



*Board of Governors
Office of the President*

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February 6, 2014

Mr. Robert Hawkins
MLA Yellowknife Centre
PO Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

Dear MLA Hawkins:

Re: Letter of Concern Received on January 30, 2014

I would like to thank you for taking the time to write about the meeting you and the members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs had with Aurora College students at the Yellowknife North Slave Campus January 24, 2014, and for sharing your concerns about the issues that were raised.

As Chair of the Aurora College Board of Governors, I would like to assure you that we take the concerns of our students seriously and, as an institution, consider all issues that are brought forward. These concerns are dealt with in a number of different ways, depending upon the subject, the seriousness, whether we have the authority to deal with it, and whether it has potential or probable impact on a larger number of students. There are a number of avenues through which students can bring matters forward, including through their instructors, their student associations, college administration or to the Board of Governors. As a matter of practice, Aurora College administration and the Board of Governors regularly review all operations and procedures, especially those that directly affect students.

I have had discussions with our president, Jane Arychuk, about the topics raised during the meeting. While some are a product of misinformation, several are issues that we ourselves have been working on with our partners. Others are currently being reviewed and examined by either college administration, the Board of Governors or Education, Culture & Employment (ECE). However, one point that is clear is that we need to continue to ensure students receive accurate information about topics which impact their lives and about the services that are available to them at Aurora College.

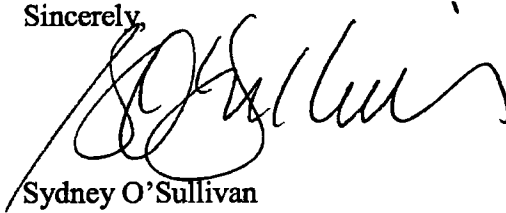
The operations of Aurora College, and the roles and responsibilities of its Board of Governors, are laid out in the Aurora College Act and accompanying regulations. Membership is clearly defined, and Section 9.(2)(c) stipulates that one member shall be a student. Although the Act allows for additional members who bring specific expertise to the position [Section 9.(2)(d)], this clause has recently been used to appoint an Elder representative. As well, the Act specifically outlines the procedures by which student concerns are to be brought to the Board. It is the role of

the Student Representative to communicate about students and student matters at Board meetings, which are open to the public.

In addition, there are many formal and informal avenues by which members of the Board of Governors interact with students and receive information about their concerns. The Student Services Division undertakes an annual Student Satisfaction Survey which asks questions about all areas affecting students at Aurora College. Summaries of the survey results are reviewed by the Board of Governors, and areas of note or concern are followed up by administration. Board members attend Campus graduation ceremonies, special events, completion ceremonies and campus gatherings when appropriate, and take that opportunity to speak casually with students. Issues are often brought forward in this manner. In fact, the Aurora College Board of Governors' Manual specifically states "Board members are encouraged to continually expand their understanding of their role as stewards of Aurora College: talk with the Minister, MLAs and more experienced Board members. While you are at a learning centre or on campus attending a college event, speak casually with students and staff...."

In closing, I would like to thank you again for your obvious commitment to and concern for the welfare of Aurora College students in Yellowknife. I assure you that the Board of Governors shares that commitment and concern. We will continue to do our best to discover, understand, and address the issues that face the students at all of our campuses and community learning centres.

Sincerely,



Sydney O'Sullivan
Chair, Board of Governors
Aurora College

- c. Aurora College Board of Governors
Minister, Education, Culture & Employment
Chair, Standing Committee on Social Programs, Legislative Assembly