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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, February 9, 2010****Members Present**

Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:36 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 61-16(4):
DIAMONDS, TOURISM AND CANADA'S
NORTHERN HOUSE STATEMENT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games are still a few days away, but our government's efforts to promote the Northwest Territories at the games as a place to invest in, visit and live have been going on for quite some time.

With that in mind, I'd like to talk today about the government's recent activities in this very important initiative.

Mr. Speaker, Canada's Northern House opened to the public on January 15th. This is the North's Olympic pavilion and is the result of a partnership between the governments of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon. This building will be ground zero in our pan-territorial efforts to promote the North.

Two weeks ago I was fortunate enough to attend the grand opening of Canada's Northern House, as was the honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Dave Ramsay. Also attending the grand opening were Nunavut Deputy Premier Peter Taptuna, Yukon Deputy Premier Elaine Taylor, B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell, the federal government's Minister of State for Sport, Gary Lunn, and Vancouver Olympic Committee CEO Mr. John Furlong. It was a proud moment for the Northwest Territories.

And I say that with conviction, Mr. Speaker. Canada's Northern House was the first Canadian provincial and territorial Olympic pavilion to open.

A great accomplishment for the three territories with limited resources.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure each and every resident of the Northwest Territories that Canada's Northern House is a wonderful asset in our efforts to promote our home to the world. It truly showcases the best our Territory has to offer: our people, our culture, our land, our communities, our arts and crafts and our business opportunities.

It has also been a smash hit with the public. On Sunday we had over 3,500 visitors and over 20,000 visitors have walked through our doors so far. We've received media coverage from all across Canada, the United States, United Kingdom, Scandinavia and Asia. I'd like to provide the Members with a sampling of some of the words visitors have used to describe Canada's Northern House: "beautiful," "fascinating," "amazing," "awesome," "informative" and "wonderful."

Mr. Speaker, this government has also ensured that there is a full slate of events and programming scheduled at Canada's Northern House. We just wrapped up two of those events. The first was Diamond Week, held February 1st to 4th, where we promoted our diamond industry. The week featured demonstrations on diamond cutting and polishing, talks on prospecting and information about diamond mining from representatives of our three diamond mines. The week was capped off by the "Rare in Nature" fashion show, which featured Northwest Territories diamonds, jewellery and the fur fashions of Dene Fur Clouds of Fort Providence. Mr. Robert Hawkins and I had the opportunity to attend this gala. It was a tremendous show and a wonderful way to wrap up Diamond Week.

Yesterday and today Canada's Northern House is hosting Tourism Days, where Mikey McBryan of Buffalo Airways, operators like Ted Grant of Simpson Air and the Nahanni Mountain Lodge, and Don Morin of Aurora Village, along with representatives of Northwest Territories Tourism and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, are on hand to promote the broad range of tourism opportunities in the Northwest Territories.

Yesterday Mr. Dave Ramsay and I had the privilege of attending one of these tourism days. We were able to meet with the tourism travel trade, media

and Canadian Tourism Commission delegates. It was an amazing event.

This was just the beginning, Mr. Speaker. Activities and events will continue at Canada's Northern House until April and this facility and our promotional efforts there will bring unprecedented exposure to the Northwest Territories. It will also potentially open up new markets for our artists and our businesses, and help to diversify our economy and provide all Northwest Territories communities and regions with choices and opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, in a few days Canadian athletes will give it their all in hopes of bringing home the gold at the 2010 Winter Olympics. And I can assure the Members of this House and all our residents that the Government of the Northwest Territories is giving its all to promote our Territory at the games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 62-16(4):
NWT MENTAL WELLNESS WEEK –
FEBRUARY 7 - 13, 2010

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the week of February 7 to 13, 2010, has been designated NWT Mental Wellness Week by the Northwest Territories branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Twenty percent of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime. The change in name from Mental Health Week to NWT Mental Wellness Week emphasizes how it is important not to stigmatize mental health issues and instead draw attention to how we are able to take positive steps towards our mental well-being.

Mr. Speaker, "Building Supports" is one of the key messages for Mental Wellness Week this year. The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to assisting residents in the NWT in making healthy choices and finding ways to address mental health and addiction issues. By building a strong personal support system for ourselves, we will increase our mental wellness and better cope with day-to-day life.

As outlined in a Foundation for Change Action Plan, we can each make healthy choices to build supports for ourselves, such as asking for help when we need it, making our relationships a priority or joining a group in which we share common interests.

Within the Health and Social Services authorities, the Community Counselling Program addresses the areas of mental health, addictions and family violence. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge all the front-line staff and workers, such as clinical supervisors, mental health and addictions

counsellors and wellness workers, for their hard work and commitment in supporting the people of the NWT in their pursuit of wellness. They provide essential services such as counselling and referrals for both treatment and after-care.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services has committed approximately \$800,000 in suicide prevention initiatives this year, such as suicide prevention training programs and community-based projects such as self-esteem camps for youth.

Health and Social Services also funds the NWT Helpline through the NWT branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. The NWT Helpline provides toll-free service for those in distress from across the NWT. The NWT Helpline number in Yellowknife is 920-2121 or toll-free 1-800-661-0844.

The department is also proud to support new community-based, culturally relevant initiatives in the Beaufort-Delta region to address mental health and addictions issues. Mr. Speaker, they are working closely with the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation to support a three-year pilot project in the region in the communities of Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk and Fort McPherson.

This work is unique in that community-based organizations are being provided the opportunity to design their own Mental Health and Addictions Program based on their understanding of their need and their unique understanding of solutions that will work for them.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to extend a warm thank you to the delegates, who are Health and Social Services employees appointed under the Mental Health Act, for volunteering their time to ensure the act is followed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 63-16(4):
CULTURE AND HERITAGE UPDATES

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: This week is Heritage Week and each year the City of Yellowknife recognizes one resident for their work preserving our northern heritage. I want to congratulate Yvonne Quick, who is the recipient of the 2009 City of Yellowknife Heritage Award. Over the years she has served on the City of Yellowknife's Heritage Committee, the Northern Frontier Visitors Association board of directors, the Wildcat Cafe Advisory Committee, the NWT Mining Heritage Society and the Float Plane Fly-in and Air Show committees. She is also the current coordinator of the Arctic Ambassadors and

represents the Northwest Territories on the federal/provincial/territorial Culture, Heritage and Tourism Initiative, a nation-wide committee that brings together heritage and tourism.

There are many heritage activities and programs provided year-round by schools, language centres, cultural organizations and community museums across the Northwest Territories. I encourage people and families to participate in these activities and consider the many ways of celebrating their cultural heritage in everyday life through spending time with elders, preparing traditional foods, travelling to places of cultural significance, speaking their traditional language and learning about their family history through stories and photographs. Residents and visitors in the Yellowknife area may want to visit the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre the evening of February 10th for the opening of the City of Yellowknife Heritage Art Show, featured until February 26th. The exhibit highlights the rich history of our capital city expressed through creativity of Yellowknife residents.

I believe supporting this kind of creativity is essential for fostering productive and healthy communities. In 2010 the NWT Arts Council celebrates 25 years of supporting northern artists, helping them develop and share their talents. Since it started in August 1985, the NWT Arts Council has provided support to over 1,000 artists and organizations.

Throughout this anniversary year, activities and workshops are planned in each region showcasing local artists and cultural organizations. I invite everybody to participate in their community, get to know their local artists and thank them for enriching the cultural fabric of our communities. I would like to thank the NWT Arts Council members across the Territory whose ongoing efforts increase awareness about the value of northern art.

A great way people and visitors in the Yellowknife area can learn more about the NWT Arts Council is by viewing some of the art they've supported at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. In addition, Amazing Family Sunday activities at the territorial museum often include presentations by artists who are funded by the council and other programs of my department.

These are great opportunities to spend time with family, learning about the diverse cultures that make our Territory such a great place to call home.

I'd like to give you a taste of some of the Amazing Family Sunday activities coming up at the museum. On February 14th the City of Yellowknife Heritage Committee is hosting a storytelling event; on February 21st people are invited to a tour of the art on display at the museum, with demonstrations by the Aurora Arts Society; music is the theme on February 28th, when people can take in a performance by members of Classics on Stage

Yellowknife; and finally, on March 5th local experts will demonstrate traditional northern clothing decoration. I encourage everybody to bring their family on Sundays for a fun look at the art and culture of the Northwest Territories.

Visitors to our territorial museum can also catch a glimpse of some existing new exhibits being created. Museum staff are currently developing new permanent displays that highlight the beauty and cultural significance of our northern landscapes, animals, artifacts, stories and legends. A new display featuring muskrat in the Mackenzie Delta is scheduled to open in June 2010.

As I said earlier, supporting northern art and culture is essential for fostering healthy and productive communities. I want to again thank the NWT Arts Council for 25 years dedicated to helping northern artists achieve their goals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NEW SCHOOL FOR TROUT LAKE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, I was in Trout Lake before Christmas and the community leadership and members have great value for our education system and for their children. They want a real school.

Presently, classes for students from K to 10 are held in the community recreation complex in a one-room area. This area is being retrofitted and it is not the same as a stand-alone school. Also, once plans begin for a new school, I also ask that a gymnasium be considered, as Trout Lake is one of the two communities in the North that does not have a gymnasium.

Trout Lake is experiencing a homecoming of sorts. Young couples are raising and bringing their young families home with them and settling in the community. They would like a school like the one in Jean Marie River.

Learning starts in the home community and children need a safe and enjoyable place to learn. Thus I support the community in their request for a new stand-alone school in Trout Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is on the condition of

firefighting equipment in the communities. Our small, remote communities are ill-equipped to fight fires. The approach our community fire departments are now taking is to let fires burn and to just control it. Our communities have no offensive and defensive capabilities, and that is unacceptable. Considering that the small, remote communities that are most susceptible to house fires have the highest number of deaths per capita all over Canada, you'd think this government would be working with local fire marshals and various funding sources to develop real funding for each community.

When I toured my communities during my last constituency tour, the Sachs Harbour hamlet foreman took me for a tour of the garage, where an outdated fire truck sat in cold storage and was last inspected in 1984. The last time the garage was needed for repairs, valves for the truck were broken. I spoke to the mayor, Yvonne Elias, that the community consistently worries, knowing that they don't have a fire truck in the event of a fire. That's unacceptable. Sachs Harbour could not include vital services in their capital plan due to struggles with their ongoing problems with the rec complex. Paulatuk has some old firefighting gear, as they could not afford all new. Ulukhaktok has the same situation: outdated firefighter's gear.

Why is this government continuing to place firefighting services in small, remote communities on the back burner? I've visited all my communities enough to know the communities desperately need an overhaul in their fire equipment. I'm especially concerned with the lack of equipment and resources for each community. Firefighters entering a house, searching for somebody, could get trapped without proper equipment. They could seriously get hurt.

I hope the community firefighters in the NWT will have experience, and if they do, we must equip them. They are risking their lives to serve and protect the communities. The least we can do is train and equip them properly.

I'll have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ECOLE ALLAIN ST-CYR SCHOOL EXPANSION

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, it may be a little early to start talking about a capital project, but there is an unequal situation in one of our schools in Yellowknife, one which must be corrected. Ecole Allain St-Cyr provides French first-language schooling for students from kindergarten to grade 12, and

because of dedicated parents, teachers and board members -- which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year -- has grown from a single portable at Sissons School site in 1989, with only nine students, to the opening of their own building on their own land in 2000, to the five grade 12 students in the initial graduating class in 2007, then phase one of a two-part expansion to the school in 2008.

Yet, this school of about 110 students does not enjoy the same facilities as other YK schools. Ecole Allain St-Cyr does not have any capacity for physical education. They have no gym, no multi-purpose space and no outdoor playing field. A gymnasium is scheduled for the second part of the school's expansion, and the dollars for that expansion are not in the 2010-11 Capital Budget and not in the 2011-12 Capital Budget either. No, phase two of Ecole Allain St-Cyr has been delayed until at least the 2012-13 fiscal year.

This is a complicated situation, Mr. Speaker. As French first-language rights holders, the children of Francophone parents are guaranteed schooling in French, according to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the federal government provides funding for French first-language schools; schools such as Ecole Allain St-Cyr. The GNWT, through Education, Culture and Employment, was slow to agree to build the school's necessary expansion a number of years ago and phase one only took place after a court decision forced the government's hand. Phase two of the court-ordered expansion has once again been delayed by ECE and should not be delayed any further. All parties concerned recognize that capital planning takes time and that it is a slow process, particularly when three orders of government are involved. But, Mr. Speaker, I don't think we want to go back to court to get phase two underway.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MS. BISARO: Apparently, GNWT is waiting for the federal government to commit capital funds, and the federal government is waiting for the GNWT to commit the funds. The kids are caught in the middle, learning in a school without a gym to give them much-needed physical activities. Ecole Allain St-Cyr students deserve the same access to physical education activities as all other students in the city. Phase two of the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr must be included in the 2011-12 Infrastructure Budget. It can't be left until 2012-13. If the GNWT takes the lead and shows our commitment to this project by assigning the capital dollars, then the Government of Canada is much more likely to ante up their portion of the capital costs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STUDENT ABSENTEEISM
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about school absenteeism in the smaller aboriginal communities. Mr. Speaker, our dedicated educators in the smaller communities are continually faced with the challenges of getting students to attend school on a regular basis. There are many factors outside the school that contribute to this very serious problem. On this front, I know that community education councils in these communities are doing the best they can to address the issue. However, Mr. Speaker, there are many other community education issues that need more immediate attention. One such issue is funding.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what we, as a government, are doing to address this issue. What type of supports does this government have in place for addressing the issue of absenteeism? What resources have we committed? What plans do we have in place that support the schools, that support the community education councils to help them address student absenteeism and to address the factors of student absenteeism?

Mr. Speaker, I know this could be a complex issue. For example, the problem could very well originate in the home and the quality of the parenting in the home with lack of support a child is getting or it could be a case of different cultures. Maybe some families in these smaller aboriginal communities are choosing to take their children out of school for certain periods of time to go out on the land to pass important traditional traditions on to their children.

Mr. Speaker, I hear this government making all kinds of effort for supporting industry, for supporting both renewable and non-renewable harvesting exploration extraction. I would like to see this government add to this effort and include additional and immediate support in the schools and education councils in the smaller aboriginal communities for addressing student absenteeism.

I can see this being a collective effort by the Department of Education and also the Department of Health and Social Services. Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
LACK OF ADEQUATE DENTAL CARE
IN THE INUVIK REGION

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have heard from several residents of the Inuvik region

about the lack of dental care in the Inuvik region. Without essential service, children and young adults are going without.

Mr. Speaker, dental care is just as important as health care. Mr. Speaker, the lack of adequate services in the Inuvik region are having to have families and family members pay their own way to Yellowknife at their own expense for their children to deal with braces. They see the oral dentists here in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, but, more importantly, they are bearing the costs. Again, they are not being reimbursed by the Department of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is essential that that service be provided. Mr. Speaker, I have heard from one family where they waited for over three years for service. Three years is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Inuvik region hasn't had an orthodontist in the region for some time. I think it is critical that that position be filled and it be filled as soon as possible. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Health has the responsibility to ensure that families and the residents of the Mackenzie Delta's children will be taken care of with this important service.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services questions on this matter and, more importantly, on the well-being of dental care for the people in the Inuvik region. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
AND SUPPORTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of Health and Social Services has indicated, the Mental Wellness Week is February 7th to 13th. Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the news this past week. I was very saddened to hear the report of the young mother in Millet, Alberta, that was going through a relationship breakup. In fact, they found her two children, her two little boys -- they showed a picture of them on the news -- and the two year old and the 10 month old were dead in her home. After that, she attempted to take her own life. Mr. Speaker, when I heard that story on the news, I thought to myself, what do we have here in the Northwest Territories that is different than those who live in a big city and are lost in that kind of milieu who would become so desperate? I have to assume that perhaps mental illness played a part in that or post-partum depression played a part in that.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we as legislators and as a government do spend those resources to ensure that there is help out there for

people when they do go through situations of desperation or times of mental illness. I think that we also need to talk about it, so that we take away the stigma so that people do not feel embarrassed or ashamed to reach out and ask for help when they need it and to clearly and concisely communicate their needs.

Mr. Speaker, to that end, I want to tell you that many people look at me and think that I have accomplished a fair amount in my life and have on my now fourth term serving here in the Legislature. But I want to tell you that, as a young mother with two small boys myself, with news of stress of my mother being diagnosed with a terminal illness of cancer, at the age 27 I went through a period, a very dark period of post-partum depression, with two little boys and 3,000 miles from home in the Northwest Territories. Now, I had the good fortune of having a supportive husband and by the grace of God and with the help and support of a community, I did come out of that. As you can see, I have gone on to lead, I think, a very kind of normal and productive life. But, Mr. Speaker, I know what it is to be in those throes of being down and being desperate and being depressed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage anybody who is out there, if you are in need, reach out for help from someone. This Helpline that the Minister spoke of today is there. There are people who do care. People need to be aware of that. I do commend the Minister for this initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak today on one of my highest priorities, which is the need to give our children the best start in life both for their own sakes and for the good of our society.

In Canada it's estimated that the loss of physical and intellectual development in childhood will reduce our economic productivity by 20 percent over the next 60 years. That toll of missed opportunity accumulates one child at a time. It can only be worse in the NWT, where poor access to childcare, rates of household poverty, and all the sad indicators of difficult lives are much higher.

Getting our children started on living a whole life has to be our biggest priority if we are to prosper fully in a realized society. Evidence from many progressive jurisdictions proves that the cost to government of child care support is repaid many times over. Increased worker productivity and tax revenues, reduced social assistance and social services costs, reduced crime, justice and correction costs, and the reduced impacts of

lifelong substance abuse are clear benefits. The building blocks for full early childhood development are clear and they include access to affordable childcare. Parents must work to provide well for their children, especially in the North. Food, clothing, recreational opportunities and learning. So they must have high-quality full- and part-time child care. Child care availability is that much harder in our small communities, where schools must play a key role.

Early childhood health services, healthy pregnancies, parenting skills support and infant health care provide the opportunities to promote healthy development in the critical first 18 months. Perhaps the most obvious need of all is adequate nutrition. It's hard to have a healthy life without a healthy childhood. Adequate, nutritious food is the most basic need. In our conditions of poverty, that means child care must include nutritious meal programs, from daycare through the schools. And finally, healthy cultural grounding is essential. Meaning we must ensure children are reared in the culture that will support their lifelong growth and well-being.

Responsibilities for ensuring early childhood development are broad across the departments of ECE and Health and Social Services. I will be asking the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment questions regarding the state of early childhood development services to date.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPACTS OF HOUSING SHORTAGES ON NORTHERN COST OF LIVING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to start off today by thanking the NWT Construction Association, which held a meeting last Friday to talk about 300 homes for 300 families. They want to find a way to help attract people to the Northwest Territories. I must highlight that they've really sparked off the debate as to where some of our financial and long-term visions should lie. Certainly, they've nailed it down to one of the biggest problems we have here in the North. The Construction Association has clearly identified that housing is a serious problem here in the North and, certainly, housing availability is one of the problems I'm talking about.

This year Diavik announced an expansion of its communities that they will be picking up employees from. With that lies an opportunity for this government to say maybe we can expand the population of our Northwest Territories and work with these organizations and businesses that need more employees. The bottom line is they need more places to live.

If I provide a small snapshot, we recently heard the Minister of Finance talk about the 18 percent vacancy in the Northwest Territories government. We've heard that at least one mining sector would like to bring another 300 families to the Northwest Territories. We've always heard that the federal government would like to expand some of the opportunities here in the North by at least 100 federal families. Even if we just did a modest number, we could attract, of a three-person family, another 4,000 people here if we showed some real initiative by helping with the cost of living for development to help produce houses.

Recently we've heard some good vision from the Minister of ITI on the Look Up North campaign to attract southern workers to our northern environment. But the question really then lies: where would we put them? Nowhere. In some cases apartments are the solution for some people, but in other cases families would like homes. Money isn't getting any cheaper at the bank rates. Why are we not taking a look at this seriously to help support our municipalities to expand land development, to help curb some of the costs of that development? The opportunity is right in front of us.

If numbers are what they want to hear, I will tell the Finance Minister, which he knows, that in the last budget cycle we had \$25 million less in corporate and personal income taxes. If we attracted just the people I talked about, we'd have \$27 million in new transfer payments according to the agreement we have today.

Later today I will have questions for the Minister responsible for cost of living, the Strategic Initiatives committee, and we'll discuss the issues then.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CORRECTIONS SERVICES TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Justice made a statement on the success of a new approach to corrections training and recruitment and I wanted to say I was listening quite closely to that statement. The department has to be applauded for getting the Recruitment Program initiated. Sadly, the reality for aboriginal employees in corrections today is that some are still having a very difficult time at advancing their careers.

I have a constituent who is aboriginal, born and raised in the Northwest Territories. He's worked in corrections for over 17 years. He has solid performance appraisals throughout his years in corrections and he's getting very frustrated at consistently being passed over for advancement. He doesn't understand it and neither do I.

His story is one that I have seen many times across government. We like to say that we're hiring aboriginal people, but, really, what support, encouragement, training and planning is really taking place? Why aren't we seeing more aboriginal persons in senior management roles with this government?

In my constituent's case, he and his family are now planning on leaving the North. It really is troubling to know that we are losing long-term aboriginal employees to the South when they are consistently being passed over for advancement. The sad thing is that opportunities are going to individuals with no priority hiring status. This is just not right.

Seventeen years is a long time for an employee to keep trying to advance himself, applying on numerous positions to no avail, frustrated because he's watching others with no priority hiring status getting hired. He's watching direct appointments being made by the department and wonders how and why this continues to happen.

I'll have questions for the Minister of Justice at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. SPEAKER: It's always a pleasure to have Hay Riverites in the gallery and I'd like to recognize one of my constituents. Ms. Sandy Beaulieu is in the gallery today. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to beat our colleague here to recognizing his family. You have one of your constituents and I have one of mine too, our colleague, Mr. Beaulieu's sister, Louise-Ann Larocque.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Oh, no.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize my mother, Annie, and my sister Louise.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I'd like to welcome all our visitors in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 275-16(4): NEW SCHOOL FOR TROUT LAKE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement with regard to the Trout Lake school and the need for expansion; in fact, for creating a new one. I had this debate with the Minister of Education last year in the fall session and I just want to, of course, continue the support to the community of Trout Lake and ask the Minister about, will the Minister recognize the needs of the students in the community of Trout Lake to ensure that the budget for a new school is on our capital plan? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Trout Lake school, obviously there's a space issue, as the Member is alluding to, but we do have the student population that's going up and down. In 2009-10 there were 15 students attending the school. But at the current stage we have 33 students. So we have to have that in mind as well as we move forward.

There is a small capital project that's been identified in the 2010-11 Capital Plan as an immediate measure to deal with the issue with the space. But we can certainly develop a long-term plan for the school expansion down the road. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm glad to hear the Minister's positive response to a long-term plan of creating a new school for the community of Trout Lake. In fact, the government had promised in the past that they would actually build them a new school when the old Charles Tetcho burnt down.

Also, can I ask the Minister, in the long-term capital plan, to ensure that a gymnasium is attached to this school, because I like to think... My colleague Mr. Krutko showed me a letter that indicates that Trout Lake is one of the two communities in the North that does not have a gymnasium. Can this capital planning include a gymnasium when they look at a new school for Trout Lake? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, this particular capital plan that we're talking about, we need to work with the divisional education council as well. Also, I need to work with my colleague the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs with respect to the recreation, the gymnasium area. We have done that in the past where we've had communities partnering on a certain expansion in the schools. Those are the discussions that we can certainly have with the Member and also the Member's leadership at the community level. I think, Mr. Speaker, this particular issue that's before us, we'll discuss it further. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: That's the kind of discussion that we'd certainly like to see for Trout Lake. We've taken care of big schools throughout our North up to date, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's time to start concentrating on our small and remote communities and providing facilities for them. Once again, when will the capital planning discussions begin with the education council and the Minister of Education towards planning of the school in Trout Lake? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, all the schools are our prime focus. We're not comparing small schools versus bigger centre schools. I think we feel that all schools are the responsibility of the GNWT as a whole under the Department of Education. But with this ongoing discussion that we're going to be having, we need to compile that information from the divisional education council, what they have on file, with our department. Certainly, from there we'll move forward with that information on the capital planning process. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased, once again, to see the eagerness of the Minister to assist the community of Trout Lake. Like I said, the whole community is behind this initiative. I'd like to ask the Minister once again if he will commit to begin the process of identifying a school for Trout Lake in the long term. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, this will be part of the discussion that we're going to be having on the capital projects for future discussion, along with other schools throughout the Northwest Territories. Definitely, this will be part of the discussion we will be having within our department and also the education council for Nahendeh. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 276-16(4): LACK OF ADEQUATE DENTAL CARE IN THE INUVIK REGION

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. It is in regard to dental care in the Inuvik region and, more importantly, the lack of the orthodontists in the region.

I think it's critical that we have that service being provided. Like I mentioned in my statement, Mr. Speaker, there are quite a few people who have been calling me and also other Members of this House and, more importantly, the frustration of having to wait three years after being referred for surgery and still hasn't heard back from the department. I'd like to ask the Minister: exactly what

is your department doing to ensure that dental care services are being provided in the Inuvik region and, more importantly, having an orthodontist in the region to provide that important service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let the record show that this is a two good news day for the Mackenzie Delta from the Department of Health and Social Services. Earlier in my Minister's statement, I indicated the mental wellness initiatives in McPherson, and I'm happy to confirm that we have a three-year contract with an orthodontist for the Beaufort-Delta. We expect that he will begin service on April 1st, until March 2013. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, that is good news, but too bad that people aren't hearing it outside of this building. I recommend to the Minister she puts out a press release on that good news story, because I think people are waiting to hear that. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, people are still having to have the lack of dental care in the region and also for the individuals who have taken it on themselves to bring their children to Yellowknife at their own cost to get them into the dental care system in Yellowknife. Is there a way that those people can be reimbursed for those costs associated with dental care from the Inuvik region?

HON. SANDY LEE: I know lots of people are listening to the debates in the House, so I'm sure the Beaufort-Delta knows this good news already.

Mr. Speaker, I need to advise everyone that dental service is not a health service that the Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for. It is an NIHB service. It's the federal government that pays for dental service. The Department of Health and Social Services and the authorities assist in this program in terms of getting a contract for the dentist. If the Member wishes to give me the personal information of these individuals, we would be happy to assist them in doing the paperwork to NIHB to recover some of those costs. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I will definitely get that to the Minister. The other issue that I was dealing with is the issue of an individual who was diagnosed to get surgery three years ago and still hasn't gotten it. I'd like to ask the Minister: can you put some urgency on that case and get the individual into the appropriate care that is needed and so they can get the surgery in regard to their dental care? Can the Minister commit to that? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, I would commit to getting the individual information from the Member and assist where we can. Without knowing the facts, I

have to say it's hard to believe that somebody could not have a surgery for three years. There must be some reasons for that, because we do get periodic requests from constituents and we do help with the process of bridging the gap between the NIHB and our clients. So if the Member brings the information forward, I will commit to follow that up. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Your final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, I thank the Minister for that. Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to ask the Minister if her department can put out some sort of a public notice informing the public in the Inuvik region that that contract has been let and there is going to be a service provider so that the public in the Inuvik region knows that their dental care will be taken care of through a new contractor arrangement, so we get it out to the public either through a public announcement or, basically, the Minister making a statement in the House. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, I will work with the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority to publicize this welcome start of the orthodontist in the Beaufort-Delta region. At the same time, I would like to ask all the public in the Beaufort-Delta, if they have a dental appointment, please show up. If they can't make it, please let us know so that we could maximize the use of these dentists when they are in communities. This was a topic we talked about in the Beaufort-Delta Regional Council meetings. I will advertise both of them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 277-16(4): ECOLE BOREALE SCHOOL EXPANSION

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Listening to my colleague Mr. Menicoche today talk about school and a gymnasium for Trout Lake, I had asked the Minister of Education not to make them wait long, because I think we had to listen to him speak in this House about the gymnasium for Nahanni Butte for about three or four years.

On the topic of gymnasiums, Mr. Speaker, we all know the value and the importance to children of physical activity, and in our remote and northern communities here, where it is cold much of the year and not everybody can participate in outdoor activities, a school gymnasium is a very, very important thing to promote the health and well-being and enhance the education of our children.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to Hay River and the Ecole Boreale and the advancements that have taken place there with the establishment of a school and now the addition of additional classroom space through the portables that were added on, that school is still without a gymnasium. I wonder if the

Minister of Education could update us on what the government is doing in relation to that. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Hay River school, there has been an addition to it to deal with the space issue; the challenge that was put before us I believe a couple of years ago in the school itself. Also, the gymnasium aspect of it, certainly there have been arrangements made with other schools within the community of Hay River. Part of the long-term plan, of course, is to work on the gymnasiums for those schools without the gymnasiums. Like I said to other Members, I need to work with the Department of PWS and also Municipal and Community Affairs on this particular piece of work. We need to cover all schools that we are currently dealing with. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, the Ecole Boreale is a French first language school and, as such, when the original capital budget for that school was obtained, there was participation by Heritage Canada in conjunction with our government, and subsequently our government has invested more capital in that school.

Mr. Speaker, is there an opportunity to secure any funding for the gymnasium to any other sources than just to the normal capital planning process of the GNWT? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, this Ecole Boreale, we are always in negotiation with the federal government just on expansion itself, even here in Yellowknife. Those two schools, we have been in contact on numerous occasions with the previous superintendent of the French school and also even now with the new person onboard, that we continue throughout the open communication dialogue, because we need their support as well when we are faced with the federal government. At the same time, within our department, I will continue to work with other departments in the area of recreation, the gymnasium piece of the area within the school. Mahsi.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, maybe my question was not clear enough, but what I would like to know -- and I didn't hear this in the answer from the Minister -- is there an opportunity to secure additional capital funding through the federal government Heritage Canada for the expansion of the facilities at Ecole Boreale through federal dollars, or is it a GNWT allocation that will have to be identified for the adding of a gymnasium? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, with the addition that we are talking about, whether it be

the second phase of Ecole Allain St-Cyr and also the Ecole Boreale in Hay River, we also talked about having a gymnasium attached to the school through our negotiation with the federal government. So we will continue to address that at the federal level. We are, like I said, Mr. Speaker, dealing with the French school board on enhancing this even further, expediting the process with the federal government, but it has been a slow process to date, but we're not giving up. We're going to continue our negotiations with the federal counterparts and Canadian Heritage. Mahsi.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I assume that the portables that were added on to Ecole Boreale to make room for more classroom space were intended as a temporary measure. So I would like to ask the Minister of Education if, in considering the expansion of the school to incorporate that additional classroom space, the gymnasium could be part of that ask and part of that negotiation and I'm also just wondering if the footprint for an expanded Ecole Boreale could be accommodated on its present site. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Those are discussions we need to have with the community of Hay River French school board and our department identifying the gymnasium or the footprint of the actual facility right now. We've added on as a temporary measure to deal with the space crunch at that time. So, yes, we will continue to have ongoing discussions with the parties to move this forward with the federal government. So we will continue to do our part as the Department of Education, Culture and Employment with the community of Hay River. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 278-16(4):
CORRECTIONS SERVICES TRAINING
AND RECRUITMENT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've got questions today for the Minister of Justice and I guess I'll give the Minister of Human Resources a heads up too. We are here for another four weeks, so I'll have ample opportunity to ask him some questions on advancement of aboriginal people in senior management positions in this government. For today, I'm going to ask the question to Minister Lafferty. It gets back to my Member's statement. I would like to ask the Minister if he could explain to me how a 17-year tenured aboriginal employee with corrections, with good performance appraisals, is consistently being denied and overlooked for opportunities to advance his career in corrections. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this particular area is a personnel issue. At the same time, we can be generic about whether it be the 17 years, aboriginal employee within corrections. Mr. Speaker, there has been some progress in play with certain individuals within the system where individuals may work night shifts and they get an opportunity or are offered an opportunity to work day shift, so they can expand their role in day and night shifts. At times, there is some reluctance for various reasons and due to the fact that the warden and associate warden try to deal with this matter and put the individuals through the development stages. There have been some challenges, but we're not giving up on those individuals. We want them to succeed. We do have an associate warden who is aboriginal. So we are making steps in the right direction, Mr. Speaker, having our aboriginal workforce move up in the system is our prime focus right now and is the priority of the Justice department and GNWT. Mahsi.

MR. RAMSAY: Is the Minister aware of direct appointments of non-aboriginal, non-priority persons into positions at North Slave Correctional Centre? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: There have been direct appointments in the past, but we currently deal with inventory of people that we have on file and individuals that are moving up within the system are given, based on their credentials, based on the experience they provide to the organization and not only that, but to the aboriginal perspective, there are... The numbers we have within our corrections officers at North Slave Corrections is 36 positions are filled by aboriginal workforce and 27 are non-aboriginal workforce. There are 87 other full-time positions with 16 percent filled by aboriginal people. So those are individuals that we continue to focus. We work closely with human resource development, because they do have a plan in place as well. We, on the other hand, within the Justice department, have a role to play during the development stages to focus on those individuals in a management position.

MR. RAMSAY: I hope the Minister can understand the frustration of this individual when having been in the corrections field for 17 years. He watches individuals who are new to the position, who've been there for less than a year, who are non-priority, non-aboriginal get direct appointed into positions. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would be willing to share -- and he talked about it a little bit -- the Succession Planning Initiative at North Slave Correctional Centre. I know we have 36 percent aboriginal employees on the floor at that facility, but what is the percentage in senior management?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Surely I can share the information that we have within North Slave Correctional Centre on the number of positions, the percentage and whatnot. But I did meet with the MLA and the individual that he's referring to and I would encourage the individual to continue applying, because now we're having seven positions that are currently open for transfer. Fifty-seven percent, or four positions, will be for aboriginal people. There is a great opportunity there to be identified. Those individuals who are interested need to work with our system as well. Either take the day shift and night shift combined together and additional roles and responsibilities. Those are the areas we continue to push within our system.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was wondering if the Minister has a breakdown of the 20 individuals that have just gone through the training program for careers in corrections. There are 20 individuals. What is the breakdown on that by priority status and aboriginal persons?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are very proud of our training program that we have initiated. It's very successful, focusing on the northern hires. We can have a breakdown to aboriginal perspective. I guess we're focusing on the northern perspective, the northern people that we hire that go through the transition period to development stages. Yes, I can share that with the Member.

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

QUESTION 279-16(4):
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement and ask the Minister of ECE a few questions here on early childhood. I'm very supportive of the Early Childhood Small Communities Initiative that's been announced in the budget. It shows some good coordination. I'm wondering what the deficit is. I'm assuming this is known. What is the deficit in the number of child care spaces in the Northwest Territories and how many new daycare spaces does the government plan to open or support in the coming year?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. A couple questions there. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Early Childhood Program delivery is, of course, our first priority as a government and also with my specific department of Education, Culture and Employment. I do not have the

breakdown of what the Member is referring to as a deficit, but we are investing more money, as you know, within the budget that will be before us and that we'll be discussing further on the huge investment that we're allotting for that particular area of early childhood. So we'll continue to invest in those areas, because this is a prime example of a worthwhile investment into a system.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate those comments. I am, once again, very supportive of the program. I think it would be worthwhile determining what the needs are out there for number of spaces. That would help inform the program and make it more effective. I wonder if the Minister would commit to determining how many child care spaces are needed and, once again, I'm wondering how many new ones are being supported this year.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: When we talk about the early childhood spaces, we do have some throughout the Northwest Territories. We have roughly... I have a number here of 1,800 as a number. But it does fluctuate, the population on these spaces that we have. But I can certainly provide that detailed information for the Member that we have on hand on the early childhood development programming and the needs of these individuals in the communities. That can be available to the Members.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that commitment to determine how many child care spaces are needed compared to what we now have. The other question I have is, our birth rate in terms of annual numbers is fairly predictable. Is the capacity in place to provide healthy pregnancy, infant health, and parenting skills programming to all who are likely to need these services? I realize some of those are Health and Social Services but, as I say, I'm impressed with the coordination. Is the capacity in place to provide healthy pregnancy, infant health and parenting skills programming to all who are likely to need those services now?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I was just chatting with my colleague here. Yes, the health centres do provide those services. Not only that, within the early childhood space the Member is referring to, capacity, we do have the capacity. If not, then the funding that's been identified is available to organizations that would like to maybe open up a space in that area. Yes, there is a collaboration and cooperation by Health and Social Services and our Department of Education, Culture and Employment on providing more services in this area.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that response. I would like to ask the Minister, a particular need is for spaces for infants. That seems to be the bottleneck and perhaps understandably. It's very challenging. Is the Minister

supporting the provision of child care spaces for infants and where are we at on that? Is there sufficient provision of those spaces out there? I understand there isn't. What is the Minister doing to provide that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That infant provision is part of the ongoing discussions that we're having, whether it be the expansion of the area. But within the early childhood spaces, we do have infants in our spaces. Within the five regions, as I indicated, the 1,800 spaces available, they also have a child care area and nursery school, after-school program and family day home. So they do take in infants as well. So we'll continue to work with that with those organizations that we sponsor.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 280-16(4):
ECOLE ALLAIN ST-CYR SCHOOL EXPANSION

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. He's getting his exercise getting up and down today. I was going to ask him what progress has been made and ask for an update on plans that ECE has for phase two expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr. He's kind of referred to that in answering questions from Mrs. Groenewegen. He's mentioned that discussions with the board are ongoing and he's also mentioned there was a need for board assistance. I'm not exactly sure what that means. I know the board is onside with this project, so I'd like to know from the Minister what he thinks needs to be done in order to get this project going.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We did send off another letter to the federal Minister of Canadian Heritage in January, this last month, reminding them of the critical stages we're at to expand the phase two of this particular school. Not only that, but we're trying to expedite the process. As I highlighted earlier, gymnasiums and other additional administration and learning support and the building services area, that's the phase two that we're talking about. At the same time, we are waiting for them to give us the go-ahead.

When I said the discussion is ongoing, we are continuing the discussions with the federal government and at the same time are having an open communication dialogue with the French school and the superintendant that is actively involved in this area with my department.

MS. BISARO: I don't believe I heard the Minister tell me what he thinks is required. I appreciate that

a letter has just recently been sent to Heritage Canada, but I am still looking to know what it is that we need to do. I have another question, though, on a bit of a different tack.

I'd like to know whether or not the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has facility standards for NWT schools and do we have facility standards that provide for a gymnasium in any school that the department builds.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: In the past even the current stages, the schools are being built with gymnasiums usually built in the past through MACA in partnership and also with the community. There's always been a partnership approach, because it does reflect on the recreation aspect of it. We continue to have those dialogues with the new schools as we move forward.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for the answer, but it really didn't get to my question. At one time there were facility standards for schools. There were things that were required such as certain classrooms of a certain size, open areas spaces of a certain size, office spaces of a certain size. I want to know whether we have facility standards now which require a gymnasium to be encompassed in the building plans for any new school.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: With the specific plans of the school specs, we do go through with PWS and also other departments as required. But I can get back to the Member on the specific gymnasium that she's referring to. Those are the discussions that we continue to have with other departments that are actively involved in this area.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I still didn't hear that we have those standards. I'm presuming that we don't. This expansion will provide gym space and I mentioned in my statement that I think there's a need for the GNWT to show the feds that we're committed to this project. I think that is also going to put pressure on the federal government and force them to be more supportive of the project than they are at the moment. I'd like to ask the Minister why the government, the GNWT, cannot commit our portion of the capital costs for this project in the 2011 budget. If we show our commitment I think the feds will produce the money that's required, so why can't we show the way?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I do believe we are committed to having the school expedited, the second phase. So that's why we continue to pressure the federal government to sponsor us as they did in phase one. They provided the funding to the schools and we're hoping that they'll continue to do so. Those are the discussions that we continue

to have to put more pressure on the federal government. We'll continue to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 281-16(4):
STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment questions on my Member's statement on absenteeism. This is not an opinion. I'm seeking from the data that the Minister has access to, if the Minister agrees that there is a direct correlation between absenteeism and graduation rates.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, throughout this session and in the previous session, as well, we did share the highlights of the graduation among the aboriginal groups or even the northern students. It has been very successful to date. Yes, we are currently dealing with a challenge on enrolment and absenteeism in the schools, but we are developing a plan of action to deal with those matters. I did highlight some of the key areas we've initiated with providing worthwhile investment into the school boards so they can deal with those enrolment and absenteeism challenges before us. There has been some progress being made since September until today, Mr. Speaker. So we are making progress in this area. Mahsi.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, again, from the information that the Minister does have in the department, does the Minister agree that the more education a person has, the greater the potential a person has for employment and higher income?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, most definitely I agree that the more an individual has education in their back pocket, high school graduation and on to post-secondary and even to higher education. Of course, we want them to come back to the Northwest Territories and work for whether it be our government or aboriginal governments or municipalities. So we continue to invest into our SFA Program, our Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative area. So we continue to invest in those areas. Early childhood that we talked about earlier, we continue to invest in those important factors. Mahsi.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, aside from the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative and more money being put into SFA, is there anything specific, anything strategic that's happening with the district education authorities and the department to address the issue of absenteeism? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, there are different education councils and also education authorities initiating their own practices to deal with the absenteeism. We just came from the South Slave school district where they had certain pilot projects that have been very successful and they are almost meeting the Canadian standards on the grade level. So I'd like to see in the next year or two the final results, hoping that we're beyond the Canadian standards. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are successful programs underway within each of the five regions. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was on the literacy tour in the South Slave with the Minister. I think that all indications are that if the students were attending school better than 90 percent of the time, we would probably be higher than functional grade level, actually. Would the Minister look at re-profiling some money to address the absenteeism issue with the district education authorities, from the department to the district education authorities? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I do believe this will be part of the discussion that the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative will certainly take into consideration, because they are dealing with the absenteeism, the enrolment issue, the functional grade level and the also the high school graduates we're upgrading. Those are the discussions that are before them and they will certainly take those into consideration. If not, we can certainly discuss it as we go forward. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 282-16(4):
FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in my Member's statement, Mr. Speaker, was the operation of fire departments in the local communities that I represent in Nunakput. Mr. Speaker, considering the volunteer firefighters are risking their lives for the service and protection of the communities, will the government develop a comprehensive checklist, whether it be proper valves functioning, breathing apparatus, heated truck facilities, proper safety training, a listed checklist to each community? Will the Minister commit to that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have an assistant fire marshal in the Inuvik region that would be more

than willing to go and visit the communities and work with them to do an inventory of the type of equipment they have and some of the training that they need. He'd be willing to do that and that would help the community identify some of their priorities. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: In the community of Tuk -- I've been a firefighter there for over 20 years, Mr. Speaker -- we have no breathing apparatuses. We have six units that were there from the 1980s. The bunker gear is outdated, Mr. Speaker. We were at a fire about a month and a half ago. I'm asking the Minister if he could commit to find the funding and the financing to address these issues in all of Nunakput. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the allocation of money, we give all our money to the communities now and the communities will then do their capital plan and do their priority list. We're having more and more communities now identifying some firefighting equipment, and their fire halls, they're identifying those as part of their capital plans. So the Member's communities up in Nunakput, I'm sure, once they work with the assistant fire marshal and realize what their priorities are and what equipment they need, I'm sure that they'll take it upon themselves to identify those and start putting some money towards purchasing those. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, during the transfer of the New Deal, it's difficult for the smaller communities to catch up on these. There's too little capital dollars given to the communities. Mr. Speaker, all we're asking for in the communities that I represent is that the fire marshal goes up there and does a proper check, a checklist in regard to the safety of the firefighters and not only that, for the safety of the people. Can the Minister commit to me that a fire marshal will go to every community and check the facilities that are in the communities? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I have had some discussions with the assistant fire marshal and he's aware of some of the community demands. He's more than willing to meet with the communities, identifying some of their equipment, their priorities, what needs to be improved. They're also planning on having regional workshops, where they bring the firefighters in from the communities and have a regional workshop in Inuvik. I think that's a great idea instead of sending them a long way. I think we'd be able to accommodate more people by having it in the region. These are initiatives that he's got on the go and I think they're very good initiatives that would benefit the communities in the Beaufort-Delta. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's all good news to hear from the Minister. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if we could do a joint letter to that fire marshal from myself and from him to get him into the communities to get this issue sorted out before a fire does occur. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I will communicate to the assistant fire marshal in the Inuvik region the member's desire to have him go into his communities. I'm sure that he will be well aware, after our discussion today, that he is needed in Nunakput. But I will communicate to him the Member's desire and we'll make sure that he gets up and works with the communities in identifying their firefighting equipment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 283-16(4):
IMPACTS OF HOUSING SHORTAGES
ON NORTHERN COST OF LIVING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in my Member's statement I was trying to talk about the issue of solving some of our housing problems. We've got one arm of the government trying to attract people; we've got another arm of the government of housing that likes to talk about how they work to increase the adequate supply and sustainability and, certainly, the affordability of housing, but we just don't seem to have a conductor organizing this whole thing. Then comes along this committee called the strategic investment for cost of living. I think they could be the real focus of this and certainly the solution to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the Construction Association, I think they are really onto something, a solution to some of the housing problem and certainly attracting people to the North and giving them the opportunity to an adequate supply of housing. I would like to ask Minister Lee, who is chair of that committee what is that Cost of Living committee doing to address the land costs to help provide adequate housing that is affordable here in the North? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister who is in charge of the committee on Reducing the Cost of Living, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, the committee was set up to do work across different departments to advance the objectives that were laid out by the 16th Assembly when we first met. We have been working on investing. We have invested in improving infrastructures, winter roads, highway improvements, airports. We have invested in

energy initiatives, and the work of electricity review as well as hydro has come out of this committee. Those are some of the initiatives we worked on to reduce the cost of living in the North. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate those elements. They sort of speak to the overall bottom line of the cost of living. I certainly won't ignore the fact that the Minister is correct that the budget does attempt to glaze over these issues. If anything, the reality is nothing really changes on the bottom line.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, I think the Construction Association again is on the right issue. They believe addressing some of the cost of living factors are let's tackle one of the pillars which is housing. So, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, has the Cost of Living committee ever thought about addressing some of the costs to housing, such as land development, to help stimulate a bit of a housing boom here in the Northwest Territories that could help bring in new residents to our North? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that MACA has been working on land development issues and some of the challenges faced with land over the years. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I am aware that the NWT Construction Association sponsored this gathering last Friday. I could not attend because I went to a fundraiser for Haiti, sponsored by the Native Women's Association. I am interested in hearing what this Construction Association has to say based on their gathering. I understand that they are seeking to speak to us. I am more than prepared to work with other colleagues on the Cabinet and Members from the other side to see what they have to say and how we could work together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to see if the Minister will commit to developing a policy that could help stimulate a housing boom here in the Northwest Territories that does not disrupt market costs or market value in the Northwest Territories but stimulates it through some kind of a bursary program that could work through our individual municipalities again to help them with the infrastructure costs and the land development costs. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister be willing to look at a policy of that nature to help kick off our economy after this recession? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the Member is touching on a lot of major issues that are the responsibility of various departments of this government. Like I stated already, I am and we are interested in hearing what the Construction Association has to say based on the gatherings that they had. I believe they are in the process of putting information together. We could always look to see how we can work together, whether it is land issue or attracting people into the North or dealing with the housing issues across the communities. Of

course, we are interested in hearing that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, not focussed at the Minister directly, but I think Cabinet is part of the problem. I think each department provides its own bottleneck to the issue, whether it is to supply land, whether it is the transfer of the land, whether it is negotiations or whatnot. I think Cabinet could actually show some real leadership to address the cost of living by helping with supporting the costs of development of the land. Would the Minister be able to bring this to the Cabinet table to start addressing these initiatives? They could start at the Cabinet table to show leadership throughout the government. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I don't think this speaks to bottlenecks in any department or lack of anything in anywhere. I think this speaks to complexities involved in land issues in the North, because we have municipal land, Commissioners land and other land types. Not only that, we have market communities like the city of Yellowknife and the towns of Hay River, Fort Smith, but we also have non-market-based communities where housing issues are different. Like I said already, the Strategic Initiative Committee on Reducing the Cost of Living is interested in looking at policy changes or policy options to address broad issues of reducing the cost of living. I would like to work with the Member and the association to see what they have to say and how we could advance it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 284-16(4):
PROMOTION OF DELINE AS THE
BIRTHPLACE OF HOCKEY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask several Ministers, but I think I am going to zero in on the Minister of ITI on this question here. Mr. Speaker, I think the ministerial statement here on diamonds and tourism in Canada's Northern House statement, I want to ask the Minister in terms of the promotion of Canada's North, the golden opportunity in the Olympics, if the Minister had any type of discussion in terms of promoting one of our best kept secrets being the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada in Deline. Even this House passed a motion. I really find it odd that this government here hasn't been taking this up and score the goal for us in terms of the Olympics here. I want to ask the Minister is this something that he would look at or is it too late, game is over and we can't throw this on the table in terms of promoting the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is not too late to promote Deline as the birthplace of hockey because the Olympics haven't started yet. Perhaps he can start tomorrow when he visits Canada's Northern House and getting that message out. I think he would be impressed with Northern House and a message that we are delivering to the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: I certainly look forward to the invitation from the Minister to go down to the Olympics. I will certainly do the invitation with the Minister in terms of promoting the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada at the Olympics. I want to note the Minister then would work with me in terms of when we have this promotion in Vancouver to display one of the most hidden secrets of the Northwest Territories or in Canada in terms of promoting hockey in the North. Would the Minister then work with me in terms of how we coordinate an event that would showcase the world that the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada is in Deline in the Sahtu region?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we have been using Canada's Northern House as the opportunity to publicize the North as a great place to live, work and invest in. Certainly promoting the spectacular Northwest Territories and all the different opportunities, and if there is some way we can promote the birthplace of hockey as a way to entice people to come and visit the Northwest Territories, we are quite interested in that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is correct that the Olympics are going to start soon. I was very surprised that this... I am very happy that we could have this opportunity to promote the birthplace of ice hockey in Deline down at the Olympics. I want to again ask the Minister in terms of putting some small display in terms of shirts and maybe even, I don't know if it is too late to invite some of the original hockey players, if that is possible. Invite some of the descendants of the hockey players from Deline in terms of promoting this historical event that happened in Canada. Would the Minister have some type of special concentrated specific time that we could promote the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are intending to keep Canada's Northern House open until early April and so when we go to Vancouver on Thursday, we can talk to some of our creative design team to see if we can develop something that can be exhibited at Canada's Northern House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister then look at the possibility of working with the community of Deline in terms of possibly looking at something that could be, they can add into the design or to the celebration at the place in Vancouver in terms of celebrating the birthplace of ice hockey in that community so the community can also celebrate with this government here?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As the Member knows, there are several communities in Canada that are claiming to be the birthplace of ice hockey as well as some places in England. I think the biggest help would be in being able to validate the fact that Deline is the birthplace of hockey. Certainly we can talk about that with our creative design team. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 285-16(4):
ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES
FUNDING PROPOSALS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week I spoke in this House about the lapse of aboriginal funding for '07-08 and '08-09 to the tune of hundreds and thousands of dollars. And, at the same time, this year I supported a proposal by the Deh Cho Friendship Centre for, I believe, it was a \$40,000 proposal to create an aboriginal South Slavey CD-Rom to help the community and help the region to work on our language. That proposal was refused, Mr. Speaker, saying the money was spent. I find it hard to believe that lapsing almost \$1.4 million the last two years and now we are saying we don't have money to fund unique aboriginal language proposal. I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment will he seriously consider this proposal and why is he saying there is no money for aboriginal language, given their past record? Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do take all applications seriously as they go before us. We do provide funding to all the education councils where they distribute to all the schools. The aboriginal funding we get from the federal government, we offset the costs from our perspective, as well, through the GNWT expenditures. The funding has been allocated to the schools and we usually tell the folks, if they ask for funding for specialized projects, they should approach the local language groups first. Language centres, we provide funding to them, and those are special projects, so the money has been identified for them to expend into the region. So we will continue to work with them, Mr. Speaker. The

language groups have expertise around the table from the community perspective and they give us advice on where the money should be expended. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: It's curious to note that the letter was signed by the Minister saying there is no money in his department for aboriginal language proposals such as this unique one from Fort Simpson. So who is lapsing the money then, Mr. Speaker? Is it the Department of Education, Culture and Employment? Is it our divisional council? Who is lapsing the money? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: It consists of Education, Culture and Employment, the education council, the teaching and learning centres, the aboriginal groups we sponsor. The funding that has been allocated to them, yes, there may be some lapse due to the deadline constraints and projects may not be completed. So it does vary, Mr. Speaker, on a case-by-case basis. Clearly, those are areas that I instructed my department to review the overall funding allocations for aboriginal language from a cultural perspective, because we need to maximize the funding we produce to the Northwest Territories to the best of their ability on special projects such as what the Member is alluding to. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Time for oral questions has expired; however, I will allow the Member a supplementary question. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I should commend the French language groups, because their funding does not lapse, Mr. Speaker, but aboriginal funding does. I've got unique proposals that don't want to be supported by this government or even given a second chance to say there is money that may be lapsed, we'll use that. Can the Minister commit to look at potential lapsed funding and look at the unique community ground-based proposals such as this? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I did already commit that we are going to look at the overall program delivery and the funding we did distribute to the communities. Those are the important factors that we need to consider. I would encourage the Member, and also the Members, to deal with those individuals at the teaching and learning centres. They have the funding and the funding application comes into our department, as we usually ask them to contact the local school boards or teaching and learning centres about the funding that's been provided to them. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's letter of refusal said no, and to reconsider applying next year. I would like to ask the Minister if

he can reconsider this proposal, write back to the organization and say potentially we may have an opportunity this fiscal year. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, for those letters that we receive, it's not only one letter; there are other letters that could be in the millions of dollars of requests for big projects. They are all important projects and we can't pick one from one region versus another region. That's why we have the language groups that deal with the funding that's been allocated to them. So, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to work with the language groups.

Like I said, we are reviewing the overall structure of how we allocate funds. There is always room for improvement on how we can provide those services more effectively and efficiently. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 67-16(4):
NWT PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, 2008-2009

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document titled Northwest Territories Public Accounts, 2008-2009. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

TABLED DOCUMENT 68-16(4):
COMIC ILLUSTRATION REGARDING
DRIVING WHILE TEXTING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have something to table today. It was a picture that was e-mailed to me that really sums up the cell phone issue. It's says "Honk if you Love Jesus and Text While You're Driving if You'd Like to Meet Him." I'll make sure the Minister of Transportation gets a copy.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 69-16(4):
LETTER TO INAC MINISTER FROM
DENE NATIONAL CHIEF REGARDING
CARIBOU HARVESTING BAN
ORDER-IN-COUNCIL

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document addressed to the Honourable Chuck

Strahl, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, House of Commons, from the Dene Nation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 12-16(4):
SETTING OF SITTING HOURS BY SPEAKER

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 11, 2010, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting days and hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act; Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011; and Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy, with Mr. Bromley in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. Today we have under consideration Bills 2, 4, 7, Tabled Document 62-14(6) and Minister's Statement 47-16(4). What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to continue on with general comments with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and hopefully make some progress on the detail of that department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. We will continue with general comments on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and perhaps get to detail today. Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. It's been agreed we'll begin with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. At this time I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty, if he will be bringing in witnesses. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree the Minister bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I have with me the deputy minister, Dan Daniels, to my left, and, to my right, Paul Devitt, director of strategic investment services. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. Prior to adjournment yesterday, I suggested we allow the Minister to respond to comments from yesterday, and from there we go back to general comments starting with Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, first of all, I would like to touch on the Early Childhood Small Community Initiative that's been allocated, approximately \$600,000. This is to increase a half-time position in the Sahtu and Deh Cho regions and also in Fort Smith and Inuvik from one position to 1.5. That's an additional \$250,000. An increase in the early childhood programs that we talked about in the small, remote communities. So we've identified funding for that as well. The funding in addition to the \$600,000 for the Early Childhood Small Community Initiative is Early Childhood Program territorial-wide increase, so combined will be \$1.2 million in the early childhood area.

In the capital program for daycares, as Members have asked about adequate space for child care, of course, it's an important piece of work ahead of us. An increase in subsidies may help some requirements. So those are the areas that we continue to improve on, Mr. Chair. There is also rent and mortgage subsidies that have been added.

The high schools in small communities... There has been talk about access in the trades area. Mr. Chair, there has been some initiatives underway, whether it be providing laptops to the grade 12 students in small, isolated communities and infrastructure contribution, as well, through CTS, career and technology facilities. So we've made some investment in that area.

Another area that we are focussing on is on our technology, upgrading our systems that we have in

place, just focussing on the education factor, the broadband centre of...(inaudible)...services.

The high school in Sachs has been brought to our attention. Of course, it is of importance and we need to discuss that further. We need to work closely with the education councils that we have in all regions. When it comes to issues that are being addressed, we will continue to work with them, because we do provide funding based on enrolment. So those are the challenges that have been put before us. So we will work with the school boards.

The elders in schools have been brought up before. Of course, elders are an important source of knowledge in our schools. They provide wisdom and experience through our education system. I haven't really ignored this area because it is of importance to our department to have that in our school system. We have been trying to get around the system of them not being penalized, whether it be their pension or old age security. So those are the ongoing discussions we are having and we're trying to come up with a strategic plan to move forward. We also work with education councils in this respect, working with the superintendents.

Mr. Chair, board reform has been brought up as well. This, as you know, there is still encouraging and supporting great collaboration among the various groups, the boards and agencies. We continue to work with other departments as well, interdepartmental areas. So we continue to have that dialogue, but we'll certainly be asking for more information from the school boards themselves, because we need to compile the information that we need to work with. So we will be seeking input in these areas of collaboration. Mr. Chair, those are the ongoing communications that we're having with the regions.

Another area that has been brought to our attention through this discussion is, of course, and even earlier today, is the Ecole Allain St-Cyr addition. This is part of the discussion that will occur through the consultation 10-year education plan that's scheduled for Yellowknife. That particular school is part of the plan. Consultants have been hired to provide that service. So this particular information will be helpful for the next capital planning process.

The school in Tuk, Mangilaluk School. DK Consulting was hired to do a complete educational plan. It has been completed. Now it lays out what needs to be done. That will be in the works for the next capital planning process. They're compiling that information that we can work with within our department.

Mr. Chair, the official languages. That is of great importance for us. The GNWT tabled the interim response, as you are aware, in the Legislative Assembly in the fall of 2009. We want to provide more of an in-depth implementation plan on

responding to these questions that were thrown at us, the recommendations. So we are developing a strategy to deal with those matters. Not only that, Mr. Chair, but involving aboriginal groups, aboriginal organizations. We are having a language symposium, as you are aware, at the end of March/beginning of April. Based on the outcome of that, we will definitely develop a comprehensive strategy and develop an implementation plan for each language group.

On the income security that has been brought up on numerous occasions, there has been some core delivery of courses with some improvement. The highest quality of service is part of our priority that we continue to provide those services in a timely and efficient manner, as best as we can as a department. Of course, there have been expressive concerns of customer services, questioning the customer service aspect of it, community relations. So those are the areas that we continue to improve on.

Mr. Chair, there are other areas that have been addressed: the O and M and mostly in the income security area where we've made some changes. As I indicated earlier, there's been an additional increase in caseloads that we are currently dealing with. As we move forward, we'll definitely provide more detailed information on that.

Mr. Chair, a lot of discussion or questions pertaining to education can be dealt with as we get to the details of it, but inclusive schooling, the funding that's been highlighted, the Member has indicated there's been a decrease. We can certainly elaborate more when we are at those detailed stages, but this also hinges on the enrolment that we're challenged with in all schools. So we continue to work with the school boards and how we can improve in those areas.

So, Mr. Chair, those are just some of the highlights of the opening comments that Members have shared with us and I'll continue to provide more detailed information and also respond to Members' additional opening comments. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The comments I have are just more in the sense of general comments to the Minister. Certainly, there will be further discussion once we get to the details of it.

I want to just let the Minister know that in our region there's a big need to look at our education system and we've certainly had some discussions with the Minister regarding how we look at our education system in the Sahtu. The issue of high school students graduating with quality high school credits and there is a difference of opinion on this subject. However, the matter is we have high school

students in our communities who are walking around, hands in their pockets, going into the income support office, getting income assistance and living off income assistance and we are not doing any good, Mr. Chair. We need to look at that in terms of how we get them out of that state of dependency on the government to a state where we want them to be productive.

There are a lot of young, good people in my region that want to do good in their life. Like any child, they want to do good in their life by making an effort to get into school, get a trade or get a degree and come back to the community to be role models for the children. I don't think any of them are very happy in going to the income support office for a handout.

I think two things, Mr. Chair. The first is look at our education system how we are producing graduates. We want to produce quality graduates. I mentioned to the Minister that we want to work with this Minister to have a symposium in the Sahtu region and the Minister has agreed to work with me. We'll have to get some details together and have this much needed symposium in the Sahtu to really take charge in terms of how we produce high school graduates that can go out to post-secondary institutions or go to a trade school and do good and come back to the communities. So that's one the Minister and I agreed to work on together. Actually, I have some draft proposals that are going to begin going to him shortly in terms of how we do stuff like this together.

The other one is income support really needs to be looked at. What are we doing in terms of... The Minister has indicated there is an increase, actually double the case files in terms of income support. Are we creating more dependency on our young people to the government in terms of funding? Or is it just a sign of the times that there's no economy? The percentage of employment in our region is low. Mr. Chair, the employment rate, for example, in Colville Lake is 53 percent; Fort Good Hope is 52 percent; Deline is 46 percent; Tulita, 49 percent. That's the employment rate. In Norman Wells, the oilfield, it's 82 percent. The unemployment rate is 20 percent in the communities and only 7 percent in Norman Wells. So we really have to look at this in terms of taking a hard look at the means of the Income Support Program. We need to get our youth out. I have faith in terms of their ability to be a productive member of the community. That is something that I really want to look at. I will look at it more in detail in terms of going into the detail in the budget here.

Mr. Chairman, we have a young population in the Sahtu. There are 45 percent of our population that is under 25 years of age. That is a high number of youth under 25; 45 percent of our total population of the Sahtu. We need to look at programs that would

benefit them and services that would benefit them. One of the things that I like about the budget is a look at trades programs. It is long overdue. I am looking forward to the Minister to see how they would be implemented into our schools in the Sahtu, see where they would benefit, something like the Mackenzie Valley Highway or the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and other initiatives.

Nutritious Food Initiative; I think the traditional foods need to be more exposed, more educated in the communities in terms of foods that are taken from the land. They need to be promoted and need to be explained by the elders on traditional foods. We need to have discussions with the elders. I look forward to receiving more things like that. It could happen.

I guess I wanted to close in terms of schooling in the Sahtu. I talked to our educational chair superintendent some time ago. I asked them what is it that they need to help us with our education. One thing he said is that we certainly need high school teachers in our schools; the funding is not adequate; the funding is not sufficient. I said, what do you mean? He said, well, we need high school teachers in some of our communities in the Sahtu. We had extra teachers in our communities. It will make a big difference in the quality of education our students are getting. Right now, they are just doing barely minimum standards to meet the requirements. It is not fair to our students. However, on the other side, that will cost a lot of money to get extra teachers into the Sahtu. Here we talked about that. How do we get an extra three or four million out of this government for teachers? This is only one region. The superintendent and I already had some discussions on that in terms of having high school teachers in our communities.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister made a ministerial statement -- I don't have the exact day -- in terms of contribution of elders in our education system, our schools. I guess I want to know that this Minister is going to do something. I don't know how long we have been talking about it. Still we haven't seen it. This Minister has to do something to bring our elders into schools. It would be wonderful to walk into one of our schools and there is a room there, an office or room where there is an elder there. They go see the elder. That is part of our teaching. It is part of our culture. He is a Minister. He could do things that could ensure... These elders don't know our system. They want to encourage parents to go into schools. Bring the elders in there. Elders can go talk to the parents when they come to school and all that. That is the way you get parents into the school system. They listen to the elders. Prominent elders in education, elders that speak up at meetings and tell us how things are going to be and how things should be. That is how you get the parents in there. That is all the advice I am going to give to the Minister in terms of how he is trying to

get parents involved in schools. Get the elders in the schools. He is a Minister. Let's see him do it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I would like to recognize Mr. Joe Bailey up in the gallery and guests in the gallery. Welcome to the gallery and to the House. Next I have his boss, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have given my opening comments on the opening remarks by the Minister. I was thinking we were moving into the period for questions at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Beaulieu, are you questioning that the Minister responds to the questions now or do you want to wait until we conclude on the presentation, then have them answer the questions?

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am okay to wait until we get to detail and get to the item on the right page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I have you on the list. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a very good opportunity to comment on some of the current directions of Education, Culture and Employment at this time when we are reviewing line-by-line budget items. Perhaps I will just follow up on my Member's statement earlier today on aboriginal language dollars being lapsed in 2007-08 and 2008-09. I know we are in the 2009-10 fiscal year. We are debating 2010-11, but my concern is that I do not wish to see this happen again for this coming fiscal year. I know that some departments strive very hard at the end of the fiscal year to spend their budgeting but, for whatever reason, our aboriginal language doesn't have the same verve to get this money out to the communities, to the specific projects out there. By far, that would be, of course, my single greatest criticism, especially when I have projects that I have been supporting and moving forward and I get a letter saying, sorry, all the money is spent for this year. I know it is not true. That is my concern right now. I would like the department to watch out for that and even support whatever initiatives the community base as they come along, especially given the importance we have given the aboriginal languages.

Like I said, the French are very vigorous in ensuring their rights are entrenched. We do have laws that entrench our aboriginal languages. Ourselves as legislators, ourselves as a government have to do everything we can to ensure that whatever resources we dedicate to our aboriginal languages are spent and not lapsed, because once you are doing that, especially in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, that is a lot of resources that our communities, our language learners, our small

schools can use to bolster our aboriginal languages.

In this new budget, I am interested in the Minister of Finance's statement, of course, with the return of the income support for housing back to the housing authorities. I think that is a great move. That is something people have been looking for.

But also coupled with this is something that I will be speaking about probably later there, Mr. Chairman, is that the rent scale has to be rolled back again. As government we can do that. I think the last time the rent scale was at the 90 percent level of salary and what that, in effect, means, Mr. Chairman, is that previous to the rent scale being moved up to 100 percent, people were actually paying \$500 a month for their low rental units.

In fact, I've got a constituent that said when we roll it up to 100 percent, their rents were now \$700 or \$800 and they're saying, well, why do you call it low rental housing when we're not paying low rent. Right? And that's something that our people are looking for, is the ability of our government... They do it in other jurisdictions. They actually have low rental housing programs, but because of the way we change things so much... There were a couple changes that happened at the same time -- I'm very aware of that -- but we don't have low rental housing and other jurisdictions do. In fact, they create low housing districts in order to stimulate the economy there, Mr. Chair, and that's the same kind of vision we must return to. In order to help our people, the rent has got to be low. We can't be clawing them back and keeping them in the salary negative, which means every time they make more money, then we charge them more. There has to be a better way around it.

First things first. I applaud the government for listening to this side of the House and working hard on returning housing back over to the housing authorities. I think that's something that our people wanted. I know that there's much debate about it finally working. People are getting used to it now and returning it. But at the same time that's what people have always wanted and I think we're going in the right direction with that.

Another thing that's picking up interest, of course, is the \$400,000 with regard to the Nutritious Foods Program. I know it's listed as a nutritious foods study in the budget. Government has written to this side of the House saying they're going to re-profile it to establish a committee and look at other ways of distributing this money to the communities. I'm not too sure how it works in the smaller communities, but I know that our education councils have bent over backwards, found whatever money they could to help with nutritious breakfasts, annual luncheon in our smaller communities, and if there's going to be \$400,000 to assist with nutritious foods, if anything, I think that's where it should go. It's

increasing the value of the food they can provide to smaller communities and a lot of it is done by volunteers as well, but it's a great thing that they're going to re-profile it and move it towards that type of programming. But the plan is not clear of how that \$400,000 is going to be re-profiled. They're talking about, of course, creating a committee, but establishing a committee is the last thing that my constituents tell me. They say they would rather see programming and resource dollars right in the communities as opposed to striking up some kind of committee. The last thing we need is another committee. However, of course, direction has to be given about how to best distribute this money, but I think the goal is to bolster our community programs and if this is one way we can do it, I certainly support the direction government is going, but it's still not clear. Perhaps when we come to that line item, Mr. Chair, I'll ask more questions on it.

Other than that, just moving on about increasing money budgeted for community adult learning centres is much needed support, as well, to our communities.

Actually, while I've got the floor, Mr. Speaker, I better speak passionately about something I've been asking the Minister and our government, which was the community library in Fort Simpson. There's still no resolution there despite how many times I've raised the issue and tried to move it forward. It's not supported by government only because there's some kind of transfer agreement that the Village of Fort Simpson uses it. But I've been thinking, Mr. Chair, some of the funded libraries that we do have are in the regional centres and in fact they're entrenched in our Public Libraries Act. They're actually in the act, like Hay River, Yellowknife. They're actually a public library in the act so they're funded by the Government of the Northwest Territories. If we could move towards something like that, Mr. Chair, we'd move towards establishing that Fort Simpson library as a regional library, then the resource of our government can certainly work towards establishing it. A community of that size, a region of about 4,000 people without a public library is very, very shameful. Believe it or not, there are still people that have value for books even in our Internet world, but now all we're reduced to is just a resource centre there, Mr. Chair, with a bunch of computers. Of course, the children still use it, but a lot of the impact of having a library is gone and children used to love it when we had a good program of bringing in authors, et cetera. So it's probably still there, but it's just not the same impact, Mr. Chair.

So I'll continue to raise those issues as we move through the budget deliberations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a few issues in regard to the budget with this department and mostly in the area of the social program side in regard to income support, the housing supp program. I know that it's being transferred back, but it does show up in your budget as money coming through CMHC. Again, the time it's going to take to make this transition, I think that it's important that we do try to implement it hopefully sooner than later.

But I do have concerns similar to my colleagues from the Sahtu and from the Nahendeh in regard to the whole policy development around income support and the ability of that policy to really do what it's intended to do, is to be a support mechanism to allow people to make a transition from being unemployed to being employed, to being able to take advantage of education programs and services and, more importantly, have a stable system where you have some flexibility in how that program is being delivered.

I've had an opportunity to talk to people within the Income Support Program and through the district board of education and also through the education office in Inuvik, and they're frustrated, because they mean well, they want to help people, but I think the policy is too rigid and I think sometimes we have ideas, but what happens is when we try to implement it, the bureaucrats get a hold of it and they make it so soundproof that it's not flexible. I think we have to re-look at that policy and find ways to be able to work through that policy to help somebody who is in need where it is classified as some sort of emergency person who either got laid off or their house burnt down or for some reason that they're in desperate need of support and we can't keep sticking to these time frames and say you're sorry, you've got to be here three months or you have to be unemployed for three months before we can assist you. I think there has to be some flexibility on how that policy is administered and I think it also has to take into consideration the social and economic realities of where that policy is being administered. A good illustration is going on in the Beaufort Sea right now. The economic activity has basically come to a complete halt. There is no real activity going on right now and I think that a lot of people who need the support have to be able to access that support.

I know another issue that I've raised is the whole area of elders payouts in regard to the Gwich'in. The Gwich'in made a motion last year at their assembly for the sake of the elders who are aged and ready to pass on, that they wanted to give them something before their days are up and that we're able to do an advanced payment for people from ages 60 onwards so that it was a one-time payment. That was it. Once you got that payment, you weren't going to get any more. That was the understanding. But because they got \$2,600, the

government, and my understanding when Charles Dent was in this House, I know asking him questions in the past, you know, that there was an exemption when it referred to the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in land claim. It was definitely referred in the exemption section of that policy, but for some reason, I know the Gwich'in have written letters to the department and they have requested some sort of legal opinion on exactly how is it, because under their agreement they refer more to the tax act in regards to how those dollars would be classified as settlement payouts versus dividend payouts, which they weren't. They were settlement payouts, they weren't dividend payouts. So there is a class of dollars how you would classify them.

Again, that is another illustration of the frustration people have, and also we have to be able to work around some of these challenges but also have the flexibility to change that program. The other issue that I raised is trying to find ways of enhancing education in small communities. I know we talk about Sachs Harbour, we talk about Tsiigehtchic, I think. I know we can do that if we just put our minds to it and put some resources either into technology, advancing those technologies that are out there in regards to Internet access to other school systems. More importantly, have the resource people on the ground that can support those high school students in those communities and try to find a way to allow K to 12 to exist in communities, and I think we can do it by way of advancing some of our technical support by way of technology, but, more importantly, having people on the ground that can work with the students in regard to the courses they require, but, more importantly, have the materials accessible to them. I know you mentioned something in your statement about you are doing something with the, I believe it is with Alberta, in regards to a program there. I think that is a perfect opportunity to try to find ways of working with communities such as Sachs Harbour, Tsiigehtchic and other communities of similar size.

Again, I raise the issue in this House about the cost of having a boarding school in Inuvik. I mean, you know, at one point we had a boarding school there, which basically was costing somewhere in the range of \$500,000 and just lately they have changed the whole concept from a boarding home to actually home boarding and again that is costing you \$200,000. Again with the number of children that have dropped out, it is almost half. Last year you said they were down to two students and I think that is telling us for that type of investment, they should allow the DAs or education counsel, Beau-Del counsel to have the flexibility to try to find solutions. These students want to retain their high school education in their home communities, try to work around that solution because student-pupil ratio concept that we use does not fit small communities and I think we have to find a way

around that. Again, I think it is going to take a little bit of effort on both sides to find solutions to these problems.

The other areas in regards to the Western Arctic Leadership Program in Fort Smith, I mean, if anything, that is the Cadillac that should be allowed to take place in all regions so that students that do have potential, especially in our high schools... And I know for a fact I have students going to Inuvik because they can't get the curriculum that they need to go into the Nursing Program, or go into southern institutions and move on with regards to post-secondary education, college or university, and I think that is what it is going to take to retain the best students that we have in the Northwest Territories. Give them that extra support and that extra boost. Maybe we should consider expanding the Western Arctic Leadership Program from Fort Smith and put it in other regions so that we can see the success that that program has had and also offer it in other regions. Again, I have talked with the aboriginal leadership, I know the Gwich'in are interested in Inuvik, that is the case of having them provide the infrastructure. They are willing to seriously look at it, but again that is the type of thinking outside the box that we have to be realistic about.

Again, there is the question about the Food Mail Program and I think that, if anything, we have to find a way of increasing the food basket in our communities, but, more importantly, deal with the issue. I know we have the school program in regards to the breakfast program. We have programs that most of the band offices... You can go to the band office in Inuvik, you can go to the band office in Aklavik or Fort McPherson and you can go there for lunch, and again that is to support people that basically are going hungry and, more importantly, that people are being able to access a meal when they need it. I think that more importantly is the breakfast program than the success we see in our schools to ensure that that type of program is really active. I think we can't see money being wasted on administration. It has to go right into the program so it is spent on the individuals, the food being provided and, more importantly, that we are not spending money on another report or some major administrative overhaul.

Mr. Chairman, I think also one of the areas that is essential for this department to look at is the area of -- I know I touched on it earlier -- working in conjunction with the holistic approach of education in regards to early childhood development, kindergarten to elementary school, high school, university. I think we have to take a look at exactly how we want to see ourselves as government administer programs, basically looking at the whole cycle of education to ensure that we are able to see the chain reaction that we have from the programs

that we have right from introductory education to students prior to kindergarten and there is pre-school and how that all fits together in our community. I think we have to work with other organizations and agencies in our communities to support that type of a concept because, at the end of the day, education is what is going to pull us out of the rut that we are in, and, more importantly, look at the support that the communities are going to need to make them self-reliant and, more importantly, have educated people so that they can take advantage of the economy and the future development that we have. So with that, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you Mr. Krutko. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am very happy to provide some comments to the Minister's opening of his budget for this type of discussion.

Mr. Chairman, a lot of issues that I think could go a long ways, you know I wish that the department would find a way, and they haven't here, but I wish they would find a way that we could address some of our issues that we have in Income Support with moving the social work component back into Income Support. That was a mistake made by the government in its wisdom, back in the day, when they thought, well, maybe the social worker component should be over with the Department of Health and Social Services. Now, whoever came up with that idea, and I am sure they thought they were genius, but you know as I look at it and try to help people through the income support process, I mean a lot of people have more issues before them and challenges that are before them than an average data entry person can provide. I think the guidance of a social work type of person in that job could do a lot to inspire people to help them get back on their feet to provide them opportunity and just that little 'umph' of a pat them on the back and say, you know, look, we will help you through this, we will give you some ideas and have you tried these. It is a complete philosophy change as opposed to if somebody shows up and says, look, I can't cover rent and they do the little tap on their keyboard with their numbers and say you either qualify or you don't qualify and I find it is a missing element, if I may define it as simple as this, Mr. Chairman, it is a human element being lost in the income support process. When it works and it is seamless that your paperwork flows and flows and goes, you know, most people don't care, but I think what that process really needs to do is help inspire people to get on their own feet so they can get back in the running and get back in the game. Sometimes a little inspiration from someone with the right type of background, the right type of personal experience. I mean, some of the best income support workers I have heard of are people who have bad days

behind them. They have had some experiences, they understand what the real world is about and they understand, they relate with people who show up at their office with some other troubles and I mean, as sort of a point to this issue is some of the best addictions counsellors, as an example, are people who have gone through those troubles and they can say, look, when I tell you it is going to be tough on you, they really mean it, because they know it. That is sort of the issue that I am trying to bring to light here, and I have always felt that this is a gap for a long-term strategy in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I would not want to say in any way that the staff are not well meaning and I would not want to define in any way that they are not dedicated, I think they are. I think many of them probably carry many of the difficult challenges, that they have seen through the day, home. You know, it is the style of staffing I think could go a long way.

I'm going to change gears, Mr. Chairman, and I'm going to talk about an issue that has been raised. I think it was raised just a minute ago. I hear about the milk subsidy and although I'm not particularly a big fan of it, and this sort of relates back to the income support, because I've always been concerned about it's not the quality of the milk in the sense of what that will do to a young person's life. I grew up on it. That's all I drank as a child and my mother always said that I probably drank more milk than anyone she knew. But I think that the government providing a subsidy specific to that is the wrong approach and that if they feel that it's a money issue -- and this ties back to the income support -- then we should really identify on what these things actually cost. Because if it's a government policy that I would not object to say, well, we want to make sure that parents can parent, making sure that they can afford the extra cost of milk. Whether it's in a community or wherever, why don't we just bump up the income support rate to reflect that? I think it's important, and this is back to my theme of the income support issue, which is it's important to empower people to make the decisions themselves. I mean, there are certain people that, you know, we will always need to be there to help hold their hand and certainly there will always be people who will have to do it for them. But I think, on average, back to the social work element, I think the job there is to empower. And when it comes to things like that, if it's an affordability issue, I think that's a policy question for the House here. We could make the decision and say if milk is too expensive and you've got kids under your care and you're getting social help, then you should get a little extra money. To me, that's the right approach. It's just about the philosophy.

Mr. Chairman, the next issue I'd like to touch on, and of course I'll have more comments when we get to the page, but the next area I'd like to touch

upon is, hopefully the Department of Education will soon start to put on its radar and agenda to develop junior kindergarten. As sort of cited in some manner by my previous speaker Mr. Krutko, early childhood education is very important and eventually some government is going to have to start to decide that it's better to invest up front than it is to invest in cleaning up the mess. If we can give kids the best opportunity before then... I mean, how many times have we heard the old adage that, you know, an educated child is the best investment we could ever make? I think people are starting to have a higher expectation of services they can have and, certainly, give their kids the best start as possible when it comes to an education background.

Mr. Chairman, the other element to providing a strong base to things like early childhood education and day homes is stabilized funding. I've heard from a number of parents that that continues to be a phenomenal problem. What they would like to see is the fact that stabilized funding reflects the true costs of what these organizations need to cover in order to keep the lights on, keep the oil in the furnace burning and making sure that the wages of the staff are paid, because quite ultimately, the way the system is built, it's got an element of base funding and I'll give it that, but the problem is it's the top-up based on attendance. Well, if you go to any day home, they want their money up front and if your child misses, your child misses. The fact is, they've still got to pay that light bill, they've still got to keep the heat on, they've still got to pay the staff. And when they stop paying the staff, well, then it's just sort of a tailspin into destruction. That's how these places fall apart and how are we really helping then. Then it's emergency money if we can keep the debtors off. Then we have people who can't make their rent because they couldn't get paid and the day home administrator or the early childhood facility had to make choices that they probably didn't want to make or they didn't pay the power bill and the power bill company now...

So it's an endless cycle for these folks. I think if the department will start seeing the way, and I'm convinced they know where the solution is, and I'm providing it if they're listening, and the solution, I think, is that we provide base funding that's reflective of cost. It's the over and above sense of things like the profit that a day home may provide or an early childhood facility would provide. That's the gap we make them do the extra earning for when it comes to head count. Like Four Plus or the Aboriginal Head Start, we don't want to tie their funding to unstable, variable circumstances. That's the biggest trouble we have in life. It seems like, oh, we need to find money. Well, we can never tackle the fixed costs. We can only tackle the variable costs. But it's like we're paying these facilities... Like, everything's based on a variable cost and they

can't cover their fixed costs the way we're paying them.

Mr. Chairman, although time is running out -- and I assure the Minister and his very dedicated staff over here that I will raise other issues as we get to the particular pages -- there are two other areas I'd like to quickly touch on. One is arts funding. I try to raise arts from time to time, but, of course, there are always pressing issues that seem to supersede one over another. But I'd certainly like to see our government address the film industry in a way that shows them the respect. I think we're on our third type of series on national television and this is a phenomenal push forward about what type of market could be opening up here in the Northwest Territories. When they're filming *Ice Pilots*, if I have my facts correct that have been forwarded to me, is they're not using northern people that could be doing the work. I think the diamond in the rough of this opportunity really is that it's an untapped area. It could be a new area for expansion and a new area of promise when it comes to developing opportunities, developing a new market, getting people working, creating economic interest, whether it's tourism or whatnot.

Mr. Chairman, I see I only have a couple seconds left on the clock, so I'll just say that I would like to speak to it later when I have more time about my concern about the transfer of public housing administration back to the housing authority. As I said several weeks ago, I always thought it was an administrative problem that we never fully transferred over and that's where my view of the issues were. Mr. Chairman, I'll leave it at that for now and I'll provide more details as we get to the individual pages. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. If there are no more general comments, I will go to the Minister for a response to the general comments. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there are a lot of important comments that have been initiated here that we will certainly continue to work with. In the Sahtu region, of course, the high school grads have been brought to our attention. We do provide tools for the students to continue on with their high school and also post-secondary. There are other options that are available to the students that we've talked about in the past, but we will continue to provide the funding to the school boards in that respective region and other regions as well.

At the same time, Mr. Chair, there is a concern about students returning to the community and not working, but there are productive choices that they have to make as well. The community offers courses that they could certainly take on in order to further upgrade their schooling if that's required.

That's the area that we continue to improve on at the community level.

Income support, of course, there is a 20 percent increase in caseloads due to the fact that the economy is on the downturn. Two years back, as the Member alluded to, everything was good. Yes, it was when we were having high employment in the communities and so forth, but lately the economy is going down. At the same time, we are investing in various areas such as summer employment for small communities. That will certainly capture some attention in the small communities. So I think that certainly is a worthwhile initiative.

On the trades investment that the Member for Sahtu has touched on, we are investing heavily in trades. Since the budget address, and even this time around in trades and labour market training, approximately \$600,000 that we've initiated. That will be before us to discuss further. So we need to be prepared. We need to have our own people with the right tools to enter the workforce, whether it be the diamond mines, the pipeline, or even our government, the community governments and municipalities. Those are the areas we continue to provide training dollars and working with other partners as well.

Also the traditional food has been addressed here. It could be part of the nutritious food items. There was a discussion on the milk subsidy and the food basket and so forth. That is an area of interest to us that we continue to work with. We will discuss it further when we talk about nutrition, the \$4,000 that has been allocated. Mr. Chairman, I can certainly elaborate more at that level.

The teachers, the funds are not adequate has been addressed. Yes, our wish is to have more teachers in all schools, all 49 schools that we have in the Northwest Territories. We would love to have more teachers, but it is a challenge, Mr. Chairman. As the Member alluded to, it could cause several million dollars per region or more, but we do provide funding to deliver those teaching instructions at the community level in the regions. At the same time, on the side, we are developing plans through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. There will certainly be some initiatives coming out of that. We have already initiated some of them to deal with the enrolment issue, because aboriginal student achievement covers a vast variety of challenges that are before us in all communities. I am looking forward to them, Mr. Chairman. They all come out of the committee's report.

Again, the elders in school, the Member has addressed this to my attention. We are collectively working closely with other organizations and businesses or even organizations at the community level if they could take on the elders so there is no impact on their pension. Those are options that we

are currently working with. It looks very positive. Definitely it will be part of the next business planning cycle. I want to plant a seed. I know the Member is getting impatient, but we want to do this even before this Assembly is over and done with.

Definitely that is my commitment to this House, that I want to work with the organizations so they could take it on and by all means to satisfy us and if the organization is satisfied, then we will go that avenue.

Mr. Chairman, aboriginal language, the funds, the Member spoke to the lapse. Those are the areas that we will continue to monitor. It is the language groups that we work with, as I indicated earlier today in the House. There needs to be collaboration and also consistent meetings that need to take place. Fortunately, it has been happening. We need to set our targets, our objectives, our priorities. We will continue to strengthen that within our department, to work with the language board to expedite the application process and whatnot. Mr. Chairman, that is a concern to me as well. I am glad the Member is raising that issue.

The public housing transfer has been in the process. Clearly, we want to have a smooth transition. The rent scale that has been discussed here, of course, is a housing area. We have the Minister responsible for Housing who will be taking over that, but we will be working closely together on the transfer of the program.

The community learning centres, of course, there is great news about the 33 communities. They will be getting upgrades through the federal funding, but those are areas that we are continuing to focus in all communities. Some community learning centres are fairly old and some are capacity issues. Mr. Chairman, we are continuing to work closely with the Aurora College, the college themselves, because it is under their leadership, the board of governors. So that has been identified already and we will continue to work with that.

The library funds were addressed for Fort Simpson, that consideration of being a regional centre. Mr. Chairman, we do have funding that has been allocated to the communities. Simpson is one of them. We do have annual funding that is allocated to Fort Simpson. We continue to increase the funds as it looks now. Mr. Chairman, the areas that we can certainly look further into, the Simpson and other community libraries, because they questioned about the regional status. I think it is up for discussion.

Enhancing education in small communities, on-line courses have been addressed. That is the area that we are certainly very interested in delivering more, broadening our Internet service capability into the 33 communities that we service. We have an educational system that we want to have a separate system, but working with TSC, as well, on

how we can improve in those areas. It can have the capability of on-line programs in communities such as Paulatuk or Tsiigehtchic in the small, isolated communities. So we are really pushing for that, Mr. Chairman.

There is also a question about the grade 8s and grade extension, the boarding, students to board in different locations. This is an area that we need to work with the education council because... Then again, we did provide the money, the funds. The Member discussed with similar to Fort Smith leadership program. It is an independently run business that has been initiated. It is a very successful program. By all means, if other regions are willing to take it on as independent sort of like a business run, we will certainly be looking at possibly contributing that towards similar to the Fort Smith leadership program.

Mr. Chairman, the elders callback has been addressed. It is not the first time Members are addressing that with us. We are fully aware of it. The Member is right about our Justice department looking into it further. If it is business arm funding or is it through land claims? Is there a cost or is it income exempt? So those are areas that we are exploring as we speak. This will be brought forward to the Cabinet for further discussion. Mr. Chairman, just so the Member is aware, we are not ignoring this area.

The social work goes back to Income Support. I am not sure where that is coming from. We do have income support client service officers that are very dedicated and committed to providing the valuable services that they continue to provide and we have done a lot of work in this area. We continue to improve in those areas, Mr. Chairman. There are other challenging tasks that are before us at times, but we deal with this on a case-by-case basis.

The junior kindergarten has been brought up before, investment up front, and also the stabilizing funding. Those are the discussions that we have had in the past with other Members as well. We met with certain organizations. They threw that at us, as well, where we should fund them to offset the cost of certain cost factors, I guess, not to depend on enrolment. But they are under some circumstances, where some of the facilities will be fully utilized, maxed out in the capacity, but at times there will be one or two students in a centre or none. Do we continue to provide the funding to that organization if there's no attendance? So those are the discussions that we need to have as we go forward.

Arts development, the tourism that the Members talked about regarding the pilots through Buffalo, we've increased our funding over the years and ITI also has various pots of funds to subsidize some of these initiatives. So, Mr. Chair, we'll continue to highlight that as we go forward. So those are just a

summary of what the Members have addressed as their opening comments. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any more general comments? If not, what's the wish of committee? Detail. If we can defer you to consideration under detail. Again we're on page 10 of 7. From there we'll move forward in regard to department summary. So if I can have you turn to 10-8. Does the committee agree to defer department summary, operations expenditure summary?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. With that, information item, page 10-8, Education, Culture and Employment, infrastructure investment summary, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Page 10-9, Education, Culture and Employment, information item, revenue summary. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick question. Under early learning and child care I see we have revenues of \$272,000. I wonder if I could just get an explanation of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. That \$272,000 is in line with Human Resource and Social Development of Canada funding to support the Early Learning and Child Care Program. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bromley. Page 9-10, information item, revenue summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 10-9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 10-10, active position summary, information item. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had a question with regard to the increase in staff. It shows we're going from 184 staff persons, indeterminate full-time in '09-10 to 191 in '10-11. If the Minister could advise where these staff are going and what they're going to be doing as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. There is an added position, assistant curator position as part of collection and exhibit renewal at the museum, website and multimedia coordinator position also added at the museum. Another position added as an aboriginal student achievement coordinator to deal with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. Another position is an administrative officer for an aboriginal language position as the Official Language Implementation

Initiative. Mr. Chair, another position as an SFA loan officer position through the Student Financial Assistance Initiative. Another position, coordinator position as part of the Alberta Achievement Test that's been highlighted. There's one part-time PY as part of the Early Childhood Small Communities Initiative and one adjusted full-time immigration administrative position, South Slave, one part-time position, PY, now funded as full-time as Early Child Community Initiatives and another part-time Early Childhood Initiatives. So those are the positions that are before us, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on the list I have Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask a question on the active position summary. Looking at last year at 184 and then this year there's 191, that's an increase of seven. Obviously, or the total actually is an increase of nine positions. Given the fact that ECE is transferring their responsibility for social housing back to the Housing Corporation -- and I've said this before -- I think there has to obviously be some sensitivity to the staff that were hired four years ago. I believe it was 11 or 12 staff and it might have gotten even up to 14 staff that were hired to deliver that Social Housing Policy through ECE and Income Security and I'm just wondering what is the HR plan for those positions and how come we're not seeing any of that reflected in the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. The reason it's not reflected in this budget is we're still working out the logistics of transferring those positions. So we're at the development stages, development plans for the actual transfer of the program and also there's going to be PYs attached to it. So those are still in the preliminary stages as we speak. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's fair enough. I appreciate the response from the Minister and look forward to seeing that information when it comes available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Page 10-10, information item, active position summary. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on, page 10-13, Education, Culture and Employment, activity summary, directorate. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Another, hopefully, quick question here. I see the TSC chargebacks have increased by somewhat over 50 percent and I'm just wondering if that's a one-time thing, if there's an explanation for that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Those TSC chargeback costs is a target adjustment required to reflect the new rate structure and to fund the growth in the network, Internet and DCN, usage costs and the implementation of the Strategic Security Initiative. So those are the cost factors. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: That probably does it, but I'm curious about the security side of things. We can probably spend as much as we want to on the security and I'm wondering is that something new or is that just a tune-up of an existing program? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Devitt.

MR. DEVITT: Mr. Chair, my understanding, from discussions with the TSC, is that the security aspect, although very important, is a very small portion of the total financial cost and that most of this is due to increased usage costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question has to do with board reform. I mentioned it in my remarks earlier. I'd like to know from the Minister whether or not the department has any plans over this next fiscal year to make any changes in terms of the makeup of education authorities or if there are any plans, if it's not changed in the makeup, what sorts of things are in the works that the department is planning to work on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I guess the reason why it's not reflected in this budget is that work is still being collaborated with the regional boards, whether it be the schools, the health, the housing, but nothing has been changed at this point. As we move forward, as I stated earlier, there will be more discussion that will be taking place. But, Mr. Chairman, the Member is asking if there have been any changes. No, there has not been any change. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: My question was not so much whether there has been any change to date but what is being contemplated for this next fiscal year. This issue was extremely volatile and piqued the interest of many residents and particularly the education authorities. So the Minister states that they are working on it. I wonder if he can tell us what sorts of things they are working on and what changes might be contemplated that they are going to be working on. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We will be asking the boards to provide to the department a summary of the current system that they have and just an ad hoc process, the practice that they have done for years; some of the activities that allow greater collaboration between the boards and agencies in the regions. With that in mind, we will be seeking

input into areas of collaboration from our department to the regional boards and also case management to strengthen in that regard. We are also very interested in identifying ways to improve the overall accountability and reporting by the boards. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: One other question. The Minister mentioned earlier today when he was talking about Ecole Allain St-Cyr, I think, that there is a 10-year education plan that is underway that, I think, is being developed now at this point in time. I wondered if he could advise if that is the case and if he could advise when this 10-year education plan or facilities education plan will be available and complete. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Part of the plan will be to have that package... We are hoping to have it available April 2010. So we are looking forward to that so we can start thinking about the future capital plans. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): On Page 10-13, Education, Culture and Employment, activity summary, directorate and administration, operations expenditure summary, \$10 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 10-14, Education, Culture and Employment, information item, directorate and administration, active positions. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 10-17, Education, Culture and Employment, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$181 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you Mr. Chairman. A couple of things. First of all, I am wondering, I spoke earlier in the House, and the Minister did, about what our actual need is for child care spaces and particularly for infants, but certainly for all child care needs territory-wide. I believe the Minister is going to work on that, but I just want to stress that this would be a useful statistic to have and to help evaluate how this program is going. We are doing some good work to build on this program and I am very happy to see this. It is time that we started to have some good evaluation happening and one thing that I think would be very useful would be the development of needs. How many child care spaces do we need in the entire Northwest Territories and where are we at in providing those? That is just a comment.

On the official languages side, I understand that the Standing Committee on Government Operations requested a comprehensive response to their review of the Official Languages Act for the May

sitting. I am wondering if we are on target for providing that. I will just start there, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. When we presented that in the fall time to provide a comprehensive response to the recommendations that are brought forward, we continue to work with different language organizations, language groups in the communities, just looking forward to this Aboriginal Language Symposium. Out of that we will produce a strategic plan to deal more in-depth of the discussion that needs to take place on recommendations. So I would say yes, at this point we are on par, but there is more work to be done. So, Mr. Chairman, those are the areas that we continue to have our priority in place. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: That is really good to hear that we are on par, that we are on schedule. I look forward to that at our next sitting here. I know in the response that was provided, there was quite a number of recommendations that the Minister agreed to and that there was a commitment to providing updates on those as they worked towards achieving them and I don't recall seeing any updates on that. I am wondering if I have just missed those. Are they reflected in some of the budgeting that I see before me on aboriginal languages here and if there is some updates that could be provided, I think that would be much appreciated. Obviously the Standing Committee on Government Operations worked very hard, did a tremendous amount of consultation Northwest Territories-wide. I see the government wants to do even more, but I am concerned that at the rate we are losing some languages, at least we want to be moving forward with these. I would appreciate any comments there. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Clearly it is a priority for our department to follow through with all recommendations that are brought forward. Even though we have responded to some of the recommendations in the fall, we want to have a comprehensive package plan of action after the Language Symposium that we are going to be having in March, the end of March. So once that takes effect, then the plan should be available for presentation to the standing committee at that time. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Yes, I will be happy to see that and I see that commitment, too, in your response. Is there funding identified for developing the full response that will be provided in the fall session? Is that part of the funding that is here or is there specific funding for that, or is that just part of the department's general funding here? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: In order to provide a response on the recommendations and move forward, we did identify some in-house funding to

offset the costs, because we feel that this is an important factor and we need to follow through with and in an on-going forward basis, if we need additional funding on a long-term basis, because some of the recommendations will take longer than just a year or two. So those are the areas that we will certainly consider as part of the next years' business planning cycle. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Okay, I know that won't be exciting news to the language communities that are out there waiting for new dollars to come forward here, although I am sure they will appreciate the conference that is happening and so on, and will participate. I am just wondering will the funding program, the proposals, fall out of this update that we will receive in the fall session? Is that where we'll learn what the plans are and progress on that? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, those are the avenues that we need to work. Not only that, but the federal government, we've invited two federal Ministers to come before us, because they need to realize that this is an important factor. So we're hoping that there will be some commitment. We are getting some funds from them at this point in time, but the funding will be increased, of course. But we will continue to pressure them. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Mr. Menicoche, Ms. Bisaro and Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to raise the library services line item here. I know that it goes to some of the regional libraries. Fort Simpson has been without a functioning library for a couple of years now. I've raised the issue in the House and raised the issue with the Minister. I'd just like to know what has been done to date and what is planned to assist the community of Fort Simpson in re-establishing a full library there, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Education.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I did indicate that the Fort Simpson John Tsetso Memorial Library does get funds from our department. They did receive, in 2008-09, \$16,500; sorry, \$21,000, and we increased that funding in 2009-10 to \$53,000. So more than double. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm pleased to see the amount of resources that are going towards the John Tsetso Memorial Library. However, the fact remains that I've been asking about additional resources. The issue is the lack of suitable space to have the storage of library books, et cetera. I'd just like to know what current efforts to date has the department been working towards resolving this issue in Fort Simpson in assisting it to re-establish a library. Earlier I spoke about one of the ways that I saw to fully resource that library was, of course, to

declare it a regional library. In all fairness, it is a region and it is without a library. So short of working towards that, I know that the government is aware of the needs of the community and the children of Fort Simpson in establishing a library. Just once again, what is the current status of GNWT involvement in re-establishing the library? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, the library issue has been brought to our attention. We had the discussion with the superintendent of the Dehcho Divisional Education Council and there was supposed to be a meeting set up this month in the community. There has been talk about the school, the Thomas Simpson and Bompas Elementary School to accommodate a library program. So they do have the capacity right now. Those are the discussions. There is talk about structural engineering submission for review on both schools and the location of it. So, Mr. Chair, there is supposed to be a meeting scheduled and we'll certainly follow through with the superintendent to see what the status is on that. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much for that update and I'll be looking forward to any future update, especially when that meeting happens.

Just with respect to the official languages, once again, there was, of course, a concern of mine of lapsed funding. I know that the Minister was talking about a lot of that official languages money is given to the divisional education counsels. I'm very concerned that in this coming fiscal year that there may be more lapsed money and especially, like I said, I was supporting a proposal from the Deh Cho Friendship Centre in developing a Slavey CD-Rom project, which was quickly refused by the department saying that all the funds had been allocated. But at the same time, I know that the Minister is very aware of the almost \$1.4 million over the past couple years. What mechanisms are in place for this fiscal year that we're talking about, 2010-11, of preventing that and, in fact, if the Minister can answer what mechanisms or what are they looking at so that this kind of huge lapse of much needed aboriginal funding won't happen for this 2009-10 fiscal year which ends March 31st, Mr. Chair? Thanks.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, one of the mechanisms would be, of course, we need to closely monitor the funding that's been allocated and making sure that it is fully expended. There has been some improvement over the last several years with the schools. They have expended their funds to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, there are some funds that lapse. But those are areas that we've identified where we can improve. My deputy will be meeting with the staff to deal with the matter at hand because this is of importance to us. It's a very serious issue. Mr. Chair, we will continue to

monitor as part of our mechanism to deal with this matter at hand. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm still not convinced that we will not lapse any money in this coming fiscal year and I'm not too sure what mechanisms the Minister speaks about ensuring that it doesn't happen in the future. Of course, the amount of emphasis and efforts and concern that we as MLAs have with regard to our aboriginal languages is something that we have to ensure that we're doing our best to get those resources out to the communities. At the same time, my concern is that we're saying no to grassroots proposals that are out there saying all the money is spent, but I'm still not convinced that's the case. I don't want to get into too much detail, but certainly there are probably organizations or groups out there that are hanging onto their money until the last minute but they cannot spend it. So there's got to be a way of monitoring it, of redistributing those resources as quickly as we can before the fiscal year ends, or even have the ability... The Minister can have the ability to ensure that the funds get out the door by March 31st, the end of this fiscal year. At the same time, there's got to be... I know that sometimes funding is just rolled over into another organization from one year into the next. But if these organizations aren't performing, why are we just rolling over yearly funding contributions if they're not performing? So that's what they actually should be looking at. Who's getting the money and who's not spending it is my concern and should be the Minister's concern as well. It's something that he should track. If they're historically not utilizing the funding, we have to find out why and ensure that there's redistribution for the people that have the good projects. It's probably not only my region, but the frustration of many other communities that have community-based projects that probably have the same letter as my organization did, like, all the funds are expended. So there has to be flexibility there. There has to be monitoring. There has to be full assessment of who is getting the money and who is not using it on an annual basis, because over a couple of years there is certainly a trend developing.

That is, once again, the Minister can comment on that there, Mr. Chairman, in his best efforts not to lapse any money for 2009-10 year and then to develop a good streamline mechanism for the budget year that we are talking about today there, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chairman, we will have a good streamline process as we move forward. As indicated, this is an area of interest to me and also concern. There has been some work on the way. We have identified a couple of positions that we highlighted; aboriginal student coordinator. That initiative will deal with this matter at hand as well. We want to have a mechanism in

place where most of the money expended to the regions, but at the same time there are unique circumstances that are beyond our control at times.

Mr. Chairman, as a department we will do our best to fully utilize the funding that is available to us on to the language groups and various organizations. We share the Member's concern. We will certainly take that fully into consideration. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Beaulieu and Mr. Bromley. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions on this section. I would like to first off state that I am -- and I have mentioned it in my comments earlier -- very pleased to see that there is an increase in the funding to arts and culture. It is the way that we should be going. I am very glad to see that the department continues to increase the funding in this particular area.

I have a concern with the early childhood and family literacy funding. It is a strategic initiative, I believe, in this particular section of the budget. I am glad to see that we are increasing the funding for early childhood and for family literacy. They are both areas that are extremely important. I echo the comments from my colleague, Mr. Bromley, earlier. I am a little bit concerned, though, that this funding may only be one-time funding. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not the funding for early childhood and family literacy is going to be an ongoing funding and it will continue year after year after this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chairman, this is an area of focus, as well, with our department, investing more into the early childhood development area. Yes, this particular area will be ongoing funding. Next year we will be faced with that again. It is important to note that it is a worthwhile business, so we will continue to fund that. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, it is good to hear that this is going to be ongoing. I am presuming that it will be added to base funding for the fiscal year 2011-12. Also, in terms of child care, and I think that the Minister referenced that there is going to be some research done, some investigation done in terms of what child care facilities do exist in the NWT, and I think it is a very valuable research. I believe that we need to be putting an awful lot more money into child care spaces, assisting child care with both physical facilities, capital costs and with providing more daycare spaces for people who happen to be working and that is in all of our communities. It is difficult enough here in Yellowknife, but I know in the smaller communities it is probably almost impossible to get a daycare space.

One of the statements that was made when we were discussing the business plans was that there was going to be an investigation of the School Community Counsellor Program. I wondered if there is a problem with this particular program. What program is it that is being reviewed and, perhaps, why? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chairman, with the child care spaces, we do have approximately 1,810 spaces that we support. Out of that, there are roughly 117 programs across the Northwest Territories. With the School Community Counsellor Program, it has been delivered through, as you know, the college for a number of years. There has been some interest, of course, in restarting that. Those are the areas that we are looking at as we speak. We need to have more discussion in that field. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, thanks for the answer to the Minister. I just would like to suggest that, when this is being investigated, when it is being looked at, the Minister and the department seriously consider the effect the lack of school counsellors has on students in schools, particularly high schools and their inability to actually fully understand the impact that particular course will have on their post-secondary education. The Minister full well knows it has been an issue that has come out a fair bit in the last several months. I think if there is an opportunity for us to train school counsellors, that this would certainly be a valid program. If it is not counselling the kids, if it is something different, then my remarks don't apply to this particular item, but I still feel that it is imperative that every school that has students in high school grades needs to have someone in that school who is counselling those kids on which classes they should be taking to achieve the goals they want to achieve in order for them to advance to the secondary education level that they want and that they need to get to. That is just a comment. I don't have a question there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will leave it up to you, Mr. Minister. You can respond to the comment or we can move on. Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. The School Community Counsellor Program in the past has been very successful through Aurora College. We are starting our annual programs and service proposal discussions with the college. Those are discussions that we need to have and working closely with the college president with my department. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I just have one more and it has to do with the issue of funding for inclusive schooling. When we did the business plans, we were advised that inclusive schooling funding was being reduced from 19 percent to 18.5 percent. I think, as well, somewhere along the line since business plans and

now, I have been advised that it doesn't mean a reduction in the cost to individual education authorities. I guess if I can get an explanation as to how the reduction in the percentage of funding to schools is going to give them the same amount of money that they need to deal with their inclusive schooling needs children. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Devitt.

MR. DEVITT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department currently funds schools based on a funding framework. It varies with enrolments, collective costs such as collective agreements. The formula for inclusive schooling will not be changed. There are no plans to change that formula.

What the new approach means is that the department will no longer be adjusting the formula to match a particular percentage of overall school funding. This will avoid having to change the formula every year and it also avoids potential difficulties in determining a percentage in overall school funding when the approach or when there are transfers to other departments such as utility transfer, so it simplifies things in that area. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: That was kind of clear as mud. I guess if I understood correctly, it's now being tied to students within an authority as opposed to being tied to a percentage of costs within the authority's budget. I didn't fully understand how this dollar amount is being determined. Secondly, is the dollar amount that is going to individual authorities going down this year for inclusive schooling? Thank you.

MR. DEVITT: We've always used a formula to fund schools. In the past, though, if the relationship or the percentage difference between inclusive schooling and other parts of the formula change, we'd adjust the formula. So the change is that we won't be adjusting the formula for changes in other areas. The formula itself or the amount for inclusive schooling this year is changing to reflect changes in enrolment which have gone down, but it's also being increased for collective agreements, which have gone up. So there are some changes in the formula, but they're relatively minor. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I will try one more time. The funding that education authorities are going to get for their inclusive schooling needs for their inclusive schooling students, is that going to go up or down in this next fiscal year? Thank you.

MR. DEVITT: It's decreasing somewhat. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, M. Chairman. Just a couple of questions I have here. I notice that the early childhood development budget has gone up quite a bit, quite substantially, actually. I am

wondering if the Minister could advise me if there is any of the extra money going to support daycares in Tu Nedhe communities of Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e. I talk about the students and even the absenteeism and then I get information from the schools and I am aware that kids going through a good daycare program have better success early when they start school, better success K to 12, especially better success in the lower grades like K to 5 and so on. I am wondering if there is extra money to support the daycares. Extra money is badly needed in both of those communities. I will start off with that, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. The funding overall will be covering some aspects of going to small communities, such as increase in funding to license early childhood programs in small, isolated communities up to \$350,000. This way the young children in small, isolated communities can certainly benefit from it. Those are the areas of increase to our funding to deal with small, isolated communities. Mahsi.

MR. BEAULIEU: I am not 100 percent clear on what that exactly means. I wonder if the Minister could just explain to me, in layman's terms, exactly what that funding will do in the small communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I will call on Mr. Daniels.

MR. DANIELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding that we're providing to the small communities will be for those communities outside the larger regional centres and will be intended to help with a variety of different things depending on different priorities that are present in the community. They may go towards helping with nutrition programs in the Child Care Program, for example, or it might be going towards helping with some playground equipment costs or some other safety matters around the playground of a centre or maybe going towards child and family literacy programs or staff development costs to help those operations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Daniels. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think those are all good initiatives. Is any of it going directly into supporting... The issue I have in one of the daycares is location, like to somehow bring the daycare into or close to the school. The other issue is staff complement. They are not able to support as many preschoolers as they would like to because they don't have the money to hire the staff. So just a direct question if any of that funding is going directly into daycares.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, it would all depend on the community, what kind of facility that they have. The criteria, of course, will be followed. We do have various funding through Early Childhood Development, whether it is daycare or other areas of programming. So we can't really give out the community-based...which community is going to receive this. All we are saying for now is the small and remote communities will certainly benefit from this and it could be part of the Member's riding as well. It all depends on the community infrastructure they have in place. Mahsi.

MR. BEAULIEU: I thank the Minister for that response, and the department. There is a Dene Yati program in Fort Resolution that I am proud to see going in the school. It was very good. The Minister and I travelled to the community to the school and the kids were coming up to us and speaking Chipewyan, of course. I understand what they were saying. The kids are actually able in the community -- and I don't think it's happened in a little while -- to walk up to you and speak very clearly and express themselves clearly and accurately in the Chipewyan language. However, this program is not in the school in Lutselk'e. I have talked to a couple of elders and I think even an elder that may have actually worked with students in the school in Lutselk'e in the past in the Dene Yati program. I know that the Minister can't give me the specifics that we're getting this much money into Lutselk'e, but I am wondering if because there's a drop, although other Members have said there's a surplus here, because there's a drop of close to half a million dollars in the area of aboriginal language and culture education. I'm wondering if the Minister could tell me if that money is going to support aboriginal programs in these schools right now that don't have an aboriginal language program.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, when we toured the community, it has been... I saw some positive outcomes out of it where the language spoken by the students, they can't leave their classroom until they say a word every day. It was fascinating to observe. Those are areas we are seriously looking at through our funding criteria. The Member is asking if the money or the funds that have been lapsed could be used towards that. It would all depend on discussions with aboriginal groups. We do have representatives from, I believe, the Member's riding. They can certainly bring that information back to their discussion table. If it's important to them, then they can certainly make that a priority. So we will continue to push that, Mr. Chair. This is an important initiative that the school is pursuing and we'd like to see more of that in other schools, where they speak the aboriginal language in a class setting. Mahsi.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Chairman, just switching gears for a second here and recognizing that library services in this area are really intended for community libraries, I am interested in if some sort of program could be put in place where this function, this task or activity I guess, could be expanded to support the library in a school. Right now, in Lutselk'e, there is no library and there is apparently a very good library in the Deninu Kue School in Fort Resolution. However, there is no library at all in Lutselk'e. I think it's essential. Again, recognizing that this is a community library area and I'm not sure that there is such a thing as a school library area, so I will ask if this is an area where they could maybe have a joint activity to expand library services into Lutselk'e through the school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Those types of discussions we need to have with the divisional education council. The library is an area that we continue to support, whether it be the programming into the regional centres or small community libraries. In the Member's library in Lutselk'e, they are getting new community learning centres. It could be worked out through the college itself, but there are all these opportunities that we can discuss with the Member in that respect. At the same time, I think this is an ideal discussion that we need to have for the community of Lutselk'e.

I know that there is always talk about having libraries in schools or even community libraries. It's not the first time we are hearing that, so we would like to continue working with the Member on this. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to follow up on official languages and talk about the importance of it. It's just interesting to note, Mr. Chair, a colleague of mine pointed out there's actually a reduction of funding to this year, from over the revised estimates of last year, of almost \$400,000. If the Minister can explain what got reduced or what is reduced for this coming fiscal year.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, those are the funds that have been allocated to the schools, but due to low enrolment, the money has gone down a bit. It's all based on enrolment. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: One of the main things that came out of the languages committee is that languages are being threatened or being endangered or in a position of possibly being lost. I know we had a

debate the last number of days on caribou and I think a lot of aboriginal cultures and languages are in a similar predicament if you look at the possibility of losing culture and language and it's important to the aboriginal people. Have you looked at the possibility of emergency-type funding for certain language groups that are threatened by way of extinction, such as the Gwich'in language group that I represent and I think that the Inuvialuit are also seeing a decrease in those language speakers. Is that something that your department is considering in light of the report that came forward?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you Mr. Krutko. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. We have identified some of the regions are losing their languages rapidly and we are currently dealing with that through our language groups and the continuous discussion with the federal, three territorial Ministers... We have had a teleconference just late last week and, Mr. Chairman, I am taking a lead role in the language and culture preservation on behalf of the three territorial governments to push at the federal level. I have identified the Gwich'in especially, because they are losing their language fast. Even the Tlicho, even though we have a strong language environment, we are losing it, as well, through the younger generation. So, Mr. Chairman, this is very important to us, that is why we are having this Language Symposium. We are going to have a variety of speakers on how we should preserve or even revitalize our language through curriculum development and, yes, Mr. Chairman, this is an area we continue to stress at the federal level and even within our territorial level as well, three territories. Mahsi.

MR. KRUTKO: I have been working with Darius Cassidy from the Yukon in regards to seeing if they can look at a similar process that we have formulated in this House by way of forming a languages committee or commission to look at how we deal with languages over here and have passed on information on previous commissions we established, because they are in the same dilemma we are. So I am glad to hear from the Minister that he is working with his northern colleagues, because I think that is the approach that we are going to have to take in order to get some attention to this issue, because, I mean, no offense to the French, but they used the constitutional argument but I think we also have to use the argument under Section 91 and also Section 35 of the Constitution, which talks about preserving and protecting aboriginal culture and not only looking at the rights but looking at the cultural side of aboriginal people.

Again, I would like to thank the Minister for that as I think it is important we do whatever we can. But I was looking more in light of some sort of special

fund we can establish so that we basically are able to do unique things to enhance those languages. I think one of the areas we have to really focus on is in regards to the younger students, either in preschool or kindergarten, and work in that group taking it through the education system. I think that is one way and I think that is the avenue we have to focus on to actually get those children educated in their language, using their language but use it as they move on and make it more of a working language in those communities. Because I think one thing that we found talking to other language organizations, regardless of whether it is Welsh or other languages around the world, is that you have to be able to develop it into the curriculum and find that as a means, and also into peoples' homes. Again, I would like to encourage the Minister to try to find unique types of funding, regardless if it is through federal funding or whatnot, to try to retain or enhance those languages that are being threatened. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I totally agree with the Member that we definitely need to stress the importance of preserving our language or even our cultural way of life. Every opportunity we get with the federal Ministers that are here... Just recently Minister Strahl was here and I reminded him that there is a proposal that is coming, because I did meet with Minister Strahl in December and although we had a discussion about losing our language, I did touch on the Gwich'in as well. I use Gwich'in as an example when I meet with these officials. It was a very productive meeting where we talked about the submission of a proposal and just the other day they reminded us about where the status is on, so the three territories getting in line will certainly make a lot of noise to the Heritage Minister, Mr. Moore. Those are the ongoing pressures that we are putting on the federal government. Certainly those two Ministers will be out here in March and we'll continue to work with them. I am glad the Member is raising this issue, because it is high importance for us. Mahsi.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, I would like to touch on the area of education K to 12. I know there was a political decision -- I think it was made back in the 12th Assembly -- to consider looking at K to 12 in all communities in the Northwest Territories. I think that just like anything else, it worked in some communities but it didn't work in all communities. I think that we should somehow look at and assess the progress or the faults of the, I don't want to say experiment, but I think that in most cases it was a plus for most communities where students are able to stay in the home communities, be part of the family unit. You don't have to leave home, you can get educated in your home community, but in some cases, that issue still exists and I think that we do have to find ways of assessing that decision. But, more importantly, practically, are we implementing

the policy as it was discussed in the 12th Assembly? In the 12th Assembly we were part of 51 communities which included ourselves and Nunavut and I think because of the challenges of the time that the concept was thrown out there, we were dealing with even a lot smaller communities than we are talking about here in the West today, and yet the policy was to instruct and seriously look at that. Again, I feel quite strongly that we have to be able to somehow develop assistance.

I know you talked about expanding our bandwidth in our communities and giving them that technology, but again, you have to have someone on the ground by way of a technician ensuring that they give them the expertise, the knowledge that they are going to need in how to use the system, how does the system work, understand the system and make the students make the best use of that system, but you still are going to have to hire people to implement the system. We have to find ways of dealing with that and I feel quite strongly that we do have to find some workable solution and I think that we can't say that, well, you know, it is up to the education boards. I think that we have to find a unique way of progressing on this one.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister if he would seriously consider going back and looking at what was discussed back then and, more importantly, are we achieving the results we were hoping for back then from the 12th Assembly to where we are today in 10 years.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We can certainly look at that. We are, through discussions with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, it does cover in that respect as well. We also talked about K to 12 members talking in the area of greater extension into the communities. Some are working, some are not working, but I think that needs to be identified through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative that is currently in discussion right now and devolving in a package by this year. That would certainly capture that. There are other issues or opportunities before us, so, Mr. Chairman, this will certainly be reviewed with the committee. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you Minister Lafferty. I have nobody else on the list here. Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Just in regard to Mangilaluk School in regard to the motion that I would like to be bringing forward. I brought one forward last year in regard to the unique position that overcrowding in Mangilaluk School for the library and the 35 teachers and whatnot and there's 35 staff having to share one bathroom and the library is being utilized for an office. I put a motion in last year in regard to the extension for Mangilaluk School and I think that, again, I would strongly want support from my

colleagues in regard to a motion that I'll be bringing forward here shortly in regard to that.

Mr. Minister, just regarding last year, I made a motion in the House for the Mangilaluk School extension. I'd like to see where he's at with it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that school, as we talked about earlier, will be part of the next year's capital planning process. We have the report back from Mr. Kindt highlighting the required space in the school, as the Member has referred to in his Member's statement. I think it is time to look at that on a going forward basis, so this will be part of the next year's planning cycle. Mahsi.

MR. JACOBSON: Again, I thank the Minister for the report that was done on Mangilaluk School. The situation in the Mangilaluk School, I'm happy to hear the Minister on a go forward basis on the funding for next year, but I still feel strongly enough that I do want to put a motion into the House. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. I didn't hear a question there. Mr. Minister.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are clearly listening to the Member and I appreciate the persistence that he's been pushing forward. We are seriously going to consider this school for next year's budget planning cycle. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Jacobson, do you have a motion? Go forward.

COMMITTEE MOTION 21-16(4):
ESTABLISHMENT OF A FULL-TIME
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER POSITION
IN SACHS HARBOUR FOR THE
2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR,
CARRIED

MR. JACOBSON: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that the committee strongly recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work in close cooperation with the Beaufort-Delta Education Council to take all the steps necessary to establish a full-time high school teacher position in Sachs Harbour for 2010-11...

Wrong motion, Mr. Speaker. That's my second one. I'm speaking on the Mangilaluk School extension.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question is being called.

---Carried

Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Committee, we're on page 10-17, activity summary, Education, Culture and Employment, education and culture, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I, too, will be coming forward with a similar motion in regard to the community of Tsiigehtchic, because I believe that the community should have a high school teacher in the community. I think that if you're going to deliver grades kindergarten to grade 9 and then also high school, you should have more than two teachers in a community. I think you can't expect people to carry that large workload and, more importantly, expect to have quality education being provided in those communities. So, again, I will be bringing forward a similar motion dealing with the community of Tsiigehtchic. I think that it's a similar arrangement as Sachs Harbour and I, again, will be coming forward with a motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Go forward with your motion.

COMMITTEE MOTION 22-16(4):
ESTABLISHMENT OF A FULL-TIME
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER POSITION
IN TSIIGEHTCHIC FOR THE
2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR,
CARRIED

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, I move that committee strongly recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work closely in close cooperation with the Beaufort-Delta Education Council to take all steps necessary to establish a full-time high school teacher position in Tsiigehtchic for the 2010-11 school year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question is being called.

---Carried

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Committee, I'm about to recognize the clock, but before we do, we're on page 10-17, activity summary, Education, Culture and Employment, education and culture, operations expenditure summary, \$181.532 million. Agreed? Ms. Bisaro has a comment. Go ahead, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to let you know I have questions. I thought you were going to recognize the clock. I can ask the

questions tomorrow as long as we don't close the page. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you for that heads up, Ms. Bisaro. Recognizing the clock, I will now rise and report progress. Thank you to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the House.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Bromley?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011, and would like to report progress, with two motions being adopted. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett): Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 10, 2010, 1:30 p.m.:

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

19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act
 - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act
 - Tabled Document 62-16(4), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2010-2011
 - Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 10th, at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:06 p.m.