game council's direction. This is why I am asking the question at this time, Mr. Chairman, to find

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out to whom I would address this particular question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. It involves the regulation of this government. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All the wildlife studies that are done, for instance within the Inuvialuit region, would be done under the direction of the Inuvialuit Game Council. They have the management and wildlife responsibilities to oversee and request certain studies to be done and then, we generally provide the funding. Funding comes from the federal government to us. Then, the money sits there. It is for the Inuvialuit Game Council to tell us what the priority areas are and then, we work together with them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, it is this particular funding where they would identify what projects are priorities, and then, the department would, using this particular funding, carry out the project. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 11-26, Total department, \$3.382 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Program summary, page 11-5, total operations and maintenance, \$96.442 million. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I do not recognize a quorum.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I will ring the bell. Program summary, page 11-5, operations and maintenance, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, total operations and maintenance, \$96.442 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total capital, \$3.969 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$100.411 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I want to thank the Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee. -- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

According to the agreement of this committee, the next department to be considered at this time is Education, Culture and Employment. I believe Mr. Dent has opening remarks.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the main estimates we present for review today totals more than \$303 million for operations, maintenance and capital. The presentation of the annual budget allows final approval of one year in a long-term planning process that includes the development of a three-year business plan and a five-year capital plan. The past few years have been ones of refocussing and reduction across government. In 1998-99, Education, Culture and Employment plans to concentrate its efforts in select areas to address the major challenges in the system.

In 1994, the department released its strategic plan. This plan is intended to guide the department's programs and services until the year 2010. While the general direction is still valuable, it is time to revisit the strategic plan to ensure it will help northerners reach their goals in education, culture and employment. Over the next year, the department will consult broadly with northerners and update the plan based on this consultation.

Accountability remains an issue for the school system. The department will soon release the first edition of a document called Towards Excellence, Northwest Territories Education Indicators Resource. This document will provide a profile of education from kindergarten to grade 12. It will use 31 sets of statistics, known as indicators, to help us track trends and changes in the system. Along with information from other sources, these indicators will provide the information we need to monitor and continue to improve the education system. The document the department will release is a baseline report that provides data for 1994-95. The next report, which will provide information for 1996-97, will be available later this year. We intend to release a report every two years from now on.

Enrolments in the school system continue to grow. The department is almost finished collecting

enrolment numbers from schools for the 1997-98 school year. The preliminary results show an increase of about two percent. This is a NWT-wide overall increase. The enrolments of some individual schools have actually gone down. Student enrolments have been increasing for a number of years with only limited increases in funding. As a result, the size of classes, in most cases, has grown and teachers are feeling increased pressure.

For the 1998-99 year, we have carried out internal reallocations which will provide an additional \$2 million to support kindergarten to grade 12. The increase will not reduce the pupil/teacher ratio but should allow us to maintain it at the 1997-98 level. Given the pressure on the K to 12 system, it will be important in future to carefully consider further investments to maintain or reduce the pupil/teacher ratio.

Despite the challenges, the number of students graduating from grade 12 has increased. In 1997, 295 students completed

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grade 12. This represents a graduation rate of 27 percent, an increase of two percent over the previous year. While the increase is modest, the trend is encouraging and we expect to see increasing numbers of young people completing grade 12.

The extension of high school programs in small communities has been very successful in encouraging students to stay in school. Education, Culture and Employment are working on a number of distance education initiatives to support the delivery of senior secondary programs in small schools. The department is also developing a distance learning policy which should be in place in the next fiscal year. This will open new opportunities for learners of all ages.

Preparing for the creation of two new territories is a major focus of the department's work. Education, Culture and Employment is cooperating on implementation of the Nunavut Unified Human Resources Development Strategy with the federal government, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Nunavut Implementation Training Committee and the Nunavut Implementation Commission.

While funding for this strategy is provided under a Vote 4 arrangement, the colleges, divisional education council staff, and departmental personnel,

all participate in supporting the effort. In 1996-97, the strategy provided training for a total of 232 Inuit adults. It is anticipated that 300 to 400 students will enrol in training supported by the strategy in 1997-98. Education, Culture and Employment has prepared a report on the GNWT Inuit Employment Plan and copies will be made available to Members.

The NUHRDS strategy is funded over four years by the federal government to help reach the goal of a representative public service in the new Nunavut government. It will also help ensure that Inuit benefit from the employment opportunities in both the public and private sector that will result from the creation of Nunavut. The department will continue to offer support and work with our partners as we make the transition to two territories. The department is preparing a similar strategy for human resource planning and development for the western territory.

A good deal of the work the department is undertaking in the area of heritage also focuses on the creation of two territories. Staff of the culture and heritage division are currently developing criteria to divide artifact and archival collections. An assistant director of culture and heritage has been hired to make recommendations on the work necessary to prepare for division.

The mine training committee is another example of how the department is working with its partners to improve services. The members of this committee are aboriginal leaders and industry representatives. It was established last year to identify training opportunities for northerners and has already launched the Mine Trades Access Program, the first of a series of training initiatives. Forty northerners are currently enrolled in the program, which is a collaborative effort between Aurora College and the Mine Training Committee. The department and the public colleges will continue to commit \$300,000 to work with industry and aboriginal leaders to provide northerners with training opportunities in mining during the coming year.

Improving links with other post secondary institutions is essential for the north's new two public colleges. These agreements enable the colleges to offer more credit courses and allow students to transfer between institutions. Aurora College has more than 30 university transfer agreements with southern universities, while Nunavut Arctic College has more than 20 such agreements.

Accountability is important in adult and post secondary education, just as it is in the school system. Education, Culture and Employment have recently published a post secondary indicator document that will allow us to monitor the achievements of the public colleges. This document shows that our post secondary system has achieved some remarkable successes. Northerners are taking part in a wide variety of post secondary learning opportunities in ever increasing numbers. These indicators also show that the public college system has been successful in addressing equity issues, with increased enrolments of aboriginal people and women over the past few years.

Another key area for the department is Income Support. The department has been working on the broad components of a strategy designed to help those most in need. Improving the food allocation within the Income Support Program is part of this strategy. The food allocation has not changed since 1992, when it was increased by five percent. This change was based on the increases in the food price index for road access communities only. As a result, it fell short of the cost of the healthy food basket for off road communities. Given the increase in the cost of living in the past few years, the food allocation within Income Support has continued to fall behind in purchasing power.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has been working with the Bureau of Statistics to carry out a survey that will define the cost of a healthy food basket in each NWT community. The department expects that the results of the food price survey will be available by March, 1998. The department will then come forward with recommendations for changes to the food rates.

The Members of this Assembly are already familiar with the National Child Benefit and the NWT Child Benefit. The National Child Benefit is an initiative that the federal government will be carrying out in partnership with the territorial and provincial governments starting this July. This program is an important step in tackling child poverty, helping northerners move into and stay in the work force and helping build a better future for children and our society.

The department will soon be assuming an expanded role in the design and delivery of labour market development programs and services for the unemployed in the north, as we have concluded negotiations with Human Resources Development

Canada. Members will remember that I made an announcement on Friday and signed an agreement with my federal counterpart to take over the activities linking our existing career development programs.

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This has been a brief outline of some of the key activities of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I will be happy to go through the main estimates in more detail with you now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. On behalf of the Social Programs Committee, I believe Mr. Miltenberger, has opening remarks?

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee was generally satisfied with the 1998-99 main estimates as presented by the department. The numbers complied with the figures contained in the business plan and a five-year capital plan already reviewed by the committee.

The committee made note of the following issues during its review of the 1998-99 Main Estimates of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

High School Extensions

The committee wishes to commend the department on the apparent success of this program. The committee encourages the department to improve the quality of distance learning opportunities for high school students in our smaller communities. The committee would appreciate the opportunity to examine student enrolment figures, as well as figures on the number of successful high school graduates since implementation of high school extensions to get an understanding of the true value of the program. The Minister has committed to supplying the number of high school graduates for the year in January.

Board and Community Aspirations

There is a concern that some board operations do not take into consideration the aspirations of some of the communities. We understand the Minister's position that in order to maintain the economies of scale at the board level the department cannot split every community into separate boards. The committee encourages the department to work with the people in their home communities to develop programs that are

relevant to their wishes and to work with the boards to foster an understanding of the groups and communities in the jurisdiction.

Administration Costs

The committee was pleased with the department's response to our request to examine the administration costs at the board and department level. From all appearances, the department has done an exemplary job of keeping administration costs down. The committee would still like to examine these administration costs on a board by board basis.

Income Support Food Basket

Seniors' Fuel Subsidy

The committee was pleased that the department reinstated the Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program. The committee believes that this is one program that the government receives fair value for its dollar. It is important that this subsidy continue.

National Child Benefit

The committee appreciated the department's briefing on this important new federal/territorial program. The committee strongly encourages the department and the territorial government to lobby the federal government to ensure that the National Child Benefit is permanent.

Student Financial Assistance

The committee appreciated being supplied with the report on the Ministerial Forum on the Student Financial Assistance. We look forward to the government's response and proposed course of action, as well as an opportunity to contribute.

Heavy Equipment Operators' Course, Fort Smith

The committee felt that with all the activity of diamond mining in the north, this course would be valuable in providing employment opportunities for northerners. The committee understands that the heavy equipment presently being used for training is old and outdated and encourages the department to work with the college and industry to address the problem.

Aurora College, Yellowknife Campus

The committee was not satisfied with the Minister's reasoning for the placement of the college in the Northern United Place. There is no place for student

or staff parking, and the committee believes that the whole building does not provide a positive learning environment. The committee believes that the department missed an opportunity to create a permanent and positive learning environment with all the amenities in a separate, dedicated facility. The lack of public consultation on the renovation of the Northern United Place also disappointed the committee.

Health Children Initiative

There was some concern by the committee that the criteria for this program needs to be defined to ensure that those children who really need the program do not fall through the cracks in the system. The committee was pleased to hear that the department, in concert with Health and Social Services, is conducting a review of the program. The committee looks forward to being briefed on the results of the review and the department's plan to implement positive changes to the Healthy Children Initiative.

Legal Studies Program

The federal government is currently funding a program in Nunavut to train aboriginal lawyers. The committee

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encourages the department to work with other departments and stakeholders to develop this program in the western Northwest Territories.

Federal Training Programs

The department is encouraged to lobby the federal government to get the same benefits for the aboriginal people in the western Northwest Territories as are currently received in the east. Even though there is an established government in the future Western Territory, the level of aboriginal employment, particularly at the senior management level, remains out of proportion with the population this government purports to represent. A training program similar to the one in Nunavut might be useful in increasing aboriginal employment in government in the future Western Territory.

University, College Entrance Program

The department is encouraged to lobby the federal government for more funding under this program and to include eligibility for the Metis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Before we get into general comments, I would like to offer the Minister if he wishes to bring in the witnesses.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yes, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Proceed. Thank you, Mr. Minister, would you please introduce the witnesses to the committee?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me on my left is the deputy minister, Mr. Mark Cleveland and on my right is the director of finance, Mr. Paul Devitt.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Welcome to the committee. We will now open the floor for general comments. Any general comments from the Members here? Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we get to the appropriate sections, I will be asking questions in regard to the monitoring of statistics we collect in terms of graduation both at the high school and college level, not just the numbers of people who are graduating, but the success rate and are they going on and where they are going. I have some questions with the issue of standardized testing that we heard discussed at different times in the House. As well, I would like an update on official languages and how things are with the interpreters. I would like just to find out what is happening with the Heritage Act and, of course, division preparation. The Minister said they were well on, for instance, will the carvings be moving and how will that be decided? There has been discussion in this House of late, and I have some questions on income support, which the Minister touched on briefly. As well, I would like to ask some questions on transfer of Human Resources Canada. I

have questions on inclusive schooling, and the issue of special needs. How is that looking? Are we able to cope? Which ties in somewhat to the student/teacher ratio? Finally, I would like to, hopefully, get some concrete information from the Minister on these long outstanding board appointments, that have been now months and months in the mill. Hopefully, in terms of apprenticeship and the NWT Arts Council, I believe, is also the Minister's. I would like to get some clarification on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Once again, keeping with the tradition, I will allow the Minister to respond once all the Members who wish to make a general comment have made a general comment. Any further general comments? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comment is in regard to the Department of Education and the whole area of human resource development, starting to work with the students, especially when they go into high school or the upper grades preparing them so they know what type of career they want to get into. One thing that has to be done in regard to the Human Resource Strategy or studies is you have to look at a community and see what the community has to offer to our students who are presently in the school system. We find a lot of our students who graduate from the smaller communities say there are no job opportunities. I will use the smaller communities where you have certain sectors that students can get into, such as nursing, policing and administration in regard to working in the different band offices and the administration offices of the hamlet councils. You identify all the human resource opportunities in all our small communities so that the students, when they start taking their different courses, develop them for a scenario knowing where they are going to be, once they conclude high school or university. When that process is concluded, they know there will be an opportunity for them once they go back to their communities, either in nursing field, policing, administration, finance or the different structures or hamlet offices.

We have to start developing or training in the education of our students with the emphasis there will be a job for them, once they take these different programs and extra university courses, when they do conclude, there will be room for them in the communities. They can come back home without

having to go home with these different degrees with no opportunities there. This is something I would like to mention in regard to those different developments.

Also, working along with different aboriginal organizations, we now have different claims being settled, where there is a claims institution being developed. You have different regimes in regard to land and water boards. You have land use planning boards where there is going to be a need for biologists, people with different degrees on the engineering side, when you talk about the land management. We have to start working along with the communities, the aboriginal organizations and the different institutions that are in our regions to identify what those opportunities are, so when students do conclude their education and higher learning, those opportunities are there.

In regard to the different economic sectors, we have to start

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developing other sectors and economies. There have been a lot of effort and work done in the Department of Education, especially around the mining sector, but we have to expand that to include the forestry sector and oil and gas sector, where there are still opportunities there. Looking at the tourism sector is one, the key areas that have possibly the most opportunities to offer a lot of the smaller communities, especially with the potential that tourism has for the north. We are seeing the increase of the Japanese tourists in Yellowknife looking at the northern lights and looking at the beauty and prestige of the land that we have in the Northwest Territories. We should start developing different opportunities in those communities for eco tours to the areas of big game hunting to looking at fishing lodges in the different regions. There is a sector there that has to have continued development to start looking at those sectors to ensure we do not lose sight of different sectors by concentrating on one particular area. We develop the scenario that we have taken into light, all the different sectors to combine the other opportunities.

There has to be more real emphasis in the cultural component of the Northwest Territories. A lot of the aboriginal people have a real cultural history and background, in the time before the Europeans came, so people could explain the uniqueness of the different cultural groups from the Inuvialuit to the Gwich'in exactly how they governed themselves

before contact with the Europeans to identify the different lifestyles they live and the different cultural practices that they do from harvesting to gathering, basically, how they are able to survive in the Northwest Territories over time. We have to build this cultural component into our education documents we develop and some sort of a learning program or curriculum so that there is a cultural component to the delivery of education.

The other area is one that factors around income support and that field, where it is an important program, especially to a lot of the smaller communities. In the Minister's statement, he talked about the health food basket in the Northwest Territories. We have to realize a lot of these people going to income support are a lot of times, harvesters, who want a little bit of revenue to be able to go out on the land to acquire food products such as fish, caribou or moose or anything they can bring home to offset extra costs, especially with the high cost of food in a lot of our smaller communities where a lot of this stuff is flown in. You come to Yellowknife where a lot of people are baffled by the price of food compared to a lot of our smaller communities because it is so high in the smaller communities. The program has to be more developed in the context that our people in the communities have a skill, but it has to be recognized as all other skills, when it comes to harvesting skills, they are able to use that skill to sustain themselves by going out in the bush or on the land trapping and harvesting wildlife to bring it home to their families to offset the extra cost of having to purchase food from the Northern Store, Co-op or wherever.

The other area I wanted to touch on is there does not seem to be much discussion on disabilities, not only in our education systems, but in a lot of those smaller communities where you may have someone who is disabled, especially a young child and trying to get them to fit into society. A lot of things we take for granted as healthy human beings. The disabled find it awfully hard, especially accessibility to public buildings and libraries and transportation, for the individual to take them from school and home or treat him on the same basis as other students. He may have a disability and he has the same right to learn in all our schools in the Northwest Territories.

Those were some of the things I had concerns about. I will probably be asking more questions when we come to a different departmental section of the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I will have the Members address their comments and questions within the comments, then we will have the Minister respond. I recognize Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recently, I had an opportunity to sit down with Pat Thomas, the president of the NWTTA and review some of the areas of concern that seem to be there from their perspective. I have several items that I will briefly run over and then, when we come to the appropriate area within the budget, education and development, I believe it is, I will ask some questions in that regard.

One of the concerns expressed was in the area of resources for programs. The funding needs are viewed as a need for adequate funding for both existing and new programs. For example, \$350,000 was allocated apparently for the implementation of the new math program but the text books costs, that is \$26.14 per student, the text books alone cost \$22.00, so there was not much left over for inservice costs and other materials.

Housing was another area of concern. The high cost of renting and lack of choice are making it difficult for teachers in the smaller communities. In the opinion of the NWTTA, this can have a negative impact upon education in those communities. There is an expectation that more is being asked to be done with less. Teachers feel they are becoming frustrated and adversely affected.

Low morale is another concern. Government restraint and in their case, the loss of wages and benefits have had a negative feeling amongst the teachers. Division is a concern. There is concern about and worries when division happens, will the same level of service continue to be delivered?

Also, the NWTTA has requested that both territorial governments consider paying the wages of the new presidents for a period of time so that stable labour relations can continue. Large, diverse classes, class sizes have been increasing over the last two years. The needs of students are varied and diverse. It is becoming difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all students.

Finally, there was a concern about the school year that is now reported in hours instead of days. Previously, the school year was set in days and not hours. This was changed in the new Education Act.

Both the association and the directors and superintendents, reportedly, would like to see this revert back to the school year being set in days, rather than hours. Apparently it is reported this is a contentious issue amongst the teachers. I will probably get into some questions in that area once we get into the appropriate allocation of the budget. Thank

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you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. General comments from the Members. If there are no further general comments, I would be prepared to go into the details of the estimates. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have a few concerns in addition to what has been indicated in the Social Program Committee's report, of which I am a Member. A lot of this will be related to the Minister's opening comments. The first area is in the pupil/teacher ratio which I understand is close to the top, the highest ratio in the country. I have talked to some people and one of their concerns is that the pupil/teacher ratio is not really a true indication of how many students are actually in the classroom in relation to the teacher, because I believe that includes the janitor, the principal, et cetera. In many cases, the principal does not actually teach or if they do, it may be a limited amount of teaching. It is time to look at a system where there is a true indication of a pupil/teacher ratio, so that people actually know how many students are supposed to be allowed in those classrooms in relation to the teachers.

Another concern I have is the inclusive schooling, I believe it is called, where everybody is allowed to progress in classes and it does not matter what type of learning problem or disability they may have. It seems everybody is included in the same classrooms. I know that Mr. Picco had gone to a conference last year in Washington. I just happened to notice his well-written report that he provided to the Members. At that conference, the general consensus, as I recall, was that educators themselves were against this particular model of teaching. Primarily because while it is a laudable cause, Mr. Chairman, something to work and strive toward, unless you have adequate resources,

unless you have more than one teacher in the classroom, it is very difficult to achieve your goal.

In some instances, a Grade 8 teacher may be working with students right from Grade 1 to Grade 8. How is one teacher supposed to work properly with all those students? It is very difficult. It is almost like you have a one-room school in every class. Unless we are able to pour a lot more money into this type of system, perhaps it is time that we went back to the system where people do not actually progress unless their exams or learning has warranted that they should progress. I do not think it is fair to any child to actually get up to Grade 9 and all of a sudden, they find out that they are only reading and doing math or whatever, at a Grade 3 level. What good is that? Sure the kid has stayed in school, but certainly it did not do them any good educationally. I should not say any good, but I hope you get my concern.

The other thing that I wanted to comment on was this graduation rate of 27 percent. Mr. Chairman, the constituency I represent includes the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. I believe their graduation rate is somewhere around zero percent. Nobody to whom I have spoken to last year knew of a Yellowknives Dene First Nation member who graduated from high school last year. This has to be alleviated somehow.

I was also in discussion of extension of high school programs, keeping kids in school and all that. This will not occur for the Yellowknives Dene unless they have their own school. Because unless they have their own school, they are still going to continue sending their kids to the schools in Yellowknife. Their position will remain exactly the same. They will not have cultural-based schooling. They will not have any say whatsoever over the curriculum, over the days in school, when they have holidays, when they have professional development, anything like that. They do have a small school in Detah, but even that, Mr. Chairman, is under the auspices of the Dogrib super board that they have put together over there now. It was bad enough when they were part of their education divisional board, but now that they are part of an overall superstructure that includes health and social services and education and what not, then they are just one little dot on the landscape there. They have very little input on how their education works.

Mr. Chairman, the other thing I wanted to comment on was the Human Resource Planning and Development Strategy for the west. I am glad to see that this is occurring. The other area is the college and university transfer agreements with the southern institutions. Mr.

Chairman, it is fine to have these agreements, but unless the instructors at our college ensure that all the course materials are followed, and ensure that the exams that are done, hit the right question areas, students who complete those courses will not be transferred. I know that first-hand, because I know two students who this occurred to. Courses that are supposed to be transferred to a university could not transfer because not enough course material was followed. I think the exams were also like that. I talked to an instructor there and he was quite concerned about it as well.

In the area of the university college entrance program, yes, we do get money from Indian Affairs for allowances. Mr. Chairman, this alone is not enough. We have to ensure there is actually a program out there that to prepare the students for university and college. They have to learn how to do research, how to study and how to write papers. Just merely throwing them into a regular upgrading class is not good enough.

The final area I wanted to address was the Aurora Campus in Yellowknife. I recently attended the opening of the new campus building. I would like to congratulate the department on finally consolidating the programs that the campus has been offering for many years, in eight or nine different buildings throughout Yellowknife, Mr. Chairman, including above a bar, which I do not think was very conducive to learning.

The one area of concern I have here yet is, of course, whether or not Yellowknife has been recognized as an official campus. The Aurora Campus was operating for many years without being officially recognized. I would like to know if this has changed. Is the Aurora Campus now recognized as an official campus and if not, why not? When will it occur? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus, for a timely ending. Mr. Picco, for general comments.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to begin, the Department of Education, and the Minister and his staff has had the opportunity on a couple of occasions to be in Iqaluit with the Minister and have had an opportunity to tour the Arctic College campus. I believe the Minister has had opportunity to

tour some of our schools in the community of Iqaluit.

My requests for information to his department have always been very well received and expedient responses, in most cases, have been very good. At this time, I would like to thank the Minister and his staff for that help.

On the department itself, the Department of Education, Culture and Careers has taken on new roles over the last couple of years; for example, the income support role, which has been devolved from health and social services, is a new role for education, culture employment officers in the community and at the regional level. In a lot of ways, this has been a good move. It has allowed the social worker to do the job that they are in the community to do. It also gives the income worker an opportunity to do the job which is separate from just counselling for social work. That has been a good move by this government.

The biggest concern that seems to come forward within the Department of Education itself is the concern with the funding caps that have been in place. As a result, as the Minister says in his opening statement, the size of classes in most cases has grown and teachers are feeling increased pressure. Mr. Chairman, over the last several months we have heard that in the House, with questions put to the Minister about the concern that, indeed, the pupil/teacher ratios had increased and for the 1998-99 year, that the Minister mentioned that there were internal reallocations of about \$2 million territorial-wide.

I know it seems to be the problem that the enrolments and the budgets are based on the funding and enrolment levels, the previous October. What happens is, the previous October, the enrolments are done, the way I understand it, and they figure out what the number of dollars will be allocated to the individual boards based on the October enrolments. When the following September comes, in some cases, you have people moving into communities and so on and enrolments can be really out of whack. We have seen that, for example, in Iqaluit, where the Department of Education actually had to give extra money to the divisional board of education to fund some extra positions. Although it did meet a need, it did not actually cover the total need. I think that is a concern.

We also have to look at the extension of the high school programs in the smaller communities. That has been very successful, as the Minister has mentioned. It has enabled students to go to high school at home, and that shows on the attendance records where more students are actually graduating and completing their Grade 12. That is a good thing.

We seem to be putting a lot of money into the education system, but it does not seem like we have any systematic way to judge the results of the money that has been put in. When we get the results, it seems that we come up with some excuses or outs to justify the results that have taken place over the last couple of days. Last week the Minister was on the radio talking about the results from the recent national testing and the Minister, rightfully so, pointed out that some of the problems that you encounter are that quite a few of our students are ESL students and do not find some of the questions to be culturally sensitive or relevant. Thus they do not achieve the same standard of marks that their southern counterparts would. That is okay to a certain degree, but, Mr. Chairman, when you look at math, if you have a question adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing fractions, those are not spelled out in any complex terms, those are actual figures you would work with. That was the reason this morning; for example, I asked could we get a copy of the results, a copy of the test to see what was being tested, by what region to see where there are problems.

We also found out through discussions with the Teachers' Association, with the different divisional boards of education, there is a problem with the curriculum. The Minister mentioned the new math curriculum that is being introduced this year. Hopefully, that might help us change something around. That is a good indication that, indeed, if the department realizes a new math curriculum had to be implemented, then there was a problem with the math curriculum before. We can only use your own experiences and what people have told you. As a former educator for five and a half years, I do know when I first started off in adult education, back in 1987, we really did not have any type of curriculum to use. It took two or three years before we started using the BC open agency learning system. We threw out the TABS test and the CAT test, which is a Canadian test for achievement, and the TABS test, which is a test for adult basic education levels. In most cases, we would get people from grade 11 and grade 12 return home to their communities and then they had to be TABS tested or CAT tested to take a

post secondary class. Let us say the average, if you need a grade 10 or grade 11, where the TABS test or CAT test was done, you would usually run into a grade 7 or grade 8 level, which was a concern.

The college then came out in the early 90s with the 120/130/140 level testing, which tried to accomplish the same things a CAT or TABS tests did, but in more of a northern context and put more emphasis on the actual work and not on the detail of the questions or curriculum itself, I should say. That seems to have helped, but I believe through accountability within the system, to see what types of results you are getting, with the money you are spending. That needs to be tightened up. The Minister did talk a little bit about that

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in his opening remarks.

Moving off education, into the area of culture and employment, the Minister talked about working with the bureau of statistics and coming out with a survey that would define the cost of a healthy food basket in each NWT community. The results of those food pricing surveys would be available by March, 1998, and then the department would come forward with recommendations for changes to food rates. Mr. Chairman, when we look at food rates in our smaller communities, a healthy food basket is again subjective, depending upon what the Minister or what his departmental officials believe a healthy food basket is. When I lived in smaller communities, a healthy food basket is what you bought at the local store and included; for example, tide to wash your clothes, it also included pampers. It did not necessarily mean food products. Those areas, Mr. Chairman, are quite expensive in smaller communities. An example is when I am here in Yellowknife, I can purchase a six or eight litre box of tide for \$7.98 whereas in Iqaluit it could be \$30. I would hope that the food basket would take into account other items, other than direct food purchases, sundry items like cleaning detergents, paper towels, toilet paper. I mean staple food items for your basket of food. Hopefully they will look at that.

I think the idea of the National Child Benefit and comparable NWT Child Benefit is a good move by the government and by the Minister and I congratulate him on that. We have to look at how we take the money we allocate toward the department and have it coming back with the systematic approach of how the money is spent and are we getting the value for the

dollar we are spending. Right now we have no systematic way of doing that. I noticed my time is up, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you for your time and later on today we will have some questions for the Minister on specific program areas within the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. General comments. I will now ask the Minister if he would like to respond?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe Mr. Miltenberger indicated he wanted to ask more detailed questions as we got into the activities, so I will leave his items until that time. Mr. Krutko had some general comments on career counselling and the need to identify job opportunities to prepare young people for the future. The department in the last couple of years has been trying to improve its results in this area. It is now required for all students in grade 9, with their parents, to meet with a counsellor and to discuss their career options and where they think they are headed. We have also tried to strengthen awareness of what some of the opportunities might be in the north by developing a number of brochures and booklets that are aimed at students, talking about opportunities they might find in various areas in the north.

I know that right now the department is considering a proposal by the western divisional education councils that would make career planning a credit course, to be taken during the CALM or Career and Life Management part of their schooling. There would be a requirement that students would earn four credits before graduating in this area, which would tend to strengthen their awareness of what they need to do, to achieve their career goals.

The Member had some good comments on the need to expand training. What we try and do right now, given our limited resources, is identify areas where we have the best potential for getting northerners into new jobs and concentrate our efforts in those areas. There is no doubt though that we have to broaden those efforts. Mr. Ootes also indicated some areas that he wanted to get into in more detail when we get to the activity levels, perhaps it would be better to leave those until then.

Mr. Erasmus talked about the pupil/teacher ratio and how that does not necessarily translate into real numbers in the classroom. That is absolutely correct.

The system we use is the one that is used consistently across North America for evaluating pupil/teacher ratios. So if we were to change the mechanism, it would make it much more difficult for people to compare. While our numbers do not include the janitors in the school, it does include all of the program support staff, the specialized teachers who work in special programs in the schools. There is no question that an official pupil/teacher ratio of 18.2 to 1 can translate into sometimes as many as 30 students in a classroom. That is also in part determined by the divisional education councils and how they structure things. We do not say they have to maintain a certain level. They may choose to put more money into supporting the children with special needs and increase the numbers in some of their classrooms. It would be difficult for us to come up with a system that would be consistent across the territories because each divisional education council has to be able to respond to the situation they face in their schools.

The Member talked about inclusive schooling and social promotion. We need to remember that these are two separate issues. Inclusive schooling is required under the Education Act. What that means is everybody has the right to receive a good education in school. Social promotion is a policy that is not set by the Department of Education. It is a policy that most of the divisional education councils, if not all of them in the north, have adopted. What this refers to is age grouping so you keep students at the same age, in pretty much the same classes. The expectation, as I understand it, is the school will then work on an individual education program for students as required in those classes, so each student is working to a program that suits their special needs and challenges. The Member is absolutely correct though, that neither one of those two programs can work if the classroom supports are not adequate. That is, without question, one of the biggest challenges that is faced by education councils and teachers in the north, right now.

The Member also mentioned university transfer courses. I am unaware of there being a problem with transfer courses. I would hope the Member will give me the specifics so that I can follow up on those concerns because I would share his concerns if that has, in fact, been a problem.

Regarding the funding for the UCEP Program, I have written to Minister Jane Stewart, asking that funding be improved for this program. I know the Member

indicated he thought, as a government, we could do more. Our problem is, of course, one

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of funding. As all Members of this House are aware, in the course of the cutbacks two years ago, adult education programs within the department were cut by 25 percent. This has really limited our ability to increase the programming in the adult education area. Finally, the Member asked is Yellowknife a campus? Yes, it is an official campus of the college. It is one of three in the Western Territory. We have three in the east as well. I am not sure when that was signed, but I believe it has been at least two years that the college has been a campus. I believe I signed the order a full two years ago.

I would like to officially thank Mr. Picco for his generally positive comments. The pupil/teacher ratio and funding for divisional education councils are not just based on school population, but it does make up the major part of the formula. While funding is based initially on that October 31st figure from the previous year, there are adjustments made for the schools that experience a significant increase over what had been expected. For instance, this year when Joamie Ilinniarvik School saw an increase of 25 percent, it did qualify for a significant amount of extra funding in recognition of that fact.

The Member also expressed interest in knowing, in the standardized tests whether or not we would be able to separate out regions. He will be interested to know that we have negotiated with the Council of Ministers of Education to ensure that future tests will do a breakout on a Nunavut and Western Territory basis, so that these figures will be more useful for the future two governments.

Mr. Chairman, I did not hit on all of the issues that all of the Members raised, but I hit on many of the general ones and that the Members will then follow up as we get into the detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Dent. For the record, I am on Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, page 9-6, activities summary, directorate and administration. I believe we are just coming off of general comments. If there are no more general comments, are the Members prepared to go detail by detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. We will then move on to page 9-6, activities summary, directorate and administration, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$5.284 million. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under directorate and administration there is capital planning. I would like to ask a couple questions on capital planning here in this section, because the line items that I am interested in are not shown in the capital planning section later on. If that is all right with you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. I understand that you may ask questions on capital planning as long as it is under the particular activity summary and it is listed as capital planning. If you are going to get specific on capital planning, then perhaps we should wait until we reach the proper activity, Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have two specific projects that are not in the capital plans that are not funded by this government and that is why I would like to know some questions under capital planning under directorate and administration to find out if the department is involved and an update. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. I understand you are allowed the question.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all, under capital planning, the Francophone community in Iqaluit has requested, for a couple of years now, a new program school for the Francophone usage in Iqaluit where the Francophone population has been increasing. Right now they have some dedicated classrooms within Nakashook School doing a program.

I recently saw a letter from the Minister, about a month ago I believe, maybe a little longer, to the federal Minister for Heritage, the Honourable Sheila Copps, about combining some federal infrastructure money that had been allocated to Iqaluit for another school, which would be paid by the federal government as an incremental cost of Iqaluit being the capital of Nunavut and because of the increased enrolments we are expecting. I am wondering if the Minister or his staff could update me on both of those issues, the new school for Iqaluit under the incremental money, what type of capital planning the department is involved in with that program, and also an update on the Francophone school, the new French school that they are asking for and how the department sees the tie-in between the federal DIAND money for the Iqaluit school as under the incremental money that has been provided and how they are going to cost-share it as the Minister proposed in the letter to Sheila Copps with the Department of Canadian Heritage, if I read the letter correctly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Could I have Members refrain from tapping their pens when the microphones on? Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we do not have an answer yet from Heritage Canada about the Francophone school. We continue to work with the district education authority and the federal government and we would hope to have something resolved in the not too distant future, within the next couple of months. It is really difficult to get into the level of detail the Member is asking for until we are a little further along in the negotiations with the federal government. We do think that it is looking fairly positive. The signals that we are getting from Heritage Canada tend to indicate that they are interested in moving forward with this project, but we do not have a commitment yet.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the reason for my asking this question right now, I know they are in negotiations, is because the money that has been

allocated for the new school in Iqaluit under the federal incremental monies was budgeted for 1997-98 year, which is the one we are in right now. It would be hoped that those supplies, those building

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materials, will come in on sealift this coming fall for construction. The idea of combining the French school with the incremental school and the Cornerstone Program study that has been completed in Iqaluit, there was no recommendation of that, in that report that I recall seeing. Would the Minister be able to tell me, is the department suggesting or recommending that the french school that the Minister has written the Minister for Canadian Heritage on, the Honourable Sheila Copps, is that a dedicated school for French, a stand-alone, stick-built school for French or is the department still looking at combining the incremental school that is found in the federal infrastructure money and having more dedicated classes? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the approach at this time is still open. We, as I said, are still talking with the district education authority and the federal government in trying to ascertain what will work. It may be a school that is one school and combined or it may be some other approach. For instance, the approach here in Yellowknife is building the Francophone school right next to another school so they can share facilities on the same site separated by a very short distance. Whether it would be one larger building or two smaller buildings I cannot say right now, because we want to leave as much flexibility as possible to examine what funding is available and then try and make the project work so that it fills the needs of the community in the best way possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under capital planning, under directorate and administration, we know what the federal contribution is right now for the stand-alone school that has come out of the

cornerstone report on education. We know the dollar values for that. What has been thrown into the works now is the French school. I had a meeting with the Iqaluit Education Council just before Christmas and again spoke to the chairman about a week ago, he sent me some letters on it. They have a lot selected in Iqaluit for their school. They want to move forward and they want to get the capital planning for that under way. Has there been any approach from the Department of Education on capital planning for that school at the present time? That is the concern, Mr. Chairman, that they have a lot selected. They are ready to move. The money has been allocated and now the request by the Francophone community for a separate school and the Minister writing the Minister for Heritage, Mrs. Copps, to have more financing come forward, is seemingly delaying that school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intention is not to delay any projects. As I said, I think we are very close to finding out at what level the federal interest might be in the very near future. I do not think there will be any delay in the projects, but we still need to leave the door open to take a look at how we can work this as a total package for the community and make sure that we meet the needs of all of the students best.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you. Just a last point. I have just recently written different letters to the Minister and the department on these concerns and they have been raised by my education council in Iqaluit. I am wondering if the Minister or his staff can tell me in the next two, three or four weeks, would we have a better indication from the federal government which way they will be moving on the new school under the incremental monies available to Iqaluit and also on the French school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said, I expect it will be very soon. I would think within the next two to four weeks is definitely within the realm of possibility.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Total operations and maintenance, \$5.284 million. Agreed? Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other day, the Housing Corporation had come in here and indicated that they had a plan for five or six affirmative action candidates within the corporation. I was wondering if the department has such a similar plan for promotion or to bring new affirmative action candidates into the department? I am not talking about the boards, which we have absolutely no say over according to the Minister. I do not want to hear anything about the boards. I am talking about the department. Is there a plan with specific areas where the department is? We have a stated objective of 50 percent, I believe? Is there a plan in place there for a specific position affirmative action plan that this department has formulated? If there is, can we see it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated in my opening comments, the department is working on a human resource development plan for the west. We have Inuit employment plans for the east. The response to the Member's question is, in terms of an overall coordinated plan, we do not really have one. We are in the process of concluding the second of two plans, one for the east and one for the west. Within the next week or two, the one for the west should be available.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will that western plan include the plans for the Minister's specific department to increase affirmative action candidates in his own department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just as each department was required to demonstrate in the Inuit employment plans how they would improve representation in their departments, it would be expected that a similar process will be followed in the west.

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Each department will be expected to follow through with a detailed plan of how they will address the issue in the west.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. For the Members' information, we will break after we are finished with Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister expand on this sentence on page 9-6 that says, they are working on alternative governance structures for school system management? What does that involve?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That will include initiatives like working with the Dogrib Community Services Board to develop with them an alternate governance structure. We have had requests from the many communities in the South Slave to look at different alternatives. I have had petitions from communities like Kakisa where I have granted them authority to develop their own district education authority. It means a range of issues.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my opening comments I had indicated that the Yellowknives Dene was a part

of the Dogrib Community Services Board and they have absolutely no say in what occurs in their school. Similarly, other members of the Akaitcho Territory First Nations are involved in district education authorities in which they virtually have no say in because they are totally outnumbered. I know that they had wanted to form a district education authority for sometime. Are there any discussions underway now in this area with the Akaitcho Territory First Nations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr.

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Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Most of the communities in the Akaitcho territory will have their own district education authorities right now, for instance Detah, Lutselk'e, and so on do. Ndilo does not. As the Member is aware, the department has been working with the community on an initiative that will probably culminate in a formation of a district education authority for Ndilo.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate when Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution formed their own district education authority?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

I should just get some clarification from the Member. When I am talking about a district education authority that is one that refers to a community only. Detah has a district education authority. The chair of the district education authority sits as a member on the Dogrib Community Services Board. The same is true for Lutselk'e. The chair for the Lutselk'e District Education Authority sits as a member of the South Slave Divisional Education Council. I just want to make sure that the Member and I are talking about

the same thing, so perhaps I can ask the Member if he could clarify his question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus, do you wish to clarify your question?

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I was using the wrong terminology, usually when I am thinking of a district I am thinking of an area larger than part of a community. I guess what I am talking about is a divisional council then. I know that the Treaty 8, as they used to be called and now they are called Akaitcho Territory First Nations, which includes my constituency of Detah and Ndilo, have been attempting to form their own divisional council for years because they have no say, virtually, in their education. They are totally outnumbered in the three different divisional councils that they are part of. What I would like to know is if there are talks underway for the Akaitcho Territory First Nations to form their own divisional council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is a real problem with resources and capacity in creating divisional education councils with numbers that are too small. The Education Act was set up in such a way that significant local control of schools can be exercised at the community level. The requirement for some of the overhead, superintendents and the accounting functions that are performed at the divisional education council level, mean that it is fiscally very difficult to support the creation of new smaller divisional education councils. There is a difference in the per capita cost to run a divisional education council right now, more that \$2,000 per student, between the larger education councils and the smallest ones. It is a situation where we cannot afford to set up any more divisional education councils and that was one of the reasons that the act does give so much control to local bodies.

One of the problems always is, Mr. Chairman, that when you get a local district educational authority they sometimes do not understand the overhead cost and feel that perhaps they are not getting a fair share of the overall funding passed on to them at the

community level. That is always going to be a challenge for the education councils to deal with. If the Member is asking if we can find a way to create another divisional education council, I would have to make sure that he understands that the only way to do that is to significantly increase the pupil/teacher ratio and I do not think any of us want to see that happen.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are one page 9-6, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$5.284 million. Are there any further questions on this? Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister for his information. However, what I asked him was, are there currently discussions underway with the Akaitcho Territory First Nations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The discussions that are underway are with the district education authorities in terms of their approach to governments and not on an approach that would form another divisional education council. There are discussions with nearly all of the communities the Member refers to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate who is responsible for hiring of the staff in the individual schools? Is it that particular community or the district education authority, whatever it is called or is it the overall council, for instance, say in Fort Resolution for the school there, is it the authority from there that decides who is going to teach in their own school or is it the overall South Slave Divisional Council over which they have virtually no say?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the divisional education councils have the overall authority. They generally set the parameters and then the district education authorities or the local bodies are typically the ones that do the interviews and decide on which teachers to hire. It is not always the same in every single community because it will depend on how much authority each community has negotiated with the divisional education council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Chairman, I have very great difficulty with this. If you are totally outnumbered on the divisional council, you cannot negotiate very much. I know that this past summer there were some very serious concerns in one of the schools where the local authority wanted to hire someone and they were not able to. It was because they were not able to negotiate control. We are saying that we are giving control to the local authorities, well, we are not. If they are not big enough to dominate the divisional council, particularly in the case of my constituents who are one small part of a huge community services board, they are totally intimidated and totally out of their league when they are trying to get things. Hopefully, the ministry will look at these types of situations and assist those smaller authorities so they can actually get real control over their schools. I would like to ask the Minister if he could ensure that this does occur?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are happy to work with any community that would like to discuss issues of empowerment, especially when it comes to education. I am surprised to hear the Member's concern because I know I have had more complaints about the power exercised by the district education authorities and how there have been a number of concerns that they, for instance, are making the decisions locally not to hire local people. That has been a concern that has been expressed to me by Members in the past. In general the system works, where the local community is the one in charge of making decisions about who teaches in the

community. We are certainly prepared to work with any community to address issues of helping their boards develop. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Total operations and maintenance, \$5.284 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you we will now break for 15 minutes.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I call the committee back to order. We are on page 9-7, activity summary, culture and careers of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, total operations and maintenance is \$109,584. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could update us as to how things are working with the official languages, now that it has been moved into Education and the negotiation of an agreement. How are things working with the interpreter/translators?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not think there have been many new initiatives in the official languages side. We are continuing our work as needed. In terms of the interpreters, the funding has been handed on to the departments for them to purchase services as needed. We have not heard of too many problems. I know that there was some mention earlier in this House when there was a review of the Legislative Assembly's budget but, considering that the Legislative Assembly and all other departments got the amount of funding that should have paid for what they were getting from the department previously, they should be able to get the services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the area of income support, as well as, training programs and career development there was a concern raised in our committee that, as we looked at student financial assistance, it seemed it would be better if you looked at student financial assistance in relation to career development, training and employment development, as well as income support, so that we could have, in fact, one branch of income support with a number of separate areas as opposed to the way it is now. Has any consideration been given to that kind of approach, trying to link it? I just noticed the student financial assistance is separate, right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr.

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Chairman, we have consolidated all of the income support programs into one division so it is all one part of the one department. That does allow us some level of coordination. The Member is right to see that is an opportunity to consolidate the income support initiatives and we have done that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the student financial assistance under that as well or did I miss that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is all within the culture and careers activity, but the student financial assistance is within the income support division.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The way I understand students financial assistance is that it is separate and apart from careers and employment that there are very clear criteria and that there is no actual working connection between SFA and employment development, for instance, or training on the job.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of programs within the income support division, for instance, the seniors fossil fuel subsidy is an income support program. It is administered by the income support division. All of our programs that relate to individual support for people are administered under that division. The expectation is that there will be coordination through that mechanism. If the Member is asking if the programs are the same, the answer is no. The Income Support Program and the support it provides to an individual and the support that is provided to a student from the Student Financial Assistance Program are different, just as the support that is provided to seniors for the fossil fuel subsidy is different. We have different programs, but they are administered by the same people in the same branch of the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, I am having trouble trying to make myself clear. My understanding, after looking at the student financial report is that it dealt strictly with student financial assistance as a stand-alone program. One of the concerns we had was there did not appear to be a linkage and a flow from student financial assistance to career development, employment development and those other kinds of training programs that student financial assistance has very clear, separate criteria. There would seem to be a benefit if there was a better linkage and blending of those particular programs as opposed to keeping them as discrete possibly fragmented programs as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am saying a similar thing. Because the programs are administered by the same division in terms of support, we are enabling people to try and make sure that all programs do work together as best they can. We, as a department, recognize that there has to be a continuum whether you are talking about early childhood intervention, K-12 or adult education. The whole process has to be linked and we do try to work on those linkages within the department. I think you will find that we still keep the programs separately because that is how it is a line item in the budget and here is how much money we need for student financial assistance. The rules for it are distinct, but we do look for ways to coordinate the activities of the department and how we support people to achieve their goals. On the income support side, people are expected to make productive choices. Productive choices could be on-the-job training, upgrading or community college participation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have submitted, however late, something to the Minister and his staff, so at this point I will just wait and see because we raise that concern in our response to that SFA report. Those are all my questions on that particular item. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I am on operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$109.584 million. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the area of the colleges, in my opening comments I expressed my concern regarding the credit transfer agreements. The fact that it is not the agreement that I am concerned about, it is the fact that some students are not able to take advantage of those agreements at times when instructors do not finish all the necessary course work. As a result of that they cannot make their exams difficult enough so that the universities and colleges will accept the transfer. While I appreciate the Minister's willingness to look at the

particular cases that I had brought up, that I know of, for those people it is too late, Mr. Chairman.

What I would like to do is to try and ensure that this does not occur any further. I would like the Minister and his staff to try to work with the colleges to ensure that this does not occur because those agreements are very delicate instruments, so to speak. Every time a person wants to transfer his credits from, for instance, Aurora College to the University of Lethbridge they have to show the documentation. You cannot just say I took this course, and I made 89 percent, and they will transfer your credits. It does not work like that. They have to look at that particular course, that year. Everything which was taught, they have to look at the exams that were written, how much you passed those exams by. If a particular instructor does not finish

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the course work for that particular year, it does not matter if you received 100 percent in every exam, you might not be able to transfer your credits. I am asking the Minister if he can look into this, wherever there are agreements like this to transfer credits, to work with the colleges to ensure the amount of course work that is required to ensure people can actually transfer their credits, that the course work is done and the proper types of exams are written, so people can put that forward when they are trying to transfer their courses. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I was interested in getting the details from the Member because this is something I had not heard from anybody else. I wanted to be able to check and see how much of a concern it might be across the system. I would expect that the college, and this is obviously an operational issue for the college, would be concerned as well if their clients, the students, are not able to transfer courses. The college puts a fair bit of effort into negotiating the transfer agreements and I would think, on that basis, they believe they can deliver the goods. If they have not, it is probably an indication of an instructor failing to do as was expected of them. I would expect it is something the college does not experience very often. If this is an issue of concern, I would be happy to bring it up with

the college. As I said, I would still welcome information from the Member because I would like a concrete example to point to when I bring the issue up with the college. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have to speak to the former students involved and ask them to discuss this or write a letter, something to that effect. However, I know this is not an isolated case because I have spoken to several students who are concerned with this, students who work hard and go to school regularly and the rest of this. I have heard several complaints that there are many students who may not be quite as serious about their studies and then, the course is watered down, so everybody can handle the course work. That is not the way it should happen, Mr. Chairman. If zero students pass, then it is too bad. We have to ensure that we have quality courses in our colleges. It is not how many people we can pass or how many people who can actually say, I have a certificate or diploma. It does not do them any good if they try to transfer to a university and they cannot transfer their credits, if they have to take another two years of college or university when they thought they would not have to. This is not an isolated incident I am talking about. I will undertake to speak to students I know of who could not transfer their courses, who were told that they would be able to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. You made your point, but I will let the Minister respond.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like the Member, I would be very concerned if people are not being able to transfer courses. I would be quite prepared to look into the issue and work with the college.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. I am on total operations and maintenance, \$109.584 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 9-8, detail of capital, culture and careers, buildings and works, headquarters, total region, \$1.231 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Buildings and works, Fort Smith region, total region, \$448,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Inuvik region, total region, \$559,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Baffin region, total region, \$340,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Keewatin region, total region, \$5,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Kitikmeot, page 9-10 for total region \$697,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total buildings and works, \$3.28 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Contributions, headquarters, total region, \$2 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total contributions, \$2 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total activity, \$5.28 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Educational development, activity summary on page 9-11, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$158.18 million. Agreed? I have Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus and Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier in our opening remarks, we all had an opportunity to make some comments,

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and I pointed out some areas I was concerned about. One is the area of housing. I believe that would fall under this particular area with respect to teachers. Could the Minister tell us if they have any plans or what the current situation might be with respect to problems they are encountering for housing with teachers in the smaller communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The concern about housing in the smallest communities is certainly an issue I hear about from Ms. Thomas whenever we get together. I do know the councils are in the process of doing a housing survey, which they have offered to share with us when it is completed. In response to the specific question, what the department does, is when we have a specific teacher who has a concern or an issue with housing in a specific community, the department works with FMBS to try to find some way to address that problem on a one-by-one basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. I will move on to the various issues, Mr. Chairman. I also refer to the fact that there was restricted resource, and I gave the example that I was given where \$350,000 was allocated for the implementation of a new math program, for example. However, in that case, the allocation was \$26.14 per student and the math books themselves cost \$22 and there was very little left for inservicing or other materials that might be needed to deliver the particular program. Can the Minister tell us, it does constrict what teachers can do in the classroom, when all the money goes for one textbook and they have no money left for any other service to deliver that particular program? Is the Minister aware of the kind of restrictions that are there and can this be addressed in some way in the upcoming year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The big restriction of course, is the availability of funding over and above what we provide to divisional education councils right now. As the Member has pointed out, we have provided in excess of \$300,000 as a contribution to councils to assist them in implementation of the new math curriculum. Within the funding that divisional education councils get now by formula, there is part of that formula that would relate to supplies and materials. When we introduce a new curriculum like the math curriculum across the territories, we look for a way to top that up, to assist them with delivering or instituting the new curriculum. The divisional

education councils knew for quite some time that the intention was to bring this new curriculum in. They would then have the ability to plan for it. It would be nice if we could provide 100 percent of the cost for the books and extra funding for lots of inservice time to introduce the new curriculum, but we looked at it and how much we could come up with, in doing our best to assist the divisional education councils, recognizing that change in the curriculum is part of the ongoing business of delivering schools in all communities. Therefore, they have to be prepared to work with us and work within their formulas to bring about these new changes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Could the Minister tell me if he has had much feedback from the boards when it comes to the funding of new programs, such as the new math program? From what I hear the Minister stating, is that yes, they are advised and they do provide the funding for it, but it may be very restricted. It is really up to the boards then to find extra money if extra money is needed. Going back to my question, has there been feedback from the boards and have they identified specifically or in general, concerns with this particular style of funding for programs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have heard from all of the divisional education councils, the pressures they are under trying to deliver the educational program across the Northwest Territories with the limited funding that is now available. The issues are sometimes different. Not every divisional education council has complained about implementation of the new math curriculum, but in general, they have all talked about concerns with delivering education to special needs students, the pressures they feel with the increasing pupil/teacher ratio and a number of councils have complained, for instance, about the changes made in the formula related to school bussing. Anytime you make a change, there is a concern expressed. We have had concerns expressed because of the reduction in overall funding more than anything else. The funding

that we were able to allocate to implementation of the new math curriculum was fairly reasonable, given the cost of the textbooks and so on. If divisional education councils had not felt reductions in other areas, I do not think they would have had any trouble themselves resourcing the inservice days needed to adequately bring the curriculum on-line. Since everybody is under fiscal pressure, this just becomes another one of those points that people can fixate on. The one concern we have heard is about introduction of the new curriculum that we can respond to is divisional education councils would like more advance notice of when curricula will be expected to be implemented, so they can better plan for what they will need available to provide the inservicing and other resources needed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. Mr. Dent touched on the large and diverse classes. I appreciate that. Let me perhaps deal with a specific question Ms. Thomas had with respect to the school year being reported in hours instead of days. She informs me that is a contention amongst teachers. First of all, if I could ask the Minister to explain from the department's point of view why they report in hours instead of days? Can it be addressed? If not, why can it not be addressed and what are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, an interesting question to ask me to defend a position that was not a department position. The department did not propose that hours be included in the new act. In fact

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that was a change initiated not by the government or the Cabinet, but by the Ordinary Members in this House, to allow communities some flexibility, for instance, in some communities in the darkest hours or days of the year, they wanted to have a school day that was 12 hours long, so they could finish the program of instruction earlier. The community had

that flexibility. Of course one problem would be the collective agreement and hours of work that would get in the way of total community flexibility.

The department and this government are committed by the collective agreement to work with the NWTTA, to examine issues like that. I should just point out, it was the Members of this House, in particular the Ordinary Members, who instituted that change in the draft act, that change was not something that came forward from the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. I recognize Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of curricula for aboriginal languages, on page 9-11, it says there will be continued emphasis on achieving quality for curricula and aboriginal languages. How well is this emphasis proceeding in the city of Yellowknife? The city of Yellowknife is a community with the largest aboriginal population in the NWT with approximately 4,000 aboriginal people. What kind of aboriginal language instruction is there in Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if there is any aboriginal language instruction in Yellowknife. I do know the Dene Kede curriculum for grades kindergarten to grade six is in place in the western Arctic. The department is continuing to work at developing that curriculum through to grade 12.

The Inuuqatigiit is the curriculum for the eastern Arctic and it has been implemented for grades kindergarten to grade 12. The Member has a point in that there may be a large community that does not have much in the way of aboriginal language education. It is worthwhile noting that the theme of Education Week this year is strength through culture. There is a symposium being sponsored by the department on culture-based education on April 1st and 2nd. Hopefully, through the measures we take, we will help to improve access to aboriginal language education across the north.

This is an ongoing problem. The big challenge is finding enough qualified teachers who can speak

aboriginal languages. It is a problem that is particularly difficult in the west. The South Slave Divisional Educational Council has trouble finding qualified Cree speaking teachers. The Beaufort Delta has a very difficult time finding teachers who are qualified to teach in Gwich'in. It is not a problem that we find just in Yellowknife, but the Member makes a point that one of the largest communities in the north does not offer a large amount of aboriginal language programming. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Educational development. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister had indicated the development or the Dene Kede curriculum had been developed up until grade six, I think he indicated? Could the Minister indicate if this is a compulsory curriculum that all schools across the western NWT have to use every day in school or how often?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dene Kede is a curriculum framework which allows an aboriginal language teacher to teach almost any subject in an aboriginal language. The teacher would still have to develop program materials for each individual class and for each part of instruction. It is an enabling tool. The first requirement is a teacher who can speak an aboriginal language in order to bring it to life.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it is not compulsory then are we not ensuring there is any culture-based schooling in the schools? Is that what I am hearing?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Culture-based schooling is a philosophy of the department and one that we encourage all divisional education councils to follow. Using Dene Kede is not necessarily required in order to have a culture-based philosophy in schooling and making sure that is being followed. It is possible to relate almost any subject to a culture and would be expected in all of the divisional education councils.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In actuality, we are not ensuring that culture-based schooling occurs. There was a recent education conference here. Could the Minister indicate how many culture-based workshops were held there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Member is referring to the Professional Development Conference that was run by the two Yellowknife School Divisions, I am not aware of what their program was at their conference.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I spoke to one person who had been there and was informed there was not any, although, I could be wrong. Similarly, there was about three years ago, a conference on Dene Kede. I believe it was right here in Yellowknife. There was not one teacher from the Yellowknife schools that attended. If we are leaving it up to individual schools in Yellowknife to participate in these types of things, Mr. Chairman, we are going to wait a long time. This culture-based education conference April 1st and 2nd, is it

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compulsory for all the teachers in Yellowknife to go to those or a certain percentage at least?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have invited a whole range of people. The local education councils have been invited. People across the north, but no, we have no way of making it compulsory for teachers in the Yellowknife system.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I read in a couple of department's reports how important culture-based schooling is for the success of students. If there is something like 4,000 aboriginal people in Yellowknife and there is little if no mention of their culture in their schooling, then what we are doing, in my estimation, Mr. Chairman, is not living up to the act. The Minister indicated a few minutes ago that it is every student's right to receive a good education. Could the Minister indicate how he is going to ensure in the future that in Yellowknife schools there is actually true culture-based education, so that the children of all those aboriginal parents who are living in Yellowknife can also receive a good education that our Education Act gives them a right to?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This conference we are sponsoring on April 1st and 2nd is one step down the path to making sure everyone is aware of the importance of culture-based education.

Another thing which has to happen in Yellowknife is parents of aboriginal children have to get involved in local control of community schools. Whether that is through parent advisory committees or through running for election for the two education authorities in town, I think that is also an essential step in order to heighten sensitivity and awareness.

The challenge in Yellowknife is still going to be to find qualified teachers who are also qualified aboriginal language speakers when it comes to using the Dene Kede curriculum. I know I have seen a number of articles about local schools taking field trips to try and

learn about aboriginal culture, bringing elders into the classrooms. I think that there are a number of initiatives that the schools take part in to heighten students' awareness of the aboriginal culture and I think that, in general, from the teachers I have met and talked to, that there is a very good awareness among the teaching staff in Yellowknife that culture-based education is absolutely essential for children to learn. It is not something that every teacher is aware of, but the department will continue to perform a role in increasing the awareness. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Activity summary, educational development. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of collecting statistics and monitoring effectiveness of the schools, now that there is no longer matriculation in general, we just have one sort of graduation, do you have any idea or can you track who goes on to university? Do you just lump all the grade 12 graduates into one big pot regardless of whether they are going on through the university stream as opposed to maybe not? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, historically, we never tracked whether students graduated with a general or an academic diploma. This has not been something that we could track in the past. The trend is to continue to track just graduation statistics. We get a fair indication of success rates by looking at the applications for students financial assistance. We can take from our applications how many people are going on because what they do is they tell us how many years of schooling they have had in the north in order to qualify for remission. We do get some of that information. I think we are going to be working at improving our computer systems so that we can better track students. Hopefully, track them close to graduation so that we get a better idea of who is dropping out and see if we can work on approaches to counter that as people get toward the senior level in the system. We are going to be improving our

computer tracking method so that we can find out more about post secondary students.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand this correctly, the department does see a benefit to being able to track students to be able to, even for quality control, differentiate what kinds of graduates are coming out of the high school to have a sense of what is working and what is not working or do we have 90 percent that are just getting the old style general and cannot go anywhere. Do we have an idea or would it be a benefit to know how many can go on to higher education and become doctors and lawyers? How do we track that? Is there a benefit to doing that and not just, sort of the considerably less accurate way of after the fact, looking at who applies for student financial assistance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I have said many times in the House, the department needs to be able to demonstrate to the public that what it is doing has value. We do recognize that we have to find more and better indicators of what constitutes success. There was an underlying theme in the Member's question, though that causes me a bit of concern, particularly coming from Mr. Miltenberger. I am a little surprised because it seems to imply that there is more value in somebody coming out of the system and going on to become a doctor than there is in becoming a journeyman certified carpenter. From what I have seen of the future job market in the north, I would have to say that we cannot put enough emphasis on trades training in the future. I would just like to make sure that we all remember that the numbers of doctors that we are going to see in the Northwest Territories compared to the numbers of carpenters who will be able to find work will differ greatly in the ratio. There will be fewer doctors than there will be carpenters and we need to recognize where the opportunities are.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know if I could actually say that the Minister is imputing motive here, but we will not push that particular issue. There is a concern, I mean, we all talk about productive choices. If you graduate with a full slate of level 30 courses, then to me, you have more productive choices. I am not trying to imply in any way that being a university graduate is better or worse than a tradesman, far from it, but I do know that if you have that many extra doors that you can go through, you have more opportunity, which is my point, that not everybody will go on to university. If we could track that, if we knew that and if those who are given the highest quality, then they have that choice, which they may not have otherwise. If we cannot track that, we do not know. By no stretch am I trying to denigrate any particular occupation.

If I could in my time left, Mr. Chairman, I would like to just quickly ask some questions about inclusive schooling and the ballooning special needs part of that particular mandate. How can you have a formula to anticipate these ever increasing special needs requirements in schools? Has there ever been a review to see what kind of justice is, in fact, done to all the students concerned? Does the teacher end up, in some cases, devoting all their time, if they do not have an adequate support, to those requiring the most need and those requiring just a good general education sort of slide by without the proper attention? I think this is a really important area. I know Mr. Picco went to his workshop, but I am interested for my own experience, especially on the special needs side and the incredible stress it places on the system, especially when there is not enough money for special needs assistants to the level that seems to be required. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has not been a formal study to assess that issue. I know that there is anecdotal information that would indicate that it is a concern and it is certainly something we have heard not just from teachers, but from divisional education councils, that they are feeling a significant stress dealing with special needs students. The department

has recognized the importance of trying to provide services at an increased level for special needs students and, in spite of reductions in other areas of the formula, have found ways to increase funding for special needs students within the formula. We are told by divisional education councils that it is still not enough to provide the level of services that are required, but, as I say, we have certainly done what we can to provide as much of the funding that we can and are continuing to look for ways to redirect funding in that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that I clearly remember after these many decades when I went to university, is what a sociology professor told me and that is that education is the trendiest profession that there is. It always sort of chases after what is the latest and greatest. I do not know if this is an instance of that, but I do remember in my own time when we used to have separate classes and alternative programming and they had them all in separate sections of the school in Fort Smith. Now we have come back where there is inclusive schooling. I, as well, have heard a lot of anecdotal accounts of the stress that this inclusive schooling approach places on the system. Given the fact that, obviously the Minister has heard it too, we have had this with us for some time now, is there not a benefit to taking a look at this and maybe it is not an either/or system or situation, but a way of adding to or complementing this attempt to ensure that, in fact, we do not burn out the teachers, that special needs students get attention, but so do the vast majority of other regular students. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that, from all the teachers I have talked to and all the divisional education councils and people I have talked to, the support is there from everybody for inclusive schooling. Nobody wants to go back to the pullout system. What they say is, make sure that we have adequate supports in the classroom to deliver the program. I think, working with our partners, the

divisional education councils, that we will have to see what we can do to achieve that. I think that there are a number of small scale programs that work. I have seen, for instance, in Hay River, a program where volunteers come into the school and work improving literacy skills with children. We may have to work with communities to find ways such as that to augment services that we provide. That is the sort of support where you can get one, two or three children into a small group with somebody working with them for short periods of time, not a completely segregated program, but where they get additional supports to bring their skill levels up. I think that if we can find ways to improve on that, we will be more successful.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question is in regard to the delivery of programs, kindergarten to grade 12, in smaller communities in relation to what is available in the larger centres. In particular, Mr. Chairman, I am referring to programs for home economics that are really not available at all in the small communities. In particular, I am referring to my home community of Tuktoyaktuk. The community has been asking the Minister now for a number of years to extend the school so that it could adequately supply programs to higher level grades. I wonder whether the department has guidelines in place as to what has to be or should be available in the schools that relate to home economics, both for girls and boys.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Chairman, could I have Mr. Cleveland answer the question please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The delivery of high school programs, at the community level, is coordinated by

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the divisional education councils and many of the courses that are delivered are selected by the council in cooperation with the district education authority. There is the flexibility in the high school program to add modules from the Career and Technology Studies Program, the CTS Program, which reflects specific competencies and skills that the community might wish to see developed in their students. That is one approach to delivering enhanced programming, whether it is for home management or for mechanics or for a number of other areas. As well, Mr. Chairman, we are working with the divisional education councils to examine what the best supports are for high school programs at the community level. I would point out though, Mr. Chairman, that with CTS programs, it is not a requirement that they be offered, so much as it is an option whereby the community can influence the program that is delivered and can ensure that the high school program is responsive to the needs of that community. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to find out that the schools, either the local boards or the regional education board, can identify what home economic programs they would like to carry out. I believe their choice is limited by the space they would have in the community school to put forward these programs. That is my specific point. I was amazed to come to this community; for instance, I have one of my boys going to school here, and the amount of programs available for him to enter the use of specific carpenter tools or mechanical tools that he has the ability to see and use, they are not even available in the small communities. I feel the small communities are greatly disadvantaged by the bigger centres. By having all this available in the bigger centres, those children have a big advantage over the children in the smaller communities. They do not have the ability to get introduced to this type of use of home economic tools such as carpentry or mechanical. Mr. Dent suggests all the carpenters we can use up here, I agree with him. First we have to introduce them to a hammer and a nail and go from there. My particular community cannot address these programs because there is no space in that school. They have been after the Minister now for a while to extend that school. My question is again, it is fine that

the boards can decide they want all this, but where do they put them? All these grade 12 programs, how do they fit into a grade ten school?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is no question that in the smallest of communities, the student does not have the same access to all of the programs they do in the larger communities. That is because there are some economies of scale that you can achieve when you have 500 students as compared to a smaller number. I do not see any way we can get around that, unfortunately. I do not think that, even if we could afford to put a shop and a home economics room in every school in the Northwest Territories, we would have the funding to provide specialized teachers for those programs in every school.

Some of this is only able to come about because of the economies that divisional education councils can find in the larger schools. That might mean they are trading a larger class size for English students or math students in order to make sure they can still fund a teacher for a shop program or one of the home management programs. That is how the divisional education councils will fund those types of programs. It is a continuing challenge.

I know the Member's interest, and I recognize what he is saying in terms of the need to get a hammer into young people's hands. Maybe we are going to look there too for partnerships. I know when I was in Arviat, they have a program with a local contractor in town where the contractor has really taken the initiative to work on the space and upgrade a space that was not being used as a shop into what can now be used as a shop. They have managed to develop a tremendous partnership there that means that there is a broader access to an educational program in a small community than you might find in any other community of that size. That may be one approach. Distance education is certainly another approach, but as the Member I am sure will reply fairly quickly, sitting at a computer is not the same thing as having a hammer in your hand. I recognize that. I do not have the answer the Member is looking for, I am afraid.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, the next question would be, does the department have any plans to upgrade, to some degree, the smaller community schools? I do not expect them to be at the same level as the regional schools, but even to have the bare minimum home economic programs so that they can, at least, address that portion of the high school curriculum. I would have thought that would have been one of the priorities of the department to assure that the bare minimums are available in the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department's priority is to start with the bare minimum in the community to make sure the program is available at a basic level. We start with the academic program first and then, over time, try to build it up so that other programs can be added. So yes, in time, it would be our intention to improve all the programming that is available in all communities. We are starting in each community from basic academic programming for high school first.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational developments. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just following up on some earlier comments by Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Erasmus talked about the Dene Program here for the school. I had addressed some of these concerns earlier in a letter to the Minister. I think they need to be restated. The Minister had said the teachers are given a theme, for example, the theme could be family. Then the teacher has to develop the materials to surround that theme. The complaints that I have heard from teachers in the letters that I am sure the department has seen is that they do not have time. You have a teacher who goes to a classroom and has to teach a program but also has to

develop the materials they are going to use. In a lot of cases, the materials that are being used in one community may be different in another community or a different class or a different school.

Who provides the money for that? This is where it has come out. In some cases, teachers are actually buying materials out of their own pockets. I know the Minister and the department have received at least one letter that I have seen on this from Iqaluit. I am wondering if the Minister, at this time, given what Mr. Erasmus said earlier and given that letter and other concerns similar to that with the NWTTA, because I know they had also written a letter on it, has the Minister or the department looked at that? Is there any way of helping the teachers and have the materials on hand to give them a theme unit? Is there a text book available or do they actually have to physically go through magazines and cut out different family stories, and so on? I would like to have more clarification on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The way the system has worked is that there has been an expectation that teachers will provide their own materials based on the curriculum. I do not think that means they have to go out and purchase their own materials. For instance, the Baffin Education Council has done a fair bit of work in putting together boxes or kits of materials to tie into different themes that they can ship from school to school available through the teaching and learning centres in the region. I think divisional education councils have a role to play, in particular, because they can help reflect the culture of that region when they are putting together these supplies for the teachers. The department does fund teaching and learning centres to assist them in that kind of work.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister is correct when he says there are theme units and the materials available. I believe, and I stand to be corrected, the last time I checked which was about two weeks ago, 90 percent of that material was from K to six. Indeed, the letter and the teachers who had

responded were grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, in the upper grade levels, especially grades 7, 8, and 9 which the teacher had been referring to.

When you talk about providing materials, giving a theme unit, and then providing materials, the materials that are program specific or theme specific may not match the scope or the breadth or where the teacher, in this particular instance, wants to take the theme. For example, we talk about family as a theme unit that is taught at the school level. Sometimes I think it is strange to expect a teacher to go out and find a theme and cut things out of an encyclopedia or out of any magazine and bring it forward. I am wondering, has the department looked at the seven, eight and nine grade level where there is a lack of materials that have been brought forward by teachers in the profession by the divisional board of education, the education council, and even the NWTTA? I think that is a concern.

It is one of the shortfalls we have in the system itself although we do have TLC, the learning centres that are trying to produce books and so on, most of that is at that lower level, and it is not at the seven, eight and nine level. A lot of the material that has been developed, like anything else, has been through trial and error. Some has worked well and some has not worked very well. I do not know very many education boards across Canada that actually had to sit down, on the school basis, or whatever, for example, you go to the Baffin Divisional Board of Education of 13,000 people, about 3,000 students, who have to create their own material to teach in their schools. That is very unique. Now there are unique factors involved in that because of the mandate that the divisional board of education has given, but it still leaves a shortfall in the program materials. I do not know if the department has looked at somehow assisting the seven, eight and nine, especially in light of the recent information being brought forward by these groups. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have to agree with the Member that the challenges that we face in the north are probably unique. I would say, however, that a teacher who is teaching in Athabasca, Edmonton, Winnipeg or Montreal has the same challenge. From the curriculum they have to put together what they

use in the classroom to bring the curriculum to life. That is always the challenge. The Member is also right that the teaching and learning centres have, up until now, concentrated on the K to grade 6 resource materials for teachers, but they have recognized the need to expand and are starting to develop broader resource materials for the grades 7 to 12.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to move on to another area. I just want to say that the theme units are not curriculums. The theme units are just giving a theme, for example, on family, how families live. It could be on traditional structures. Then the teacher has to develop the program around the theme. When we say curriculums in the standard sense, you get an English text book, for example, and you read about the sonnets of Shakespeare or whatever. That is the curriculum. The theme is when you are just given an overview. It could be ten pages or whatever and then you have to develop your curriculum around the theme unit. That is the way I understand it. I am pleased to see that the department has looked at grades 7, 8 and 9 in this area for development. I do not see anything funny about the statement I made.

No, seriously, I am addressing a serious concern here. I do not see anything funny about it. I am getting the letters. You have received the letters. I think people want to know what is happening, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to move off this subject and talk a little bit about the academic and the general programs that Mr. Miltenberger had asked about earlier. The Minister replied saying, well we need carpenters and plumbers and so on. I think the point that should be made here is that it does not matter if you are going to school in Clyde River and getting grade 12 or if you are in

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school in Pond Inlet and getting grade 12 or Lutselk'e or wherever, when you finish your grade 12 you should have the opportunity to go from those communities, from Clyde River, Pond Inlet, Iqaluit and take post secondary education in universities and transfer those academic marks that you received. Not

necessarily are we talking about just the vocational programs. You should be able to take academic courses and transfer that from Clyde River, Hall Beach or wherever and be able to go into schools of higher learning. Then you could make that decision if you want to be a teacher later on or if you want to be an electrician. I think that is the point that has been made. Many of the graduates that we have, when they come out of the general stream, do not have an academic grade 12 and then are not able to get into some of the other institutions. As a former adult educator I had several students who applied to institutions with a grade 12 and were not accepted because of their academic level. I think that is what the other Member was pointing out.

That is why you need to have some type of standard of testing in place so that you can see what is working and what is not working. Right now that system is what is failing. When you speak to parents, and as a parent myself, if you speak to teachers they point that out all the time. Over the last 20 years this government and other governments have put millions and millions of dollars into the education system. It is a lot better and we do have grade 12 at the schools, but there is a long way to go. I do not think any student should be limited when they get a grade 12, whether it is academic or general, but they should be able to go on to wherever they want. That is applying on a job in Edmonton, going to University in Calgary or staying in their home community and taking a journeyman's course in carpentry or electrician. They have to have that foundation in education at the grade 11 and grade 12 level to be able to do that. I do not think the question was answered properly earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly do not disagree that we would want to make sure that as many doors as possible are open to graduates in the north. I think that the Member for Thebacha made clear that I had misheard him in his concern and had suggested very much the same thing that the Member has, which I do not disagree with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. Mr. Steen and Mr. Ootes. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a couple questions here on how the department arrives at the capital requirements for their communities. I presume there is a fair amount of planning, both at the department level and at the board level as well as the local district education authority level. What do they use to establish these needs? Is there a forecasted population increase, forecasted regional economic development or industrial activity? What do they use for these forecasts?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, every year education authorities, colleges and communities are asked to identify their capital needs for consideration and the department then compares those requests to other planning information that we have, such as current enrolment which would lead to current usage in the school. We would look at population projections for growth and try and map out where the needs will lie. The communities are involved because they are requested to identify what they see as their priorities. We then have to take a look at what they have identified as their priorities and see how they fit into the criteria that the department uses. That means we would have to assess whether or not the space is there now or how much of the space that is there is being used and try and project when an addition or a new school would be needed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take it then that the community would identify its priorities based on its growth and based on what it sees as its forecasted increase or decrease in the community. Now, you never see a decrease, but normally no one would ask to decrease. It is always an increase. Therefore, if a community foresees, for instance in division, that they are going to be the capital and they forecast a \$6 or \$7 million school and then they do not become the capital, that school is built without the need being there. I refer specifically to Rankin Inlet, because I

got the impression that the school was built forecasting Rankin Inlet to be the capital. Now I find out that they are not the capital any more so now I see, Mr. Chairman, in the federal budget, that Iqaluit is getting a brand new school because they are the capital. Now that school was already built, in fact, in Rankin Inlet.

It seems to be that as people identify these needs, sometimes they do not happen. I bring this up in particular because I noticed in the overall capital, Mr. Chairman, that there seems to be some identified, where they do not need a school anymore. They identify a community library and it gets funded as well, but we are still not meeting the basic needs in the other communities. Before you get a library you should be able to read. It stands to reason that you would make sure that the rest of the communities have their basic needs before you go with the secondary requirements of libraries. I referred to a library this year, but I noticed it last year as well. Where my community of Tuktoyaktuk has been trying to address the shortage of space in that school in which a grade 10 school is used to service up to grade 12 students and there is just no space in there.

The other point I want to make here is that the community did point out to the Minister that there is a major impact on the younger students by the higher level, senior students. Peer pressure, discipline suffers because of mixing those two students together. Now, I notice that in a community like here and Inuvik you have Kindergarten to grade 9, then half way across town you have the high school, so that the students do not mix together and do not cause problems for each other. That is smart, but we do not seem to have that allowed in the communities. That is one of the points that I am trying to make here is that the need for capital does not seem to be really put

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to where it should be.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would point out for instance, we have been hearing now for two years where Yellowknife has been losing a whole pile of people. I cannot remember the exact figure that is going to be reduced in this particular community by division. They will be either going south or going east, but there will be reduction in this particular community of Yellowknife. In addition, I have been hearing for the last eight or nine months that the mines are shutting down. I look under capital and I see \$6 million for two

schools for Yellowknife, but the population is dropping. Where is the justification for this? I have a community with a stable population, slowly increasing, but we cannot get a \$2 million extension. That is my point, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in fact, we do try and do some forecasting to project where the needs are going to be. We do find that in a number of communities that things change as time goes along. In Rankin Inlet, for instance, it was not so much that it was forecast to be a capital as the need was demonstrated. What probably caused the biggest change in school numbers in Rankin Inlet was the speed at which grade extensions were added in the other communities in the Keewatin. Nobody expected that Kivalliq Hall would be emptied out as quickly as happened, certainly not anybody in the department or the college. What it did was it saved us the money of building a new college facility because it freed up the space for the college to have a campus there when the students moved out as quickly as they did.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Look at Tuktoyaktuk and, in fact, the school population has dropped there in the last year. It is down by about eight percent this year over last. I think we have made a commitment to work with the community, to look at ways to resolve some admitted deficiencies in that school, to improve the school as much as we can within our limited budget. We will continue to follow through on that. We do recognize that there are some problems and we will do what we can to deal with them. There is not a justification we can see right now for adding onto the school. The situation in Yellowknife is that the school populations here, in spite of what we have heard about lay-offs and jobs lost, have continued to increase a little bit. They have not been going down. I think we should point out that the two projects in Yellowknife are renovations. They are not new projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, my only other question here is when will Tuktoyaktuk see their school extension in the capital budget? It is not in there at all. My other comment that I would just like to make is that it is strange that you talk to one department and the population is not going down in Yellowknife, it is increasing. We just finished giving them \$450,000 because of all the population loss that they will be recognizing over the time, when either they all went east or they all went south. I do not understand. Sometimes these government departments should talk to each other, so that they all speak with one tongue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In answer to the Member's first question, the five-year capital plan now shows a \$2.5 million project for Tuktoyaktuk, tentatively scheduled to begin planning in the year 2000, 2001. Of course, timing is always dependent on school populations. At this point, it shows up in the five-year capital plan as starting the planning phase in the year 2000/2001. As to the Member's second comment, all I can say is the number surprised the department as well when they came in. They are based on October 31st enrolments. We would not have seen them until probably December 1st, at which time the other departments would have made their decisions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On the list, I have Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have two items I would like to ask a couple of questions on. Does the department now fund the NWTTA for their president?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do not pay for it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With division there is a likelihood, or a possibility, of the creation of two teachers associations. If that does come about, will the department consider funding, for an interim period, the positions, because of the smaller contributions being made by its membership and the viability may not be there? That would ensure some stable labour relations and, perhaps, contribute to the smooth transition of the two associations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is not currently in our plans. It would seem to me a very interesting situation if the employer was paying for the association's leader. I think it might call into question the independence of that position. I am not sure how appropriate it would be for us to take that responsibility.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe years ago that were the case, where the territorial government contributed through a grant system or some process. It was many years ago. The purpose of it being the viability of the organizations because they will be cut down in size substantially and the organizations may be pressed for funding if that happens, hence the reason for raising the concern in question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent.

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HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the Member is remembering when there used to be a line item in the budget that referred to the NWTTA president's salary. That was recovered from the union. It was not ever

actually paid, for at least 15 years, it was never paid for by this government. It was an arrangement that, while the government may have paid the salary, it was 100 percent recovered from the association. There has never, as far as we are aware, been a situation where this government has paid for the president's salary.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, just on another subject, I had asked the Minister about a week and a half ago about violence in the schools, just a question to start with. Does the department track incidents of violence centrally in one central location? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do not.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is of concern and I am sure the Minister is well aware of it through reports back to him. It certainly is of concern to the NWTTA. That along with the low morale of teachers, a lot of this goes hand in hand. We talked about it before in the House during question period. Could the Minister address this question again to keep tabs of the violence issues in schools? It definitely is of concern to the association. It leads me to believe that we cannot just leave it to the boards alone. While the boards, yes, have the responsibility of instituting policies and procedures, we should be very cognizant of it if it means teachers are leaving the north over it, et cetera. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have committed to work with the NWTTA to take a look at this issue and

concerns the association has. I certainly do not find violence in the schools acceptable. I cannot say that we have a concrete answer for the Member as to what the approach will be, but we are certainly prepared to work with the association to see if we can, in concert with the divisional educational councils, come up with an approach that works in the north.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes. Educational development. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to get back to the right to receive a good education which we have heard is in our act; also, to the fact that culture-based education has been proven to be much more effective for aboriginal people and, I suppose, for any race or culture, considering the fact that, at last count, there was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 4,000 aboriginal people in Yellowknife, making it the community with the largest aboriginal population in the NWT.

The Minister had indicated that people should become more involved on the parental advisory committees and run for school boards. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that perhaps it is time to look at guaranteed seats on those boards, rather than making people run for office. I know that the Western Constitutional Working Group has been looking at guaranteed representation for the Legislative Assembly in future. If we can look at guaranteed representation in our constitution in the Legislative Assembly, it might be time we also did this, on a smaller scale, on the school boards. I ask the Minister if he is willing to look at this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The current Education Act allows a fair bit of latitude for alternate governance structures in education. If a community petitions me for an alternate governance structure, it is something I can consider. There have been a number of communities which have petitioned to allow the inclusion of First Nations representatives on their district education authorities. In some of those situations, I have granted them permission for that to

happen. There is a process in place to allow that to take place, if it is the wish of the community.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Chairman, it is difficult for me to envision how a community of 17,000 people can indicate it is their wish to have guaranteed aboriginal representation on a school board, unless you do that through a vote for the school board. Could the Minister provide me with some suggestions how this could be done?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, technically, all that is required is a petition with 50 signatures on it for a request like that to be made to the Minister. However, there would have to be a clear expression at the community level of the acceptance of the change that was requested for me to agree to it. There is no clear process that would indicate the nature of my response to the request. I answered the Member from Thebacha a couple of days ago, in a small community, 50 names on a petition indicate a fair level of community support. In a community the size of Fort Smith, or larger, 50 names would certainly not be seen as indicating a broad level of community support. You would have to look for other ways to find that. Outside of that approach, there is currently no option that I am aware of. The Education Act limits the changing of the governance structures in education to this method.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, would the Minister say there was a petition with 500 signatures in Yellowknife? Would that indicate some level of comfort for the community support that is warranted?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A petition of that size would certainly start the process in this community, but if the community is, in fact, more than 17,000 in population, it is going to take a sizable number to institute a change. There would have to be some process of consultation that would demonstrate to us this was something the community was in favour of.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the Department of Education staff undertake this consultation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department would facilitate local discussion, but it is not the responsibility of the department to lead the discussion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister indicated 500 signatures, for instance, would start the process. What would happen after that, the process? You get 500 signatures, what occurs next?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To be honest, Mr. Chairman, I do not know. I would have to determine at the time I receive the petition what would be appropriate to suggest as a course of action from that point.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Chairman, would you require a separate petition for each school board, one with 500 signatures for the Catholic school board and one of 500 signatures for the public school board? Could you have one petition that would suffice for both?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would probably have to get some legal advice based on the act, to ascertain whether or not it would require one or two in Yellowknife.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other area I wanted to ask questions about was the Dene Kede curriculum where teachers are expected to develop their own materials. I do not understand when they have time to do this. I am sure there are all varying degrees of capabilities as well as education. They are paid to develop a curriculum. Why are we making teachers develop their own curriculum and using these guidelines? Should not the department be doing this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the curriculum is a framework document that a teacher can use to put together their day plan. It does not say, here is what you say to start the class or here is how exactly your classroom should be structured. It provides the teacher with a guideline for what is supposed to be achieved by the students over the course of study. It is then up to the teacher to come up with the day plans to achieve what is set out in the curriculum.

The teaching and learning centres can be used to provide resources to achieve the plans that are made

by the teacher. It still comes down to an individual teacher to put together what is required in the classroom.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. For the record, the committee is considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-1999; Department of Education, Culture and Employment; activity summary, educational development, page 9-11; operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$158.180 million. I have Mr. Krutko and Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to the Minister is in regard to the whole area of developing skills in the school system. Students in school can also have an opportunity to not only learn the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also hand skills in regard to developing sewing and mechanical skills by working with small engine mechanics, wood skills of carpentry, et cetera, while they are still attending school and then off into high school. When they have the choice of what they want to become later on in life, at least they can have some basic skills of how to take a motor apart or how to build a boat and also be able to sew. Those skills would be with them for the rest of their lives. A lot of people will not finish high school. At least this gives them the ability to go out there and find a job, either starting off as a labourer, but also knowing that they are able to take on these things. I would like to ask the Minister, why is it there are differences between smaller communities and the larger centres, when it comes to delivering such programs within the curriculum of the education systems, especially in the north? Why is there a difference? Why is everybody not treated the same when it comes to delivery of educational programs, especially when it comes to mechanical programs in the schools such as workshops and whatever?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We believe there is equity across the north when it comes to funding, but because funding is based so much on populations, the larger the school, the bigger their opportunities. For instance in a small school, the teachers are going

to be stretched to deliver the program whereas in a large school there may be two classes all day long of just English.

You can have teachers who specialize in a program of English. You may have an opportunity when in the funding, they are funded at the rate of 18.2 teachers to one student. In a larger school, they may be able to put 30 to 36 students in one math class and then shift the funding that would go to the other teacher providing shop or home management programs. It really comes from the economies of scale because they have

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so many more students, but in terms of funding, smaller schools, obviously, are not going to have the same sort of flexibility because they do not have a big enough classroom size and population to have the same sort of flexibility that a larger school does.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Is the Minister saying there are two different types of education or is it an education for large centres and an education for small centres, where basically the larger centres get everything and the kitchen sink and the people in the small communities, sorry you are too small, you cannot grasp it? You just do not have what it takes, but because we are a larger centre, we will deliver education fairly to everybody else. When it comes to a smaller community, you are basically using a two- criterion system when we take all the schools. We tell the communities take on higher education. Get high schools in your community, so we do not have to send you to the larger centres, but then when it comes to delivering programs such as the small mechanical programs in the school, it is only offered in larger centres.

In the case of Fort McPherson, we have almost 900 people. You are telling us we cannot deliver this program, but people that live in Inuvik, Fort Smith or Yellowknife can deliver it. There are two criteria systems for education here. There is education for the large, rich, remote centres and the outlying communities who are supposedly offering the same level of education to everybody in the Northwest Territories. There is a different process when it

comes to the smaller communities when it comes to the context of the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not saying there are two levels of education. In fact, the smaller communities in the north, in our formula, have a much lower pupil/teacher ratio than do the larger communities. I thought I had made that clear when I was answering a question from Mr. Enuaraq this session and pointed out in his home community, the pupil/teacher ratio is significantly lower than what is the average across the Northwest Territories.

It is not a question of whether there is a double standard, but in a larger community, you have the opportunity. Where one teacher can take over two classrooms, then the other teacher could be shifted into providing a shop program or some other program. You do not have that flexibility in a small school where one teacher may be teaching 7, 8 and 9 or even broader, in order to make up that classroom size. Even if you have the smallest pupil/teacher ratio, you have one teacher for every 15 students. Let us say, in a small school with 150 students, you may not get the overlap, where you can put so many students together that there is a teacher freed up to offer an elected program. A larger population means you have some economies of scale.

Whether you are looking at the administration of the Northwest Territories government as a whole, there is no way we can divide up the headquarters operation here, because we are dividing into Nunavut and the west. Nobody expects that we can just divide what we have right now and provide the same level of services. There are incremental costs. The smaller you get, the higher the cost it is to deliver the programs. Our formula recognizes that and does provide better assistance to the smaller communities. It can only be stretched so far. The flexibility only goes so far. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me which communities deliver the shop program in the Northwest Territories?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would have to contact the divisional education councils and ask them that information. I can undertake to do that for the Member, if he would like. I will have to get back to him.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me what it would take to make it compulsory through the education program right across the territories that the shop program will be part of the curriculum for all schools?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Technically, what it would take is to include industrial arts as part of one of the required courses in the secondary schools directive. Technically, we could say it was a required course in that directive. What we do on an annual basis is review what is in that with the divisional education councils and there is typically some agreement about what courses should be required. This would be technically how we could do it.

In terms of physically making sure the space was available and that there were qualified teachers in every school, I am not sure how we could achieve that. In the short term, Mr. Chairman, that would probably be impossible. Choices are made by the divisional education councils in consultation with district education authorities. If the program is there now, it is because the DEC and the DEA together have decided that it should be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I received a package of letters from some grade nine students from Baker Lake from the Jonah Amitnaaq School requesting that they have their school renovation moved up from 2001 to hopefully start in 1998. If I can, Mr. Chairman, I would like to just read one of the letters out of the dozen letters from Bradley Hart, grade nine student, Baker Lake. The Jonah Amitnaaq School needs to be renovated before the year 2000-01. Three years is too long to wait. I am 14 years old and I am in grade nine. I have been going to this school for seven years and spent two years in the other new school. This school needs to be renovated because it is the oldest operating school in the whole of the Northwest Territories. We need a bigger gym and

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a water fountain in the gym. Up in the Home Economics room the water does not get hot enough to wash dishes, therefore, it does not kill the germs. We need the library and the art and English classrooms attached to the main school so we do not have to run outside. This school also needs more natural light because the fluorescent lights are too hard to learn with. We need private washrooms and private stalls in the washrooms, so people cannot peek under the stalls. I would like this school to be renovated right away rather than wait for the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, I note that in some areas we are spending \$6 million and \$7 million on schools and I will have to say that I appreciate the fact that the Minister did spend money in Baker Lake on the other school to have it renovated and it was much appreciated. From this particular school I hear complaints from the students and teachers referring to illegal doors, poor air handling, poor washrooms, poor layouts, some situations where classrooms are right next to the industrial art's classroom and there is too much noise and it makes it difficult for the students to concentrate. What the students and teachers are looking for is to see if it is possible to move this renovation up to next year so that they do not have to wait until 2001. My question to the Minister is, what criteria does his department use to decide which area gets the priority? I know it has been talked about on different occasions, but if the Minister would provide

that information to the House I would appreciate it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The criteria and priorities for capital standards are, the first priority is if there is a life, health or safety concern in the facility; the second priority is for space shortfalls; the third priority is for deficiencies in the existing structure; the fourth is for upgrades and the fifth is for technical reasons.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Do you wish to finish your response?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

As I heard the Member, he was asking me for what the capital standards and criteria are and I just listed those for him. I believe this project has been moved up one year from where it was in last year's five-year capital plan. Looking at the budget it appears that we have added about \$400,000 to the project over what was shown on last year's capital plan. The budget would currently show the initial start on the project with planning in this next budget year some preparatory work and the really serious planning would be in 1999-2000, with actual construction starting in 2000-2001.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I have indicated to people in Baker Lake, teachers, students and parents did appreciate the efforts of the Minister last year in providing the necessary dollars to move that school renovation ahead. Would the Minister at least agree to revisiting this issue on this request from the students and the people from Baker Lake to see if it could be moved ahead any further and to see if these necessary repairs could be carried out and the students would have a much healthier environment to conduct their studies in? **CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):** Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department examines the capital project list every year and re-evaluates each capital project based on the criteria because sometimes the ranking changes. As I have said, we have found that the project has, in fact, advanced one year over what was shown last year in the five-year plan. At this point we do not see any way to advance the project for the two years that were requested by the community, but it does fit into the criteria for advancing it one year over where it was initially shown. We have identified the need to increase the budget slightly by more than ten percent of what we had shown previously.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

I do not think that we have the flexibility to move it forward another year and from what it would appear, with other priorities, it would be difficult to advance it any further than where it is right now. We will examine next year's capital plan as it comes out to see whether or not any other changes need to be made but as things stand now, it has come forward as much as it possibly can.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am satisfied that the Minister will once again look at it in next year's budget to see if it can be moved ahead any further than what it has been. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. I take that as a comment, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a motion, please. I move that we make it compulsory that the home economics and shop program be delivered in all high schools in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I did not get your total motion, so I will have to ask you to repeat it. Could you repeat it please, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The motion is, I move that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment make it compulsory that the home economics and shop program be delivered in all high schools in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I take it that your motion has to be translated. I have you last on the list to speak toward the activity. I have two ways to handle this. If I do not have anyone else to speak to the activity, I will have the committee break while we have the motion translated. Mr. Krutko, although I recognize your motion is on the floor, I will ask if anybody else will speak to the activity. Since there is no one else speaking to the activity we will take a break while the motion is translated and then we could come back and finalize this activity.

--Break

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen): I would like to call the committee back to order. Mr. Krutko, will you read your motion.

Committee Motion 29-13(5): To Institute Compulsory Home Economics and Shop Programs in All High Schools

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the committee recommends the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment institute compulsory all three home economics and shop programs in all high schools in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Page 9-11, activity summary, educational development, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$158.18 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 9-12, detail of capital, educational development, buildings and works, headquarters, total region, \$6.189 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Fort Smith region, total region, \$2.847 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Inuvik region, total region, \$2.432 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Baffin region, total region, page 9-12, \$8.798 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Keewatin region, total region, \$1.972 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Building and works, Kitikmeot region, total region, page 9-15, \$2.934 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total building and works, \$25.172 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Contributions, headquarters, total region, \$67,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total contributions, \$67,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total activity, \$25.239 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions, page 9-16, grants, total grants, \$12.64 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Contributions, page 9-16 and 9-17, total is on page 9-19. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 9-18, under college contributions, there is funding for training opportunities for northern residents. Mr. Chairman, the Minister for MACA has agreed to undertake the development of a community development program which would be for a certificate and diploma program at the college level. She had indicated she would be approaching the other members of the social

envelope for assistance and cooperation in this regard. Could the Minister indicate his willingness to cooperate with the Minister of MACA and her staff so we can ensure the Community Development Program is properly developed and, hopefully, implemented in the next coming year, whether it is September or January? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We certainly are prepared to work together with other departments and the college and look at how such a program could be developed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Contributions, page 9-16, 9-17, 9-18, 9-19. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

I would just like to thank the Minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question is in relation to page 9-17, community income support delivery. I note that in the opening comments of the Minister, he refers to the Bureau of Statistics to carry out a survey that would define the cost of healthy food baskets in each NWT community. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could confirm that each community in the NWT will have a survey done as to the cost of food baskets in that particular community.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct. In every community across the north, the department is cooperating with the Bureau of Statistics to survey food costs to determine how much costs in each community (a

representative sampling of foods)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am encouraged with the response because I have been advised that the survey that was being undertaken was only in relation to big communities. I am encouraged to hear the Minister say that each community will be surveyed because there is quite a difference between the small communities and the larger centres. With that, Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions on this particular item.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Contributions. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to the Minister is in regard to page 9-17, the town of Iqaluit, where they received \$3.074 million. How did they come up with that formula and what was it based on? How did they come up with \$3 million?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$3 million includes the program's costs, as well as administration. It is a block contribution to the community. The formula used to calculate the administration cost is the same in Iqaluit as it is in every other community in the north.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could you tell me how much did they receive for administration of this program in Iqaluit?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if Mr. Devitt has it down to the dollar, but it is one full time equivalent per 2,000 cases. I could get that in terms of dollars and cents for the Member if he would like, but we do not have it with us today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

The point I am trying to get at is that the community of Tsiigehtchic, it is \$4,000 to administer a program for a whole year and yet in this position, they get two full-time equivalent positions based on the formula you are using? The size of the community does not matter. The demand is the same. The program has to be delivered by someone. The cost of delivering a program should not be any less in a community of 200 people compared to a community of 4,000. One community gets \$4,000 for a whole year, and this community gets two full-time positions for a year. Whom can you hire for \$5,000 to work for a whole year to deliver a program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If, in fact, Iqaluit is funded for two full-time positions, that would mean they are seeing more than 4,000 cases in the course of a year. In Fort McPherson, we are talking about hundreds of cases, not thousands of cases. Yes, there is a difference in the size of a community and in terms of how many visits to an income support worker takes place in the course of a year over what kinds of resources are required. It would be physically impossible for one person to handle the load in a community like Iqaluit. It should not take one person's full-time job to deliver it in a smaller community. In the pilot projects we found, in many cases, we worked with housing authorities and band councils that it just takes somebody on a part-time basis to perform the functions of income support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Why is there such a drastic change from say, a community of Tsiigehtchic with 200 where they get \$4,000 to administer a program for a whole year, and it does not matter if it is a community of Iqaluit or Yellowknife where they get two full-time positions? That is the problem I have. I do not think that is fair. What can you do with \$5,000? It probably costs a charter for a Minister to go from one community to his riding, one trip. Yet this money has to last a whole year for a community to administer a program. That is the problem I have with the whole delivery program where a community, like Iqaluit, receives over \$3 million and out of that they get two positions. Yet for the rest of the area, we get \$1.41 million for support for the other communities. We talk about fairness and being equitable to all people in all communities. It does not look equitable to me. What is being done to ensure that fairness is distributed to all communities, no matter what the size?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I would argue that we are approaching this in a fair way. Let us say that we discovered that it takes an average of ten minutes for an income support worker to fill out the form to determine whether somebody needs support. It takes ten minutes for every person they see to fill out that form. If there are 4,000 forms that have to be filled out in the course of the year that is 4,000 times ten minutes. In another community, there might only be 400 forms that have to be filled out in the course of the year. It would be then, 400 times ten-minutes. We pay the same rate. I do not know whether the number is ten-minutes, I was making that figure up, but we pay the same amount for the worker to fill out that same form. It depends on how many times that form is filled out in the community as to how much we pay. Again, I have to repeat that the number you see here for the town of Iqaluit, that includes what we pay the recipients of income support, that is not the cost to administer the program. The \$3 million includes everything that we pay out for rent, food and all the other supports that we pay to people who are receiving income support.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Overall budget. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

You mean they even get money for rent? In Tsiigehtchic, they do not even have an office for the income support person that they are looking for. I have a real problem,

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especially with the way this program has been allocated. It favours more of the larger centres than the service of the program to the smaller communities, just based on the geographical size of a community or where they are located. The program is workable in the larger centres so this program is more structured toward the larger centres. You have to realize that in the smaller communities where you do not have the necessities of life where you can attract people to do a job for \$4,000 a year and trying to deliver a program for that amount of money. It just does not work. In my riding, a lot of the communities have come to the conclusion that it is not feasible for them to continue to maintain and deliver this program in their communities, because of the way the formula has been distributed and allocated. There has to be a fair way of delivering this program and serving all communities on some sort of a more equitable manner because I just cannot see it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the approach is that the positions are funded equivalently. In other words, if we take the number of times an income support worker or person has to fill out the income support form or assist in filling it out, evaluate it. Everybody is paid for doing the same work. I would hope that the community would see this as an opportunity to take on a function that can be provided within their administration. If the community decides that they are not interested in delivering it, then we will have to discuss other agencies. We could go to the tent and canvass factory, perhaps, and ask if they have somebody who, on a part-time basis, could assist people to fill out the forms. If they would be prepared to do it for the same sort of contract level, or some other agency in the community, which is how we handled a lot of the pilot projects. We may have to look at flying a person into the community, or not necessarily flying, but bringing a person into the community for half a day a month. We may have to look at other options, if that is what the community wants. If it is not seen as worthwhile, we will certainly

work with the community to find another alternative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe this area is done through community empowerment as well. Is it? Yes, it is. Contributions. Page 9-19, total contributions, \$189.451 million. Agreed? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me the breakdown of the community income support delivery program for \$1.41 million, how much of that is allocated to Mackenzie Delta Region?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do not have that detail with us. I will be happy to provide it to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total contribution is \$189.451 million. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me exactly how the formula works and have they made any attempts to restructure the formula so that it is more equitable to the communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Based on needs, Mr. Minister?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The formula is one full-time equivalent for every 2,000 cases. This means visits, whether the person is accepted or refused for income support that counts as a case. That is typically, I believe, the salary equivalent of about \$50,000 plus the northern living allowance for that community. There would be an adjustment to reflect that amount as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you talk about a visit, are those the people who sit down and fill out a form or the people who come in to see you? Is that actual persons who come to your office to apply for income support and fill out an application or are they the ones who are accepted and receive income support?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It does not matter whether they are accepted or not, but, yes, it is people who stop in and fill out an application.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Total contributions, \$189.451 million. Agreed? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you say it takes a person ten minutes to fill out an application, realistically, you are not talking about the people that are refused or the people that have gone there to fill out a form to say exactly what their goals are. This is just the application itself. I think that is the problem that we have in the communities for the income support workers. In a lot of the smaller communities, you are dealing with more than just filling out applications. You are doing assessments of the individuals. I was not aware until the last couple of weeks that there is an appeal process in place where, if I was not aware of it, there are probably a lot of other people in the communities who do not know that this process exists also. What happens in that case where they are asked to help fill out an appeal application? Do they get paid for that too or does that not count in the scenario of the visit?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I do not know if the public expects the Minister to know every case, every detail. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are typically very few appeals, so there is not an awful lot of time spent on those. The Member quoted my number of ten-

minutes and I want to remind the House that I just picked that figure for an example. I am not sure that the formula bears any relation to that ten-minutes. I do not want people to become confused by that, but the formula is based on the amount of time that it took an income support worker to deliver the program on average over the course of a year. We have considerable experience in assessing whether or not that number works.

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The income support worker is not funded to counsel people. The Income Support Program came to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and away from the Department of Health and Social Services because it was expected that this would provide more time for the social workers to do counselling. So, if people need counselling, the income support worker is intended to refer them somewhere else.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not think they are there for counselling too, but I believe that the role that they play is to help people, assess them to see exactly what educational backgrounds they have, exactly what type of skills they have so that they can develop themselves to become independent and eventually they will not have to depend on income support. I thought that was the whole initiative of this program.

I think that myself growing up in a small community is where a lot of the larger centres take a lot of things for granted because they do not realize the efforts and the human resource people who we have in the communities are limited on the amount of time they usually have a handful of people who are responsible for doing everything. I think that for him to make the motion they are not there as counsellors, I do not think that is what I said and I did not make the statement. I would like to ask the Minister is part of their job description is to assist people filling out forms and to do the evaluation of those individuals?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the first aspect of the job is to assess the form that is filled out by the income support applicant to determine whether or not they qualify for support. Then there is an expectation that they will assist the applicant by referring them to other resources in the community if they need assistance to develop a career plan and so on. I think it is important to remember that, even in those situations where an income support recipient is payrolled, in other words their support comes automatically each month, that counts as a visit too. There are clients that the income support worker never has to see, or almost never has to see. Yet the funding is included for those positions as a visit as well. As I said, the formula was developed over the course of a year by checking how much time it took for income support workers, on average, to see clients. All of these things have been, over a period of time, worked into the formula. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me if there is going to be another review or assessment in light of the concerns I have raised out of my riding where they feel that they have been unjustly treated in regard to the way the formula works, and expecting them to deliver a program for the amount of resources that they are getting, and I use Tsiigehtchic where they are getting \$4,000 to run a program for a whole year? With the cost to run that program, it is not feasible. Can the Minister tell me if there is going to be a review in light of the concerns that are coming from my constituency on this particular matter?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the formula will be reviewed annually. We are prepared to talk to the community any time. As I said, we would hope that it would not happen, but if a community decides that it is not worth administering the program, then we would have to look for alternative delivery mechanisms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe your time is up, Mr. Krutko. I believe also you have made your point. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, it comes down to this scenario, I do not know if growing up in a large centre or not living in a small community is not setting in because it does cost a lot more to live in small communities. It does take a lot more work to deal with people in the small communities because you are dealing with a different environment. In larger centres you have office structures and everything else in place. The whole concept of applications for them in a lot of the communities, it is a tough job just trying to attract the person without trying to explain to the elders and people in the communities, well, you have to fill out this form and you have to do this, which takes a lot more time than in larger centres. My question to the Minister is, why do I get the feeling that we are being penalized because of where we are located? It will be easier to change the program and the way the program is being allocated than coming up with a statement, well, they do not want it we will take it back and do it some other way. Why do you have a program which is a territorial program for all communities, but with the notion if that community does not like the way we are delivering it we will just take it back? What message is that supposed to send to myself, as a Member of the Mackenzie Delta, and the people I represent? We are different? We are martians? What? I get the feeling all of a sudden that we are being treated differently.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister, I believe most of the questions you did respond to. However, I get the feeling the Member wants to know why he feels that he is being treated differently in his riding. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in my previous answer to the Member, I indicated that the formula was going to be reviewed annually and that we would be prepared at any time to discuss the issue with the community. If we still cannot resolve it then, we will have to find some other way to deliver the program. This is not saying we are treating a community differently that is saying we will deal with the community up front and see if we can resolve the issue with them. If not then, we will have to find some other way to deal with it. It is important to point out

too that the community delivery of this program was piloted in 11 communities across the Northwest Territories, including small ones like Providence, Holman Island, Igloodik, (Coppermine) Kugluktuk. It was not

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piloted just in large communities. It was piloted more in the smaller communities than in the large ones. It is from those pilot projects that we got a lot of our information about timing and developed our numbers for the formula. I was not intending to make it sound like we are treating any community differently. If any community has a problem with feeling that the program is inadequately resourced, we are prepared to discuss it with them and see if we cannot help them understand what the expectations are and how we think they can deliver the program within the formula, because we have found it to work in other communities. If we cannot come to some resolution then, we will have to find some other way to deliver the program. That is all I was saying. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I recognize Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like some clarification as I am trying to follow this discussion. There are x-number of hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on income support. I am assuming, in Fort McPherson, or whatever the figure is, I am not sure. This \$4,000 that I keep hearing reference to, is that to pay somebody's salary over the course of the year to deliver this on a once-a-month basis? Is that what the \$4,000 is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is, the Member was referring to that as the contribution we provide to the community agency which delivers the program, which they would use to cover their costs for delivering it, whether that is salary or however they chose to do it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Total contributions, \$189.451 million. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for further clarification, that \$4,000, how many cases does that person look after in the whole year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I should remind the committee, I have not said \$4,000 today was what was delivered to a community, but we could provide some level of detail, if this committee is interested, to Members, about how many cases are seen in communities. If it were, in fact \$4,000 to calculate the number of cases seen in a year you could, remembering that we provide \$50,000 plus the northern allowance, you could probably do a quick approximation of the numbers of people that you were seeing. Without having detailed information I would not want to make something up and try to tell the committee that is what it was because it might not be accurate.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are the other smaller communities treated similarly, where they receive a certain amount and then, they are not expected to pay a full year's salary of \$50,000 a year for someone to sit there and see maybe one person a week? Is that the way everybody is treated?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, all communities are treated exactly the same.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate how some other communities handle this if they are not getting a full salary for a full-time person to do this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a variety of approaches. In some communities the hamlet or band has combined the duties with the duties of another function that somebody performs, so that income support is delivered as just part of their job during the regular course of a month. There are a number of different alternatives. During the pilot projects we had a couple of housing authorities where we had staff at the housing authority, who would be designated to also provide income support. It is a very broad approach across the territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know this is not the Minister's area, but are there social workers in all of the communities to handle the counselling and the other related duties that used to happen? When a person went to a social worker, you normally received income support as well as counselling. Are there other people in the communities to do this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know the answer to that question. I would assume that the resources would not have changed significantly in the communities after Education, Culture and Employment took over income support.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

One final question, Mr. Chairman. In the case of Fort McPherson then, who used to do the income support before this new initiative happened?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was delivered by the social worker as part of their job.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

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MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you. I am sorry I said that was my final question. I have one more. Is the Minister aware of whether there is a social worker in the community of Fort McPherson to do counselling and other things that are not associated with income support at the present time?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of the answer to that question. We can certainly endeavour to find out and provide that information to Members of the committee as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Total contributions, \$189.451 million. Mr. Krutko.

Committee Motion 30-13(5): To Review the Income Support Program to Ensure Fairness and Equity

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move a motion. I move that this committee recommends that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment review the Income Support Program and funds paid to communities to deliver the Income Support Program to ensure fairness and equity in the allocations to all NWT communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I understand your motion is being drafted and translated. Are there any further questions on this particular activity? If the committee would agree, I understand we have some lunch ready in the lounge. We could take a break and have the motion drawn up, drafted and translated while we are having our lunch break.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I would like to call the committee to order. Mr. Krutko has a motion on the floor and I would like him to repeat his motion, please for the record.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move, that this committee recommends that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment conduct a review of the Income Support Program and funds allocated to communities to deliver the Income Support Program to ensure fairness and equity in the allocation to all NWT communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. I have to ring the bell for a quorum. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Speaker, I recognize a quorum now. Can we deal with the motion?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Krutko. Question has been called. The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Now if we may return to page 9-19 and for the record, we are on Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-99 main estimates, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, tables of grants and contributions, total contributions, \$189,451 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total grants and contributions, \$202.091 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 9-20, information item, active positions. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Information item, student loan revolving fund, page 9-21. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Information item, page 9-22, table of funding allocated to education bodies. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I am just looking at the different educational bodies here and the amount of money that they are receiving. For instance, the Keewatin Division Educational Council receives about \$20 million. The two Yellowknife education bodies together receive \$21 million. For the Keewatin body, is that the total amount of money that they utilize for their education?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the full contribution from the department to the divisional education council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would they spend another similar or smaller amount through taxes that they raise through their communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The only two authorities that have property taxability are the Yellowknife Public Denominational District Education Authority and the Yellowknife District Education Authority. The Keewatin Divisional Education Council may raise some funds on their own through fundraising activities, but they would probably not be of a significant nature.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

The two Yellowknife Education Authorities receive \$21 million. Does the Minister have an indication of how much the two education authorities raise through taxes of the citizens of Yellowknife for education?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do not have that level of detail with us, but we could certainly make it available to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Could the Minister just give an approximate figure, say \$50,000, \$1 million or \$2 million?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is probably in excess of \$6 million that the two councils in Yellowknife will raise.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Chairman, is there some way Yellowknife could get more money for their education. For instance, if Arviat and Baker Lake get 100 percent for their education, is there some way that Yellowknife can get more money for their education?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the local councils wanted to give up the ability to collect taxes, we would have to provide funding for them as well, but that would mean there would be less funding for everybody, including the students in Yellowknife.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is the reasoning for making the city of Yellowknife residents pay education taxes when Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay or other larger centres like that do not have to pay education taxes?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Devitt was just advising me that we have never been able to find anybody old enough to give us the answer to that question. It has been that way since as long as anybody can remember. I cannot tell you what the justification was for starting it in the first place.

People are taxed typically on their ability to pay and I would suspect that years ago, the government saw that the residents of Yellowknife had an ability to pay taxes that were not found in other communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Considering the fact that there seems to be a few more people who are working these days in the various centres, particularly with all this construction happening in Iqaluit and what not, is it not about time that other areas had to pay a bit more for their education, in terms of education taxes, as well?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All residents in the Northwest Territories or all property owners in the Northwest Territories are assessed. A portion of their taxes is attributed to education. The tax rates in the general taxation area are significantly lower than they are in the city of Yellowknife. I suspect years ago that might not have been quite as noticeable a situation as it is now. It would be an initiative of the Minister of Finance, if there were to be any consideration of raising taxes in the general taxation area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of my constituents recently indicated he pays \$1,000 a year for education taxes. Would the taxes that are collected, for example, from the community of Arviat, would they be as high as \$1,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Erasmus, if you wish to pursue this line of questioning you might want to address your questions to the Minister of Finance. He is responsible for taxes, I believe. I will allow the Minister of Education to respond.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it would be highly unlikely that there would be a residence in Arviat that would be assessed \$1,000 for the education portion of their taxes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions except to indicate I think it is time that other areas contribute a little bit more toward their education rather than only the city of Yellowknife. Are not Fort Smith, Hay River and places like that? I would suggest it is time we started looking at other communities that could pay a few dollars toward education, as well, rather than penalizing residents for living in the city of Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. It was more a comment than it was a question. Are there any more on detail of funding allocated to education boards?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Page 9-23. Information item, colleges. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Page 9-24, information item, college funding allocation. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 9-25, detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. We have a total department for detail of work performed on behalf of third parties on page 9-27. Total department, \$16.435 million. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell us what the status is of negotiations in regard to the official languages for aboriginal languages? How soon do you expect to have an agreement?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I believe you are referring to an item on page 9-26. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The agreement was signed in November with the federal government. It saw a reduction over the previous agreement. The first year's allocation has been made. We are currently examining what the second year's allocations for the agreement would be. I cannot remember the number that was in the agreement that we signed, but I believe, it was a significant reduction over the previous three-year agreement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Further questions, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO:

What is the status of the French? Has there been a decrease there, also?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Both aboriginal and French language contributions were decreased close to the same percentage.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. I recognize Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under the French School, I note that the department says they have negotiated an auxiliary agreement for replacing the Allain St. Cyr School. Is that recorded in the \$2.4 million on page 9-27? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Minister.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The contribution from the federal government is \$3 million, in cash, for the construction of a new facility. There is nothing in here for the old Allain St. Cyr, if that was the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when the money comes forward for the construction of the school for the new Allain St. Cyr or Iqaluit, would that money then come within the budget of the Northwest Territories government or the Nunavut government, then the school is constructed on behalf of the Francophone Association, by this government or is it a federal public works project? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our expectation is it would be handled in the same way. The monies would flow through the northern government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Total department, \$16.435 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. If the committee would revert back to page 9-5, I have, for the record, Bill 8, 1998-1999

Main Estimates, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, program summary, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$273.048 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Capital, total capital, \$30.519 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$303.567 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of the department's estimates is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. I would now like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. We would now move on as per previous arrangement. Mr. Ootes, do you wish to be recognized?

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to give some direction for us to proceed from here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Go ahead, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

That we conclude the budget by finishing the Department of Finance and Financial Management Board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Just a small correction, Mr. Ootes. We agreed this morning to conclude FMBS, I believe, Finance is done under the Executive. Therefore, I would now direct the committee to page 2-25. Financial Management Board Secretariat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Have we found our places? Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance. I am sorry, we did agree in the past to the total program summaries. All that remains is to determine if the committee agrees that consideration of Financial Management Board Secretariat estimates was concluded?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. Does the committee agree we now move on to the Executive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Okay, on page 2-5 of the main estimates. I have the Executive, department summary, operations and maintenance, \$55.551 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Page 2-5, Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under the Executive, given that the Premier is the overall captain of this ship during these budget negotiations, I would respectfully request that the motions that were passed over the last few days during the budget deliberations that they administer, they post-haste review those motions - and get a commitment at this time that he will review, for example, the allocation surplus funds motions this morning and other motions - put them in place and come back with something in writing to the committee at our next sitting in May to demonstrate that good faith shown by the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we will respond accordingly to all the motions that are in. The committee will compile the motions. I will write to every Minister of the government asking them to reply at the earliest possible date. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. I would appreciate some order in the House. We look like we are getting close to something here. I have operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance under the Department of the Executive, \$55.551 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$55.551 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of the Department of the Executive is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of the 1998-99 Main Estimate detail book is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Committee Reports 2-13(5), 3-13(5), 4-13(5) and 5-13(5) are also concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That we consider next the Bill 9, Bill 12 and Bill 13.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Could I have some order please? We seem to have overlooked something here. Bill 8, is a bill. Therefore, it is in your green binder. We have to go through the bill clause by clause. I will direct you to your green binder, Bill 8. I will call it out. Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-99?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Page 1, clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Clause 5 of Bill 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Page 2, schedule, part 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Vote 1, operations and maintenance, appropriation, \$1,027,808,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Part 2, vote 2 capital. Capital appropriation, \$141,808 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total appropriation, \$1,169,616,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. The bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 8 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Bill 8 is now ready for third reading.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I will go back to Mr. Ootes for direction as to which the committee wishes to deal with tonight. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that we deal with Bill 9, Bill 12 and Bill 13.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I am sorry, Mr. Ootes, I did not get that.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that we deal with Bill 9 followed by Bill 12 and then followed by Bill 13.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. We will now proceed with Bill 9. I will ask the Minister responsible for Bill 9, Mr. Todd, for his opening comments on the bill.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bill 9 is really the purpose of the Loan Authorization Act, which is to authorize the government to make loans to municipal corporations. It is a requirement of the NWT Act that the Legislative Assembly authorizes any loans by the government.

This act is an annual act which for the year 1998-99 will provide the authority to lend up to a maximum of \$1 million to municipal corporations. This amount represents a decrease of \$5.5 million from the \$6.5 million authorized in the 1997-98 fiscal year.

Non-tax-based municipal corporations have identified a requirement for loans in 1998-99. If a municipal government requires it, we will seek them in the private market. However, some non-tax-based municipal corporations have identified amounts that will be required for land development. This land development is pursuant to the government's initiative to devolve ownership of the land and responsibility for land development. This is required to support the implementation of the Nunavut land claims agreement and to empower communities to become financially self-sufficient. The communities are Cambridge Bay, Clyde River, Gjoa Haven, Hall Beach, Resolute Bay and Sanikiluaq.

The total requirement identified by these non-tax-based municipal corporations at 1998-99, this has been rounded to \$1 million to provide a cushion in the event other needs arise. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd, Minister of Finance. I will now ask the honourable Member, Mr. O'Brien for Government Operations Committee comments on the Bill. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99, at its meeting on February 23 and 24, 1998. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting this bill.

This bill would authorize the government to make up to \$1 million in loans to municipalities in 1998-99. This amount is considerably smaller than previous years, as municipalities are now able to access private market lending sources. The committee appreciates the importance of this bill in providing

financing for the NWT municipalities. Mr. Chairman, committee Members may have additional comments or questions on this bill during the review in committee of the whole. This concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. I now ask the Minister if he wishes to bring in witnesses.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do not know about any of you, but I would be only too happy to go to the witness table so we can go clause by clause. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I understand, Mr. Todd, you will proceed to just do general comments at this point while we wait for the witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Chairman, I can proceed with the bill. Hopefully, I will be able to answer all the questions, if any are raised on these three bills this evening, as I am well versed in their reasoning and the rationale behind it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I will open the floor to general comments from the Members. Are there any general comments? Since there are no further general comments, are we prepared to go clause by clause to review the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Page 1, clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 5 of Bill 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 8 of Bill 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 9 on page 2 of Bill 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 10. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 9 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Bill 9 is now ready for third reading, and I thank the Minister for appearing before the committee. As per direction from the committee, we will now proceed onto Bill 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

I would like to make a motion to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. Motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is defeated. Let us proceed with Bill 12. I will now invite the Minister responsible for Bill 12 to introduce the bill, please.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98 is to authorize the write-off of the debts listed in the schedule to the act.

Pursuant to Section 24 of the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of government assets or debts exceeding \$20,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval.

Pursuant to Section 82 of the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of debts, owed to a public agency exceeding \$20,000, must also receive Legislative Assembly approval. The write-off of debts, owed to the Workers' Compensation Board exceeding \$50,000, must receive Legislative Assembly approval.

The write-off being proposed in this act will not require a new appropriation. The write-off will be charged against allowances for bad debts which were established in a departmental budget at the time it was determined that collection of the debt would be unlikely.

I wish to emphasize that the write-off of a debt does not relieve the debtor of the liability for repayment or mean that the government will not continue to attempt to collect the outstanding amount. Though continued reviews by my staff, future recovery of the debt still may be achieved. In addition, in the case of debts owed by companies, we track the principals of each firm for future credit references. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. For the record, that was Minister Todd, Minister of Finance. I would now like to invite the chairman of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, Mr. Erasmus, for the committee's comments on the bill.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed Bill 12, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98, at its meetings on February 23 and 24, 1998.

The committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting the bill.

This bill would authorize the government to write off more than \$1.6 million in debts, and the amount is larger than in recent years. The majority of debts to be written off relate to monies owed to the Business Credit Corporation and the NWT Development Corporation. The Business Credit Corporation write-offs total \$325,000 in loans, and the NWT Development Corporation write offs total \$1.2 million shares and dividends.

Committee Members questioned the Minister about the details of these debts and about the circumstances under which the loans and investments were originally made. The Minister advised that the delegation of lending authority to the regions by the Business Credit Corporation has allowed greater scrutiny over business practices of borrowers. The committee was also advised that a formal structure does exist within the government to allow for the continued pursuit of payment for written-off debts, although the success rate is minimal.

The committee urges the Minister, particularly in view of the amounts involved, to ensure that practical efforts are made to collect payment on these debts.

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Mr. Chairman, committee Members may have additional comments or questions on this bill during review in committee of the whole.

This concludes the report on the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Bill 12, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I invite Mr. Todd, if you would like to bring in witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

I can do it from here, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I now open the floor to general comments on the bill from the Members. Are there any general comments? Does the committee agree to go clause by clause in review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. In your green binder, Bill 12, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 1, clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. On page 2 of Bill 12, schedule debt written off.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Total, \$1,622,647.88.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. The bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 12 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Bill 12 is now ready for third reading. As per earlier directions, we will now proceed on to Bill 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

As per earlier direction from the committee, we will now proceed to Bill 13 which is Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98. I will invite the Minister responsible, Mr. Todd, to introduce the bill. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98 is to authorize the forgiveness of certain debts listed in the schedule to the act. Pursuant to Section 25(1) of the Financial Administration Act, the forgiveness of a debt or obligation to the government exceeding \$1,000.00 must receive Legislative Assembly approval. When a debt is forgiven, no further collection action will be pursued.

The forgiveness being quoted in this act will not require new appropriation. Allowances for doubtful accounts were charged in the appropriation at the time it was determined that collection of the debt, or debts, was considered unlikely.

The accounts we recommend for forgiveness are a result of bankruptcy, compromise settlements and/or in the public interest. In cases where a compromise settlement is reached, the following factors have been considered, the possibility of future recoveries, the cost of continuing legal actions and the value of the security, for example, Mr. Chairman, do the personal guarantees hold a realizable worth? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I invite Mr. Picco of the Government Operations Committee for the Committee's comments on the bill.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bill 13, the Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98. The standing Committee on Government Operations had an opportunity to review Bill 13, the Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98, at our meetings on February 22nd and 24th. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting the bill. As usual we had some good discussions. There were some questions answered and asked. As reprinted, this bill would authorize the government to forgive approximately \$62,000 in debts. The committee noted that this is a significantly smaller amount, Mr. Chairman, than has been forgiven in recent years.

Mr. Chairman, committee members may have additional comments or questions on the bill during the review right now in committee of the whole. That is about all I have to say on Bill 13, Forgiveness of

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Debts Act. This would conclude the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Bill 13, Forgiveness of Debt Act, 1997-98. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Does the Minister wish to bring in witnesses? Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

No, I am fine, Mr. Chairman. I think there are only 2 clauses. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. General comments on the bill by members? No general comments. Are we prepared to move clause by clause on the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Bill 13, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997-98. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

On page 1 of Bill 13, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. On page 2 of Bill 13, Schedule of Debts Forgiven. Total \$62,029.09. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Does the committee agree that Bill 13 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Bill 13 is now ready for third reading. I thank the Minister of Finance for appearing before the committee. Mr. Todd. Perhaps we could have some direction now, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

That we report progress, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. We have a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Good evening. We are on item 20, committee of the whole. Mr. Steen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99 and Committee Reports 5-13(5), 2-13(5), 3-13(5) and 4-13(5), also Bills 9, 12, and 13 and would like to report progress with two motions being adopted, that Committee Reports 2, 3, 4, and 5 are concluded, that Bills 8, 9, 12 and 13 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Barnabas. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there is a meeting of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 3, 1998:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers Statements
3. Members Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions

8. Return to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 16-13(5), Extended Adjournment (Mr. Ningark)
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, No. 2
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Considerations in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1997-98
 - Committee Report 06-13(5), Standing Committee on Government Operations, Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General to the NWT Legislative Assembly for the Year Ended March 31, 1996
 - Tabled Document 15-13(5), 1998-99 Budget Address
 - Tabled Document 19-13(5), Guidelines for Implementing Public/Private Partnerships
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
 - Page 1264
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99
 - Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99
 - Bill 12, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98

- Bill 13, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1997- 98

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned to Tuesday,
March 3, 1998, at 10:00 a.m.

--ADJOURNMENT