

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, October 28, 2010— 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes which have been made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 1219, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, and Motion No. 1220, standing in the name of the Member for Mount Lorne, have been removed from the Order Paper as they are now outdated.

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Cervical Cancer Awareness Week

Hon. Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize this week as Cervical Cancer Awareness Week. Every year almost 1,500 Canadian women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and almost 400 women die of it. Since 1987, 223 Yukon women have been diagnosed.

The main risk factor for cervical cancer is the human papillomavirus, or HPV. HPV is a sexually-transmitted infection that comprises different strains, some of which cause cervical cancer. Thankfully, science now provides women with some protection against the two strains of HPV that cause 70 percent of all cervical cancers. This immunization is now part of the Yukon immunization schedule, which means that young Yukon women can obtain this life-protecting vaccine for free, at a time in their lives when it will offer the best protection.

The other way women can help protect themselves is by getting a regular Pap screening. This test helps identify early in the process any abnormal changes to the cells of the cervix, when can develop into cancer over time if not treated.

Les femmes peuvent aussi se protéger en subissant régulièrement un test PAP. Ce test permet de dépister tôt toute anomalie des cellules du col de l'utérus, ce qui peut avec le temps aboutir à un cancer faute de traitement adéquat.

The 2009 Yukon *Health Status Report* tells us that the cancer screening tests are one of the reasons that we have seen improved cancer outcomes across Canada. The Pap smear is the main reason why cervical cancer, once a common and devastating cause of death in both younger and older women, is now a relatively rare cause of mortality.

The report goes on to state that about 92 per cent of Yukon women over the age of 18 have had a Pap test at some time. This is higher than the Canadian average of 87 per cent. As well, almost 60 per cent of Yukon women have had a Pap test within the past year and almost 80 per cent have had one within the past three years.

Until we can eradicate cervical cancer entirely, regular testing and immunization against dangerous strains of HPV will continue to save women's lives.

Jusqu'à ce que le cancer du col de l'utérus soit complètement éradiqué, le test Pap et la vaccination contre les souches les plus dangereuses du VPH continueront de sauver la vie des femmes.

In closing, I would like to ask the members of this House to join me in encouraging all women in our lives to get their Pap test. As well, let's encourage young women to obtain a life-saving HPV vaccine.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I would ask the indulgence of the House to join me in recognizing and making welcome a very special group of people. Today in Whitehorse and over the next few days, the inaugural Model Arctic Council is being held. It includes the participation of a number of young people from as far away as Russia. This year's theme, of course, is the engagement of youth, who are the leaders of tomorrow, and a focus on climate change. So, join me, fellow colleagues, in making welcome the following:

Constantin Asabin from Moscow, Russia. Constantine, you can stand as I call out your name — or he's not here? Okay, we missed him. Garrett Ahenakew — Garrett, please stand; Hailee-Jean Lindgren from Calgary, Alberta; Pia Blake from Whitehorse; Swen Ugyuk from Taloyoak, Nunavut; Ellen Ramsay, youth facilitator from Kamloops, B.C.; David Crowe, youth facilitator from Ottawa, Ontario; Kathryn White, executive director from the United Nations Association Canada; and Denise Siele, project officer for the Model Arctic Council.

There are also a number of other individuals in attendance. Welcome, one and all.

Applause

Speaker: Is there any further introduction of visitors?
Returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling the audited consolidated financial statements of the Government of Yukon for the year ending March 31, 2009.

I also have for tabling the public accounts for 2009-10.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Mitchell: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Premier to work with the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to resolve out-

standing transboundary claims involving the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun.

Mr. Cathers: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to move forward with planned improvements to the Hot Springs Road by ensuring the 2011-12 budget includes funding for the work identified in the functional plan, including widening and repaving this road.

Speaker: Is there a ministerial statement?
Hearing none, this brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre, women's transition unit

Mr. Inverarity: I have a follow-up question for the Justice minister regarding the women's transition unit at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. We have asked questions about this before and we've received some fuzzy answers. Last week during debate, we learned something new. We learned that the women's transition unit is not being used very much.

The government has invested more than a million dollars into this facility that has rarely been used for its intended purpose. Can the Minister of Justice explain to us why the plan was changed at the women's transition unit and what it's being used for now?

Hon. Ms. Horne: The plans have not changed for the women's annex; it was built to exist for the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre. As I stated in this House last week, it will be turned over at the completion of the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre to be used by Health and Social Services, and the actual use for it is still not determined.

Mr. Inverarity: We have heard of this before. The minister has previously stated, and again today, that the women's transition unit will be transferred to Health and Social Services. During the debate last week, and again today, she revealed that the previous commitments and plans for this facility at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre are now up in the air. The minister was unable to explain what the women's transition unit will be used for. Some notice about what the government is planning now would be helpful, but the minister has been unclear with regard to her responses. Is there a different minister who could tell us what this facility will be used for in the future and/or is the million dollars that we invested into this project lost?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Money lost? We are setting up Whitehorse Correctional Centre as a multi-use facility, and this is only part of the new WCC. It's actual use will be determined by Health and Social Services, but it will be used in a therapeutic setting.

Mr. Inverarity: These questions are pretty straightforward. You would think that if you're going to spend a million dollars on a building you would know what it's going to be used for before you actually built it. The women's transition unit had a million dollar investment. That million dollars was supposed to be put to good use now and in the future. The mil-

lion dollars is spent, the money is gone, the building is rarely used, and we have no idea what the building will be used for in the future.

The minister should answer the basic questions. What else is the women's transition unit going to be used for and what are the plans for the transition centre after it is transferred to Health and Social Services, if in fact that's what is really going to happen?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I think the only confusion here is in the opposition. I was going to say something else there, but I hold that back. The women's annex is not occasionally used, it is open. It has been open; we have women inmates in the facility. I believe the member opposite toured the facility. This facility has been in use for over a year and it is functioning very well.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre, use for old facility

Mr. Inverarity: We'll continue questioning the Minister of Justice on the ever-changing plans for the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Last week during general debate, the minister revealed that the old jail was not going to be demolished after all. The old jail was condemned. That's why the government spent \$67 million on a new one. Now we find out that the old jail is going to be, as the minister says, "re-purposed". It would be nice to know what this really means, but I think we kind of get the idea. If the new purpose for the old Correctional Centre is still unclear, the Justice minister could at least tell us what is under consideration. So, my question is this: what new purpose is the government considering for the old jail?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I stated here in the House the other day, the purpose of the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre is not under the Minister of Justice's purview, and what it will be used for will be decided. Isn't it better to put use to it, rather than demolish the existing building? I think that makes sense. That's common sense, which is lacking in the room opposite.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, her building is condemned. The Minister of Justice should simply answer the question, and it's about trust. We deserve at least that much respect here. The government cannot reopen a condemned building of this size and this age without a lot of renovations. There is currently almost \$1 million allocated for demolition of the old jail. There is also supposed to be a reduction in the operational costs for heating and electricity. Those cost savings won't happen now if the new plan goes forward to keep it up.

Mr. Speaker, this change of plan the minister is proposing will be very, very expensive. Does the Justice minister have any idea what the additional operational costs for the continued operation of the old jail will be year-round?

Hon. Mr. Lang: The old building will be assessed through Property Management. If there is any more life to it, we can utilize it in the government, and if it would be economically feasible to do so, we will do that. But that assessment will go on after the new building is open, and it will become the responsibility of Property Management to do that assessment.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, what we're getting here from this minister seems to be nothing but evasive and confusing answers. We still don't know what this building is going to be used for. It is condemned. You would think, as part of the current corrections facility up there, that there would be a fence around it, so what else is it going to be used for?

The new corrections facility was \$67 million. This investment was undertaken to replace the old facility, and the original plan was to save money by reducing operational cost. This is about trust, Mr. Speaker, and this new plan coming from the Justice department looks like it is going to be throwing more good money after bad. All we're asking here is this: could the minister tell us what the O&M costs are going to be to continue the operation of this building for the next year?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should change his script. I just informed the member that Property Management will be managing the building. The building was condemned as a facility to house inmates. When the member opposite talks about it being condemned, it was condemned to be used as a correctional institute. We will do an assessment of the value of maintaining the building. That will be done after the building is cleared out and the new facility is open and running.

At that point, a decision will be made, but that decision will be done at a level of professionalism that is lacking in the Opposition benches.

Question re: Labour, Yukon hire

Mr. Cardiff: Although the Yukon economy is booming, unemployment in the territory remains disturbingly high. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the Yukon as of September 2010 was 7.1 percent; however, the jobless rate in rural Yukon is off the charts at 22.6 percent. One of our local papers recently quoted a union official as saying that he thinks that 95 to 100 percent of the tradespeople currently working at the Wolverine mine are from Outside. Will the Minister of Economic Development tell us if this figure is correct?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I certainly don't have employment statistics at the Wolverine mine, but he is right in the fact that there are challenges in rural Yukon, and this is something that our regional economic development office is continually looking at. There will be challenges in the future for other mines as they open — the Bellekeno mine, for instance, and possibly Victoria Gold and others. This is certainly a challenge for the future to put that employment rate out over a wider spectrum of the Yukon. However, people have to remember that, as population goes up and the number of jobs goes up, sometimes the percentages may remain the same.

Mr. Cardiff: If the government had done a better job of planning for the mining boom and the building boom we are witnessing, perhaps more Yukoners could be directly benefiting. If the government had staggered some of its infrastructure projects, perhaps more Yukoners would be directly benefiting. If the government had done a better job of training people to take advantage of the boom, perhaps more Yukoners would be directly benefiting.

Last week I had the opportunity to tour the \$67 million Whitehorse Correctional Centre currently under construction in

Whitehorse. I was impressed with the scale and the scope of the project, but I have heard that a lot of the concrete block work and a lot of the drywalling was done by workers from outside Yukon.

Can the Minister of Justice tell us what percentage of the workforce at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre is from Outside?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: It's with both my hat as Energy, Mines and Resources minister and Education minister that I'd like to address this question, because it is an important one and one that recognizes the growing economy in the territory, the growing faith that companies are having in the territory, the explosion of building going on around us — whether it's condominium facilities, infrastructure like the correctional facility, whether it's the Wolverine mine or the Capstone mine — some of these projects are employing hundreds of people.

Indeed, we're seeing literally hundreds of people employed in some of these areas and, yes, we want to ensure that Yukoners are prepared for these opportunities.

That's why we're preparing and investing in vehicles like the Yukon Mine Training Association, which is bringing industry and First Nations together to identify the opportunities that are out there and identify the people that need the training and to create those kinds of bridges. That's why we're building college campuses in Pelly and Dawson to enhance those training opportunities for Yukoners. That's why we're investing in programs literally across the territory and providing additional post-secondary education opportunities for Yukoners. We're taking the steps to ensure that Yukoners are prepared for Yukon opportunities.

Mr. Cardiff: Everyone in this House, including members on this side of the House, want to see the Yukon economy booming and doing well, but no boom lasts forever. So while it lasts we need to make sure it provides maximum benefits to Yukoners because they're the ones to whom we are responsible.

The government needs to put greater effort into planning and staggering projects so that the boom and the local benefits last as long as possible. But when a government like the current one fails to take the long view and plan accordingly, the economic benefits of a mining and building boom will be short-lived and shallow.

Will the Premier tell us what percentage of the workforce at the Mayo B project, the doctors and nurses residence in Whitehorse, the hospitals in Watson Lake and Dawson City and other projects currently in the Yukon — how many workers are coming from Outside?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, I see the NDP still has a great aversion for the broader Canadian public and the world at large and indeed the mining sector, from what I'm hearing today.

Let me make a point, Mr. Speaker. The member states that we should have done a better job in planning. Has the member of the Third Party looked at the budget? There's a multi-year capital plan in the budget. It is all about staggering capital projects.

Secondly, the member is referencing people working in the Yukon. Well, we all know what past Liberal and NDP govern-

ments did — to create a lower unemployment rate, they drove the population out of the territory, down to some 29,000 people.

In today's Yukon, we are over 34,000 in population. Does the member not recognize that these are people who are working in the Yukon and are part of Yukon's social fabric and society?

The government did do a better job. The government has increased the population. The government has increased jobs and benefits for Yukoners. The government has actually created an economy. The government has doubled the fiscal capacity of the Yukon. The government has invested in quality of life. The government has done a much better job than past governments and we intend to keep on doing so.

Question re: Land development

Mr. McRobb: The Yukon Party's 2006 election platform promised to ensure there is a constant two-year supply of residential lots in the Whitehorse area. On Monday in this House, we discussed how this is just another promise this Yukon Party government has failed to live up to. Today's question deals with a related issue. This government has priced the available land out of Yukoners' hands. Now, not only has the shortage of lots caused problems for most Yukoners, but the government's practice of pricing the land at market value has also made lots virtually unaffordable. Can the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources tell Yukoners why the government is selling lots based on market value, and has he considered any alternatives?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: This government certainly recognizes the growing faith that people have in the territory, as demonstrated by the growing population, the growing number of businesses, and the growing number of industries here.

We've worked with the City of Whitehorse and other municipalities in order to provide additional lots. We've just seen the Ingram subdivision and others that the City of Whitehorse has put forward. The next project is Whistle Bend, and that will provide thousands of lots to Yukoners.

I need to correct the record for the member opposite. When the Government of Yukon looks at pricing lots, there are a variety of factors to consider. These include the development costs — for example, what does it cost to bring the road to the area; what does it cost to put in the sewer, electrical lines, sanitary lines, the curbs — those types of things? What does it cost to actually create the neighbourhood? There's also an argument to be made for looking at the market value, because we don't want to negatively impact the other people who have already made those kinds of investment in their neighbourhood and community.

That's why in many of these situations, we're seeing a blend of the development cost and the market cost being used to establish the pricing structure. It's one that addresses many of the interests out there and puts land in the hands of Yukoners and addresses the cost of developing the lot.

Mr. McRobb: Without a continuous supply of adequate lots for development and the Government of Yukon setting the market value, Yukoners are in a no-win situation. The minister surely realizes that demand will only continue to

grow; the City of Whitehorse is trying the best it can with the land it has available, but this Yukon Party government has not stepped up to the plate on availability or pricing. Lack of lots equals market value increase. Yukoners need affordable land, but this government has produced lots that are either unavailable or unaffordable to most Yukoners. Can the minister tell us why land valuations are not based on development costs?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Well, I appreciate the continued faith in the government that the member opposite indicates; he certainly believes that Yukoners have faith and will continue to move here. I want to let the member opposite know that development costs are certainly a factor that is considered in setting the prices of these lots. When we went through a recent exercise on pricing the lots — in fact, the percentage points between the development costs and the market costs were within percentage points of each other. There's certainly a case to be made for using both or either of those methods — in this case, we used a blended one — and the final outcome — or the final selling price — was large enough that it covered the development costs, but also it didn't have a negative impact on those people that have already made an investment into Yukon and Yukon real estate.

Mr. McRobb: The minister said that development costs are a factor, but perhaps we can only agree that development costs are not the primary factor. The primary factor this government continues to use — and its model is based on it — is market value. Yukoners need adequate and affordable land to develop. They need to know how this government is planning to deal with the big issue of price affordability. We already know in terms of availability that there won't be any new construction on land yet to be released until the year 2013. The next subdivision to be released will be so late in the year 2012 it'll skip the building season entirely. This government has produced land that is either unavailable or unaffordable, and we as the Official Opposition are suggesting that this minister should consider changing the pricing model to development costs. I'm going to ask him again: will he undertake to do that?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: This government has certainly worked hard to create a climate that was conducive to growth, conducive to economic prosperity, conducive to the lives of Yukoners.

We've heard about the population increase and I believe that's good for the territory. That creates more opportunities now and into the future.

Yes, we need to ensure there are more residential lots as the population continues to grow. That's why this government established a protocol with the City of Whitehorse to ensure we are in line and we are consistent with the City of Whitehorse's plans. That's how we follow the lead on many of these different initiatives.

We're also very supportive of other orders of government and their plans to provide residential lots and opportunities for Yukoners. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the development cost is certainly a very important factor that has to be considered when setting the selling price and it is one of the most important factors. The development costs must be covered by the selling price.

I'll try to provide a bit more information to the member opposite about some of these costs, because I think he believes that they're a lot less than they actually are.

Question re: Great River Journey

Mr. McRobb: All week now, we've been asking the Minister of Economic Development questions on his failed investment in Great River Journey and it's time to wrap up some loose ends.

On Tuesday, in reference to the lost \$576,000 he said, and I quote: "It's the maximum allowable amount under the strategic industries development fund..."

However, yesterday, he said that it was me who was: "lumping a large number of different programs and claiming that it exceeded one single program." Well, it's obvious this government is tired and too often points the finger. We refuse to accept blame for something this minister said on the record. Will he now correct the record and give us the breakdown for that \$576,000?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: For the member opposite, I'll try to be a little bit clearer for him, since "tired" does seem to be the operative word here. The \$576,581 granted from Economic Development to Great River Journey was provided through non-repayable contribution agreements for business development purposes — also for tourism development, but I'll let the Tourism minister deal with that. \$500,000 was contributed to Great River Journey from strategic industries development fund: investment, attraction and planning, \$93,000 in 2005-06; implementation-stage development, \$407,000 in 2006-07; \$38,250 in 2009-10 was contributed to the First Nation Investment Corporation by Regional Economic Development to assess the impacts of restructuring options for Great River Journey; and \$38,331 in 2009-10 was contributed to Great River Journey by Business and Industry Development to assist with the restructuring and refinancing analysis.

I hope that gives him a better ability to break it down, although I'm somewhat suspicious that he still won't be able to quite understand that.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please. Minister of Economic Development, the Chair feels that you're starting to personalize this debate, so just keep that in mind, please.

Member for Kluane, next question please.

Mr. McRobb: The minister was also asked several times to tell us whether the monies were secured or unsecured, so Yukon taxpayers would know the status of his ill-fated investment, but this minister wouldn't state the obvious, that the monies were gone and won't be recovered. Instead he said it was a matter for the courts to decide.

Then he was asked to table the agreements signed between this government and the proponent, but he chose not to answer that question. Why did he avoid that question? Why won't he table those documents? Let's ask him again: will he now agree to table those documents?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I think it's time for the member opposite to change his script and actually listen to some of the

answers, so I will repeat what I just said verbatim: it was provided through a non-repayable contribution agreement for business development purposes, and that breaks down to assess the impacts of restructuring options; it was part of the business and economic research to assist with restructuring, et cetera. We did not purchase assets and the matters of a private company — is the member opposite actually criticizing the four First Nations, as well, that invested in this? I can understand that they might want to criticize the federal government, but four First Nations are involved in this. Is the member opposite actually saying something against those four? Investments were made in good faith; I still think that the project does have life, and there are others in Canada who agree with that. But they are restructuring, the matter is in the courts, and I leave it to the courts' good work.

Mr. McRobb: Let the record show this minister failed to answer the question and failed to undertake to table those documents — so much for this government's promise of being open, accountable, and fiscally responsible. This is yet another example that causes that promise to ring hollow. Let's go back to when this minister announced the funding and said, "All is set out in the business plan." Based on that, Great River Journey would be a financially and environmentally sound, sustainable, and long-term business, but yesterday this minister confessed he never read the business plan, even though it sounded like he did.

It's time for this minister to finally own up to his own words and not blame others. Why didn't he feel it necessary to read the business plan before dishing out well over half a million dollars of taxpayers' money?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: To summarize what the member opposite has already said in this House, the Liberals would read business plans. They'd read and go over every one. They would probably Google some of the people involved — the member opposite has done that many times. They would also insert themselves into boards and committees and make those decisions. No wonder the previous, short-lived Liberal government disbanded the Department of Economic Development. They would do it all themselves.

The member opposite now suddenly likes to go back into *Hansard*, so let's reminisce on March 31, 2009: "...if the minister's thinking about mentioning Question Period as a possibility, well, that's simply not the place for information-type questions."

I think we do realize that the member opposite does believe that getting information is not what he's trying to go after.

Question re: Great River Journey

Mr. Fairclough: I'd like to follow with the Tourism minister. The government lost a lot of money through its investment in Great River Journey. My colleague has been trying all week to get answers about that from the Economic Development minister, but the minister instead points fingers at the Tourism minister.

He told the House, and I quote: "Tourism and Culture was also involved in this with, I believe, an additional, roughly, \$100,000 to support Great River Journey's restructuring, marketing and sales efforts."

Since then, Mr. Speaker, the Tourism minister clarified that amount and told us it was \$118,000 instead. Can she tell us when that money was paid to help with restructuring, marketing and sales?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to bring some additional clarity to the member opposite — obviously there is a lot required.

The support provided to Great River Journey over the last four years was by way of existing programs and services, such as the tourism cooperative marketing fund, historic properties assistance, as well as support with media, familiarization and trade tours — all of which, I might add, are not only highly subscribed, but are also supported by the Yukon's tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, each of these programs is available to all tourism entities, provided they meet the respective eligibility criteria, as prescribed by the department. Again, we are very proud of programs such as these. These are programs that are very effective for increasing the awareness and the knowledge of not only products and tourism experiences throughout the Yukon, but for also increasing and heightening the awareness of the Yukon as a destination of choice as a whole, within our key target markets.

The government recognizes the importance of the tourism sector. We are very pleased to respond to the tourism industry's request by increasing each of these funds and increasing our marketing support. Obviously it is working. We are up 12 per cent year to date.

Mr. Fairclough: Let's go a little deeper into what the Economic Development minister said. He told the House that the Tourism minister put in about \$100,000. He also said, "The commitment was conditional on Great River Journey receiving private sector debt refinancing and additional investment, neither of which has materialized, so that matter is still sort of debatable. But the matter is now in the courts; the company has filed for bankruptcy."

Can the Tourism minister confirm for the record: is her colleague correct that she advanced funds when the conditions weren't met?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It is truly unfortunate that the Liberal Party continues to demonstrate its lack of understanding of the importance of the tourism sector in the territory.

All of these respective programs, such as the tourism cooperative marketing fund, product development assistance, research, tourism marketing programs — domestic and overseas — we continue to deliver these in collaboration with Yukon's tourism industry. When it comes to the tourism cooperative marketing fund and when it comes to media familiarization tours and trade assistance, these are two particular areas that the Yukon Tourism Industry Association directly and specifically asked for, both of which this government has delivered, and both of which have also delivered visitation — the highest visitation in numbers compared to the rest of the country. This territory believes the very strength of the tourism sector and we continue to work in collaboration with the sector to do just that.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister didn't answer the question. Now, we're interested in how this government manages Yukon's money. We're interested in getting answers in this House about hundreds of thousands of dollars advanced to a now-bankrupt tourism company. Her colleague said she advanced public money in a fashion that was, quote, "debatable". He said there were supposed to be conditions on that money, specifically that the company needed to get more private money before it could get government money.

He said those conditions weren't met, and he pointed the finger at the Tourism minister. And it's a simple question to the Tourism minister: did she, or did she not, advance funds to Great River Journey, despite conditions not being met?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I am completely alarmed, but yet not surprised, by the member opposite and his line of questioning. You know, if the member opposite is accusing the Department of Tourism and Culture of dishing out funding wrongfully, then I urge the member to take it outside. I have complete and utter faith in the Department of Tourism and Culture, their integrity, and the industry. These are programs that are applicant-driven —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: One can only presume that if one asks a question that they would like to hear the answer, so I would prefer that the Official Opposition just relax, let the minister answer, then they can comment after. The Minister of Tourism and Culture has the floor.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Each of these programs is available to all tourism — all business entities, provided they meet the eligibility criteria. There are protocols in place; there are eligibility criteria — which, by the way, we also work with industry to define and to deliver, unlike the members opposite.

I am sure that what I am hearing across the way is if, in fact, the Liberals were to form government, there would no longer be a tourism cooperative marketing fund; there would no longer be an enterprise trade fund; there would no longer be assistance with media relations; there would no longer actually be an expansion to the Whitehorse International Airport — as the Leader of the Official Opposition already indicated — and there would certainly no longer be money available for tourism marketing.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now continue with general debate on the Department of Education. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 22 — *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now continue with general debate and Department of Education, Vote 3. Mr. Rouble, you have about 15 minutes left.

Department of Education — *continued*

Hon. Mr. Rouble: When we left off the other day, a member of the Official Opposition had asked a question about F.H. Collins Secondary School and its replacement, and I am pleased to answer that.

The Government of Yukon, the Yukon Party government, has recognized that F.H. Collins has served a long and useful life and it is at the stage of its life where it needs to be replaced. We've made a commitment in other jurisdictions throughout the territory to replace their schools. The member opposite is aware of the construction projects that have happened in the past in his riding, while even now seeing the replacement of the Yukon College campus in his community today.

F.H. Collins has served a certainly long and useful life with thousands of graduates going through its doors. It's really neat to see when you go into that school — the wall of graduates, if you will — the photographs hanging there of all the students who have gone through that school. We've made a commitment. The budget is put forward through the five-year capital plan. The Premier tabled this with his Budget Address earlier this year. It puts forward a commitment of \$2,700,000 this year in the budget for the project and includes future estimates for future years of over \$24 million in 2011-12, over \$14 million in 2012-13, and over \$2 million in 2013-14 as we go through this project. This indicates a project in excess of \$44 million.

We certainly didn't just start with a number; in fact, we started with the needs of the students. The discussion of the replacement of this school has been going on for a number of years now and we wanted to channel that and put it forward in more of a formal process. A couple of years ago — Mr. Chair, I'm sure you're aware of the secondary school programming review — we took a look at all the programming opportunities that were available in high schools in the Whitehorse area. There's a wide range of programs, whether they be at F.H. Collins, Vanier Catholic Secondary School, Porter Creek Sec-

ondary School, or the Wood Street Annex, which houses many of the experiential education programs. I should add the Individual Learning Centre, because that has been an important school that was created under this government to address the needs of students who disengaged from high school before they finished their high school career. It has been a very successful tool to help students finish off their high school requirements and continue on their track in lifelong learning.

We've also taken a look at the changes that have been made in education. We've certainly seen the evolution of education and reform of education. I've gone into some detail already about our goals and vision for the future and the whole issue of the skills necessary for a 21st century learner — a learner that has the skills to be inquisitive, to do the research, to question the research that they have, to do a thorough analysis of this, and then to find efficient, effective ways of communicating it with others — because we have seen a change in our workplace. The changes in our workplace need to be reflected in the changes in our education system, and that also means a change in how our educational institutions or our schools are structured.

It has been quite awhile since I've gone into a classroom and seen the little red triangles or angles painted on the floor that indicated that was where your desk had to go in order to have perfectly straight lines — perfectly straight rows. Instead, now we're seeing classrooms where people are working in groups, working in teams, or working in a more fluid educational environment. Those types of things need to be encapsulated in the design of a building.

We also have to recognize what we have learned about architectural style and changes over the years and incorporate that into our modern building. Also, it's important to look at the full life-cycle costs of a building. Yes, the capital cost of construction is an important factor to look at, but so are the costs of heating, lighting and ventilation. We want to ensure that we're building an energy-efficient building and one that is aiming to achieve the LEED standards that have been established, so that we can ensure that there is a minimal impact on the environment, now and into the future.

But let me go back to some of the programming. We did the secondary school programming review, which gave indications about the types of courses and programs necessary in our modern high school. As you can expect, our typing classes, for example, have certainly changed. We don't have students working away or pounding away on manual typewriters any more. Indeed, now it's a keyboarding class. Now it's even more important to learn some of those skills at a much younger age. That's just a small example of some of the changes in education.

We took a look at the programming and also went to work with the groups that would be affected by this new school. We looked at the creation of a building advisory committee. This included members of the school council, school administration, school staff, feeder schools — the primary schools that students attend and graduate there to go to F.H. Collins — First Nations, the environmental stewardship committee — which looked at some of the life-cycle costing of the environmental impacts,

and looked at how we could benefit from using things like natural light or natural heat or natural cooling. Of course, the Department of Education staff was involved and also the Property Management division of Highways and Public Works, because they will be very involved during the construction phase of this.

This also included two teacher representatives from F.H. Collins, two administrators from F.H. Collins, and other teachers, as I mentioned, from the feeder schools. Since September 23, 2009, the building advisory council has had 16 meetings, so clearly there has been a significant amount of work and energy that has gone into it so far.

There have been a number of workshops conducted on this process to ensure there was community involvement on the issue. Some of the topics for discussion at these workshops included discovery and design, report of discovery and design, staff member interviews and professional development workshops, curriculum mapping workshops, and the LEED energy workshop. We also had elders involved in a workshop, discussions with school administration and also some consultation around the issues of the cafeteria, the foods teachers and administration, ensuring that not only were the academic needs or the cognitive, effective and psycho-motor issues often addressed in education, but also the lunch issues and basic food needs were taken care of.

Again, we have worked with an architect since March 2010 on the design of the new school. We're getting very close to the schematic design stage where all of the different ideas and thoughts are coming together. I've seen some drafts of these and they're very exciting. It will be an invigorating learning space — one that is building upon best practices in education, one that really maximizes every square foot of the building.

There are many different aspects of it that are designed as multi-purpose or multi-space. For example, when one looks at the music room, it actually becomes a stage to the larger auditorium, so there's a movable wall in there between the music room and an auditorium to make a larger room. Then, if there's an even larger crowd, the outside walls of that can be moved — as they are curtain walls — so that there is an accommodation for much larger groups of people at things like large community meetings, graduations or other types of celebrations that are often held in these schools.

Again, it's important to recognize the multi-use aspects of a building and to ensure that it's flexible, because as much as education has changed in the last five, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years, I expect it will continue to change in the future and we have to ensure that the building will meet the flexibility needs of the Whitehorse community for decades to come.

In the process, we are again prioritizing energy efficiency, really taking a look at things such as the life-cycle costing, the effects of natural light coming into a room, looking at sources of heating and cooling — whether those be things like ground-source heat pumps or a bio-mass or wood-pellet boiler as is being used in the Correctional Centre — the new facility that's under construction. We're also looking at some of the attributes

that we have with the property, it being so close to the Yukon River. These are important characteristics.

There are also many other design characteristics that have been identified. I know in previous discussions that these issues have been important to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. He has discussed in the past how the school that the Yukon Party built in his community was designed to be a metaphor for the river flowing through the community, similar to the salmon running through that community and looking at how students can make the transition from one part of the building through to the next and then into the community. We're looking on the construction side of things at a slab-on-grade construction, rather than the typical type of stick frame. I expect that there'll be a bit more steel used in the building. We're looking at using efficient building techniques. Of course, cost is a factor when looking at these things.

In previous buildings that I've seen, I know there was a lot of work putting in place intricate angles or intricate curves. While there are some of those in this building, it's important to note that this is a slab-on-grade construction with a curtain wall in areas where we are really taking advantage of some efficiencies in building construction and efficiencies in building materials.

The budget for this fiscal year was \$2.7 million. That was to bring forward many of the issues around the building advisory committee, to bring the architects onside and to start with the schematic design stage. We're almost at that stage right now.

The forecast for next year is \$24.4 million, followed by \$14.7 million, followed by \$2.4 million. Those are put forward in our capital estimates. That certainly demonstrates the commitment that this government has put into this type of project, the level of planning that is in place, the level of ensuring that these projects are planned well in advance and properly accounted for and budgeted for in our outgoing years.

As we get closer and conclude the schematic stage of the design, we can then move into the other estimating sides that will fine-tune the budget a bit more. We'll then move on to the tendering phase of things, where the budgets and estimates will be much more closely related to the actuals.

We've allocated significant resources for this. We believe this will be an important project, not only for the needs of Whitehorse but for the whole territory. We trust that members of the opposition are in full support of this project, and they can demonstrate that by standing up today and voting for the budget and the resource allocations therein.

Mr. Fairclough: We in the opposition are in support of this project — replacing the F.H. Collins school. We said it in public; we'll say it here in the House. When it comes to the overall government budget, it's a confidence bill and we don't have confidence, like the public, in this government and that's why we vote against this government's money bills.

I just want to point that out because the minister constantly comes back and talks about it.

An interesting thing — just watch to see if this happens: if the minister so believes that, in a matter of months they'll be

voted out of government and the F.H. Collins school will be built and they will vote against the budget.

I asked the minister about the total cost of F.H. Collins — \$44 million. The minister confirmed that again today. It came out of the Yukon economic outlook for 2010. The numbers are there. The minister said that the amounts are just in excess of \$44 million for the replacement of the F.H. Collins Secondary School. He did say that in next year's budget we'll have \$24 million followed by \$14 million the following year and then finishing up the work with \$2.4 million — just over those amounts the first two years.

Also, we know that there's a change in how F.H. Collins is going to be replaced. In the beginning, with the building advisory committee, the school was going to be built in a different place than it is now. The way I understand it is the existing school will still operate and portions of it will be taken down and replaced, disrupting classes as little as possible in that manner. That means construction will go over more than one season.

I asked the minister whether or not and how much this will disrupt the classroom work in the school. I know a lot of this work will be done over the summer, of course. Because of this change, I take it these numbers are recent because of the additional money that is put into the supplementary budget, which is \$48,000 higher than the minister said — that they are accurate — but if there is any change, I would like to know about that — the fact that F.H. Collins will be built over a number of years and the existing school will be still in operation with portions of it taken down. Now, I know it's hard to predict whether or not materials increase, so could the minister answer that and also whether or not there has been any direction given through government about building this school with local materials. This has been a discussion in the past with the construction of the Tantalus School in Carmacks and that idea was dropped; they could have used local materials here and still designed it for maximum energy efficiency, with the pride of having local materials used.

Has that been an area that the department has explored with the advisory committee, and can he elaborate on that?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I'm just reminded that we don't have a lot of steel-manufacturing plants locally right now; maybe decades or millennia from now that might change. The five-year budget forecast that we put forward is really based on the Class D estimates. It's a broad look at a project. It's a commitment to a project. It has certainly gone through the Department of Finance and they are looking at incorporating it into future budgets. That's the whole point of doing a five-year or multi-year capital plan. There is a note that does say that this will be subject to the appropriations of the Legislative Assembly. That's a standard process where these kinds of budgets do have to come before Management Board. They do have to be incorporated into the budgets that we have before us, whether it's the supplementary budget or the main appropriation bill.

We've made a strong commitment to this project. We're working very closely with the community on meeting as many of the objectives of the building advisory committee as can be realistically and responsibly met. We're certainly looking at

building a structure that is efficient and effective, that meets the educational needs of Yukon students, that has the flexibility to meet the needs of students into the future, and that meets the needs of a certain size of school — because this will be designed to serve a bit of a smaller population than the current F.H. Collins serves now. That's the information that has come from the secondary school review project — the recommendations coming from the community — people involved in education saying, "This is the size of school that you should build."

Also, one that we're looking at is the environmental responsibility of building to LEED standards. In the LEED accreditation, I understand that a portion of that is for local input. And, of course, we'll try to use the most appropriate materials, and if we can find those locally, that would be great.

I know that in discussions with other ministers we certainly do a lot of cross-departmental work trying to encourage the purchase of local goods and services, whether it's locally produced agricultural products or, as I mentioned earlier with the Correctional Centre, looking at a wood-fired boiler or a biomass type of boiler that will, I expect, help to stimulate a larger market for biomass or wood pellets here in the territory. These are important things that we look at as members of the government. It isn't just the dollars and cents of a project, but also some of the other broader issues and goals of the government — of stimulating the economy, of creating employment opportunities, of enhancing new technologies and being demonstrators or test projects, if you will, of emerging technologies.

It's often hard for a new company to adopt an untried technology here in the territory, but those are some of the things that we consider in our buildings and our projects.

On that note, I would suggest that the Minister for Highways and Public Works can probably speak to that in a bit more detail than I can, because it's often the Property Management division that works with the local contractors, works with some of those local initiatives, and looks at what materials can be sourced locally, whether they be things like windows, insulation, or some wood products or wood finishings. I know that once we get closer into the design of these types of things, and the architects look at spec'ing out the different materials, those will be some of the considerations they keep in mind.

We also do have to ensure that it's responsible to the taxpayer, that the building is built efficiently and effectively, and that we are maximizing our financial rate of return, if you will.

On something like an education system and an education building, I believe that initial investments will have a huge payback in the future. We need to build a building that is inviting, that is engaging, that supports learning, supports pedagogical practices, that supports, really, that 21st century learner. We want to build a high school that will help to meet the needs of all of our students, will be culturally representative, and where students can really find a home or a sense of community in the school to support their continued academic career. It's always important in education that we continue to make the investments very early, whether that's early childhood education or engaging in kindergarten, as this government has put in place. But we want to put our investments where it will make a differ-

ence in the whole life of our community. By increasing the graduation rate in our schools — by having programs that engage students and help them to achieve high academic standards and by graduating more students — I believe it will have a huge payoff in the future.

The member opposite has raised a good point regarding the placement of this school. This is something where we're not starting with a brand new, green field, if you will. We have an existing school facility with some tremendous assets. Those include things like the sports fields or the trades wing, which we will be working with to utilize and to include in the new school. And there are other things, such as the Gadszoosdaa residence, which is on the F.H. Collins campus, and the Teen Parent Centre. These are other important facets or components to the F.H. Collins campus, and we're going to work to accommodate and incorporate them.

It will be a bit of a logistical challenge to work to build a new school right next to the old one — also one that is able to capture as much daylight as possible. I expect that there will be disturbances — to think otherwise would be kidding ourselves.

We will make best efforts with the students, the parents and the teachers to try to mitigate the impacts of construction on the school, but that's going to be a necessary issue we'll have to work through because it's not possible to build this school off-site and simply move it there. It has to be built in place.

Afterward, through the removal of the old school, there will be additional work for landscaping that will have to be done. I've been astounded at the creativity of the building advisory committee so far in its work with the architect and their ability to identify issues and propose solutions to overcome those. We will continue to work with the building advisory committee as this project continues and continue to seek their advice as to how many of these issues can be addressed and how we can mitigate the impacts on the students.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister said a couple of things. I thank the minister for his answers to that question. I've asked many questions in this department and I thank the minister and the officials for providing answers, one of which we'll try to get more clarity on in regard to the busing.

The minister said that F.H. Collins will be equipped to handle wood and wood pellets or bio-mass heating and it will be designed that way. He said it will be equipped with it, to handle that.

The minister says no? Okay, can the minister just explain that?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: As the architect and the engineers have been looking at this project, they have been exploring a number of different heating, ventilation and air conditioning or HVAC type of options. I know other members of this Assembly are much more familiar with this than I am. Some of the options that they have looked at include open-source heat pumps, closed-loop heat pumps, bio-mass boilers, and electric boilers, among others. A significant energy systems audit was already being done.

I met with architects a number of weeks ago and they were nearing some of their conclusions or nearing some of their rec-

ommendations on this, but I don't believe that the final decision on whether or not to put in a wood-fired boiler, pellet boiler, or a bio-mass boiler has been made at this time. So I'm not going to commit to that, but I will say that they have looked at these options. I know that when they were looking at the open-loop heat pump, that was having some very positive indicators of success, that their initial mathematical calculations of looking at a heat pump were very positive. That is, in part, due to the location of the building and the aquifer that it sits on. I know I'm getting into a degree of specificity here that is outside the normal budget discussion, but the engineers have had discussions with the City of Whitehorse. For example, if we were putting in a large well or medium-sized well in order to have a heat pump of this nature, could the City of Whitehorse make use of that water afterward? In that process, we would look at taking the change in temperature — the Delta T — out of the water and then ship the H₂O off to the City of Whitehorse and they would utilize it for their own purposes.

I raised a couple of these points just to give further indication to members opposite of the degree to which people have been doing their homework on this project and the options being looked at. However, at this stage, I don't want to commit to having made any decisions. As I've said, we're still at the schematic design stage. The estimates on the project are still being done and there are not a whole lot of hard and fast decisions that have yet been made.

Mr. Fairclough: We are adding an additional \$48,000 to the design of the F.H. Collins school. The minister said the advisory committee that's designing the school has looked at options of heating it. I'm not exactly sure what the minister is referring to about an open-loop heat pump, but I think he might be saying geothermal heating. I think this is doable and it's a big up-front cost, but when you look at other buildings around the territory — like the Na Cho Nyäk Dun administration building — that have this design in it, after 10 years of putting the additional costs to put in geothermal heating, in 10 years it would be paid off and after 10 years is basically free heat with additional general maintenance. It's free heat. So it would be interesting to see a building of this size use geothermal heating, because it's not just heating that is used for this. It is also used for cooling the building.

Mr. Chair, I thank the minister for that. I'm glad that this type of thing is even talked about. I know that perhaps this might even affect the total cost of the building because it is an up-front cost. It may not add a whole lot to the total cost of the building, but I think that it would. Of course in the long run, it will pay off and that's what people are looking at. From what I understand, even from the administration building of Na Cho Nyäk Dun, this is only good for up to minus-30 weather. So you still need some kind of backup heat for it, so they have it.

In Yukon, I think we could be doing a lot more of this to a lot more of the government buildings — looking at geothermal heating. I'm glad that the advisory committee is doing their work and not missing the small things — to learn from other designs of schools, like Tantalus School, for example.

There are a lot of things that could be improved on in that school, but one of them was having dressing rooms off of the

gym. There are just washrooms, and there are no dressing rooms. It's a community that Whitehorse and other communities come to for sports events and so on, and it was unfortunate that was missed. I know there was a bit of exploring into using local materials to build the Tantalus School. It was an issue of money at the time and not a lot of thought was put into exactly what kind of materials could be used for that. I understand we have to import steel, of course. We're certainly not going to be building our own heating systems here, and a lot of materials could be coming from elsewhere.

But I think we also could be using a lot of our wood materials. We could be using a lot of stone, whether it's for walkways or even walls — some of the walls and so on. That could be done. It could involve a lot of local knowledge into building this school, and making it more of a community centre there. I wanted to bring that forward again to the minister. I believe I raised it before.

Also, I guess before I move on the final question is about the size of the school and whether or not the catchment of F.H. Collins school will change. Will that change or remain the same?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I appreciate the comments coming from the member of the Official Opposition, and I appreciate the recognition that sometimes there are decisions made throughout the course of a construction project that do increase the cost of the project. Those are typically done to accommodate and address additional needs that arise along the way.

I've been very proud to be involved with this project and to see the amount of community engagement that has taken place. We started with the secondary school programming review to look at where the programming needs in a school were going. We looked at the pedagogical practices; we looked at trends in experiential learning and team-based teaching, or individual work coupled with group work. We wanted to build a sense of community within the school for everyone. There is a very wide range of people involved on the building advisory committee and a wide range of different perspectives.

It has been interesting to see people at some of these meetings going through some of the ideas or some of the — well, they're a bit more than a back-of-a-napkin diagram, but it has been really interesting to watch people go through and they kind of virtually walk through some of the drawings and ask questions about things like, "Where is the storage space going to go?" or, "Okay, where is the projector going to go?" or, "Where is the garbage can going to go?"

As the member opposite said, "Where would the change rooms be?" I've been amazed at the creativity being demonstrated, and the thoughtfulness being demonstrated, from not only the building advisory committee, but also the design officials as they have been addressing many of these issues. When someone has asked a question, there has usually been an answer right there.

Through Whitehorse's education evolution, we've seen some different changes. We saw the building of different high schools.

We saw a change for awhile where we had junior high schools. We've seen changes in populations. When F.H.

Collins was first added on to, I think that brought its capacity up to 988 students. I'm sure that someone will correct me with the number of times that F.H. Collins has been built on to. F.H. Collins as it currently sits right now has a maximum capacity of about 1,000 students. Right now, we have a bit more than 600 who are enrolled there. It's that 600 to 700 student cohort that we're planning for. That size of school, coupled with the other educational structures that we have throughout the area, really is felt to meet the needs of the community for years to come, to meet the changes in demographics. I know we're doing a lot of work right now looking at the demographics of Yukon, of Whitehorse — the analysis of our school-age students. I believe that the largest cohort of students that we have are those in the senior grades right now.

I don't have the numbers in front of me, but there are more kids in grades 11 and 12 in the school system than we have in grades 2 and 3. That's a general statement; I don't have the statistics at my fingertips to illustrate that, but that's pretty much the demographic curve we're looking at. We also recognize there are opportunities for growth and excess capacity in other schools throughout the Whitehorse area.

The question about the catchment area — it is not planned to be changed at this time. We'll reserve the right in the future, though, to review those types of things, as any school system needs to do to ensure that it continues to be responsive to the needs of our community. This is also the school campus that has the Gadzoosdaa residence and the Teen Parent Centre, and those are important considerations.

I trust that answers the questions for the member opposite.

Mr. Fairclough: I'd like to thank the minister for answering questions in general debate on the Department of Education. I'd like to thank the officials who are here helping the minister, providing information to us on this side of the floor. I look forward to working with them when we are in government. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I thank the member opposite for his comments and we look forward to working cooperatively with him and his staff on continuing to provide information about education and working to engage Yukoners in the educational direction for our kids.

Mr. Cardiff: I am pleased to be here today to enter into the debate on Vote 3, the Department of Education, and Bill No. 22. I would like to thank the officials for taking time out of their day to be there too. I would like to start by saying that I had the good fortune on Monday evening, I guess it was, to attend a meeting in my community in Mount Lorne that was put on by the Golden Horn Elementary School council where they were seeking input from parents and potential parents.

It was basically seeking input for their school growth plan and I found it a really educational — would be one way of putting it — experience.

The range in ages was everything from a one-year-old running around who will be probably attending Golden Horn before we know it, to grandparents and I won't give specific ages when we come to grandparents, because I'm one myself. I just want to say that I really appreciated the opportunity to be there and to hear some of the concerns that parents have and to hear

some of the things that are important to them when they're choosing which school their children would be attending. We may discuss some of those things over the course of today, but I'd like to begin with the staffing allocation formula. I'm just wondering if the minister could provide just a brief overview of the process and how it has been accomplished in all of the schools.

I know this has affected some of my constituents and not just at Golden Horn Elementary School. I have constituents who have children attending Whitehorse Elementary, at the Catholic schools, and at l'École Émilie Tremblay. So the staffing allocation implications are pretty broad for my constituents.

What is the overview of the process for the staffing allocation formula? How has it been accomplished? Is there a mechanism for adjusting it to meet emerging needs as things are changing throughout the year? I know it might be difficult, but if there is an increase in students in one school or another because of new families moving into communities, I would just like to know how that would be dealt with if there was an increased demand?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Chair, as I mentioned in debate on Tuesday, when we look at the staffing of teachers in Yukon schools, we really have to find one that is fair and meets the needs. It's a challenge, sometimes, where we could go into one school where there are 12 kids in one class, then go to another school and see 21 kids in a class — the same kind of grade 2 or grade 3 class. I'm just trying to illustrate an example here.

We have some challenges throughout the Yukon, those being the large geographic distances, small populations in some communities and changing populations. I've gone through the changing number of students in Yukon schools before. In 2000-01, we had about 5,580 students; then in 2008, we had about 4,950 students. Big drops in populations are a factor to consider.

Also, we weren't seeing some of these changes happen equally throughout the system. In fact, the school the member opposite is talking about had a population — I think of about 230 or 240 that then went down to a population of about 160 or 170. Those are the numbers off the top of my head. That was a pretty big change in the school population. Then, of course, we need to have mechanisms to deal with those changes in population, because if kids move from one school to another, we need to be able to have a system that responds to that. We also have to have a system that's firmly based in policy and not so much in politics. When we sat down with the recommendations from the Auditor General, for example, she said that we needed to do some policy work in the issue of our staffing allocation. That was one of the issues raised. It's also an issue that came forward from the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees. It was an issue raised with me from teachers and administrators, so we sat down in the Department of Education and took a look at this and tried to figure out a way that we could come up with a new policy that would work to meet the needs that were before us.

In establishing the criteria of success, or the guiding principles behind the staffing formula, we wanted to see a formula

that would provide equity. By that, I mean treat the same the same and the significantly different, different. It had to be one that was data-driven, with real student numbers and needs to drive the allocation of our resources. It had to be transparent so that all could obtain the information and so that it was understandable. Also it needed to be predictable — one where if you put in the same type of information you'd come out with the same conclusions. It had to be timely and it had to allow for efficient decision-making and the allocation of resources. We needed to be able to use the best information available at the time or a couple of different points throughout the school year, because our superintendents, support people and school administrators are constantly looking at the changes in school populations or the changes in their school's population.

There is a time throughout the school calendar where you do a prediction of next year's enrolment that is based on the current enrolment of the school, how many students you expect to see graduating, how many kids you're aware of in the community who are planning to come to that school — whether brothers or sisters of the current students or people who have already come in to say they have a student coming into kindergarten or grade 1 next year. We have a couple of different time points throughout the year when we look at this data.

The system had to be responsive; it had to adjust to changing drivers in a reasonable period of time. That touches on part of the member's question. It had to be sustainable and it needed to be accountable.

Those were the broad principles that were used with the staffing formula, and we took a look at where we could get the advice as to how to come up with this type of process. A staffing allocation formula advisory committee was established in early March of 2010. It included about five teachers, four principals — including rural and urban, elementary and secondary, Catholic and non-Catholic — it included all of our superintendents. We worked to engage the francophone school board — either their board member or the director general. It included designates from four school councils and one member of the Catholic Education Association. It was a wide-ranging list of people. There was a significant number of school council people who were also involved on this and a wide variety of others who also have worked with the committee, including a consultant who was hired because of his experience in British Columbia with going through these types of exercises.

They have done a tremendous amount of work. I sat down with representatives of the committee — all the members of the committee couldn't come to the meeting that I had, but it included principals; it included parents; it included school counsellors; it did include people from the Yukon Teachers Association. They shared with me the process that they had gone through and the challenges they had faced in doing this. But they felt they had come up with the best possible system and very strongly urged me to put it in place, not to tinker with it, to give their system a chance, and to allow this process to unfold.

They also wanted to continue to be involved in this for the implementation year, so that they could help to further refine the process and also put in place a mechanism for addressing an issue — they described it as "vulnerability". So they wanted

to put in place a mechanism to respond to demonstrated needs that were out of the normal and that could address different challenges in different communities. It could also address different classroom composition types of things. But they wanted to describe it as “vulnerability”. So we’ve agreed with them. We’re continuing to work through this process.

I stand fast that we need to have a process like this. I know that there are members of the Assembly who are not fans of this process. I’m concerned that if they were in my shoes that they would simply throw this out and put in place some more politically motivated process. That’s a fear I have. I think we need to have a good policy in here and seek the advice of the professionals and our educators involved in this.

We’ve done that in this process. It has created some changes throughout the school system. I’ll repeat, though, that we have not reduced the number of teachers in Yukon’s education system. In fact, when we look at the number of teachers we have — well, I used the numbers from 2001-02 awhile ago, when we had 5,430 or so students and we had 451 teachers. Last year we had about 5,070 students and we had 476.7 teachers. So we have about 10 percent fewer students but, at the same time, we have 20 more teachers in our system.

Also, in the same timeline, we’ve gone from having about 82 teaching assistants to now having about 120. So that’s a little bit more than 35 more educational assistants.

We’ve been increasing the education assistants, we’ve been increasing the learning assistants or other support staff in the school, and we’ve been increasing the number of teachers. We’ve also needed to find a better policy in order to address the issues of equity, transparency, fairness, reproducibility that Yukoners expect, that the Auditor General expects and that our teachers expect. We’re certainly continuing to work to meet the needs in the classroom, whether it is changing curriculum or different educational enhancement supports, or different training for the teachers so that they can teach differently in different situations, if you will.

This can be a contentious process, but I certainly appreciate the work that the staffing allocation advisory committee has done on this. This was a big project for them to work on and it really included people who were in the best possible positions to provide the government with advice on these policy changes. It included teachers in Yukon schools, both in Whitehorse and in rural areas. It included principals from Whitehorse’s rural schools and Whitehorse’s urban schools. It included parents and school counsellors. They all did come together and have a shared vision of producing a strategy and a policy that would help to equitably allocate our teaching resources throughout the territory and meet the needs that our school kids have, that our communities have, and one that really helps to get the best out of each and every kid going through the Yukon school system.

Mr. Cardiff: I thank the minister for that answer. I know I had received some of that information previously. One of the things I’d like to know is whether or not the policy is available publicly and where I would find it or if he can make a copy available.

Some of the issues I heard from parents and prospective parents were specifically around what they thought would be

important in choosing — the choice of a school. There were a number of things and a variety of things — things like programming — it can be music programming, it can be French programming, it can be where you live and the location of the school — which brings up another question. One of the other things that influences people is the length of time their children spend on the bus. Overall, I think a lot of it was programming. I think Golden Horn Elementary School and the students that attend there are very, very lucky because I think the staff who work there — Golden Horn has a good reputation of providing all the basic academic skills.

The students who come from Golden Horn and go into the secondary school system do really well. That’s my understanding from the parents, students and teachers I have talked to. So it’s not that I’m critical of the policy, but it’s the unintended consequences. I would like to see a copy of the policy, and I believe the minister referred to it as a “vulnerability clause.” It’s not to be critical of it; it’s more to have an understanding of it, because what happens when there are decreases in staffing is that the parents’ choices for programming their children can receive is reduced; hence, they choose to send their children to other schools that have other programming. There are issues around catchment areas, I guess. I honestly believe that, to the best of their ability, Yukoners want their children to have the best possible choices in education and the ability to attend the school that best meets their children’s needs. So that’s where the question is coming from, and that’s why I was asking about the issue of adjustments to the formula.

Another question I have: is there a planned review of the formula? Just for the minister’s information, whether he’s aware of it or not, I remember actually living in Marsh Lake when Golden Horn school was built. I actually attended a couple of meetings, and it was a community effort. There was a group of community people who came together from Marsh Lake, Mount Lorne and Golden Horn subdivisions, and some of the areas like Wolf Creek and Mary Lake, who wanted a community school. The need was very great back then.

My information, from what I remember, is that the enrolment when it first opened — that’s 20 or 21 years ago, I believe — was 300 students. Today, I believe, it’s 135 to 140 — somewhere in that area. Part of the reason for that is that the people who were living there 20 years ago are still living there, and their children have moved away. But young families are coming back to the community, and there are young families looking for homes, and they’re looking for land out there because they remember what it was like to go to Golden Horn school and the good education they received there. They want to come back to that.

I know I’ve put a lot on the minister’s plate here, but another thing that came up the other night with regard to what makes it easy to send your child to Golden Horn school was the busing policy — it’s more after school. I mean, one of the other issues that came up was after-school care being available so that parents can pick up their kids on the way home.

In lieu of that or as an alternative to that, the other option would be to bus a small number of children, more than likely, to a central location in town where they could be picked up by

their parents, as opposed to taking them home. I'm not sure if I'm explaining this well enough for the minister. The concept was that, because parents work in town, would it be possible to have their children bused to town after school, so they could be picked up in town, meet their parents in town and be driven home by their parents.

So I put a number of things out there for the minister and I look forward to his response.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Chair, I'm very encouraged with how beneficial the member opposite has found the new process that Golden Horn is going through right now. That has certainly been one of the changes that we have tried to foster through this government.

We really want to see an education system that welcomes the involvement of parents and the community, and that has been a conscious decision to go in that direction, to really work to embrace Yukon's First Nations, to embrace parents, to embrace others and to welcome them into the whole school process.

We've tried to capture that through the school growth plan because we certainly recognize the uniqueness of Yukon schools. We recognize that many of them have the same overall goals of education and those are outlined in our strategic plan. We have the goals of academic excellence. We have the goals of holistic student growth, but the way they get there is different. The nature of the school is different and it's often a challenge as to how do we provide the same — with the same resources or treat schools the same — when they put in place structures or processes to make themselves different?

I recognize that what might work for one, might not work for another. From my own personal experience, I still remember my English teacher in grade 12. She and I certainly did not see eye to eye on anything. My best friend, however, thought she was the best English teacher ever. Different people work in different situations differently and we need to accept and respect that in our schools. At the same time, we need to work to promote an equity in education. That equity in education can mean so many different things. To some when we talk about equity in education, it means providing identical resources to a school. In other places, equity in education means providing exactly the same opportunities as others. In other instances, providing equity in education means that we do whatever it takes to get each individual up to one common standard. These are some of the challenges we face in education — the different nature of the individuals and the situation they come in and the different educational goals or outcomes that each aspires to have.

We've worked a lot with our school administrators and our school councils on these growth plans, looking at putting in place processes to ensure that the community's voice can be heard. We also put in place the innovation in education fund. That was a fund of resources, of cash, that schools or school councils or teachers could tap into in order to explore different ideas, different changes, and different innovations. It's through that innovation in education fund that I believe the Grey Mountain Primary School Council has accessed the resources to fund some of these meetings this past week — excuse me, Golden

Horn. We want to foster that. We want to help build the school growth plan. The reason Grey Mountain was on my mind is I was thinking: why would you send your child to Grey Mountain when you have Selkirk right there?

There are opportunities in a small school that are different from the opportunities in a big school. For some kids, going to a small school really works and for others, going to a big school really works. Through the larger size of a school, that naturally creates more opportunities. When you have more students — say 1,000 students in a high school — it creates more opportunities more diversely. You have the opportunity then for more courses or more diversity of courses; you have the opportunities there to do an English class or French class, a German class, a Spanish class. But when you have a smaller school, you might not have enough students to be able to put on a German class or a Spanish class. Those — if I can use an economics term — economies of scale, or those opportunities because of larger populations — those are some of the neat things about the bigger school population, but other people would do better in a smaller school.

That's why we have the mix of schools that we do. That's why we have balance. I have to accept that we'll have diversities between our schools. Much of that diversity is by design and by choice and by the involvement of the community, specifically in the school growth plan.

I've had one example that we've talked with the school administrator about sometimes, about how one school wanted to spend its recreation dollars and one school said, "Well, we want to increase the number of trips to the Canada Games Centre." The other school said, "Well, we want to put in place a skating rink," and the other school said, "We want to put in place a climbing wall." So they do that and they respond to their individual needs. The next year they come back and then they say, "Well, that school has a climbing wall, so we expect that we should have a climbing wall too. If they get to go to the Canada Games Centre all the time, then we should get to go there too." It just kind of goes from there. We have to recognize that when there are certain decisions that are made or directions that are taken, we do have to live with those ramifications for a while.

But that doesn't diminish the amount of support the Department of Education continues to provide to our schools and our communities to help foster these kinds of discussions.

I'm also very encouraged to hear of the discussions going on in Carcross yesterday with the First Nation, school and the community, looking at what their vision is for the school in their community. That's the kind of communication and involvement we want to embrace. At the same time, in working to provide the academic excellence that is necessary and expected in our school system, we will work to help each individual student become everything he or she has the potential to be in our community, as well as working to ensure our community is made up of people who have the right makeup of skills, background, ability and involvement to make it a meaningful community. "Meaningful" also means having the ability to partake in the employment opportunities that are there.

The member and I discussed that in Question Period today: how do we prepare Yukoners to take advantage of those Yukon opportunities? That's done through the whole continuum of education.

All of this — and I'm getting a little bit off topic here — but we've talked a bit about the diversity between the schools, the challenges that we face in getting an equitable distribution of children, if I can use that phrase, in an area where we often have some choice of attending schools out of a catchment area, or where the population trends have changed and caused a huge impact on the population at a school.

These are the challenges that the department staff deal with on an annual basis: working to ensure that we have the right numbers of kids at the right school, that we're not overpopulated at one school and underpopulated at another school. It is a challenge in a jurisdiction of our size, especially with the diversity of populations — whether it's through a French first language school, a French immersion school, a Catholic school, or the school within walking distance of a child's home — or there are cases where there's more than one school within walking distance of a child's home.

These are some of the challenges that we work through, that we're continually working to address with the staffing allocation formula. The member has asked about — I should refer to it as a “formula” and not so much as a “policy” because it is a very complex process that our school administrators go through. It isn't kind of packaged up as neat and tight as a policy or regulation that we might be able to see in something like the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

It is being reviewed right now. That was part of the process we agreed to when we started working with the committee. They made recommendations for this year. I tell you, there were people who thumped their fist on the table and told me, “Don't you go messing around with this.”

They had put a lot of faith into it; they were willing to live with the ramifications of that — I had principals who were being negatively impacted by this and they said, “We want you to put this in place and don't mess around with it.” It was that kind of commitment we got from the people involved with this. Again, I have to take their advice. They're the administrators; they're the teachers; they're the people working through these processes. They wanted to see these changes made and they wanted to see them given a chance. They also wanted an opportunity this year to revisit how things are working, to look at where some modifications might need to take place and to continue to be involved with it.

That's where we're at right now. It is being reviewed; it's currently under review. I provided briefings to the member in the past and he has taken me up on them. What I would like to propose on this one — because I can't do it justice in a 20-minute response, to stand up and say, this is how it works, without using a prop or a PowerPoint projector or a piece of chalk and a blackboard, but I would propose to the member opposite to provide a briefing for him once the committee has worked through their ruminations and considerations on this and, as the process continues to come to its conclusion — once

we have gotten to a further level of refinement — I will ensure that there is a briefing made available to the member opposite.

Also, the member brought forward the issue of busing for after-school programs. Sounds interesting; immediately there are some concerns of how we actually go about doing this. Then I'm thinking, what's the best way to deal with this? Well, the best way to deal with this is the process that we're working through right now — with having these initiatives come forward from grassroots meetings; to incorporate them into the school plan; to have the school council and the principal discuss the issue and say, “Well, what can we do, what are some of the impacts of this, what are some of the liabilities of this, and what are some of the solutions?” Because they can come up with some really cool ideas that the member opposite and I, with all the other things on our plates, might get eight-tenths of, but let's let them do the work.

That's why we designed the process; that's why we put monies into the innovation to foster these kinds of things; and let's continue to work with them to provide the solutions necessary, because that's the whole point. If it was as easy as making decisions from the top down, and just coming up with making all the decisions in one place, it might be simpler, but I don't think we would have as good decisions being made as are being made with our processes now.

Mr. Cardiff: I look forward to the briefing to gain a greater understanding of how the formula works. I have to agree with the minister. I think the purpose of bringing up the idea of the busing policy was because that's where that idea did come from and it's an example of that good idea. I was wondering if the minister would be receptive to something like that.

I'd like to ask the minister a question. It's my understanding — I know the minister has talked about declining enrollments. Over the past 10 years, enrolments have decreased by approximately 800 students. I'm not sure if that's correct or not. But the cost per student has almost doubled. I can recognize that there are inflationary costs, collective agreement increases — there have been changes in curriculum and whatnot. I'm just wondering if he can tell us what, besides inflation, does account for that increase and what is actually counted in the cost per student and what is not. That could be an extensive list. I don't expect him to stand up and recite it, but if he could make it available through a legislative return, that would be acceptable as well.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: One factor — and I don't need to go through the numbers again — is that we have 20 more teachers now in our system than we did a few years ago — 20 more teachers and fewer students. We have 35 or so more educational assistants; at the same time, our student numbers are dropping. We're also seeing other investments in education, whether it's increasing experiential education, initiatives such as the leadership and innovation in education fund — these are some of those things we put in place that are increasing the expenditures in education and, at the same time, we're seeing populations of students decrease.

So our system isn't as efficient as it used to be. It costs the same to — pretty much the same to heat a school if you have 150 kids in it or 200 kids in it, so some of these costs are fixed.

The expenditures per student include all direct operation and maintenance costs to operate the schools, including the cost of all school-based staff, materials, supplies, maintenance, security, groundskeeping and utilities. Some of our calculations of expenditure per student — they do not include the support activities, which are indirect costs, such as branch administration, student transportation, in-service training, curriculum development, native language program development, student accommodation — Gadzoosdaa residence, for example — or any of the capital costs.

Also, just for members' information — if they start going through different budgets — you will see that there were different changes in Education's budget by the previous Liberal government. Libraries were included as an Education budget line item. That was a shift with the renewal-of-government initiative into Community Services, I believe.

A couple of years ago some of the building operations property management functions were transferred into the Property Management division. There's a lot to this. When we look at our figures though — and we are trying to come to common understandings of these across Canada, but when you see figures of \$15,000 or \$16,000 per student and compare that to other jurisdictions, Yukon has significantly greater expenditures. When we compare the expenditure from Yukon schools to, for example, on-reserve education, the amount Yukon spends is, by some estimates I've seen, two if not three times what the federal government is spending in on-reserve education systems.

We consistently work to ensure that we have an appropriate allocation of resources. The remuneration for teachers in the Yukon remains one of the highest in Canada. Our teachers are receiving remuneration that is significantly higher than in southern jurisdictions — in most cases, I would hazard to guess off the top of my head, without looking at any specific notes. Those are some of the factors that contribute to the student enrolment expenditure. We have seen an increasing number of teachers, a decreasing number of students. We have been making increasing investments.

There have been other factors — the price of fuel has fluctuated, but some of those have been adjusted for. Does that answer the member's question?

Mr. Cardiff: I thank the minister for that answer. I understand the challenges and appreciate the investments that have been made.

One of the things the minister mentioned was experiential programs. It's my understanding there are a couple of pilot projects. I'm not sure if they're pilot projects, but they seem to be time limited. There is one that, I believe, started this year in Old Crow, if I'm not mistaken. There is talk of another one starting in Whitehorse for grade 9 students in Porter Creek. I'm just wondering whether or not there's a limit to the number of these programs. Are they pilots or are they going to be full-time offerings down the road?

I'd also like to know, as well — I remember well attending the launch of an experiential-learning pilot project at l'École Émilie Tremblay. Can the minister tell us whether or not that experiential program is still operating? Is it intended to con-

tinue to operate? I wasn't sure if some of the funding was contingent on the federal government or whether the Department of Education was going to take over and fund the project totally.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: In Yukon, we can certainly be proud of the number of diverse programs that we have put in place. Whether it's the music, arts, and drama program, the outdoor pursuit/experiential science, or the ACES program, we have a number of experiential education-specific initiatives that have been established. Another specific program that is being included into our base of programs is the Yukon First Nation experiential program.

Starting this coming January, the Yukon First Nation experiential program will open in Whitehorse for secondary students in grade 9. It will integrate and focus on Yukon First Nation content and perspectives throughout the curriculum. It will be expecting academic excellence in a culturally appropriate manner. It's a program with an opportunity for the department to enhance opportunities for First Nations in the secondary school system in Whitehorse and meet the recommendations put forth in the *Education Reform Final Report*, the secondary school programming review report and to implement many of the directions provided from the Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee's strategic plan. If members don't have a copy of that, I can get that sent over. I see nods of yes, they have copies.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Rouble: No? You'd like copies?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Okay.

The first component, the Whitehorse-based experiential program with a First Nation perspective, will be ready to implement for grade 9 students this coming spring at Porter Creek Secondary School. Even though this is Whitehorse-based programming, there will be field trips to communities and possibilities of outreach programs offered to the rural schools. On this one, we've gone through appropriate funding allocations for three years of funding, it looks like, so that it pretty much puts it out as far as this government has any kind of control over.

The department will look for advice and will report to the Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee and the Yukon First Nation curriculum working group. It even has a cool acronym, Mr. Chair — we can't have a good program without a cool acronym. This program will commonly be referred to as "CHAOS" — community, heritage, arts, outdoors and skills program. The motto for the program is a Southern Tutchone phrase that translates into "Together we will learn."

So those are some specifics about that one, Mr. Chair.

Also, the northern strategy project that the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation is working on with the Department of Education — this is federal funding that came through. This was a one-time funding pot designed to create a program that would have lasting change and lasting opportunities. The three-year project is to develop a rural First Nation experiential education model for kindergarten to grade 12. A major component of this project is to bring the cultural and academic curriculum

together by developing and implementing field trips and on-land activities. There is a considerable collaborative process here involving the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation heritage, culture and land resources folks, as well as the Chief Zzeh Gitlit School staff and many, many other Old Crow community members.

I really have to congratulate the community of Old Crow for embracing this project. Even though this is a one-time funding type of project, it's expected that this will have a long-term legacy — that this will be able to create the strategy and the framework that will be able to be carried forward in future years.

The member also asked me about the Académie Parhémie and the experiential education program at École Émilie Tremblay. I can report to the member opposite that the contribution from the Government of Yukon for this project has not decreased. I understand the program is still underway there, and that an evaluation of the program is being done now. We often do put in place a pilot project. This is, in general, where we do come out and, say, fund a project for a number of years and then have to do a certain amount of responsible evaluation of it to find out if indeed it had the desired results that we wanted to see, or if we need to try a different tack. Often, it's like sailing across a lake, where you know the direction you want to go in and sometimes you have to zig and sometimes you have to zag in order to get there. But on this one, the Government of Yukon's contribution did not decrease.

We also continue to have the experiential education fund that is now part of the Department of Education's budget.

Experiential education is more than just one type of program. Experiential education is more than just spending a semester in OPES or ACES or MAD. Experiential education often happens when it engages the learner actively in the process of learning. Experiential education happens when we have Yukon school kids coming in and sitting in our gallery, where they come here and do something and they see how engaging it is. Experiential education happens in the classroom where, if they're doing a lesson in science on geology and looking at sedimentary igneous and metamorphic rocks, the kids go out on the playground and find examples of sedimentary igneous and metamorphic rocks and then bring them in. Or it happens when, instead of just looking at a school textbook as to what a sedimentary rock looks like, you take a cake and make layers of cake to build a replica of a sedimentary type of rock establishment. Or if you bake a cake and include a bunch of chocolate chips and marshmallows and raisins to create what looks like an igneous type of rock, with all its crystalline facets. Or, if I could extend this metaphor one more step, it's like when you create another dessert — whose name escapes me right now — where you chop up the cake and mix it in with a bunch of whipped cream —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Rouble: A trifle — there we go. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin comes through with the save. I appreciate that one — where you trifle with the truffle and actually make an example of a metamorphosis type of process. This is kind of experiential learning.

The Member for Porter Creek South is asking me to keep going, to provide more examples and to continue this cake metaphor to its logical conclusion here. I'll try to rein myself in on this one, but I'm sure members can appreciate the enthusiasm with which one can embrace experiential education opportunities.

We need to recognize that learning doesn't just happen with a child sitting in a chair, but learning happens between the ears and that, through learning and exploration and trying different things, we can have some of those other neat outcomes.

That's another thing that we're trying to foster in our education system and to help to nurture within our teachers. We're doing that, again, by providing financial resources for experiential education, by professional development and seminars on experiential education. We're trying to incorporate that by having experiential education staff in the Department of Education who share some of these ideas with teachers and people in our school system. We're trying to foster that with more educational opportunities, like the Master of Education and educational leadership that's being offered by the University of Northern British Columbia here in Whitehorse at Yukon College, and also trying to foster that spirit of trying different and new things within all of the staff. I try to encourage that with our school administrators and with our teachers when I get the opportunity to do so.

I think that addresses the questions that were put forward.

Mr. Cardiff: More than adequately. We're all enjoying our time here this afternoon, but I think my colleagues might be hungry.

I'd like to stay with the experiential — I really appreciate the fact that we're doing this in our education system. I think that it's beneficial for a vast number of reasons, which I won't go on about because we're not sure how the minister will respond to that. One of the things I'd like to know, though, is — the minister mentioned outreach to community in some of the experiential programs. It's important that rural students coming to Whitehorse for their education have an opportunity to participate in those programs — the experiential programs.

I'm wondering whether or not it could happen in some other communities at various grade levels, especially in light of the fact that, in a more rural setting, in a lot of ways, there are more opportunities for experiential learning. But it's kind of culturally appropriate; given the First Nation population in a lot of our rural communities, it would be beneficial. So I'm wondering if there are any more projects planned for rural Yukon when it comes to experiential learning. Is experiential education considered as a component when specific curriculum for First Nation students is being developed?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I will answer the last question first, Mr. Chair. That answer is yes.

I just mentioned a couple of the programs — the experiential education or the land-based education program in Old Crow; also the First Nation experiential learning program here.

Some of the other examples that I could include would be the bicultural program in Haines Junction. That's a pretty neat program that we have been working on very closely with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Again, though, I want

to get across the point that we don't need to have an acronym for the program in order for experiential education to occur. Experiential education can happen when — well, it happens in the classroom, but it also happens a lot outside of the classroom. That's why the Yukon Party government has been investing in the student transportation vehicles — those airport shuttle vehicles for Yukon schools. Yes, those are the vehicles that allow people or teachers to take the students out for a field trip, whether it's to go just down the road to a stream and actually look at an ecosystem or biosystem and to get their hands wet, so to speak.

In a lot of cases in our rural schools, in some cases with the smaller classroom size, they have greater flexibility to go out and to do some of those things. With that and with some of the other progressive education techniques, we're really trying to see this incorporated throughout all schools.

So, yes, we have some programs with acronyms here in Whitehorse. We have specific programs in some of our rural communities. But we're also trying to foster this teaching style shift in all schools. I know that when I've been in classrooms, and I've been to every school in the Yukon — I would expect most of them more than a couple of times — they have neat programs. There's community involvement, whether it is programs like the heritage fair or the science fair or the bridge-building competition. These are great examples where kids are doing experiential learning.

I know that a lot of schools come into Whitehorse and bring students in, so we start to see a lot more of the meta-curriculum, or we start to see more things that are outside of the normal expectation of a grade 4 or grade 6 science class, but now you have the learning experience of coming into Whitehorse and everything that's associated with those types of trips. So there are some of the other benefits that happen there.

Certainly, in our First Nation culture classes, there's a lot of experiential education. I know one trip that I had to Ross River, for example. We were across the river in the old community and it was an experiential, land-based activity, it was culturally appropriate, there was a learning component to it, there was research that was done before we went there, there was a report done by the students afterwards — they had to communicate what they had learned to others. Really, it was building those 21st century skills that I had talked about earlier. They would come back and they would use the digital cameras and their computers to create a newsletter to share with other people and demonstrate that not only had they built the specific skill that they were trying to learn — that being how to set a snare — not only had they experienced the cultural component of that, but then they also were learning the other skills as to how to report that information back to other people and how to share it with others.

Those are many of the types of skills that we want to develop. There are lots of examples through Yukon schools, whether it's going across the river to set a snare or some of the virtual space shuttle trips that kids have been through where the whole school turns into a NASA launch site for a couple of days. It's those kinds of experiences that we're trying to put in place to engage students to teach the curriculum, to teach the

enhanced skills, to keep the kids excited and active about learning so that they want to come to school, so that we overcome some of our challenges with absenteeism. When we look at the statistics that we have in Yukon schools, absenteeism is a tremendous factor, and we need to find ways to reduce that. We'll reduce our absenteeism. I'm convinced that we'll see this reduced by engaging the community, by having culturally relevant programming, by engaging our students and creating a welcoming opportunity.

When we engage them, they're interested and they're active. We'll sneak that teaching in there and make them learn, and they won't even know what hit them. Okay? That's part of the strategy. We'll get that academic excellence that we all want to see and all want to achieve but we'll do it through creative means.

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now continue with general debate on Vote 3, Department of Education.

Mr. Cardiff: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the minister for his comments and experiences with experiential learning.

We talked earlier a little bit about the fact that we've got declining enrolment. I'd like to know whether or not the department has any statistics regarding enrolments that tell you whether it's strictly in urban areas. By "urban", I guess I should qualify that: is it a Whitehorse issue, or are enrolments in the smaller, outlying communities declining as well?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: In addition to the stats produced by the Department of Statistics about population growth or decline in Yukon's communities, a breakdown is done of the age groups of people in the communities. That's one tool the department uses. As well, the school populations — the number of children or students at each school — is included in a report that's published on-line, so that gives the annual student population at those schools. I think those resources exist on-line with some history as to recent years. The study of demographics, especially the study of demographics in the Yukon, is a very interesting one, with our small populations.

Small numbers of people can create a huge swing. For example, if we increase the enrolment at the Beaver Creek school by one student, that would have, I think, a greater than 10-percent increase in the enrolment. So if we start looking at some of those statistics — if you applied that to Whitehorse Elementary, it would certainly take a lot more kids to make that up. I'm not sure of the math on that one; I'm just using that as an example to prove the challenges when looking at percentage growth in some of our communities.

The population statistics for each community are available from the Department of Statistics as to the breakdown of ages. As well, posted on-line for the Department of Education are our stats for school enrolment.

Mr. Cardiff: I just thought it might be interesting to know. I understand it can vary from year to year, but I was just wondering if there was any analysis done, whether there are trends in Whitehorse or whether there are trends in communities where some community populations are increasing or decreasing.

I know this question about the Kluane Lake School was asked in Question Period earlier this sitting. There have been some reports about problems with water damage that resulted in mould conditions and I'm not sure if the minister can clarify that. I'd also like to know what the life expectancy of the building is. I know it has been there for a number of years and I'm just wondering if it is in a schedule anywhere to be replaced and whether or not the minister has done or would be willing to do a feasibility study — this is where we get into the demographics and the statistics, I guess — to determine if there is a new school built, should it be built in the community of Burwash where it's my understanding the majority of the students who attend the Kluane Lake School come from. So, if the minister can provide answers to those questions, I'd appreciate it.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Several air quality tests have revealed no presence of harmful moulds. Looking at some of the demographic trends over the past 20 years or so, the Kluane Lake school's enrolment has seldom, if ever, risen above 10 students. Those were the statistics he was looking for. The school certainly still has economic life. It's a good, standing structure. It has recently had additional renovations to it. It satisfies the need of having a school.

We do have the challenge of school busing in the territory. Over 50 percent of Yukon school kids travel on a school bus, many of them for half an hour or more. I know that the member experiences that with the students in his riding and certainly sees it with the students in my riding, who have to travel through his riding to get to school.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister didn't answer all the questions. He did say that there are 10 students. I am just wondering how many of those students come from Burwash. Could he tell me that? I am not necessarily suggesting that we run out and spend a whole pile of money here, but what I am asking is if he would at least consider doing a feasibility study to determine if a new school, if built, should be built in the community of Burwash and also whether or not the population in Burwash is more likely to increase.

That was kind of where I was going with the demographics question earlier to see if there were any trends. I realize that, with a small sample, it's hard to know what the trends would be, and they could change pretty rapidly.

The other piece of this equation is there was work being done on — I can't remember the exact terminology — I think it was an elders and/or family activity centre. There was some discussion in the community. I talked with some people from Burwash who had hoped there would be the possibility of moving the educational programming into that building. I am just wondering if the department is having any discussions with the communities about doing that.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: The previous Chief of the Kluane First Nation had approached the Department of Education

about changing the use of an existing building into a school. We are certainly not at the stage of making any kind of announcement about closing down one school and opening up a new school. There have been exploratory discussions on this one, and that's the stage that we're at. We have, I believe, about five students who attend this school. The school certainly still has a function, has use, serves the need. It meets many of the needs of the situation. The challenge is that we have some kids who spend some time on the school bus. But that's a reality I face, as Minister of Education, for over 50 percent of Yukon's kids.

There are school bus rides that students face, whether they are Tagish going to Carcross, or Marsh Lake coming into Whitehorse, or folks from Mount Lorne going into the high school or, at the other end of the community, Mendenhall coming into Whitehorse, or Henderson Corner going into Dawson. There are larger populations of students spending much more time on a school bus. That's the situation that we're facing here. I appreciate that we're working on looking at seeing growth in all Yukon communities. I do have to have — or the Department of Education would certainly have to have — discussions with both communities about an issue of this nature, because it would have an impact on both. That's the situation we're in. That's some of the reality around it. If the member's looking for more information, I'll try to provide it.

Mr. Elias: I thank the Member from Mount Lorne for allowing me to engage in the debate with regard to education today. I just have a couple of questions for the minister and it's with regard to an issue I brought up in Question Period earlier this sitting about the students who have to travel from Old Crow to our capital city to receive their education in high school and their ability to travel home during Thanksgiving and Easter breaks.

I did receive the letter dated October 12, 2010 from the minister in response to my concerns with regard to this issue. The letter states that the department has been asked to review the policy to ensure that it is consistent and applicable to Yukon students in all communities.

I would like to request first that the minister take a couple of things under advisement when he's reviewing this policy. I feel that the Old Crow situation with regard to students travelling home for Thanksgiving and Easter breaks should be a stand-alone issue; that he should look at this issue in isolation simply because Old Crow is the most isolated community in this territory. It's fly-in only. The issue is a little more complicated and expensive than in other rural communities and should be treated again as a stand-alone issue, separate from other Yukon communities.

Also, in deciding how to deal with this issue, he can look at some possible information that's out there with regard to the kids who get signed out at the dorm during the school year. I don't know how far you can go back, but if the minister can look at the students in rural Yukon who get signed out of the dorm and get to go home during these two specific holidays, and then compare that to the children who have to fly down to go home to Old Crow, I would be willing to — maybe "bet" is not the word — suggest that there is going to be a distinct cor-

relation between the children who get to go home during those two very important holidays.

The other thing that the minister I hope can take under advisement during his policy review is that, again, as a possible solution to this — and I did mention this to the minister. One of the solutions that's seen by the parents in the community is that a contribution agreement, with regard to the amount of money it takes to fly the children from Old Crow to Whitehorse return throughout the school year, be simply a contribution agreement transferred to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Department of Education, because they feel they can get more “bang for the buck”, so to speak.

Thanksgiving is the end of the harvesting season — around the end of the harvesting season — for the community of Old Crow. When the kids stay and stew in the dorm in Whitehorse, they know what's going on at home. It's the final preparations of caribou and the traditional harvest and all of that stuff. That's difficult enough. During the Easter break, what happens in Old Crow is that the whole community gets together and it's the Easter carnival. There are dog races, there are community events and feasts and dances, and it's a celebration of spring.

You can imagine how a student feels when they know what's going on at home, and they can't get home. Again, to look at this as an isolated issue — have a look at issues about travel and mileage and gas purchases that are incurred by some of the other students throughout the Yukon to get home for these two holidays.

I just wanted to make those points. I hope the minister can consider those points and have a look at this as a stand-alone issue. It's affecting more and more families for a longer period of time, because when you come down in September as a student from Old Crow, you basically spend 10 months away from your family so these two holidays — and I'll tell you, I notice kids who can afford to go home during Thanksgiving and Easter come back refreshed and they come back focused. During the same Thanksgiving, there were two students who weren't able to return home and there was a very noticeable difference from the kids who were able to go home and the two kids who weren't. So, I really would like the minister to look at this as an isolated issue and try to find a solution; I look forward to his comments on those issues and concerns that are coming from parents, that are coming from the student supports that exist now in the community and in Whitehorse. I look forward to his comments on that issue.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for his comments today. He and I have discussed this matter previously. We had a discussion not too long ago in the members' lounge. He shared with me some ideas that he had and the idea of having tickets booked through a place where we might be able to get, as the member said, “greater bang for the buck.” Currently the Department of Education provides travel to and from Whitehorse and Old Crow at Christmas, spring break and then at year-end. The department also provides travel assistance or provides a travel subsidy when there is a death in the student's family. I want to make him aware of that support as well.

I appreciate the comments from the member opposite and his comments about the importance of the activities at Thanksgiving and at Easter. They will certainly be considered by the department.

I've committed to the member opposite to have the department take a look at this whole issue. We are also considering, if I can broaden this a bit, the supports for rural students here in the territory, whether that's working with the Council of Yukon First Nations, as we have in the past, to provide additional support workers to help with that transition or looking at other ways of easing the transition from rural life to Whitehorse. There are a couple of other ideas, too, that are starting to percolate through this process. I've asked the department not only to consider how do we provide assistance for people in Old Crow to be more productive — more involved I guess is a better word — so how do we provide for people in Old Crow to be more involved in their community, but also how do we look at increasing the educational outcomes of the students coming in from rural communities? What steps can we take to ease that transition to ensure that there are ties to the community and that there are appropriate encouragements for their continued academic study and growth?

It is an issue. I certainly want to see the students coming from rural communities have not only an opportunity, but an opportunity for success in their educational career. There are a couple of different things being considered on this one in addition to the specific issue that the member has brought forward. I do want to let him know that the department has taken his concerns seriously. It is certainly looking at it. As we discussed before, we do have to look at the overall policy ramifications for supports for rural students. I appreciate his comments about the uniqueness of Old Crow and some of his specific examples. So the department will certainly take into consideration his comments and other comments coming from the school council. We will continue to work on this with others, too, and engage others in this discussion.

Mr. Elias: On the concept of uniqueness, my position as MLA in this Legislature is considered to be unique for a lot of different reasons. A lot of those arguments as to why Old Crow has their own member of this Legislative Assembly can also be used for this argument.

The minister also mentioned transition. The parents, the education assistants, the directors, the chief and council, myself, the parents, the families — we all tried to make this transition between living in Old Crow and the stresses and realities of the capital city in a way to ease the pressure on the students. For instance, we just had a Crow Flats breakfast over at the dorm last month, with myself and the chief and the director of education for VGFN, and the education support worker for Area 2 in Whitehorse. We all went there and cooked them breakfast — caribou meat and pancakes and whatever. We had a huge community breakfast there with all the kids who were in the dorm.

We just established a floor hockey night in one of the schools that we're going to have every Wednesday, so the students can get together from whatever school and play floor hockey together and interact.

This year, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education department sponsored — they asked me and Greg Charlie to take the boys from the high schools up the Dempster to go hunting. We did that and we successfully harvested a moose up the Dempster in the Vuntut Gwitchin traditional territory. It was phenomenal to talk to those young gentlemen driving to and from the Dempster; to hear their issues and concerns about how it is attending high school. We got a lot of insight from them. When we brought the moose back, some First Nations women took the girls and they looked after the meat, so that's the way that we're supporting, or trying to support, that transitional period. We're doing the best we can, but to quote one of the parents about the specific issue, they feel that it's a very small price to pay to get the students to and from Old Crow during Thanksgiving and Easter to ensure that the students get through a semester, and thus graduate.

Another thing that the minister could do is have a look at the graduation statistics of students who initially travel from Old Crow and end up succeeding as part of the decision-making process.

I am encouraged that the minister has given his department direction to have a look at this policy. It's becoming, again, very important to my constituents. I thank, again, the Member for Mount Lorne for allowing me some of his time to bring this forward to the Legislature today. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Chair, I thank the member opposite for his comments and his actions as well — the willingness to get involved with kids, to take his crew up the Dempster to go hunting. We often have heard that it takes a village to raise a child. Well, it often takes a village to educate a child too. The sole responsibility for education certainly does not lie on the shoulders of teachers in our schools. We all have a role to play. I think it's great, and the member should be applauded for his involvement with those kids. Well done.

I will pass on the comments to the department. Certainly, department officials have heard them here today and we will also put this in the context that he was after — as to what we can do to look at the pedagogical side of things to help students succeed academically. I thank him for his comments.

Mr. Cardiff: I would actually like to thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for his involvement in the education system. I think that it speaks volumes about his commitment to his community and to helping educate. That's all part of experiential learning too, which we were talking a lot about before.

I'd like to move on and ask the minister some questions about the community training trust funds. I'm just wondering if he can tell us whether there have been any changes in criteria. Are there changes in the way the funds are administered? I believe he referenced the Auditor General earlier, and there was a recommendation to develop a comprehensive strategy for managing the community training funds. I'm wondering if the minister could give us an update on that.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: The biggest change, when we look at the community training trust funds, would have to be the difference between the way the previous Liberal government approached this, which was to cut the training trust funds, and the Yukon Party approach to this, which was to reinstate them

and increase the amount to \$1.5 million. That's about as big a change as we can make. I would suggest that it provides a significant difference between how different political parties in this territory would approach these types of things.

They are a strong investment on an ongoing annual basis from the Government of Yukon to fund both the community-based funds and then the industry, or economic, sector-based funds. We continue to work with a number of groups throughout the territory, whether community-based or industry-based, for the provision or execution of these funds. There were challenges with one that we've discussed in the past here before and the un-maintainable financial position that one local group found itself in.

We continue to believe that the training trust funds are a good vehicle for providing for people in a community to identify the training needs that they have and also to identify the training needs in a specific sector.

On our training side of things, one of the key words that we have been using in the department's Advanced Education branch has been "responsive"; that we need to be responsive to the needs of the communities and the opportunities that are coming out. The member touched on this again in Question Period today when talking about how we ensure that a local people are in a good position to take advantage of the opportunities that come before them in their community. So in addition to the other resources that we have available for advanced education, whether it's for post-secondary education, we also have these training trust funds.

We also have some work with other organizations like the Yukon Mine Training Association. The Yukon Mine Training Association was established between Yukon First Nations and members of the mining industry, and it receives a significant portion of its funds from the federal government, whether it's through the aboriginal human resource development funds — and I believe there's another pool of resources whose acronym eludes me right now. That's another good group that, again, receives a significant amount of federal resources to provide some of their training and opportunities in exploration.

The Auditor General in her report provided the Department of Education with some direction that we needed to take a look at this — ASEP is the other acronym for the federal funding that the YMTA receives its contribution from — and we've taken many of the recommendations from the Auditor General to heart.

One only has to take a look at the annual report of the Department of Education, which is produced, as one would expect, annually, and how we have identified the recommendations that she has put forward and what the Department of Education is doing to respond to those. We are busy preparing this year's annual report too. We're very busy working because this year's session of the Assembly is a little bit earlier than normal. Just an aside on that — we're also waiting for some information from British Columbia that we would normally include in our annual report.

With the recommendations coming from the Auditor General and with another strategic move we took — the Government of Yukon and Advanced Education took a very long look

at our labour market framework projects. The labour market framework is looking at our longer term training strategy, recruitment and retention strategy, immigration strategy and labour market data strategy.

We have been working very closely with a number of industry groups and sectors on these different components. How do we go about collecting the appropriate labour market data? How do we work with the Bureau of Statistics on this? How do we ensure we're keeping an eye on the trends, as the member was mentioning earlier today, with growing and declining sectors of employment in our territory, so we can work to ensure our training and preparation tools are in line with this?

The training strategy has a lot of consideration of the supports that government has for training here in the territory, whether it's through the training trust funds or other sources of support for post-secondary education. We will be seeing the release of the labour market framework report soon.

I can't be quite as specific as the member opposite and commit to that time frame or that window that he has mentioned, because we are working with a wide group of people on this and certainly want to afford them respect and opportunity in that release process. As we come through with the recommendations of the labour market framework and work through those recommendations, we will continue to enhance the programs or look at how we can work with industry, educational institutions, and students in order to best align our resources.

The folks in Advanced Education have certainly taken a look at their monitoring role and the financial overseeing of our training trust funds. They have done a significant amount of work in that area. They have worked with the recipients of these funds on appropriate recording and accountability issues. They have also worked with the funding agents, if you will — those organizations throughout the territory that review applications and then provide resources to individuals. They work with them to ensure that they're in compliance with the appropriate financial measurements and tools. On this one, we've seen a significant enhancement of the fund since the previous government.

We've seen strong working relationships established with both the industry and the community groups throughout the territory. We've worked on the compliance issues that the Auditor General has addressed and one will see further steps to address other Auditor General comments in our forthcoming annual report. As well, we've done a lot of work with our industry partners and education partners on the whole labour market framework, and that process will be reaching its next phase very soon with our release of those strategies.

Mr. Cardiff: I thank the minister for that. I know he probably doesn't have this information close at hand, but I'm wondering if there is a report on the community training trust funds available — basically a listing of projects. If he has that available, could he send that over?

With regard to the labour market agreement, he answered a question that I hadn't asked yet. It was my understanding that that plan would be available in October, but I can understand the minister's desire to ensure that it's fully reviewed by all the stakeholders and groups that are involved in it.

I have a couple of other areas that I'd like to ask questions about, but I don't want to begin something we can't finish today. There was a discussion going on awhile back about the inclusion of childcare in the Department of Education. Are those discussions still happening? How are they progressing? Are there any specific advantages to the education system? How long does the minister envision this discussion going on? Will it involve the public? When will a final decision be made?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I'll start with the training funds. Carmacks' Employment Training Society — these are going to tell the member opposite which funds are out there, and I think he probably already has that. I don't think I need to go with a breakdown of the whole — Carmacks has a training society, or Campbell region, or Haines Junction, or Klondike, or Watson Lake — the whole list. I don't have a breakdown as to what projects those different societies have funded. Some of the specific projects that we have funded through the fund include the Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, which was over \$98,000; Yukon Learn Society, to assist with the implementation of an evaluation that was done there — that was \$10,000; there was a contribution to Skills Canada Yukon to fund the operation of the Skills Centre and skills clubs — that was over \$79,000; further assistance to Yukon Women in Trades and Technology to assist YWITT with the implementation of their evaluation — that was about \$10,000; there was a transfer to the Bureau of Statistics for the labour market survey work — that's part of the labour market framework work.

There was an initiative with Canada called the "targeted initiative for older workers program" targeted toward unemployed older workers and vulnerable communities aimed at increasing their employability and reintegrating them into employment and ensuring that they remain active and productive labour market participants in their community. That was a contribution of \$92,247. There was a contribution to l'Association franco-yukonnaise for Destination Canada, which promotes Yukon and opportunities to settle in the Yukon to potential immigrants from French-speaking countries. That was \$26,058. There was a contribution to the Yukon Childcare Association to deliver a two-day training workshop for 125 early childcare workers. That contribution was \$9,600. Those are in addition to the contributions that have gone to either the sector-specific entities or to the community-specific entities.

By no means should that be considered the limit of funding to some of these organizations that I mentioned, because through some of our other funding sources, whether it's the labour market agreement or the labour market development agreement, which was devolved from the federal government to the territorial government, we now have greater control over that. We're still in the transition phase, so there's still a lot of consistency with many of the recipients that the federal government had funded previously, but we are able to ensure that we are recognizing the Yukon issues and having greater flexibility with working through them. That has been very well-received from a multitude of different organizations in town, whether it's the Yukon Council on Disabilities — LDAY — or others. A number of initiatives are funded through different pots, but that's a different line item, so I won't go into that.

The member opposite has also asked about early childhood development. On that front, there are certainly strong ties between the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services.

The other day during budget debate on the Department of Justice, we also talked about the common client project there and increasing those ties between Education, Justice and Health and Social Services. Again, it's trying to provide a more holistic approach to the service delivery from the Government of Yukon to Yukoners. We're certainly taking strong efforts to try to break down what others have characterized as silos of information. Would you rather see a barn than a silo — if I can continue that metaphor — where there is a collection of different tools from a collection of different departments all working together for that same common goal? We're continuing that approach, that common-client approach on the issues with early childhood education and learning.

If I can just extend this one more step — because we actually have a tie between early childhood education and Energy, Mines and Resources now, with the recent announcement by Capstone Mining. They are contributing \$1.4 million to the Selkirk First Nation for the creation and operation of an early childhood development centre. That's a change that was accommodated and encouraged by changes to the *Quartz Mining Act* and the whole regulatory and royalty regime for quartz mining, allowing a community economic development grant and recognizing that as an allowable expense.

I toss that out as another example of how we're really working interdepartmentally to encourage the overall community growth, and to have an example as timely as that one is pretty neat. Folks at Capstone — Stephen Quin and the other folks at the Minto mine — have to be applauded for their contribution, not only financially but also the amount of support they're trying to provide and offer the community — it's substantial.

That's just another example of how we're working interdepartmentally. I'll focus more now on the relationship the Department of Education has with Health and Social Services about early childhood education.

When we started these discussions, we were really focusing on how we increase the outcomes for the kids, how we increase the benefit for the parents, and how we increase the efficiencies and effectiveness of our overall system. We certainly didn't want to be in any kind of a turf war as to what department was overseeing what or who was responsible for what, but instead we're focusing on the interests that we're trying to achieve — and that's what we do throughout all the departments here.

So there has been a lot of work from the deputy-to-deputy side of the equation; there has been work going back and forth between other officials; there has been a careful look at some of the programming that Education offers and, really, one of the big things that we have in this situation is the provision from this government for full-day kindergarten for children enrolled in the public school system.

That was a big move that this government took just a couple of years ago. It's certainly having an impact for the students

and for parents here in the territory. We've heard of other provinces in the country where this has been a key election promise. This is certainly one that this, the Yukon Party government, has delivered upon and provided for Yukon's kids.

I have a few more things to put on this one, but seeing the time, I would move that we report progress, Mr. Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Rouble that Committee of the Whole report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Taylor that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, and directed me to report progress on it.

Speaker: You've heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. Monday.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following Sessional Papers were filed October 28, 2010:

10-1-180

Audited Consolidated Financial Statements of the Government of Yukon for the year ended March 31, 2009 (Fentie)

10-1-181

Public Accounts 2009-2010 of the Government of Yukon for the year ended March 31, 2010 (Fentie)