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**Tuesday, March 7, 2006**

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**Iqaluit**

**Speaker: The Honourable Jobie Nutarak, M.L.A.**

## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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*Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Minister of Human Resources*

#### **Hon. Levinia Brown**

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*Deputy Premier; Minister of Community Government and Government Services*

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(Nanulik)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Tuesday, March 7, 2006**

**Members Present:**

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Mr. Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Honourable Patterk Netser, Honourable Jobie Nutarak, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable Edward Picco, Honourable David Simailak, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (interpretation): I would like to ask Mr. Kilabuk to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Good afternoon, Ministers, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and our staff. Orders of the Day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Netser.

**Some Members:** Hear, hear.

>>*Applause*

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 077 – 2(3): 2006 Arctic Winter Games – Day One**

**Hon. Patterk Netser:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to inform the House that for the first competitive day of the 2006 Arctic Winter Games, Team Nunavut has already won nine medals.

**Some Members:** Hear, hear.

>>*Applause*

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate:

- Tom Naqitarvik of Arctic Bay, who won gold in the Snow Snake Dene Games in the Junior Male category.
- Steven Klengenber of Kugluktuk won gold in the Kneel Jump Inuit Games in the Junior Male category.
- Andrew Atatahak of Kugluktuk won gold in the Kneel Jump in the Open Male category.
- Manasie Kendall of Iqaluit also won gold in the 500 metre Speed Skating competition for the Juvenile Men category.
- Thomas A. Levi of Arctic Bay will bring home silver for the Snow Snake Dene games in the Open Men category.

- Sandra Nulijajuq of Gjoa Haven won silver in the Open Women's Arm Pull, Inuit Games.
- Aqpik Peter of Iqaluit won silver in the Junior Men's 500 metre Speed Skating competition.
- David Coulombe of Iqaluit won silver in the 500 metre Speed Skating for the Juvenile Male category.
- Sarah Ali of Iqaluit will bring home a bronze for the Juvenile Female's 500 metre Speed Skating competition.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate all of the other Team Nunavut athletes who are in Alaska representing our territory. I have been informed that they are showing true team spirit of encouraging one another in all of their sport competitions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Members:** Hear, hear.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. That was Mr. Netser's first Minister's Statement. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Picco.

### **Minister's Statement 078 – 2(3): Toronto Nunavut Twinning Program**

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to congratulate Mr. Netser on his first minister's statement. It's nice to bring good news to the House, which I will be doing right now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to update my colleagues on the Twinning Program between Nunavut and the Toronto schools that was initiated last year. This program is a partnership between the Federation of Nunavut Teachers and the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, with the support of our own Department of Education.

The Twinning Program is an exciting initiative that aims to promote literacy and cultural understanding between students and staff from our schools. Presently, there are 85 schools from Toronto and 41 Nunavut schools involved. This initiative is a great example of working together for a common cause. The program is a mutually beneficial relationship, helping to bridge our cultures and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, we have received reports from several schools around Nunavut, including those in Resolute Bay, Iqaluit, Baker Lake, Sanikiluaq, and Gjoa Haven. Discussions between the schools are leading to exchanges in information and student pen pal projects. Both staff and students are looking forward to creating lasting alliances and providing diverse learning opportunities.



Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Federation of Nunavut Teachers for their involvement in this project and for supporting our schools, staff, and students in sharing our cultural identity.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Orders of the Day. Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Barnabas.

### **Item 3: Members' Statements**

#### **Member's Statement 187 – 2(3): Housing Crisis in Nunavut**

**Mr. Barnabas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations to Patterk. (interpretation) I would like to stand to congratulate Tom Naqitarvik and Thomas Levi for getting silver medals for Nunavut sports.

I would like to stand today in regard to the housing crisis in Nunavut. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I know that the government resources are limited. I also know that every community in Nunavut is facing a housing shortage. It is not merely a shortage, it is a crisis.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Resolute Bay is in an extremely difficult position because of the lack of developed land on which to build the new homes. The community has been working with GN to address this issue for some time, but the residents are frustrated. What is the use of the new Material Assistance Program or the Nunavut Down Payment Assistance Program for new construction when there is nowhere to build a new home?

Mr. Speaker, it's not all bad news in my constituency of High Arctic. Arctic Bay has been allocated two new units in the 2006-07 Capital Estimates; these are welcomed. However, they will not come close to addressing the real need.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, members have recognized that every community in Nunavut requires new public housing construction; even communities that have least need relative to other Nunavut communities are in desperate need when compared to southern standards.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the GN to re-evaluate spending because investment in a house is a productive measure against many more costly problems. It is recognized that overcrowding leads to the increase of respiratory illness, depression, and violence. Children living in the overcrowded home tend to have difficulties excelling at school.

Mr. Speaker, there's an old saying; 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.' Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Kilabuk.

**Member's Statement 188 – 2(3): Severe Housing Shortage**

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize that you didn't have a meeting with my colleague earlier this morning.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today also to speak a little on this government's commitment in identifying the severe housing shortage across Nunavut. In my view, this government has done an excellent job in voicing the housing crisis and its plan to try and build housing to make its plan known to the federal government and its partners. Again Mr. Speaker, hats off to the government for a job well done.

Having said that, however, this government is in a position to make a big difference in the lives of my constituents with so little and without reinventing the wheel.

Mr. Speaker, today, I am not going to argue out too loud because there is no argument to be made. It is very black and white on the availability of housing and families in need in my riding of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, many hours of studies have been done to confirm what we already know about the severe housing shortage in our territory and the fact that there are many young families looking for housing. I am not going to pretend to know how many families are in need and how many houses may be available in other communities, but if the opportunity is there, should we not try to help these people because we have families living amongst families under one roof and still, we remain neutral.

I will not go into the social problems and issues. Small cramped spaces bring out plans for another day with another solution to be sought. Over the last year and a bit, I have received good information thanks to the Minister of Education regarding the current process under income support and the possible process that income support recipients can use to be considered for housing through the private market, but they have to be self-motivated and determined to go through the process and physically push the system to see if the department will consider them for a unit.

Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The member would like to have unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please, go ahead Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Having said that, Mr. Speaker, this vaguely simple question: why does this government not spend the dollars on solution thinking, just like the big bucks it spends on doing the studies on information we know already. Just think about it for a second.

Mr. Speaker, I guess with the big enough matter, it calls for teamwork; teamwork amongst the Government of Nunavut and the people of Nunavut; huge benefits through small steps at a time where opportunities exist.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I am clear enough with my communication to say that there are two issues here. First being the need to spend money on solutions thinking, and the other, having an opportunity to do what is right and house some deserving constituents of mine where the opportunity exists; nothing out of the ordinary and no special favours.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to say which I will ask on just yet because I want my Cabinet colleagues to think about and brainstorm as a team even if it is just for themselves individually for a few seconds or minutes.

Later in the session, I will do one where I am calmly solution thinking which I think deserves attention by this House and also my Cabinet colleagues. So with that, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking some questions. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Curley.

### **Member's Statement 189 – 2(3): Letters from Rankin Inlet Students**

**Mr. Curley:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to read a couple of letters that I received from students in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, Nunavut students are looking for solutions for boredom and depression that so often cause many of our youth distracted from productive family living in our communities.

Nunavut students in my riding treat me on a first-name basis and I am going to read it without naming them. One letter states, "Dear Tagak, MLA for Rankin Inlet North, I am 17 years old student at MUI. Teenagers are so bored on the weekends; Rankin Inlet should try to get a land camp to keep teenagers out of trouble. I think the land camp would be good for the youth of Rankin. We would learn how to hunt better. Maybe four or five times a month elders would be in charge of the youth camp. Tagak, thanks for reading this letter and I hope you can do something about this.

And then another letter, Mr. Speaker: "Dear Tagak, I live in Rankin Inlet and I am 15 years old. I am writing this letter to inform that there is no centre for teenagers. I think the centre should be somewhere a building is not used and break it down to make the new centre there. This centre should have a mini-gym, an arcade, a study room, and café. I think this centre should have certain age limits. Maybe Inuksuk Centre would be a great name because the name Inuksuk has been used in our culture for a long time. I thank you for your time and effort. Please feel free to write back.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements, Mr. Tootoo.

**Member's Statement 190 – 2(3): Initiatives for Home Owners**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start my Member's Statement, I would just like to wish a happy birthday to my daughter Teia. Today, she is turning eleven years old and also there are a number of people, my mother-in-law Mariette, it is her birthday today. Nicole, if you are watching, happy birthday, and also to Naimee back there in the interpreter/translator booth, and in the other booth, Mary Nashook's mother Rita it is her birthday as well today and she is seventy-two. I would like to wish them all a happy birthday.

Mr. Speaker, my Member's Statement today is concerning initiatives to support homeowners in Nunavut in making their homes more energy efficient. The federal Department of National Resources Canada offers grants for energy efficiency upgrades to existing homes as part of the Government of Canada's One Tonne Challenge. This program requires that a homeowner arrange for what is called the Energy Guide for Houses Evaluation prior to starting renovations. The National Resources Canada approved energy advisor will evaluate the home and give the home an energy rating. The difference between the pre-renovation rating and the post-renovation rating will determine the value of the grant.

Mr. Speaker, the additional incentive for northern residents is a hundred and seventy five dollars. Given the cost of goods and transportation in Nunavut, I am not sure what that is intended to cover. In addition, the homeowner does not know if they will qualify for the grant or what the value of the grant will be until the process is complete. Mr. Speaker, I have looked into this, and the nearest certified person is in Yellowknife. The National Resource Canada website says that not only do you have to pay for both evaluations, but you also have to cover the transportation costs if the energy advisor does not live in your community.

Mr. Speaker, all members recognize the extraordinary cost of home improvements in Nunavut. Every year, members approve a sizeable budget for the Housing Corporation with a large portion dedicated to modernization and improvement, or retrofits for public housing. Members are also aware of renovation programs for homeowners that are delivered by the corporation.

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

**Speaker** (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues.

I understand that the Housing Corporation for the government has the equipment necessary to do the Energy Guide Evaluations, but there is nobody certified by National Resources Canada to actually do the evaluations.

I wonder if the corporation has done a cost-benefit analysis associated with paying travel and boarding costs for an energy adviser to come to Nunavut for a couple of weeks so homeowners can have their evaluations completed and take part in the Energy Guide Grant program.

Every dollar that a homeowner gets from the federal government is one less dollar that they would have to apply for under our housing corporation programs. I urge the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation to work closely with his federal counterparts to ensure that homeownership programs such as the one offered by Natural Resources Canada are actually accessible by Nunavummiut.

It would be good if some of the resources for home renovations came from the federal government, through its programs, rather than out of our corporation's very limited budget.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I'll be asking the minister responsible some questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again Happy Birthday Teia, I love you very much.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Ms. Brown.

### **Member's Statement 191 – 2(3): Avataq Cup Hockey Game in Rankin Inlet**

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about the Avataq Cup, which is held every year in Rankin Inlet. It is festive times, and a lot of people attend it.

The Miners won the Avataq Cup, second were the people from Arviat, and Iqaluit Men's Hockey Association placed third. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 3. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Curley.

### **Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize, my son is still here. He was supposed to have left today; he just came here for the weekend. His name is

Joseph Curley. The flight just got cancelled, so he's stuck here again. We're getting fog in Rankin Inlet, and he will try again tomorrow. He has a friend here who is the grandson of the Sergeant-at-Arms. I would like to welcome Joseph Curley to the House.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past week, I recognized an individual in Pangnirtung. It's her daughter's birthday today, our interpreter from Pangnirtung, Naimee Kilabuk-Bourassa, and since it's her birthday I would like to recognize her and welcome her to the House. Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Okalik.

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you again Mr. Speaker. As I represent this individual, our media person Jane George. I would like to welcome and recognize her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 220 – 2(3): Incentives for Homeowners – Energy Efficient Homes

**Mr. Tootoo**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As promised in my statement, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell me if the corporation offers incentives to homeowners to make efficient changes to their home? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): We try to make sure that all the programs made available are accessed by the people of Nunavut. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware if the corporation or another government department has the equipment necessary to do the Energy Guide audits on homes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will see exactly how it works and once I have the information, I will make it available to the member. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my statement, there is no one in Nunavut that is qualified to do these energy audits for homeowners that are already facing rising costs of everything. Our fuel and power rates have all gone up recently, as we all know, and homeowners are trying to do what they can, and not just to meet the One Tonne Challenge set out by the federal government, but just to try and make their homes more energy efficient, therefore, cost-effective to maintain.

Given this government's new push to promote homeownership, would the minister be willing to look at working with his federal colleagues at Natural Resources Canada to ensure that that program could be delivered here in Nunavut and find a way to have those energy audits done so that people doing renovations or planning to do renovations this summer could get the audits done prior to the renovation starting and after the building season when the renovations are done to get the audits done again so that they can see how much of a grant they would qualify for from Natural Resources Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will look into it and of course we have some programs made available to the private homeowners in Nunavut. Regarding the federal government, since they have a new government, we have not had an opportunity to have a meeting with our counterparts, but I hope we are having a meeting on April 12, which is very soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would commit to putting out a call to all homeowners here in Iqaluit to see if the numbers warrant the department or the corporation bringing over, as I said in my statement, flying over and accommodating an individual to do these energy audits so that those individuals can access the federal dollars for other than using our corporation's limited resources.

So my question is: will the minister commit to doing that to see if it is worthwhile to do that on behalf of the homeowners? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** If I were to get someone here, I would not want it limited to just to Iqaluit. I would like also to look into that as a Nunavut-wide issue. Again, it is something that we should do as the weather is changing. Maybe the global warming might be colder later on.

So we'll look into that. I'll make sure that I commit to working with a company that does that. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Kilabuk.

### **Question 221 – 2(3): Process for Income Support Clients – Housing**

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per my earlier Member's Statement, I want to follow up and ask a few simple questions for the Minister responsible for Education and the Income Support Program.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, Pangnirtung is no exception when it comes to long waiting lists of families and individuals in need of housing. However, having said that, it is probably with some exceptions compared to other communities for the fact that there are vacant units in Pangnirtung through the private sector, and thus a possible solution exists.

My question for the minister: can the minister explain to me the process that income support recipients follow under the Income Support Program guidelines to be considered for housing outside the Social Housing Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the social assistance regulations, there are aspects and provisions for help with housing. And the member is aware, I think, of some residents, for example, here in Iqaluit that are actually helped through income support.

At the same time, there are also opportunities for damage deposits Nunavut-wide. Again, that seems to be an issue for some tenants who are trying to get a unit that they don't have the damage deposit available.

So for example, Mr. Speaker, if you go to get a unit you might be charged \$1,000 or \$2,500 or whatever the amount is on receiving a unit by putting up that cash amount for a damage deposit.



A lot of people haven't got that ability and under the Income Support Program, we actually can come up with those dollar values if the person has not, for example, received a damage deposit before and so on.

On rental of units, again, there is opportunity within the Income Support Program through the regulations to be able to help on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Knowing the communities outside of Iqaluit, or as you say, the bigger communities, hub communities, the demand tends to be lower both in the market price and also the demand for staff housing requirements from the private sector.

Having said that, will the minister commit to sending to Pangnirtung an official to work with the local housing association and also income support workers to try and find solutions to fill these vacant units while we have a long waiting list of families that are in dire need of housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Education actually has a regional office in the community and I think the quick answer for the member is yes, we can try to help facilitate a better program offering within the community.

We do have the regional office there and we will try to meet the member's requirements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier in my Member's Statement, we're not looking at units that already exist, we're looking at the units to be used from outside the housing association, and I know that it's very difficult.

Before we run into another difficult situation, I would like to ask the Minister of Education to work with the Minister of the Housing Corporation while you are reviewing the units so that there will be fewer unexpected barriers. Could the minister commit to this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can commit, on behalf of the department, to try to help facilitate that.

I think there are two points to be made here. One, for example, is in communities where there is a ready market of available housing, they may be too high, and the next example of here in Iqaluit where you might have people working who would not necessarily be eligible for income support, but they are making income below the threshold of, let's say, it was \$30,000 and yet their rent is about \$2,500. There is an opportunity to go through the Income Support Program. Let's say the rent is going to be \$2,100, I can afford \$1,100, and can you kick in the other amount. In some cases, we have been able to do that under the Income Support Program.

In the member's community, because there are available units outside the housing stock which may be leased, I would suggest to you that what we would try to do is lease the units that are available through the housing stock and if there is a large waiting list for that and there are other units available that a tenant or an income support client can ascertain, and they meet all the qualifications and regulations in place, then we would move very quickly to help to expedite the use of that house.

So I will commit to the member and the House to review the situation in the community, and work with our staff in the regional office to see how we could facilitate the request being made by the member on behalf of his constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do thank my colleague for the response. I am not going to let him off just yet. My last question is: will he commit to providing me an action plan for a schedule of when these should be accomplished over the next couple days? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, I am not going to commit to an action plan, no just kidding, I got him. I think that is a reasonable request. I think because of requesting by the Member in the House right now, I know all departments try to follow Question Period, and I am sure my staff are working to see how we can facilitate the request. I think we will be able to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

### **Question 222 – 2(3): Housing Units Suitable for Northern Climate**

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question first for the Minister of the Housing Corporation. I do not really believe what he is about, but I have full trust with the government.

My question is about the units that we receive up in the north. These units follow the environment or cold climate outside; when the weather gets warm the units get hot and then when the weather gets cold the houses get cold. Could the Housing Corporation

work on units that are suitable for the north or do you also work with the construction companies to make sure these units are insulated well for the north? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we do use guidelines for the northern units and we try to make sure these units can withstand the cold climate, but the older units are deteriorating and we do provide renovation funding to make sure these older units have good insulation. So we try to get the units built to make sure they're suitable for the climate. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't quite understand him, but I do want to ask a question. The units that are sent up north to be built, could you consider, or do you have a guideline where these units that are to be constructed in the north to be suitable for cold climate? If you don't have a guideline for northern units, if you don't do that, could your department work with the construction crew so that they could build units that are suitable for the cold climate? Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We use the national building code standard to make sure that we are following the codes of standard and also that there's an inspector that goes around to every house that's being done to make sure that it's completed right. And I do believe that we do our very best to make sure it meets our weather conditions here in our territory.

So I think we are doing our very best and again, I know that there are some improvements that we can do in the future and we are always looking for ways to make better, affordable housing units in the territory.

So I do believe we have done a great job using the national building codes and also doing the inspections before anybody actually moves into the buildings that we just built. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if I understood the minister, the building code is what you have, it's drywall; insulation; plastic; plywood; and then whatever is there. So is that code for the cold weather area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akasuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes it is, plus Tyvek. All of these things you build houses with, we make sure that we have the proper materials to build houses that are going to be lived in by our constituents in any community. So we are doing our very best to make sure that the national building code standard is met and that the inspections are properly done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is he talking about building codes? Could he table those building codes in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akasuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will have to get them from the federal government as they are national building codes and I will do my very best to get those documents and probably give them to the MLA. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

### **Question 223 – 2(3): Inuksuit School Project – Motion**

**Mr. Arreak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education. The minister will clearly remember that I moved a motion in the Committee of the Whole last year to recommend that the Inuksuit High School's addition project in Qikiqtarjuaq be moved forward in the GN's five-year capital plan. The motion was approved. My motion pointed out that although the Legislative Assembly voted to approve \$600,000 in the 2005-06 Capital Estimates of the Department of Education for this project, which had already been previously deferred, the current schedule for this project will not see further progress until the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

My question for the minister today is this: what exactly has his department done to respond to this motion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Education, Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do remember the motion in the Committee of the Whole. After the motion was passed in the Committee of the Whole, during the debate we had on the Capital Budget, I asked my capital planners to review opportunities within the existing Capital Budget to see if we can move the project up.

Again, we are limited by the number of dollars that are available at any given construction time for any given project. What we have done since that time is to see if there is an early construction date that can be ascertained within the capital planning cycle, and then see if there is access to those dollars.

So what that means basically for the member is to do exactly what the motion said, to see if we could move it up in the Capital Budget. Again, as the member knows, the Capital Budget has gone through in that debate.

Now, we are reviewing the Capital Budget to see in the next capital planning cycle, which is the one that is upcoming, to try and move the project up in the capital plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

### **Question 224 – 2(3): Solid Waste Disposal in Repulse Bay**

**Mr. Mapsalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Community and Government Services.

I received correspondence yesterday in regard to the solid waste disposal in Repulse Bay. There is so much snow at the dump that they can't see the fencing around it because it is completely covered with snow. A lot of garbage is flying around town even to the water reservoir.

I would like to ask the minister: can she advise her staff or officials to check into this as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Ms. Brown.

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can he clarify? No, I'm only joking while I look for answers.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I was advised about this and you already brought this up with me. I did receive that correspondence, I have advised my staff, and they are listening to us right now. I also asked them to check into this as soon as possible and to be able to work very closely with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

**Mr. Mapsalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When they're going to choose a different site, how do they decide? Is the community included in decision making? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I know that we have gone through this and I am informed by our staff where the site might be.

The communities are consulted. For example, in Rankin Inlet, they had to look for a new site because the present one we had was getting too small. So they had to look for a new site. There were three possible sites and we don't have much room either. What we did was the hamlet consulted with the elders in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

**Mr. Mapsalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for her response. Can the minister commit...first of all, let me ask: when do you think or how long do you think the hamlet council will have to wait until her officials come to the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague. In Rankin Inlet, the regional staff there, they are currently working on this and if they have to go to Repulse Bay soon, and I'm pretty sure the residents of Repulse Bay are concerned. So I will be working with the regional staff in Rankin Inlet and also the hamlet council and the foreman. We will definitely try to work on this as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

### **Question 225 – 2(3): Health Centre Update in Arctic Bay**

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. We heard that the construction of a new health centre in Arctic Bay was going to be deferred for two years. What is the status right at this time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I missed the question; can the member please repeat it? Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas, can you elaborate more on your question please?

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The construction of the health centre in Arctic Bay was deferred for two years, not until 2008, and they moved the funding to Taloyoak. What is the status of this at this time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for that. The Arctic Bay Capital Project was discussed in November. We said that we would start the planning process for that project in 2008 and 2009. It remains as we had presented back in November during the capital planning process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very difficult to fully believe the ministers when they say that, especially when they move the funding. Is it for sure now that it will be done in 2008 as it states? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Aglukkaq.

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Arctic Bay Health Centre planning has been initiated, but the actual planning for the design part will start in the fiscal years I mentioned and there's no change to that planning timeline since we discussed the capital plans and that's the work plan that we are working with at the present time. I don't anticipate that there will be changes to that schedule also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

### **Question 226 – 2(3): Roles and Mandate on the Issue of Homelessness**

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Homelessness. I would like thank the minister for stating yesterday that he will now be establishing a Homeless Secretariat. Mr. Speaker, my hope is that this will not just be a bureaucratic centre, but it will actually be implementing programs for homeless people in Nunavut.

First of all, I would like to remind the minister that I stated not long ago, when we started, that there was one constituent who came to my office and had actually slept under the building. In a place like Rankin Inlet, I thought that was shocking.

I would like to ask the minister exactly what the role of the Homeless Secretariat will be, and exactly what the mandate will be.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for Homelessness, Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Nunavut was the first jurisdiction outside the federal government to actually appoint a Minister responsible for the Issue of Homelessness.

We did that about three years ago. Since that time, we've seen the issue of homelessness become more acute across Nunavut. The member makes a good point on what he's observed in Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, the Homeless Secretariat was the next logical step. There is a little over \$100,000 in the secretariat. The idea of the secretariat is to bring together the best practices for homelessness across Nunavut and assist community groups and organizations to help address the issue of homelessness in Nunavut as a whole.

A good example of that is a grant we just provided to the Nunavut Status of Women's Council who are doing a Nunavut-wide review on homelessness as it affects women's issues. At the same time, we are involved in a project in Cape Dorset on homelessness issues.

So the secretariat is an organized group in which we are able to do interdepartmental work to help facilitate and help with the issue of homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response.

Recognizing there are acute homeless housing needs in Nunavut, also that there has to be a baseline global Nunavut strategy, I believe there is an urgency that the minister must be compelled to establish certain housing, or at least homeless centres and places.

Will the minister tell homeless individuals in Nunavut that he will actually attempt to put in a short-term, before a long-term strategy is developed, in order that the plight of these homeless individuals, not just in Iqaluit but throughout Nunavut can be addressed as one of these priorities of this government? Will he do so? Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The whole strategy behind the issue of homelessness is a very difficult one for us to deal with, not only as politicians and as governments, but as Nunavummiut as a whole.

There are two types of homelessness; there is absolute homelessness and relative homelessness. Absolute homelessness is when someone has no place to go. It's like the homeless that we see in Ontario, in the larger cities, in Ottawa, people on the corner pan-handling for money and so on. We do not have a large amount of that in most of our communities. We are starting to see that now in Iqaluit as an example.

The other type of homelessness is relative homelessness, and that's what we have in Nunavut. When you have 13 or 14 people living a three bedroom house with no space of their own and so on, that is homelessness.

However, most of these people cannot go out onto the street because they would freeze to death. So Mr. Speaker, although our homelessness is a little different than what we see in the south, it is no less real.



So what we've tried to do as a government is to address it through having more houses available. In many cases, many people that use the homeless shelter, and we have some statistics on this because we've been running the shelter in Iqaluit since 1997 and we've just moved into a new residence for the shelter here for men, and as members are aware, we just had a protest a few weeks ago where over 40 people showed up because there is no transition home for women.

So right now, we are actually trying to get a home for women. In a lot of cases, these individuals are not from Iqaluit, but they are from other communities in Nunavut and may not have the family ties and so on for a place to stay. In those cases, there are other issues that deal with the issue of homelessness, they may be social, they may be physical, they may be mental, and those types of issues need to be addressed.

The member is correct: under the Homeless Secretariat, we are trying to look at a Nunavut-wide strategy to see how we deal with it and where the crisis is the greatest. So, for example, in the member's community if there seems to be a larger incident of homeless people, and that's absolute homeless people, then we would try to respond, and we are trying to do that, for example, for the women in this community because there are some who need that type of transition home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. In recognizing, as a minister, indicators that there are different categories of homelessness, particularly more relevant for short-term work for the young people, will the minister indicate whether or not there is a role outside of Iqaluit for charity groups who may be interested in providing short-term shelter for some of the homeless individuals? If that is the case, could the minister explain to homeless people that there may be hope for them after all? Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short answer is yes. I indicated earlier that under the Homeless Secretariat, we actually have been sponsoring other programs. I gave an example of the good work that is going on right now in Cape Dorset to look at some of the issues, as well as some solutions to homelessness in that community.

At the same time, under the Income Support Program, I am looking at creative ways to be able to deal with this issue. So for example, in the member's community, if the women's family abuse centre, for example, were available and could dedicate some beds to some homeless women, then, under the Income Support Program, we could actually reciprocate the shelter for doing that. We are looking at some options here, for doing that.

So Mr. Speaker, we would entertain proposals after this budget cycle is complete after the education budget goes forward after April first. I will be doing a public advertisement in the newspapers and the media and so on asking for a call from interested community groups to put in proposals on the issue of homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for giving hope to the homeless throughout Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, there have been cases where charity groups in places like Rankin Inlet have been offered certain buildings that they could access, but the problem is, like the minister knows, that they did not have title or access to land. Would these types of problems be addressed? Charity groups in my community were willing, but they were not able to get any further help. They would provide actually two types of different buildings, but the cost of getting them into standing was a difficulty.

So would the minister indicate whether there will be a provision that allows charity groups an opportunity to apply for certain funding from the government? Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From day one with the setting up of Nunavut, the whole idea of the government has been to try to be faster in its response times to Nunavummiut, and also to be more compassionate in the way we deal with the issues we see in Nunavut and not so much from a bureaucratic standpoint.

This is a good example of that: if there are surplus buildings available that may be conducive to a shelter, the hard part is to come up with O&M money, as the member has indicated, to be able to sustain that.

And I will give the member a good example. Here in this community at one point, a little over \$1 million has been available through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative Funds from the federal government because the federal government has put in a National Homeless Strategy and we have been able to access those dollars. They are not available outside of Iqaluit because Iqaluit is an urban area.

So this is something that we need to follow up on to see if there is an opportunity under all the programs that may be available to meet the need. Specifically from the member's point, if there is a group in Rankin Inlet that have access to a building and they need X number of dollars or funds to be able to bring it up to code or something and are using it for a homeless shelter, I would welcome an opportunity to review that proposal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat, Mr. Alagalak.

**Question 227 – 2(3): Income Support or Housing Assistance**

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we have the same subject in mind today, which is housing, but I would like to ask questions to the same minister on the same subject to the Minister of Education.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many people living in one house in Arviat that we know of who are requesting and are on the waiting list to receive housing. There are so many that we cannot think of how many there are. There is even no room on the list for the need of housing and there are elders who have been applying for houses since they were young and they are old enough to own houses. They are able to hunt and they have to have a place to work with their hunting equipment as well as their pelts that they have to fix when they get back home.

I would like to ask and attend them to the question that was placed by my colleague, as well as there is no money in the income support group. If there is a little bit of money there, maybe the minister can tell us how much money a person would have to be making to be able to receive income support program for their housing. How much money would he have to contribute to get housing under that program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. It gives us an opportunity just to deal with a serious issue of housing and I can say I recently heard on the media how the House does not seem to be working together on issues. I think that here is an example where we are trying to find solutions.

In this case, Mr. Speaker, in the community of Arviat everyone recognizes, on natural increases alone is one of the fastest growing communities in Nunavut. I believe the last statistics numbers I have seen is that Arviat is the third largest community now in Nunavut in population and it is only a hundred bodies or less than what is in Rankin. This is phenomenal growth.

The Government of Nunavut, since 1999, has built over 400 social housing units, and yet we know we need 3,000. On the specific issue of homelessness in the community and income support, what the Income Support Program does is that it's a program of last resort for individuals in Nunavut.

If there is an opportunity under the Income Support Program to help, for example, with housing, then our Income Support Program officers have that ability within the guidelines and regulations of the program.

If someone is eligible for income support, that, again, depends on their wages they are making and sometimes it depends on each individual community and the household income.

I hope that answers the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is difficult to state properly exactly as to how much has been used for the Income Support Program and also what is available in the market today in housing.

It is hard to estimate how much will be required if there is a policy on housing as to how much a person would be making in order to be able to be eligible for the Income Support Housing Program. They can also make money on the side, but still be able to be eligible for the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All residents of Nunavut above the age of 18 are eligible to apply for income support and a person who is in need, who applies for income support by reason of an inability to obtain employment, loss of the principal provider, illness and so on, they are eligible for income support. On the amounts they are eligible for; again, it depends on each individual. Each individual is different depending on what their individual status or situation is.

With regards to housing, again, that substantiation will be made by the income support worker in the community and we also have appeals of the income support program in place also where you actually can appeal a decision made by the income support person.

So those types of checks and balances are within the system and that can give some good news to the member's community in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he can also tell us who the official responsible for the Income Support Program in Keewatin is. Is the income support person locally responsible for making the decisions on housing for income support recipients, or is that regionally decided upon? I don't know which of those people he would have to approach. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The different issues being raised over the last hour or so in Question Period on income support and housing, I want to be specific to state to the House and to the listening public that income support doesn't direct or allocate housing; that's done by the local housing association and authority based on the number of units that are available.

However, income support has an opportunity to help out, where possible under the regulations, for an income support client that's actually seeking a house. There are monies available within the Income Support Program on a case-by-case basis to help

those Nunavummiut and we gave some examples that we are aware of here in Iqaluit and the issues in Pangnirtung. So I wanted to make sure that we are clear that the income support worker is there.

For clients in Arviat, who go to the income support worker and says, "Look, there's a house available for rent and I can put up \$400 of it, but the rent is still \$1,000 more than I could afford." Is there an opportunity with income support; is that something we can look at? Under the program itself, that's something that we would be able to look at and help facilitate, but it's the local housing association that actually allocates the units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly what it is. Maybe there are three types of housing in larger communities and also these other kinds of housing, as well as government housing, public housing, rental housing. And homeowners, do they rent their own houses as well? When they move away from the community, do they all start to look for somebody to rent their houses to? Homeowners who are renting their own house, can they also rent them out? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we are in a position Mr. Speaker, for example, we used to have programs like HAP programs and DAT programs. And let's say, for example, I was working and I had a HAP house, I had my own home, and whatever happened to circumstances, I lost my job and my spouse wouldn't be working, and I still had my own home. Income support, in that case, may be able to step up to the plate and help out with the cost of that home because the person has to continue to live.

However, if a person starts to rent out their house, and they're for example on income support, then the income they receive from the rental of the house would have to be subtracted from their income support because that is unearned income. It would be clarified as such.

I think the good news here Mr. Speaker, is that the Income Support Program is pretty flexible as we've discussed, and there is the right of refusal. So if someone goes into the income support office and are not happy with the decision, they can actually appeal that decision. That's something that has not been made well known throughout Nunavut. Our income support workers do an excellent job for Nunavummiut under very trying circumstances, and it can be a very stressful job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

**Question 228 – 2(3): Energy Audits – Assisting Homeowners**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Housing.

Mr. Speaker, earlier, I questioned the minister in regard to the possibility of the corporation looking into bringing someone to do these energy audits. And also, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that this year is the last year of the program; it ends in 2007.

So would the minister commit to looking at the possibility of the corporation finding out and assisting homeowners in being able to access this program for this fiscal year because construction and renovation season is going to be coming up over the summer and people need to get their materials ordered on the sealift. So those audits need to be done prior to those deadlines and again, next fall after completion.

Will the minister commit to doing that so that homeowners could access this program for this building season? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do the best I can for this year. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A suggestion for the minister, I know here in Iqaluit they have a Homeowners Association of homeowners. Would the minister, through his officials at the corporation, write a letter to the homeowners associations here to find out if any of the homeowners here would be interested in participating in that program?

This might help expedite things for the corporation for this building season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do so and see what is going to be the best way to go and who I should be meeting with.

I'm sure that the Iqaluit homeowners will want to be involved, but I would like to assure the member that I will look into it and find out who should be contacted. The Nunavut Housing Corporation works extremely hard and is very capable. We'll do the best we can and have a meeting with the Homeowners Association if needed.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't really looking for a meeting with the Homeowners Association, although they seem eager to be meeting with minister, so I don't imagine he would have a problem arranging a meeting with them.

My question I guess was; would the corporation write to the Homeowners Association asking them if they have any members of their association that would like to participate in this Natural Resource Canada Program to reduce and make their homes more energy efficient for this coming building season? And would the minister be willing to commit to copying myself and other members, if he wishes, with a copy of that letter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to. Like I said, we'll do our very best to make sure Natural Resources Canada agrees to meet with us, anybody from there.

Again, if that happens, I'll make sure we invite the appropriate people here to be involved with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not really asking for the minister to meet with Natural Resource Canada officials. I'm asking him if the corporation could write the homeowners who would like to participate in the Energy Efficiency Program offered by Natural Resource Canada. And then, if the interest is there, would the minister be willing, through the corporation, to bring in a certified individual from Yellowknife to do these energy audits and energy guide evaluations on these units so that they could participate in the program and access federal dollars instead of our own territorial dollars? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will do that and it's important that we try and access any money from the federal government. It's been very hard for our government to access some money. So we will make sure that we do our very best to get individuals to access any monies from them.

So yes Mr. Speaker, I will look into it and I will do my very best to make sure that we bring in somebody from Yellowknife or anywhere in Canada that is qualified to do that. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Question 229 – 2(3): NTI Elections**

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm a strong believer that volunteerism is probably one of the strongest forces we have anywhere in Nunavut, either within the government itself, or the communities themselves, or even within the different groups in these communities. Volunteerism is something that, I know, promotes a lot of healthy living and one that this government should really promote.

Now, I think it needs to be said Mr. Speaker, because as you know there was a news release put out by NTI called the 'I am Inuk Initiative.' Through this, in trying to promote voters' turnout, bracelets are being handed to people who come out to vote.

Now, I want to try and promote volunteerism further and ask our Premier and see if this government has been in discussion with the Inuit organizations as it is expected under the protocols that they have close working relations. Have they been in discussion with the Inuit organizations at all on this issue about the 'I am Inuk Initiative?' Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We haven't been in contact on the 'I am Inuk Initiative,' but we have had past discussions on sharing Election Returning Officers. We do have a Chief Returning Officer and we have discussed with *Ajauqtiit* about cost-sharing the Office of the Returning Officer, but other than that, in relation to elections, we haven't had a lot of discussions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I opened my line of questioning, I indicated that I truly believe that volunteerism is one of the best things that this government can lean on.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I want to get assurance from the Premier that this government will not go anywhere near promoting, rewarding, or paying voters within the government and/or its subsidiary companies' elections; so can I have the assurance of our Premier that this government will not go towards rewarding voter turnouts? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the government, we work with all members in elections and elections are matters that are at the purview of this House. It will be up to the House as to how elections are conducted. That is something that we cannot do ourselves. The Members of this House determine the rules for elections and we



work with our members and make sure that, like we have had very good turn-outs in our last two elections, and I do not think we have to even consider it.

I can assure the member that that is not something that we are even considering at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess, in a way, it is reassuring to hear that it will be a matter for this House to consider if there ever comes a time. In having said what I did, I have made my position known that I am not for rewarding voter turn-outs through either pay or rewards of any kind because like I said, I believe this government needs to promote volunteerism and, not only because there are a lot of volunteers out there, but because volunteerism is the right thing to do in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am with the member that a vote is a civic duty and it should be viewed that way. And in terms of our overall elections, we have had good turnouts and I appreciate all our constituents for coming out on voting day each time. I think that is something we should encourage: all our constituents to continue to exercise their civic duty and come out and vote on Election Day regardless of what may be offered. It is something that we all cherish and we always have the freedom to choose who to vote for and who not to vote for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Question Period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Mr. Okalik.

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to return to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The member would like to return to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Okalik.

### **Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some constituents here. This individual used to live in Pangnirtung before I was born and when she left for Iqaluit, the people in Iqalulik did not have a leader anymore. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors to the Gallery. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committee on the Review of Bills. Mr. Tootoo.

### **Item 12: Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills**

#### **Committee Report on Bills 02 – 2(3): Bill 05 – An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 5, *An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability and that the bill is ready is for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Reports of Committee on the Review of Bills. Mr. Tootoo.

#### **Committee Report on Bills 03 – 2(3): Bill 06 – An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 6, *An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee of Government Operations and Accountability and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Akasuk.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 088 – 2(3): Environmental Rights Act Annual Report for the Year January 31, 2005 to December 31, 2005**

**Hon. Olayuk Akasuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: *Environmental Rights Act Annual Report for the Year January 31, 2005 to December 31, 2005*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Curley.

#### **Tabled Document 089 – 2(3): Letter from Rocky Airut to Tagak Curley**

#### **Tabled Document 090 – 2(3): Letter from Krista Tasseor to Tagak Curley**

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a document that I have received dated February 22, 2006 from Rocky Airut, a student requesting to get a land camp, requesting for support, and also another letter from Krista Tasseor dated February 21, 2006 from Rankin Inlet wishing to get an Inuksuk Centre in Rankin Inlet. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Ms. Brown.

**Tabled Document 091 – 2(3): Water & Sewage Services Subsidy Policy – Summary Report & Recommendations February 2006**

**Tabled Document 092 – 2(3): Municipal Tax Programs February 2006**

**Tabled Document 093 – 2(3): Annual Re-Supply Evaluation December 2005**

**Hon. Levinia Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the following documents: One, Water & Sewage Services Subsidy Policy - Summary Report & Recommendations; two, Municipal Tax Programs; and three, Annual Re-Supply Evaluation December 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Please pass on the documents that have been tabled to the table officers. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Okalik.

**Tabled Document 094 – 2(3): Programs Being Facilitated at the Baffin Correctional Centre**

**Hon. Paul Okalik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: Programs Being Facilitated at the Baffin Correctional Centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Ms. Aglukkaq.

**Tabled Document 095 – 2(3): New Phone Number for Medical Travel – Baffin Residents**

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I committed to providing the information as raised by Mr. Barnabas yesterday. I would like to table in the House today the telephone numbers for contacting the Medical Travel Coordinator for the Baffin Region as committed to yesterday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Picco.

**Tabled Document 096 – 2(3): Return to Oral Question 189 – 2(3): Incorporating Pre-Trades Programs**

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a document that was not in response to a question taken as notice to Mr. Peterson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak

**Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills**

**Bill 13 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act # 3, 2005-06 – Notice**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 9, 2006 that Bill 13, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak.

**Bill 14 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06 – Notice**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 9, 2006, that Bill 14, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak.

**Item 17: First Reading of Bills**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request consent of this Assembly to waive the two-day notice requirement to allow for first reading of Bill 13, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The minister is seeking unanimous consent to waive the two-day notice requirement to allow for first reading of Bill 13. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Simailak.

**Bill 13 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06 – First Reading**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit East, that Bill 13, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The motion is order. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried and Bill 13 has had first reading.

First Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak.

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request consent of this Assembly to waive the two-day notice requirement to allow for first reading of Bill 14, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The minister is seeking consent to waive Rule 62(2) that Bill 14 may be read for the first time today. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Simailak.

**Bill 14 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06 – First Reading**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Nanulik, that Bill 14, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 14 has had its first reading.

First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak.

**Item 18: Second Reading of Bills**

**Bill 13 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06 – Second Reading**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit East, that Bill 13, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of Nunavut to defray the capital expenses of the Government of Nunavut for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour. Opposed. Abstained. The motion is carried. Bill 13 has had its second reading and can be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Simailak.

**Bill 14 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06 – Second Reading**

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Nanulik, that Bill 14, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2005-06*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of Nunavut to defray the operations and maintenance expenses of the Government of Nunavut for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The motion is in order. Comments to the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour. Opposed. Abstained. The motion is carried. Bill 14 has had its second reading and can be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 9, *An Act to Amend the Exemptions Act*; Bill 12, *Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07* with Mr. Kilabuk in the Chair.

>> *Applause*

We will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House recessed at 15:25 and resumed at 15:49*

### **Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters**

**Chairman** (Mr. Kilabuk): Thank you. Another first for the Chairman today.

>> *Applause*

But with that, I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In the Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bill 12 and Bill 9. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations on your first day as a Chair with the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Chairman, we wish to proceed with Bill 12 and continue with the review of the Department of Education Main Estimates and Business Plan, followed by the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. You say Bill 12. So are we agreed we first deal with Bill 12?

**Some Members**: Agreed

### **Bill 12 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07 – Review in Committee – Education**

**Chairman**: Yesterday, I believe the minister presented his comments. Mr. Picco, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the table? Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

**Some Members**: Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, minister, could you please introduce your witnesses?

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to congratulate you on your new position as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Chairman, with me today to my immediate left is Mr. David Pealow, who is Comptroller for the Department of Education, and on my immediate right is Ms. Pam Hine, who is the Deputy Minister of Education. Also, in the Gallery, we have Mr. Mac Clendenning, President of Nunavut Arctic College, and Ms. Sandy Teiman, who is the Director of the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee on Health and Education have comments? Mr. Alagalak, please proceed.

**Mr. Alagalak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Chair of the Standing Committee on Health and Education, I am pleased to make some opening remarks as we began deliberations on the budget of the Department of Education.

The Department of Education proposes an operations and maintenance budget for 2006-07 of \$184,268,000. This has been increased by almost \$8.6 million from the revised O&M budget for 2005-06.

The committee has noted that the number of positions under the department is projected to increase mainly in the School Operations Division. While the members support initiatives to improve pupil-teacher ratios, it is not clear how the department will address pupil-teacher ratios at different levels of the K to 12 education system from the elementary schools to senior high.

The committee encourages the minister in his efforts to recruit and train more Inuit teachers and supports initiatives to develop and improve the Nunavut Teacher Education Program.

The committee has been given to understand that another phase of the new school funding formula will be implemented in the coming year. Members appreciate the minister's willingness to provide a detailed update to the committee on the new formula in the near future and recommend that district education authorities, communities, and parents also receive a full update.

The standing committee anticipates that the department's new DEA steering committee will support DEAs in carrying out their rules and responsibilities at the community level and look forward to regular reports on each activity. For example, DEAs have expressed a need for support in the areas of cultural programs, hiring policies, and initiatives to address the issue of youth not attending school. Members look forward to updates on

effective use of the multiple options strategy, which is aimed at keeping students in school.

Committee members have noted a number of initiatives being undertaken by the department to address special needs programs, including increasing support staff and the development of inclusive schooling procedures for teachers.

The committee looks forward to regular updates on these and other projects, such as the language of instruction pilot programs and criterion testing and assessments. While members are proud of the linguistic and cultural uniqueness of Nunavut, it is also important that parents and students are confident that the quality of education provided in Nunavut is equal to that provided in other provinces and territories across the country.

Recognizing that consultation activities are still ongoing and that a number of difficult issues will need to be addressed, the standing committee looks forward to the future introduction of the department's new *Education Act*.

Post-secondary education and upgrading opportunities are very important to the future of Nunavut. Nunavut Arctic College is again projected to receive nearly \$16 million in direct funding from the department with other funding from outside sources. Although the college's annual report is tabled on a regular basis, members also look forward to scrutinizing Nunavut Arctic College's business plans, which have never before been tabled in the House.

The committee continues to work on its own review of Nunavut Arctic College and anticipates tabling its final report after consultation activities are concluded.

Trades training and apprenticeship are also important investments in our future. The committee has noted that after the end of its term some time ago, a new Apprenticeship Trades and Certification Board was appointed this January.

The committee continues to monitor the plans for the establishment of a Nunavut trades school given the unacceptably high rates of unemployment and the growing needs for a skilled trades labour force in the territory. Members urge the minister to explore and consider options for delivering trades training and certification to Nunavummiut, locally where possible, centrally where necessary.

In November of 2005, Members of this House unanimously supported the minister's motion on federal-territorial negotiations on early learning and childcare. Since then the change in government at the federal level has resulted in some uncertainty with respect to this funding. Members urge the minister to continue his work in negotiating the best support possible for Nunavut's youngest residents. There is some concern that the federal government's newly proposed childcare strategy may not greatly benefit Nunavut's lowest income parents if, for example, these benefits were to be clawed back from territorial programs such as income support.



The standing committee is pleased that the minister acted on suggestions made by members of this House and ensured that the department will continue to fund the Young Parents Stay in School Initiative. Members encourage the minister in his efforts to ensure that young parents have information about this program, as it will assist them in continuing their education.

Over the past two years, committee members have been pleased that the minister has made efforts to respond to members' concerns over the high costs of living in Nunavut's remote communities. The 15 percent increase to social assistance benefits and the exemption of Co-op dividends from the earned income calculations have been welcome. Members recommend that the department conduct a review of the social assistance regulations with a view to better supporting individuals such as hunters or outfitters who only have seasonal opportunities to earn income.

The committee encourages the minister to continue working with his staff to improve the administration of income support programs. The committee supports the department's ongoing work to establish a Nunavut-wide electronic case management system for income support.

On a final note, Mr. Chairman, the issue of homelessness is one that concerns members of the committee. Although it does not fall within the mandate of this department, members recognize that it is part of the minister's portfolio and, as such, is included within this budget.

The committee looks forward to receiving reports on the progress of projects relating to addressing homelessness across Nunavut. Members encourage the minister to continue to work with entities such as the Nunavut Housing Corporation and others to address this serious issue.

That concludes my opening remarks. Individual members may also have questions and comments as we proceed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Before we proceed, I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have 10-minutes to speak and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may speak more than once to a matter under discussion but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken.

I suggest to members that wherever possible, you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates and again, like my colleague, Mr. Arreak who has been chairing, I want to remind members not to ask questions which are hypothetical or questions that are seeking an opinion.

And again, I remind you, at the discretion of the Chair, members may speak more than once and also remind you to be mindful that we are working through our interpreters, capable as they may be.

With that, do any members have general comments? Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you. (interpretation) First of all, I would like to thank the minister and his officials, the deputy minister and his comptroller.

I want to make it very clear, and I want the minister to be aware, if he was to see that our northern teachers work really hard in our schools and they don't get enough recognition for their hard work. I just want to point that out because sometimes, we get different days for specific things like Mothers Day or what have you. We should show our appreciation more to those teachers and that we do recognize their hard work. I want that to make a difference.

Mr. Chairman, teaching in general, whether it's our children in Nunavut, is planning for the future and we should realize that as parents, as teachers, and the schools themselves. We should keep that in mind. In our communities, we seem to be going away from our traditional instructions into more modern, standard instructions in schools. It's getting to be very similar to the southern way of teaching.

I would like to ask the minister, who makes the final decision because we are preparing our youth for the future and we encourage them to complete their education. We shouldn't lose hope.

At the same time, the *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, we seem to be separating from that and maybe even more rapidly. This is not very easy to say, but who is responsible for those two where we can maybe strengthen both of them at the same time, or as I have stated long time ago, after 30 years, I have the material with me. So would it be better if we just forget about Inuit culture? No, our elders are not saying that, but I can say that in Canada, especially in Nunavut the Inuit culture is rapidly fading.

We don't even seem to be too proud of our culture. If we went to Greenland it's completely different. It's amazing. All they're talking is Inuktitut with the elected politicians. You can really feel their uniqueness and even looking at their science and their history, they're very capable. They have Inuktitut professors.

And, if we were to go to Alaska, it's the same thing. They're teaching *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, Inuit culture within their universities. I wonder who has the responsibility for that in Canada. Is it the responsibility of the Department of Education or the Minister of Education? Or is it the responsibility of other Inuit organizations?

I think we shouldn't forget this. We haven't completed enough. We have to strengthen our goals and objectives. We see that when they talk about polar bears, they are not using *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*.

If we have a Cabinet, who would be responsible for all those; if we were to compare Alaska and Greenland, maybe there can be improvements if we include *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, if they have a full understanding of *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* in order to survive. Maybe there wouldn't be so many tragedies.

As we just heard, a young person wrote a letter saying what they need is not just in the schools. Yes, the schools help. Maybe it's about time they get a camp because they would even be able to make some money through trapping or hunting. The reason I said this Mr. Chairman, is because our governments have to support us more. If we look at Alaska they have scientists and if we were to go to Barrow in the northern part, we would see a lot of different buildings that were constructed with the advice of the scientists, scientific research centres and the Inuit culture is always included.

But for us Canadians who are responsible for those things, because we don't even have our own scientists, we get occasional research done, but once it's completed, we seem to forget about it. Who is responsible for continuing this? Is that the responsibility of the Minister of Education? And, if it is a responsibility, how can we introduce it so that our young people will become stronger?

At the appropriate time, I will be asking more questions because Inuit traditions are presently being used in Greenland and in Alaska.

Once scientists do research, they always include Inuit traditions even though they're not in full agreement all the time. I wanted to make that point. When our children are in school our history, right from the beginning, they do not teach enough Inuit history, and why isn't it included? If we do not know what went on way before and what changes are becoming, we cannot really be strong. There are Inuit and *Qallunaat* who really know the history, why can we not ask for their assistance or get them to help to produce a program that can be used in the schools, because we can get expert panels. Before we lose those very capable peoples we have to do something about it.

That is all I have for now, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister's officials to Committee of the Whole today. Ministers have talked about this several times over the years, even before I became Member of the Legislative Assembly, about education. We all hear that education is very important and that you cannot take a good education away from an individual whether they are a young person or an adult. I believe very strongly in education, that it is a key ticket into a better and improved life for anyone but also for the people surrounding the individual. When you are married and have a family you can be a model to your kids.

So education is very important that we give our young people to step up in education and to provide them with all the resources that we can afford. And throughout life, for those folks that did not quite make it through high school, we support them through other courses and training, including upgrading courses. I think it is very important. There is no doubt in my mind that, as Nunavut goes forward, it needs a very well trained, educated, skilled work force right across Nunavut.

There is no doubt in my mind that the government needs skilled people, trained people, educated people, private sector, the mining industry, the hamlets, everybody. So education is very important. I know the minister believes in that as well, from my discussions and conversations with him.

One of the things I want to hear some more about from the minister, and I will ask questions later, is school guidance counsellors. In my community, Cambridge Bay, a lot of parents have expressed concern that there should be a high school guidance counsellor to help kids in grade 10, 11, 12 choose courses and counsel them on some big decisions in their lives. I know that parents are important, the community and friends are important but you need people who can sit down with you and have your best interest at heart when you are choosing courses.

The minister and I have talked about that. Along with my colleague, Mr. Curley, I believe teachers are very important and we should support them with all the resources we can provide them with and, in particular, the teachers who have to work with children with learning disabilities because even a child who has a learning disability deserves a good education otherwise they will be dropping out of school and wandering the streets. We have kids like that all over Nunavut, and even some adults. It is not a pleasant experience for them and it is very difficult for their families to know that their relatives will go through life without accomplishing anything for themselves.

I was just down at a Prospectors and Developers conference in Toronto the last two days and I talked to the mining companies that are involved in exploration and development of mines in Nunavut. They told me that they are going to need a lot of trained trades people, engineers, and geologists.

They asked me to stress that to the minister that they are having difficulties now recruiting people to work. With the Tahera opening officially on April 1 and Miramar just got their approval today from NIRB, it is a pretty good sign that we might have a gold mine...another gold mine opening in Kitikmeot in a couple years. They want to hire people from Nunavut, but they have to come with certain skill sets. The mine companies said that they are willing to do their part to train people, but they would like to see the government step up a bit more and provide trades training and channel some kids into the engineering field and technical fields, and scientific fields.

I think what we have to start seeing that in the schools, I know in Cambridge Bay that everything seems to be geared towards the matriculation, but a lot of kids do not desire to

become engineers. Some of them will become excellent mechanics, journeyman, carpenters and plumbers, and we need a lot of them up north in Nunavut.

I have concern in my riding about the income support funding levels. I have folks visiting me all the time and sending me emails asking if the funding is indexed to inflation. They do not quite understand why \$300 does not buy you more than three bags of groceries that has to last two weeks.

I do not know what to tell them except that it is very expensive to live up here in Nunavut. A lot of my constituents who are in need of income support just cannot seem to make their income support funding last for the entire period of time that it should cover and they end up having to go visit the food bank. They have to ask for a lot of help from their relatives. To the credit of the food bank and relatives, they do help out.

I would like to hear more from the minister about the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program and what they are doing to increase levels of support to post-secondary students.

Last year, the minister heard me raise a question about helping Adult Basic Education students feel that they are students. They have to feed their families and they were looking for a little support there. I understand from the minister's explanation why they did not qualify for Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, but it is very difficult to explain to ABE students why they do not qualify when they believe in their minds that they are students. They have heard the talk from politicians and educators that education is important and for them to go back to school. When they go back as adults, many of them are mothers and fathers and have all the extra costs of supporting a family.

I was very pleased to read in the minister's opening comments that he is taking bullying seriously. Mr. Chairman, I would like to hear more about the progress report and how that is going in areas right across Nunavut, and certainly I would like to hear how it is being implemented in my riding.

I heard yesterday at the Prospector and Developers Conference from the mining companies involved in the mine focus group that they would like, and I, too, would like an update, on where the mine focus group is on training.

I understand that it's a territorial focus group, but you know with all the mining sector developments going on in the Kitikmeot that it's important for them to see or hear what the mine focus group does to help our folks over there.

I also understand again that Nunavut Arctic College has their core funding. It looks like it is the same amount as last year. I understand that in that core funding only certain programs are covered and then the people in the different regional colleges have to apply for funding from third party sources to offer courses and that creates a bit of a problem. If you can't secure the funding you cannot put the course on. If the funding runs out during the course then the course has to be cancelled. It puts students in a bit of a difficult place.

Also, cancellation of courses: I know there was a course in Cambridge Bay that was cancelled several months ago. I don't think students have a full explanation as to why it was cancelled. It was the Inuinnaqtun Language Training Course. I think they would like to get an update as to whether the course is going to be started up again.

I think most of them had more than a year in the course. So, I think it would be good for them to understand where they stand with that course.

I think that's where I'll leave off with on my comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Very good timing Mr. Peterson. Next, we have Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be making comments on some subjects that we do not all agree on.

As the government for Nunavut, we do make decisions that affect all the people of Nunavut. My colleague Tagak Curley stated earlier, maybe not more than once have I stated, that we can operate a government as Inuit in Inuktitut, but we have to be more aware of the situation around us whether it be natural or human decisions that we have to make for our population.

I was not aware at that time that we do have government. When we were growing up, we didn't know that there was such a thing as government. We were told that we have to go to school and that's the only time that I learned that there was a government. I was told that I was supposed to go to school.

For that reason, I believe that the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* should be kept within our area. Maybe in between the government and the Inuit, I have been lost as to which side is going to be more used: the Qallunaat side or the Inuit side. So I'm in between. I'm proud of the efforts on both sides, but I still have some issues with some aspects of the education system.

The schools in the communities are overcrowded and are too small for some of the communities. Since we were elected in 1999, when the first government was established in Nunavut, we were told that the schools were too small for the population and the teachers were not qualified enough to teach Inuit cultural aspects of education.

That's what was stated in 1999 when we were elected. Mr. Chairman, the schools are too overcrowded in some communities. Even if I kept saying that it's all the same in all the communities in that way, I might not be correct, but within our constituency, I'll be using my constituency schools as an example.

In 1984, we received a new school Sanikiluaq that was operated by the Northwest Territories Government, and then when we were getting a new government, we would be able to receive a new school. So we were depending on that in 2006 that we would be

able to get a new school in our community and there was going to be an opening of the new school. So on January 1, there was going to be an opening in 1984 and the opening was there, but there was no new school. I can't say that I'm pleased with that plan that has not been followed through and there was no new school in our community.

Perhaps the Inuit traditional knowledge is not recognized in schools enough. Maybe we can start on the curriculum geared more towards Nunavut. I'm also proud that there was a consultation program going into the communities on the *Education Act* and that *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* was recognised and also included in the curriculum development.

I know that I'm not going to live forever, but I also would like to see my culture being used by my descendents. I would like the teachers and our officials to look more towards our future so that we won't lose our culture. I would like to stress to the minister that when we do make legislation and policies, even though we are using the education system from the south and maybe we can also introduce the Inuit culture into the education system that we've got.

When we are going through the budget of the Department of Education, I will be presenting a motion in regard to the Sanikiluaq school. There's not much funding for curriculum development in our school and also for the education commission in our community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to see you as the Chairman and I'm very proud to see you chairing the committee meeting today.

The teachers work very hard in doing their job in our communities, even though that's not the same, as we know, for all teachers. Some people come to visit the communities mostly, but there seems to be more and more teachers who have been retired in the south come up north to help out. So they don't seem to work too hard in trying to teach our children. Again, we usually get teachers who haven't gone through the Teacher Education Program at all. They are put in as regular teachers in the classroom.

I also believe what Mr. Alagalak said, (interpretation ends) "...it is also important that parents and students are confident that the quality of education provided in Nunavut is equal to that provided in other provinces and territories across the country." (interpretation) I truly believe that to be the case and we should have teachers who are eager to teach our children so that our grade levels are comparable to the rest of Canada. I think that would be best for the students.

Using the point system in our schools, it isn't beneficial at all for our children. They graduate even though their levels are way under par if you compare it to the rest of Canada. In our community, I don't know what it's like in the other communities, usually there's professional development days held on a work week and also there are usually a

lot of school days where they are closed. I'm sure that the teachers can find other hours so that the students can achieve education to the best of their ability.

At times, they are missing so many days due to PD days or other reasons. The student loses interest and eventually starts to fall back. That's what happens in my community and I'm sure that it happens in the other communities.

We heard that the government is going to have Inuktitut as the working language by 2020. It's already less than 14 years away. If you are going to have Inuktitut as the working language in the government system, it takes many, many years for you to learn. We have to take it seriously and start working towards that goal now if we are going to achieve our goal, as was set out in 1999.

In regard to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, we talk about integrating it into the government system. Nothing is happening to date. If you are going to teach *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* to the workforce and to the students, then we will need individuals who can teach those subjects. If you are going to use the Inuit who do know *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, they have to be full-time workers in our schools.

We talk about the education authority that doesn't have any powers at all. They're just an entity that was created by the government with no authority and no real power. They're just there as somebody that can buffer and take the complaints instead of the complaints going to the government heads. Their responsibility and role can very likely be taken care of by the school principal.

I think that it's about time that we utilize the education authorities at the community level, give them real roles and responsibilities, and to be fully integrated in the education system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It comes as no surprise to members; I think that this department is probably one of the most important departments in the government and it's the department that is going to create, nurture, and develop our future and it's our young people.

My colleague has made some comments that I agree with. I think that we need to look at, I think the minister said it last week, raise the bar as far as education levels in Nunavut. I think it is not appropriate when students are graduating from grade 12 in Nunavut, not all of them but some of them, and then they go to take a program at the college and they can't handle it so they've got to create an access year, which is basically a neat word for upgrading. The only reason they got it as an access year is that with an access year, they are able to qualify for funding to be able to go to it and not adult basic education where they don't get anything to go, except for the few measly dollars they get increased in income support.



But I think this government has to take a serious look at the quality of education, and as I mentioned last week, quit taking all kinds of opportunities to say, “What a wonderful system we have. Look how great it is,” and all of the good things about it, while ignoring the things that are not doing so well.

The numbers could be played however as far as graduations are increasing; well population is increasing so naturally graduations are going to increase. I mentioned last week the dropout rate. I think it’s atrocious. It’s saddening to see 75 percent of the people that enter into the school system drop out.

I think the onus is on us as an Assembly and then the department to try and figure out why that’s happening and address it because as long as we try to ignore those serious issues the problem is always going to be there. It won’t go away and we’ll still have a 75 percent dropout rate. To me, that’s a pathetic number. There’s something seriously wrong with the system when you have such a high dropout rate. There is somewhere in there that’s something that is not right. There’s no reason for that many young people to fall through the cracks.

So what if we look at something and say, “Well, it’s not perfect, this could be improved.” There’s nothing wrong with that. The system that we have has been inherited from the Northwest Territories and prior to that, it probably came from somewhere else too.

I think we have an opportunity now, with the *Education Act* being developed, to seriously take a look at these issues and try and put into place measures to prevent that from happening. When you look at it in the Northwest Territories, I think one good example they did and I would love to see it come forward in the legislation here, was legislating class size; the pupil/teacher ratios in there with appropriate funding to go along to meet the infrastructure requirements to go along with that over a phased in period of time.

Again, the wizardry of playing with numbers can come into play where the entire pupil/teacher ratio is not too bad, overall, if you look at it. In some cases, it is. And in some streams, whether it be one stream or another, it could have a very low pupil/teacher ratio. When you put that into the mix of the areas where it is extreme, it doesn’t look so bad.

Let’s quit trying to make it look like something that looks good, but isn’t. Let’s fix it. I think our kids and our young people that are going to be our future deserve that opportunity of us to be able to take an honest look at ourselves and try and address some of those situations, instead of trying to cover them up, or ignore them, or pretend they’re not there.

As it is right now, and I’ve had people say it to me over and over again, the way that our system is set up is setting kids up for failure. It’s difficult to sit there and listen to them. What can you say about it? You can’t say anything. I think we have to look at how we create and set up a system that will set up our young people to succeed, and not just be limited to being recognized for their education in Nunavut, for the north.

As some of my other colleagues think it, I think the levels should be the same here as they are in any other jurisdiction in the country. We don't need to worry about dumbing down courses and things like that. Things like social promotion don't exist, but happen every day, every year in the schools. Those kinds of things, when you ask about it: oh, no, no, it doesn't happen, that doesn't happen, but you see it happening time and time again.

Again, face the challenges head-on. Nothing is perfect unless you are willing to acknowledge that there are issues here that need to be addressed and they are never going to go away. Six years into this territory's existence, the way I look at it, we can't afford not to address and fix some of these issues.

With the *Education Act*, hopefully we'll see the government follow through on its commitment when it sought support to dissolve the Divisional Boards of Education and empowering local DEAs. The last attempt at legislation pretty much stripped away everything into the department. We have to put a stop to stuff like that. If the Department of Education wants the support of the people in the community, they have to follow through on the commitments that it made. I'm going to look forward to making sure that that happens. I think that was one of the biggest flaws in the last attempt with the *Education Act*. These things need to change.

I don't think investments in education are a cost; to me it's an investment in the future. It may cost us more to put that money in place, and set up a system now, but down the road, it's going to save us money, and then we will see students graduate all over the territory with a grade 12 equivalency; a real grade 12.

We have been doing consultations on the college and I had one parent tell me, "It's like a pretend curriculum." That is a quote that I heard from someone in the community saying that what our kids get taught; it's a pretend curriculum. They graduate, but they still don't have what they need to continue on. Those are serious issues we need to have a serious look at and address them.

I have some other questions and I can go on talking about education forever Mr. Chairman, but I only have 15 seconds left now and I will leave the rest of the questions to when we go through on page-by-page for my good friend the Minister of Education and officials. I would also take this opportunity to welcome them to the Committee of the Whole. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. You were really good with the clock today. Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials. I, too, have a concern, especially for the smaller communities. The graduates of grade 12 are not going anywhere. For example, the graduates of grade 12, the only jobs they can get in the smaller communities are as a stock-boy. It is not very

good to see that occurring, especially when you see grade 12 graduates and they end up being the recipients of income support.

There is no goal for them and sometimes the Justice Department has to assist them through the courts. I do not know how the system is working. It seems like the young graduates do not want to work. Those who had graduated from grade 12, they seem to just become recipients of income support programs. They could be provided some money for some groceries and some clothing, and this is not an incentive to get them into the workforce, especially in the education system in the small communities and also, we consider how we can provide support and assistance to our students.

One thing that I have been thinking, since it is going to be a scientific year this upcoming year, the scientists will be going up to the High Arctic. They do a lot of scientific work in the High Arctic, especially in the summertime. Also, they do a lot of scientific work in Alert. These should be used to teach the adjacent communities, especially in the higher-grade level students.

Why do we not use all the things that are available? The Department of Education is not even using all those available facilities that could be used for training our students. These already-existing facilities could be used for training purposes. Perhaps the minister can make an agreement with the individuals from Alert. Also, NASA is now going up to the High Arctic and that is a good opportunity to have a training program, especially for the students are graduates of grade 12.

So with these things in mind, especially when we see our grade 12 graduates in the smaller communities not going anywhere, it is very painful and sad to see these graduates in the income support programs and there is no incentive for them. The only time they get money is when they go for income support. I believe there is room for improvement and also to rectify this.

Also, my colleague Mr. Tootoo's comment in regard to the divisional boards, we really miss those divisional boards and the communities also really miss the divisional boards. When the divisional boards were running the education system, they were running the education system very well.

The district education authorities nowadays, I do not know how they make decisions, especially when there are students taking the Teacher Education Program and the teachers; I do not know how you review those. I have no idea anymore and I believe that DEA has no authority to do that. When this is the case, the department can just go beyond the District Education Authority even though the parents have consent about the District Education Authority.

For that reason, I am going to have some questions, Mr. Chairman, so I will conclude with that for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Barnabas (interpretation) and my colleagues. I have no more names on my list for general comments. Are there any more names on my general comments?

(interpretation ends) We will move to page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting with page G-5. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this Directorate, the division of the department, it indicates in the summary this is the area that develops the legislation and the development of legislation and policy. I am just wondering if this is the division in which the department has individuals working to develop a new made-in-Nunavut *Education Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that would be under our policy shop. We actually have it under G-7 in our book. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** I look forward to asking the minister questions on that page. Is it under here in 2004-05? It was called a one-time contribution to District Education Authorities on an as needed basis to provide special needs funding for identified students.

I am just wondering, as a result of that one-time contribution, as we do not see it in there anymore, has that issue resolved itself with that funding and that District Education Authorities no longer need any more special needs funding for the students? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco shed some light on that please.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The contribution that we made last year, and again, it was a very good year for the Department of Education and for education in Nunavut, we created over 80 new positions across the board. You'd have to go back almost 20 years to find the same amount of created jobs in Government of the Northwest Territories' budget.

The member is correct. New positions were created for special needs at that time. In this budget, we did not have the same opportunities to deal with some of those issues. However, those needs, as the member has indicated, have continued to come forward through the department. We tried to, within the existing budget framework, respond to those.

The member is correct again that those needs that we have seen are less than what we saw last year because we actually did put the new bodies and new positions in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. According to the financial summary and their business plan, the PYs for this division have not changed and yet we see a drop of over \$100,000 in salary and benefits.

I am just wondering if the minister could explain who is making \$100,000 less than they did last year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my understanding that the dollar values there are the dollar values for salaries, but not actual PYs. Sometimes the number of person years is applied; it does not match total number of salary dollars. So for example, if a salary dollar was based at \$42,000, the PY might be \$89,000. So there would be a mis-congruence of the amount of monies that are available.

So I hope that that helps answer the question. It does not mean that there are less people or more people; it means that there's not a correlation between the salary dollars and the actual PY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then I would assume that there are unfunded positions in that division. Is that what the minister is indicating? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the member just repeat that again please? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Tootoo, could you please repeat your question.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wondered if the minister is indicating that, based on the numbers that are not accurate, it is that they are actually unfunded positions within that division of that department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hopefully he heard me that time.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I am sure my colleagues...Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within every government department, you have unfunded positions that are in place. They may be of a casual nature, they may be of a term nature, or they may be a contract. I say term meaning, of course, a short-term contract. New hires are based on actual salary dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is that accurate then that there are still seven PYs in that division? Why a difference then if it was \$955,000 last year that it is only \$831,000 this year? Just questioning the accuracy of the numbers; that is the only reason I am wondering. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The numbers are accurate; I am just trying to explain them to the member. The reason for them is not really a mystery, there is nothing trying to be covert.

We have one deputy minister position, the deputy minister sitting next to me; that is one position. We have two ADMs that the member is familiar with; Mr. Geikie and Irene Tanayuk. Irene is actually representing us right now in Yellowknife at the Ministers of Education meeting for Canada. We have the IQ coordinator, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* specialist coordinator that is our fourth position, we have the two executive secretary positions; that is six, and we have the coordinator position for the Nunavut Promise to Children position.

So those are the seven positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Next we have Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was not wearing my receiver. I have a question in respect to the directorate, particularly with respect to those objectives and standards.

I assume that it includes all schools for the current curriculum and all the other in-depth programs in that, is that what you mean all programs and services to the minister. Could you, the minister or your staff, outline some examples of what exactly are the kinds of programs that the department recommends to standardize for all the schools in Nunavut so we have some ideas? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is similar to what we see in the majority of the budgets in the departments across government. In this section when we talk about programs, in this case, it's not just the K to 12 schools, but income support programs, the Homeless Secretariat, as well as the K to 12 programs and colleges.

The directorate includes all the programs run by the department, as the member has indicated. That includes being expeditious on issues surrounding the program. For example, if it was income support, a recommendation may come forward to the minister for an increase of seven or ten percent, or what have you. On the K to 12 side, for

example, on programs it might be the introduction of criterion standard testing, depending on what the issue is and the evaluation techniques that will be put in place by the department to facilitate that information going forward on an as-go basis to the minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I assume then that would be also overseeing all the development of the NTEP Program that you announced earlier today. I was curious because in your announcement, you said that recommendations would be implemented. Curiosity really halted me because how can you implement a recommendation that is nowhere to be seen? It's invisible; it hasn't been proposed. Maybe you won't agree with any recommendation that they are proposing.

Is that what you do; that you pre-approve recommendations that have yet to be made, or even individuals yet to be appointed; expert panels yet to be formed? How can you rationalize that for us; that you are telling us to approve this particular item, contrary to what the Auditor General has been saying to us that if we are going to get the value for our money, should we not be seeing the value presented to us before we approve it? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe Mr. Curley and I are on a parallel universe. No, that's not it. That's not at all what has occurred. In this case, and under the program director, information, no different than any other government department or minister and the member is familiar with that role, programs and services are delivered by the department and the recommendations come forward on a given basis.

On the NTEP Program review; there was a program review. There were recommendations within that NTEP review. What I have said is that I could take that NTEP review and use that, and we are on a different subject, of course, because it's not right here; NTEP would be covered on another page.

In the NTEP case, specifically, take the NTEP report and start implementing some of the concerns raised within that report itself, but at the same time, look at opportunities to expand that program because when we look at the language of learning and the Bilingual Education Strategy that we have already tabled and made it a public document, the only way I'm going to get there is to be able to increase the number of Inuit that I have teaching in schools for grades seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, and 12, because right now, we don't have any. We need to be able to re-invigorate and revitalize the NTEP Program and attract more people to teach in it.

So I hope that helps clarify that part. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Just as a reminder for our listening audience and also the members, if we can keep our questions and responses to the point when possible, for clarity purposes. Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. That's exactly what we were trying to do because it was not all clear today exactly how the proposed program is being announced.

If you listened to my questioning, the policy announcement has been made out of a particular program to invigorate the NTEP Program. I didn't see that the Expert Panel is in place, it has yet to be appointed, assuming that they would be making recommendations as well. So that was my point of questioning. I can try to be very technical as well.

My further question is; how important it is for the department, in terms of development of programs for Nunavummiut, more related to science programs, I assume that science is really a very important component with school programs and curricula. So my question to you is: global warming, for instance, is now part of the school curriculum, or is it sometimes taught in schools as it relates to part of the world here? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just yesterday, I had a copy of a fantastic science book just put out by the Bilingual Education Society Group through the auspices of NTEP. So I would need to get a copy for the member. It's really well done in Inuktitut and English and it looks like any standard book that you would see in any other jurisdiction in the country.

The quick answer to the member is correct, the answer is yes. There are three types of major sciences that are delivered in our school; we have physical science, which includes environmental sciences; the climate, the weather, and so on; we have biology, of course; and we have chemistry science.

Mr. Chairman, when we are looking at the graduation process for our students, they have to, in most cases, depending on what grade they are in, pass one of those sciences.

So the short answer to the member is correct, is yes, that under science in the school system in Nunavut, there is work being done on global warming and climate change because two of them are not the same, they are part and parcel of a problem that we are experiencing and they had to be taken into that context, global warming and climate change, and that's why we use those two definitions; they are variations of the same thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. You are not far off on the Deputy Speaker, but serving as the Chairperson at this time, but Mr. Curley go ahead.



**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the minister briefing us on that area.

I also have a question to the minister with respect to the objectives or standards with respect to the school program. At what grade is history, if any, part of the school program? Is there such a thing or are you satisfied that we have a concrete sort of a history program that is being taught to our students in Nunavut, either Canadian history, for all that matter, including the early contacts with Europeans into this part of the world? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not to get too technical because we are on the area of the budget because of the minutiae of the detail, but the different context of history depends on the different type of subject of history that we are doing.

So for example, if we are dealing with social history, and I know because I have children in high school as an example and I have a child who is in elementary school, they do it, for example, on the historical perspective of Canadians, great Prime Ministers, and so on. There were different course takings being done at the K to five and six levels.

So at the high school level, there are different types of history; geopolitical history, that's being looked at within the social context, of course, history of the major events of the world like World War I, World War II, and so on.

I think the member is trying to get at local history. Do we have, for example, a Nunavut history of what has occurred in Nunavut, and so on? And again, I think the answer is a very strong affirmative. There's some good work being done in our schools on not only incorporating *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* within that curriculum development process, but actually specific areas of study which includes the social history and the social fabric itself of Nunavut.

So I hope that helps clarify that answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Yes, it does help. I think it is all history, whether it would be political, the way of evolution would have changed. They are really scared of change because they are not that far from linking with the world events these days. It is quite important like for instance, I bet you that you know that Nunavut students would be interested about the Hudson's Bay Company because they, at one point, were in all parts of Nunavut and Northwest Territories, including some of the provinces.

I have been amazed to know that there is quite a lack of knowledge, except for the older people that when they say Hudson's Bay Company, they are including their grandfathers. They are fascinated about the relationship that the Hudson's Bay Company, at one point, was probably very close to the Kings of England who ruled this world.

I think it is important to our students, so, strategically, I really, truly believe that if you are going to expand the minds of our young people that you really have to challenge them. I am not so crazy about this 30-year history thing in Nunavut. That is not history yet, we are talking about early contacts with people and so on.

Is it possible that you could utilize some of the even living legends? Kenn Harper can probably be chairing some of the advisory/expert panels that you may want to expand his mind to provide opportunities for young people to learn, whether it would be college or not. Could the minister consider that at least and report back to us one day whether or not we could provide some more credible history programs for students in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member, again, is making a very good point. There are different kinds of history. There is social history, political history, geographical history. Another history that could be considered is archaeology. Archaeology is the study of past cultures, events and so on, and looking at things.

Nunavut is full of opportunities for archaeological sites. Right now in grade eight, as an example, we have CD-ROM in the grade eight teacher's manual for archaeology at that level.

Mr. Curley talks about the Hudson's Bay Company and as everyone knows, it is the oldest incorporated company in the new world. It is sad to be seeing it sold now that Mr. Zucker, an American, is taking over and losing that bit of Canadiana. So I would be remiss if I didn't mention that in this conversation with Mr. Curley.

I think the other point is on local history and local colour. The Arctic College has put out a good set of biographies on famous Nunavummiut. There is an excellent book out right now of Mr. Abraham Okpik and Abe Okpik's story is being told in the college. I know that they have contacted Mr. Curley personally to do a story and a series on him. I would most welcome Mr. Curley to participate in that.

Some people would have different people who would be the father of Nunavut. Many people who have been involved in the land claims process over the years would refer to Mr. Curley as the father of Nunavut. So I thank Mr. Curley for his support of the programs that we are putting in place and have put in place with the K to 12 system, then again to the college too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** I appreciate the minister's kind words, but I have yet to respond to the offers that have been made for a number of reasons. It is fascinating stuff; we have two cultures in this part of the world. Not only the Inuit, but as well as the non-Inuit, very diverse.

The reason I am saying that, Mr. Chairman, is I think it is an opportunity that the minister could develop standards and devise strategic plans for all these whether it socio-political economics, history about what happened up here. It would expand; I think that they are way too parochial right now in schools. The students can now connect to the world through computers and so on. How much more would interest be generated if they had been exposed to some of the early European contacts and whatnot?

We were not isolated from the Kings of England or any other authorities during the last 100 years; fascinating stuff.

Mr. Chairman, if I could, I can invoke your grandfather in a real tremendously respect, he, at one point, was so proud of Hudson's Bay, even the Prime Minister of the day couldn't convince him to change his mind.

He was, at one point, asked to do a little demonstration of the cannonball that he used to use at Pangnirtung and he did. Jimmy Kilabuk was the star and Prime Minister Trudeau asked him to go ahead, take a shot of the big cannonball and it boomed, reverberated right across the Pangnirtung fiords and so on.

So Prime Minister Trudeau was so impressed, he sort of said to Jimmy, his grandfather, "Do it again." He was so fascinated. What would you do if the Prime Minister asked you to do it again? And Mr. Kilabuk looked at him and said, "Nope, one more for Hudson's Bay ship."

>>*Laughter*

So their relationship with the trade was so important, Prime Minister Trudeau came to Pangnirtung in April. The Hudson's Bay ship was a long ways from coming in, but it was a tradition that when they see a Hudson's Bay ship down in the fiord, down in the bay, they would shoot that cannonball.

So I'm just encouraged here to, I believe, the two cultures would read a little better. Right now, that's not the case, as far as our relationship because we don't have a history. You look at IQ, you look at, for instance, the Minister of Environment will tell you whether or not Inuit knowledge of polar bears has any role in scientific stuff, but you go to Alaska and tell them how important bowhead whaling is, and then stating the global warming, it's very much part of scientific studies. You couldn't get any sciences come in without including traditional knowledge and actually speaking to a number of elders. They don't fool around out there with traditional knowledge. The two may clash, but they meet at every scientific study.

So I think we have an opportunity. Our history is just as probably as long as the Greenland Inuit, Inuppiat, and Greenland people. I bet you we can develop something positive and we could do it while we have some of the legends like...

**Chairman:** Sorry, Mr. Curley your time is up and after members have had the chance to speak, if time permits, I will allow you make your comments. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister a question on page G-6 of the main estimates about Homelessness Secretariat contributions. If the minister could provide us or provide the House with a definition of homelessness as it pertains to Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we have approved now, G-5, and have moved on to G-6, to the Homeless Directorate. So I'm on G-6 now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Government of Nunavut does not have a definition for homeless like any other jurisdiction in this country. What the Government of Nunavut has done, as the only jurisdiction outside the federal government, is create a secretariat for homelessness.

There are two forms of homelessness that are recognized by the federal government and by the general public-at-large, as it were, within the housing fraternity and so on. Those two are absolute homelessness and relative homelessness. Absolute homelessness Mr. Chairman, as I explained earlier in Question Period, is a type of homelessness that you see in Toronto and larger urban cities. That's where someone is standing on a street corner panhandling.

Relative homelessness is what we see in Nunavut predominantly and what we see in Nunavut is when you have 13 or 14 people in a two or three bedroom house; that is homelessness. That is someone being homeless. That's called relative homelessness.

So that is the two different definitions that are in place, and we use those definitions, Mr. Chairman, as a government when we are working with our federal partner, accessing the SCIFI Program dollars that are available to us as a jurisdiction, and at the same time, when we are planning our programs and services for those individuals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco, to be clear on which places we are working from, it is G-5 the Education Branch Summary Directorate, but also, G-6 is part of G-5. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought the minister was trying to throw me off my train of thought there with that comment. Thanks for that answer, Mr. Minister. A couple weeks ago, it was reported in the media that there was a lady sleeping in a car at -50 degrees. Would that be termed the same as absolute homelessness, as it is defined in Toronto? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot has changed over the last few years and Mr. Peterson is correct that if a person has no shelter and has to sleep in a car, it is considered, by any definition, to be in a bad situation, but also would be considered as absolutely homeless.

There is a need for a women's transition home in Iqaluit with dedicated beds for women. Because we do not have that type of shelter and we are seeing that need right now in Iqaluit, Mr. Chairman, this is a very difficult issue to deal with, but we are trying to be proactive, we are trying to access the extra beds.

So the answer to the member's question is yes, in a case like that, and I do not want to refer to individual or personal cases. I can say in a larger sense that that type of incident is indicative of absolute homelessness, similar to what you would see in southern Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for clearing that up. When I was in Toronto over the last couple days when I was driving between the hotel and the convention center. I had the opportunity to see a lot of the homeless people sleeping on the streets. This is a very wealthy city and it is in Ontario. They are sleeping under blankets near subway grates where the heat comes out in the winter, so you can see that there is a homelessness issue there, I do not know how the Government of Ontario deals with it, but you will see in Nunavut, we do not see a lot of people sleeping in cars and sleeping outside.

So if we do not see the problem, does that mean there is really no problem? If we are trying to help the people and we do not see them sleeping out there, does that mean maybe that there is no problem? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, Mr. Chairman, that is not the way it works. I can say with some security that since 1997, I was involved with the first homeless shelter that was opened here in Iqaluit. That was only nine years ago and we have seen an increase going from five beds to fourteen and now the 20 beds at night are being used for the issue of homelessness in the community.

There are a lot of different reasons for that, in some cases, people are out of the BCC and they do not decide to return home and because he may not have the familiar family connection in the community, they end up having no place to stay. In some cases, people are unemployed and have moved to Iqaluit for work and cannot find affordable accommodation and end up on the street. Mr. Curley gave us an example of a case that he is aware of in Rankin Inlet.

So we are starting to see more and more of this type of urban homelessness occurring in our larger communities and we are trying to address that issue. We've had some success. We've moved from an old facility, for the issue here in the community of Iqaluit, to a larger and cleaner facility; are able to do more proactive work with the clientele. At the same time, we're still looking toward trying to get transition beds and so on for women.

Another example, Mr. Peterson brought it up, is that we never saw the issue of homelessness for women in 1997 when we set up the shelter. Now, we are seeing it. That's indicative of some of the issues we have in our society today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. The blurb here says, "To provide contribution funding to agencies responsible for providing programs and services to the homeless in Nunavut." How many agencies are there in Nunavut that are helping in homelessness? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are different agencies working on the issue of homelessness across the territory. They include, for example, in some cases, where women go to a family violence shelter, because they weren't homeless, they were asked to leave their home and have no other place to go. There is an example of agencies that are working on the issue of homelessness.

Specifically for homelessness itself, I talked earlier about Cape Dorset, which has a program running right now looking at the issue of homelessness and doing a kind of a study on the issue. Here in Iqaluit, we have the Salvation Army, who is actually running the homeless shelter. We have the Baffin Regional Agvvik Society that working on issues with homelessness for women. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Can the minister, just for the record, tell us who the members are of the Homelessness Secretariat? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's me and Pam. That's where it was for quite a while until we actually put some budget money into it. Just quickly on the other issue, before I answer that question, he asked me some of the other organizations; the soup kitchen is part of the issue of homelessness in this community, as well as the food bank. A good example, again, is the situation that the Soup Kitchen is feeding dozens of people a day; 40, 50, 60 people a day.

Some of the other members of the secretariat; we have the Department of Education, which is the Chair, of course; we have HRDC Canada on our secretariat. We also have involvement from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the City of Iqaluit. We also invite other groups to attend on an as needed basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Can the minister just describe a little bit how the \$200,000 that was in the budget in the current fiscal year, how was that spent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've been able to do quite a bit with the dollars that have been available to us. First of all, with the Qullit Status of Women's Council, we've done a \$30,000 grant to look at the issue of the impact of homelessness for women.

We've helped the Salvation Army with about \$120,000; that's on the management of the Oqota Shelter, which is the homeless shelter for men, as well as furnishings and moving to the new location. We are working with the Harvest Society in Cape Dorset, that I talked about before, on a program that they call 'In My Room,' about \$11,980.

So the majority of the money under the program has been expended. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Can the minister give us an idea of how you think the money will be spent in the next fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier today in Question Period, we'll be doing a call for proposals after April 1, after the budget is complete for the issue of homelessness for agencies. So I expect that we would spend the majority of our budget at that time.

At the same time, because of the issue of the monies coming from the federal government under the SCIPI Program, we're not sure how that's going to continue. If the federal government pulls out \$200,000 or \$300,000 less in funding, different programs and services like the homeless shelter, then it would be expected that the Government of Nunavut would then have to pick that up and we'll have to look at more money.

So right now, for example, the majority of money for a soup kitchen, the money for the food bank, monies for the homeless shelter, and a lot of this money is also coming from the federal government through the SCIPi Program, which is the homeless initiative of the federal government.

If they're not going to renew that with Mr. Harper's Government or cut that back, then a substantial cut back to the Government of Nunavut's programs in cooperation with community groups would be expected and I would expect a larger uptake on our pot.

So that's something that we need to be aware of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister.

The minister was talking in the last few comments about the federal government cutting back or eliminating funds. Do you have some information or indications from someone in the federal government that this may happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In any government, when you have a change of regime, all programs and services are usually up for review by that new government coming in.

A good example is the Early Learning and Childcare Agreements that were signed by every province, not by the three territories, but every province in the country, and now, the Harper Government has talked about taking those programs and not renewing those agreements.

It was the same thing with the federal initiative on homelessness. We had a good working relationship with Minister Fontaine and Minister Bradshaw who actually came here and reviewed our situation. Now, with a new federal government in place, they may decrease those programs. We have not received word from the federal government that, indeed, these programs are continuing over the 2006-07 budget year.

As soon as we are able to, we have a call into the federal government right now, me as minister, to meet with my federal counterpart to discuss the issue of the SCIPi funds and the homelessness, but we have not heard anything yet one way or another. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.



**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. In 2004-05, the actuals were \$100,000 and then we increased it to \$200,000 last year. And now you're asking for \$200,000 for next year.

It seems like it's a Nunavut issue that is increasing. You mentioned 1997, and we're seeing evidence of that. Then there was that event there two weeks ago with the lady in the car. That drew some attention to the problem. I don't think a lot of people in Nunavut and maybe a whole lot of people down south don't know about or are aware of in Nunavut.

Do you see the possibility that the \$200,000 won't be enough, or ever will be enough? Could we be looking at a lot more money in the years ahead? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a crystal ball. What I can say is that, based on current trends and what we've seen, as Mr. Curley raised in Rankin Inlet, we've seen some issues, the Member in Arviat talked about some of the real struggles for housing.

As our communities get bigger and larger and so on, then you're going to start having some of those bigger city problems and bigger community problems. That's what we're seeing. In 1997, we didn't see those things. In 2006, nine years later, we're starting to see them.

So I would anticipate that when I do a call for proposals for the \$100,000 that would be available, we might have considerably more than we would have had this year. So, yes, the short answer is I could anticipate seeing more money needed for this line item in the budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I have no names on my list. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** I want to follow up on the homelessness contribution. Can the minister tell the committee whether or not there is a policy guideline in place with this Homelessness Secretariat Contribution Program? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome back Mr. Chairman. Yes, there are program guidelines and so on in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you. Assuming that the other Nunavummiut groups also qualify for this particular program funding, could the minister undertake to table in this House so

that we may inform our charity groups out there that there is such a thing as a Contribution Policy in place and that they can apply for funding? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will be doing a public call for proposals after the budget cycle is complete after April 1, which will include advertisements in the Kivalliq News, the Nunatsiaq, and the News North, and we will also be doing other forms of communication for the people at large. We also will be sending out a letter to all hamlets, as well as to all the Members of the Legislative Assembly on the request for proposals for the homelessness initiative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Your question, Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Yes, thank you. I would like to thank the minister for that undertaking. Can you table the Contribution Policy during this session? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Yes.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. I have no other names on my list. We were on Education. Branch Summary. Operations and Maintenance. \$1,198,000. Do you agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I am turning on to page 7. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the area that the minister had indicated earlier that the staff has been working on the new *Education Act* fall under. I just want to ask the minister for a bit of an update. I know prior to Christmas, I believe, in the fall as one of the minister's staff had indicated that the *Education Act* would be delayed because of the lack of staff or support. I am just wondering if there has been any progress made on this as far as staffing and support for the development of the new *Education Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco, has there been any progress on this?

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to consider all the work that we do in progress. Mr. Chairman, with the *Education Act*, there is a delay and the biggest issue in the delay has been logistic as well as administrative challenges at which the members are very familiar with to try to get out to the communities and travel around the communities to do the consultations. I hoped to have all the community consultations completed by now and we have not been able to do that, so we have a lot of communities to visit. I want to make sure we complete that task first.

The drafting of the bill will begin this summer 2006 and the draft bill should be ready by this fall to be presented to the standing committee. We are a few months off. I had promised the Premier that I would try to expedite things.

Maybe I was a little bit ambitious in my programs; I didn't factor in, as Mr. Curley talked about earlier, issues around the weather. So that's been our biggest delay. What I can say is that we've held a lot of consultation meetings up to and including last week when we had every Chair of DEAs from across Nunavut here in town discussing the fundamentals around the new *Education Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was surprised to hear the minister indicate that he may have been a little bit too ambitious. It doesn't sound like him.

I'd like to thank the minister for that update, but I know one of the problems that he had indicated was administrative and that there was an indication that there were not enough human resources to work on this file. The minister has indicated in the past that the former Education Minister, Manitok Thompson, I don't know what the title is, but is working on that file and developing the legislation. There was an indication from her, I believe, that she didn't have the support she needed as far as staff goes on that. Has the department hired anyone to work with Ms. Thompson to assist her in going through that process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Thompson has been doing yeoman service on the file, as the member has indicated. She is working really hard. She's been out into over half the communities in Nunavut providing that feedback from communities and DEAs. She's been dealing with a lot of the issues, not only logistic issues, but the administrative issues of compiling all this information, and we are hearing a lot of it in Inuktitut, and having it ready for our legislative coordinator, who has to look at it through our policy shop.

So we have had some extra resources available to the minister logistically as well as administratively to continue her work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to caution the minister for trying to put words in my mouth. I never indicated that anyone was doing yeoman service on anything. Just to remind him that some people do pay attention to what he says.

Mr. Chairman, as the minister had indicated that they had hired some assistance and support for Ms. Thompson; I am just wondering if he could indicate who they've hired to

work with Ms. Thompson in developing the made-in-Nunavut *Education Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Some of the additional staffing needs have been identified for the full consultation and the legislative development for the Act. That includes a legislative researcher, a full-time assistant project coordinator, interpreter/translator, as well as work with the casual office clerk positions. The personnel to fill all these positions have been hired on either a casual or a contracted basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I didn't know any better, I think the minister was trying to avoid indicating who they've hired to work on that file. I am just wondering if he could clearly indicate who the people are that they have working on that file. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. We will try again. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't hear a question there, but I don't have a list of all the casual positions and the clerk and so on, and I don't want to get into the individuals who have been hired to work on the Act.

Again, as the member has indicated, Manitok Thompson, the former Minister of Education, a former Member of the House, and a former teacher, has taken a lead, and I believe she is doing good service and good work on the file.

I appreciate the member's support in moving the *Education Act* forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There he goes again saying I'm giving him support and I never said anything like that.

Mr. Chairman, I guess he doesn't want to admit then, and maybe the best thing to do is if he won't say it, I'll come out and ask him directly. I've heard that they've hired another former Minister of Education to work on that file, Mr. James Arvaluk. Can he confirm whether or not that's the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Arvaluk, again, a Former Minister of Education was available to complete some of the communities so that we could meet our time frame in consultation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

We wanted to see if we could find someone in the High Arctic, and as you know, Mr. Arvaluk is from the High Arctic and was available, we've asked him to help facilitate some of those meetings with the community stakeholders, and we believe Mr. Arvaluk will do an excellent job for us. I believe that was the consensus of some other people.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, it's not about the people who are doing the consultation and facilitation; it's about the information that we are receiving back.

I think Ms. Thompson indicated that she would work very well with Mr. Arvaluk and in the next few weeks when we complete all the communities, as I said earlier, all the community consultations will be completed by April, and so, in the next three or four weeks, Mr. Arvaluk's role in that process will be complete. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Knowing the minister, I would have thought if he was so gung-ho about hiring someone, he would have mentioned it right off the bat instead of having to try and extract blood from a stone to get that information out of him.

I guess having heard that Mr. Chairman, even if it's just from an optics point of view, does the minister not feel that there could be a perception of having two former Ministers of Education working on the Act having the views brought forward basically slanted towards...those were ministers that, individuals that worked in the past, that defended that legislation and that department.

Is he not concerned that there could even be a perception that there would be a slanted view towards any changes to the Act given that the people working on it were both former ministers for that department, that defended that Act, and that department in the past? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. For clarity in your questioning and responses, let's be reminded again that questions which are hypothetical or seeking an opinion are to be paid close attention to and let's be a little clearer on our questioning. Mr. Picco, I will allow you to respond to that.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not a partisanship thing where one party takes ownership over another party.

For the record again, and I know the member was there and some of the other members in the House were there as well, including yourself Mr. Chairman, first of all, Mr. Arvaluk was not the Minister responsible for the *Education Act* Bill 1.

It was indeed you. Ms. Thompson came after the fact as minister. I believe Mr. Arvaluk and Ms. Thompson can show some real leadership and some professionalism. They are aware of the issue. Their job is to facilitate debate and discussion based on a set of

criteria that is going into a meeting. At the same time, Mr. Chairman, all of the meetings are recorded. There's a tape in place, the meetings are recorded, that tape comes back, and then the feedback from the tape is used.

So I hope that helps clarify and answer the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you. I guess the minister is saying he's not too worried about the optics or the perception that it could be a one-sided view on things.

Again, for the record, I never did indicate that either one of those ministers had anything to do with Bill 1. I just indicated that they were Ministers of Education that defended that department and the bill that they worked on if there were any changes in the past and I never once did I mention Bill 1.

So I just wanted to clarify that for the record. I guess the minister is indicating that they are not too worried about their perception or anything of how things look. So with that, I accept his answer and I'm glad to get it formally on the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I do not believe there was a question on that one. (interpretation) I have no more names on my list under page G-7. Are there any further questions for page G-7 for Policy and Planning? (interpretation ends) Total Operations and Maintenance. \$847,000. Policy and Planning. Total Expenditures. \$847,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Education. Branch Summary. Corporate Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,098,000. (interpretation) Are there any questions on that page? Thank you. (interpretation ends) Total Expenditures. (interpretation) Corporate Services. \$2,098,000. Do you agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman** (interpretation): I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) For the record, correction that was for Total Operations and Maintenance. Thank you. (interpretation) Still on that page. (interpretation ends) Education. Branch Summary. Income Support. \$2,260,000. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you. I would like to ask the minister, first of all, the introduction. Since the Nunavut Government took over the whole number of administrations of a number of programs and so on, including income support, there have been quite a whole

slew of complaints from our constituents of whether or not GN is less generous than NWT.

I have never raised the issue to any of the ministers or administrators mainly because I frankly don't know how it all operates of whether or not the programs that were transferred were literally, I suppose, carried out, taken over, and in effect, the minister had pointed out on the business plan, there had been a couple of increases with these income support programs, whether it be Food Assistance Program or other benefits administered by this.

Can the minister tell this House of whether or not we are still carrying on as generously as the NWT used to provide to income support earners, those who depended on this program because I frankly was visited by an elder once that came to complain about it; I just didn't know how to handle this and I really need more information before I can reply to my constituent. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. Again, the program was grandfathered in from the Government of the Northwest Territories into Nunavut. What we have done is revamped and enhanced that program, and the members around this table today could take credit for some of that. We increased the amount under Income Support by 15 percent in the first year and a half of this government.

We've also done a major shift in the way this program is developed in that any Co-op dividend that is received by a person on income support now is not included as income earned, therefore they receive the money from their dividend and they don't have to include that as money being subtracted from their cheque.

At the same time, we've also made some changes in the program in regard to the Energy Rebate Program that we've talked about earlier in questioning in the House. The program has been enhanced, I believe, when you compare to what we inherited from the Northwest Territories; considerably better. Is there more we can do with the program? The answer is yes.

That's why right now, within the department itself, we're doing a review of the Income Support Program and looking at some of the issues that have been raised during Question Period, and some of the things we have heard from clientele, and indeed, from the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the hamlets on the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the minister for that information; that was my assumption all along. At the same time, the elders that visited

me appear to know exactly what was going on. I didn't want to disagree with them in front of them.

I just would like to ask the minister, by the process, when these particular benefits are issued, is there a standard or something that accompanies it because for those of us that are Members of the Legislative Assembly, it's very hard to figure out what they're complaining about or correct or not, without any pieces of evidence or documentation.

Can the minister indicate to me whether documentation is normally provided when cheques are issued to those who depend on income support? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can, just for the sake of a scenario, I'll walk you through it.

Mr. Curley approached the income support worker for the first time. The income support workers in most of our communities are Inuk and speak Inuktitut, so first language services are available when needed. Mr. Curley would sit down with the income support worker and the person would ask Mr. Curley what his basic background is. What's your family situation? Are you married? Do you have a common-law? Do you have children? They would ascertain what Mr. Curley's situation is. And then they would say: Have you been working in the last several weeks prior to the eligibility period for income support? Then he is asked for a record of how much money he had made to see, indeed, if during that eligibility period, if he would be eligible for income support and so on.

That's the process that is carried out for all clients. Regular clients, people who are on income support for a period of time; their process is a lot easier because most of that information is already known. In most cases, the clientele who go to income support in our communities are well known because the income support worker is from that community, lives there, and knows the situation of the majority of their clients. So that's basically the process.

The information that's needed for the income support worker may be how much money do you receive from a given cheque, or extra income because income support is reduced if you had earned income, or unearned income. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the minister for the information, as well as the free advice that he's providing me. I certainly will take it into consideration if and whenever I would need to apply for income support. Thank you.

I'd like to again pay tribute to the income support workers. I know they are overwhelmed in really the kind of job that they provide, I say in most of the communities in Nunavut. I



have seen them cry. I have seen them upset for the kind of treatment that they have received from people who complain and what not.

I appreciate the minister and his staff for acknowledging their plight on page G-10 of the business plan. They really need more training as well as a new professional development for their current jobs.

I urge the minister to develop that training program as soon as possible. I would say, as he has given me free advice, I would also like to give him one, if he may take it seriously. I would say, with respect to the social relation that are normally involved in people who have depended on this fund, that I say to you that you can also include elders for training ...*(audio unavailable)*...

**Chairman** (interpretation): I'm sorry. We lost the line.

**Mr. Curley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the elders can probably be involved because all of these case workers really go through difficult times. They need support, they need encouragement, and they need moral support, as well, the elderly advice as to how to respond and so on. I would like to encourage you that you will include them in the professional development training that these case workers need it and if you would also communicate to them.

From the committee, I think most of us would agree that we support their responsibility; they have a difficult job most of the time. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that's a good suggestion that the member has made and we will endeavour to incorporate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister, could you clarify the nine staff that work in this branch. They administer the program, but the income support delivery is actually contracted out to other organizations. Can you clarify that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I will ask the deputy minister to clarify the positions under this directive. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Let it be recorded that at 5:55 the minister is seeking assistance for the first time today. Ms. Hine, please proceed.

**Ms. Hine:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this page, what we are looking at is actually the income support director and positions that are at the headquarters level and not the actual delivery of the program, which Mr. Peterson had mentioned. It's actually out at the community level and responsibility at the regional level. We also will contract out some of the services to some of the hamlets or other organizations.

So the positions here, the director of income support also has taken a look at compliance through our audit internally within the department to look at the actual compliance of the delivery of the program to make sure that we are consistent across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Hine. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Hine. So you have nine people working in Iqaluit that administer the program across Nunavut via hamlets and other agencies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have 13 contribution agreements in place across Nunavut with different hamlets that are actually delivering the Income Support Program. In the Kitikmeot, there's Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Kugluktuk, Kugaaruk, and Taloyoak. In the Kivalliq, we have Baker Lake. In the Baffin, there's Arctic Bay, Cape Dorset, Grise Fiord, Igloodik, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, and Resolute Bay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. And where you don't have agreements with hamlets or other organizations, who delivers the Income Support Program in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Thank you. Where we don't have third party contribution agreements in place, then those staff people would be employees of the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. In the statement where it says provision of staff training materials for the Income Support Program, would those staff training be for all your staff and for the contractors at the hamlet? Are those the other agencies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

**Hon. Ed. Picco:** Yes, the member is correct. That would be inclusive of the staff as well as the third party agencies and would be inclusive of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could this be my opportunity to recognize the clock? It's almost six o'clock.

**Chairman:** If that is your wish Mr. Peterson, it shall be. So Mr. Peterson you are forwarding that motion to the floor? Thank you.

Okay, we have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. Thank you.

Before I do get up to proceed to my table, thank you minister and your staff for appearing before Committee of the Whole today. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Kilabuk.

#### **Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Kilabuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 12 and the main estimates, and would like to report progress. Also Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Who seconds the motion? Mr. Alagalak is the seconder. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

#### **Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder to all members: a meeting of the full caucus tomorrow morning in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for March 8:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions

5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 09
  - Bill 12
  - Bill 13
  - Bill 14
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): We will reconvene on Wednesday, March 8 at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:10*

