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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Kilabuk, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Rankin Inlet North)

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(Cambridge Bay)

Striking Committee

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James Arreak

(Uqqummiut)

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(Nanulik)

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Hon. Louis Tapardjuk

(Amittuq)

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

James Arvaluk

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Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	980
Ministers' Statements	981
Members' Statements	983
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.....	990
Oral Questions.....	990
Petitions	1010
Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills	1010
Tabling of Documents	1011
Notices of Motions	1011
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	1013
Report of the Committee of the Whole	1093
Orders of the Day	1093

A.

Daily References

Tuesday, March 27, 2007 980

B.

Ministers' Statements

047 – 2(4): GN Employees Successfully Complete Accredited Course in Human Resources
Management (Tapardjuk)..... 981

048 – 2(4): Passport Photos (Picco) 982

C.

Members' Statements

090 – 2(4): Cambridge Bay Tragic Shooting in Early January (Peterson)..... 983

091 – 2(4): Full Time Social Worker for the High Arctic (Barnabas) 984

092 – 2(4): Hockey Game Against the Iqaluit Fire Fighters (Tootoo)..... 985

093 – 2(4): Kugluktuk Caribou Harvest (Evyagotailak) 986

094 – 2(4): Upcoming April 20 Meeting (Mapsalak)..... 986

095 – 2(4): Federal Budget (Arreak) 987

096 – 2(4): Government of Nunavut's Main Estimates (Arvaluk)..... 987

097 – 2(4): "Tiger" – Name the RCMP Dog Contest (Simailak)..... 988

098 – 2(4): Hello to Constituents (Aglukkaq) 988

099 – 2(4): Government of Nunavut Budget (Kattuk) 988

100 – 2(4): Banning Pit Bulls in Nunavut (Curley)..... 989

101 – 2(4): Dog Team Race from Igloolik to Repulse Bay (Tapardjuk)..... 989

D.

Oral Questions

128 – 2(4): Power Rate Increases (Curley)	990
129 – 2(4): Nunavut’s Promise to Children and Youth (Peterson)	992
130 – 2(4): Update on KBDC Contribution Agreement (Tootoo)	995
131 – 2(4): Update on Social Worker for the High Arctic (Barnabas).....	996
132 – 2(4): Polar Bear Population Increase (Mapsalak).....	998
133 – 2(4): Small Craft Harbour Report (Arvaluk).....	999
134 – 2(4): Status of Polar Bear Study (Kattuk)	1001
135 – 2(4): KBDC Contribution Agreement – Meeting Minutes (Tootoo).....	1002
136 – 2(4): Passport Photos (Barnabas)	1004
137 – 2(4): Victims of Crime Funding from the Federal Budget (Peterson).....	1006
138 – 2(4): Food Mail Program (Alagalak).....	1008

E.

Petitions

001 – 2(4): Medical Services for Sanikiluaq (Kattuk)	1010
--	------

F.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

Committee Report 001 – 2(4): Bill 8 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (Tootoo)	1010
---	------

G.

Tabled Documents

068 – 2(4): Leases and Article 24 of Nunavut Land Claims Agreement – Correction to Statement Made on March 26, 2007 (Okalik)	1011
069 – 2(4): 2005-06 Annual Report on the Tobacco Control Act (Aglukkaq)	1011

H.

Motions

008 – 2(4): Location of Health & Social Services Positions – Notice (Arvaluk)..... 1011

009 – 2(4): Performance Audit of the Department of Health & Social Services – Notice (Tootoo)
..... 1012

010 – 2(4): Referral of Tabled Document 049 – 2(4): Discussion Paper for Ikummatiit – An
Energy Strategy for Nunavut March 2007 to Committee of the Whole – Notice (Curley) 1012

011 – 2(4): Censure of the Executive Council – Notice (Tootoo)..... 1012

I.

Bills

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 –Consideration in Committee
– Education 1013

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Peter Kilabuk)(interpretation): Good morning. I would like to ask Mr. Alagalak to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, Premier, Ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly. This morning I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members of the scope of parliamentary privilege.

(interpretation ends) The Assembly has collective privileges, such as the right to summon and question witnesses, which ensures that the Assembly is able to carry out its duties.

Members of the Legislative Assembly also have rights and immunities where necessary to allow individual members to carry out their duties and functions as elected representatives.

These rights and immunities are collectively called privileges and include such things as the right to freedom of speech and freedom from harassment and intimidation in carrying out their duties.

Parliamentary privilege is narrowly construed and extends only to those functions absolutely necessary for members to carry out their duties.

Neither this Assembly nor myself as Speaker has the authority to expand the scope of privilege. By its very nature, matters of privilege will arise infrequently.

It is not a breach of privilege to depart from usual practices and conventions of the Assembly. It is not a breach of privilege to disagree with or criticize another member. It is not a breach of privilege to make a misstatement in the House.

Not all misconducts by members will amount to a breach of privilege. Members have several forms in which they can express concerns with respect to the conduct of another member. They can discuss the matter at full caucus and, if necessary, discipline in that forum. They can raise their concerns in a Member's Statement.

Points of Privilege are not to be used to make political points on a matter under debate. Points of Privilege are not to be used as a veiled technique to challenge my authority as Speaker.

At a future meeting of the full caucus I will speak more on this matter. We will now proceed to the Orders of the Day. Thank you.

Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): We've been having our meeting for a very long time, but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. We'll be talking for a bit on old vehicles.

Speaker: Minister Netser, can I ask you to take your seat for a second please.

Thank you. We appear not to have the copies of the statement. Is this an emergency matter that needs immediate attention, Minister Netser?

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are old vehicles so it's not really an emergency. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. We will proceed to the next minister if there are any more Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, and Human Resources, Minister Tapardjuk.

Minister's Statement 047 – 2(4): GN Employees Successfully Complete Accredited Course in Human Resources Management

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform my colleagues about what we've been doing in our department. The Nunavut Arctic College certificate program through Carleton University has set up a 13-week program in Arviat, Cambridge Bay, and Iqaluit.

We recognize that there have to be courses in management, and we're working closely with Carleton University to develop a course that will address the unique needs of our participants and most importantly ensure student success. Many employees taking this course have limited or no experience taking studies at the post secondary level.

To ensure a positive and successful learning experience, additional student supports were put in place, including weekly tutoring sessions, group assignments, and a research library.

I am pleased to report that the 29 employees who started the course on September 23 successfully completed the course, nine of whom are beneficiaries. With a 79 percent completion rate this has been one of the most successful courses delivered as part of the Nunavut Public Services Studies Certificate program. Some participants plan to continue their post secondary studies in human resources management in the future.

This success story demonstrates my department's dedication to *Ilippallianguinnarniq* and our commitment to responding to the needs of our workforce and expanding the types of training and development programs and services offered to employees across the Nunavut Government.

I would like to commend all Government of Nunavut employees who are enrolled in continuing education and wish them success in their learning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Minister of Education and Income Support, Mr. Picco.

Minister's Statement 048 – 2(4): Passport Photos

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, members have continually raised the issue of securing passports for our constituents. There are several roadblocks for our residents because of the remote area we live and the complete lack of any passport office here in Nunavut.

Delays to process our applications because of the distances, requirements, for example of accurate photos, having to mail all applications and our own unique circumstances with out of territory births and registrations in other jurisdictions also causes issues with getting the proper identification and the birth certificate needed for a passport.

Mr. Speaker, in cooperation with our MP and our Government of Nunavut office in Ottawa, we have helped facilitate many applications for passports successfully. Passports are a federal responsibility; however as a government we want to help our residents get the documentation they need to secure a passport.

I am very pleased today, Mr. Speaker, to announce that over the next weeks we will be purchasing the necessary camera equipment and supplies to allow all Nunavummiut to have access to passport quality photos.

>>Applause

We intend to supply all hamlets and communities with the necessary equipment. We will also ask each community to identify an individual to be trained to use the equipment. Mr. Speaker, we expect the total cost to be approximately \$125,000. Revenue generated by

the photo fee can be kept by the hamlet. It is suggested that a fee of \$30 to \$40 for the photo will be required.

Mr. Speaker, this step will help facilitate Nunavummiut access to a passport the same as any other Canadian citizen. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 090 – 2(4): Cambridge Bay Tragic Shooting in Early January

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to thank Nunavummiut for the support, sympathy, and condolences they sent our community of Cambridge Bay in the days and weeks following the tragic shooting that occurred in our community in early January.

Mr. Speaker, as nearly everyone in Nunavut and across Canada knows by now, in early January our community suffered a horrible loss when three of our citizens died, and two others were wounded after an armed gunman opened fire on them.

The events of that terrible night will be remembered forever by our community. We hope and pray that it never happens again anywhere in Nunavut. Many people suffered painful losses that night, and their deep sadness will only ease with the passage of time.

Mr. Speaker, Cambridge Bay is a community with a lot of heart and soul. We are going through difficult times, but I have no doubt that we will recover and become stronger. Our healing began almost immediately after grief counsellors and the crisis response officials began to talk with our residents.

We are moving forward, as we always do in my community. Mr. Speaker, one of the saddest things that occurred from all of this was how my community and Nunavut were portrayed in the southern media. I read a Globe and Mail article about the shooting and I could not believe that a national newspaper would resort to such sensational reporting.

I have lived in Cambridge Bay for decades, but I did not recognize the people or the community that was reported in that article. Mr. Speaker, the reporting that went into that article did not reflect the spirit, kindness, and warmth that our residents are known for around the world by the many visitors that drop by.

You cannot go for a drive or walk very far without someone waving or smiling at you and it is impossible to get lost because someone will always help you find your way.

Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to continue my statement. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I was very proud when the Premier accompanied the RCMP Chief Superintendent to Cambridge Bay to attend a community meeting. It meant a lot to our residents to have him there and bring us the thoughts and prayers of all Nunavummiut.

It was also gratifying to have the RCMP Chief Superintendent stand before us and explain the events of that night and how the investigation will proceed. We look forward to regular updates from the RCMP in the months ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to join me in sending our condolences to all the victims of that tragic shooting, and express our sincere gratitude to all those who helped and are helping Cambridge Bay through our grieving, mourning, and recovery phases. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Members' Statements. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 091 – 2(4): Full Time Social Worker for the High Arctic

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to, once again, raise the issue of ongoing needs for full-time social workers in the High Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago on February 28, 2005, I raised this same issue with the minister at that time. The needs of my constituents have not changed since then. They still require social services but staffing social worker positions in the High Arctic does not seem to be a priority.

The communities in my constituency need social workers. The community of Grise Fiord may be the smallest community in Nunavut but that does not mean that its needs should be neglected. I said it two years ago and I will say it again: people who require assistance need face to face assistance and not just conversations over the phone. People in the smallest communities have needs just like people in the larger communities and they should have equal access to those services that meet their needs.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services why social workers hired for the High Arctic were always being seconded to the government's

headquarters. At that time the minister was going to look into it. I don't know what the results of her investigation were but it seems that we are still having problems.

I urge the government to make every effort to fill the social worker positions in the High Arctic. At the appropriate time I will be asking questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 092 – 2(4): Hockey Game Against the Iqaluit Fire Fighters

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to thank my fellow members for coming out on Sunday night to play an excellent game of hockey against the Iqaluit Firefighters.

Mr. Speaker, it's great to get a good dose of exercise at least once a year and this year was no exception. Our stalwart band of Members of the Legislative Assembly took on at least twice as many firefighters, and what we couldn't match in speed and stamina, we certainly made up for in determination and enthusiasm.

I would like to thank the firefighters for inviting us once again this year, and Mr. Speaker, as forward Netser indicated during the game, our speed was highly deceptive.

>>*Laughter*

We are all slower than we think. You, yourself, Mr. Speaker, were a tower on defence. The member from Cambridge Bay, I believe was from what I thought, in the best shape of all of us: speeding up at thin ice, back-checking furiously on defence, and even making a last-minute save on a puck that had squeaked past our goalie.

Our illustrious Premier scored a magnificent goal with a powerful, powerful shot that blew past the goalie. Shots like that I've only seen on TV made by his beloved Habs. I am not sure whether or not he had paid those members of the audience to throw their hats on the ice in celebration after scoring his first goal to make it look like he had scored a hat trick. Mr. Picco also scored a fine goal. I was pleased to get a couple, myself.

I did very well for the first 30 seconds of every shift, but it was always a welcome relief to change up as soon as the opportunity arose. While the Members of the Legislative Assembly started off strong in goals the lead soon became a tie and after that I believe the final score is still under review.

It was a gallant effort by all members and most of all it was a lot of fun. I would like to ask all members to join me in thanking the firefighters and for the opportunity to come

out and get a good dose of exercise and I look forward to it again next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Member's Statement 093 – 2(4): Kugluktuk Caribou Harvest

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is a fine day.

I rise today to share with all the members about the recent Kugluktuk caribou harvest. This year a group of harvesters traveled 185 kilometres east of Kugluktuk for the harvest and approximately 57 caribou were harvested.

(interpretation ends) Elders and youth groups obtained funding from Brighter Futures to butcher and distribute some of the harvest to the community elders, single mothers, and for others who are unable to harvest for themselves.

The estimated value of the meat harvested is \$73,000 for the community. The residents of Kugluktuk greatly appreciated the assistance of the Hamlet of Kugluktuk, and Hunters and Trappers Organization, and also the government for making this possible.

I would like to name the eight harvesters. They were Stanley Klengenberg, Andrew Atatahak, George Hala, Perry Klengenberg, Peter Akana, Isaac Klengenberg, Jonathan Niptanatiak, and Ronald Elgok. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Members' Statements. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Member's Statement 094 – 2(4): Upcoming April 20 Meeting

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 20 my constituents will have a meeting and Kugaaruk will go to Repulse Bay representing different organizations. They are prepared for April 20 and I invite the ministers if they wish to come to my constituency.

It will be very heart-warming for the residents if all of the ministers can attend, but as we know they have other commitments. If all of the ministers can come to my constituency on April 20 they are most welcome to be there and I will probably be leaving tomorrow, and I wish the best for my colleagues to have a good rest. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Members' Statements. Member for Uqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 095 – 2(4): Federal Budget

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quite a while back an accord was agreed upon and was to fund \$5.1 billion but once the Conservative Government came into power, it changed.

When Paul Martin was the Prime Minister, he was pushing for this and he passed it through a Private Members' Bill in the Parliament in Ottawa. A majority of them agreed but the Conservative Government failed to recognize that, even though it would be very beneficial to the aboriginal people for housing, education, and social services.

So I urge the members to show their support so that these things can be implemented in the aboriginal community of Canada. I urge all the Nunavummiut organizations to show their support and to be more vocal about this because once this passes it would better our lives in the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Arvaluk.

Member's Statement 096 – 2(4): Government of Nunavut's Main Estimates

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today because I have a concern where the government is expecting a lot of things, not particularly on people like yesterday we had a hard time approving Community and Government Services.

The main estimates and budget for Community and Government Services that we were discussing yesterday, because we knew that it was way too much and it will not benefit the whole community, all of the Members of the Legislative Assembly know during the Bathurst Accord and they agreed with the title *Pinasuaqtavut*.

Shortly thereafter, in Baker Lake, the government met to decide what our focus will be in order to represent the Inuit. After that, they included *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, and we often referred to *Article 24*.

We heard yesterday, when we were under Community and Government Services, the Member for Arviat said that ever since we were growing up we shouldn't leave other people out because that's the way of Inuit life. So I urge the government to listen to the hamlets, to the local housing authorities, hunter and trapper organizations, and other organizations in the communities which priorities they wish to see developed in their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 097 – 2(4): “Tiger” – Name the RCMP Dog Contest

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, residents of Baker Lake. I am happy to say that students who go to school in Nunavut, when we hear accomplishments...the dogs in Canada that are used by the RCMP have names now. Because there was a nation wide contest to name the dogs and a student Grade 8, 8 year old, put in the name “Tiger” and she won. So Stephanie Utan'naq was selected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Simailak, Members' Statements. Member for Nattilik, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Member's Statement 098 – 2(4): Hello to Constituents

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): I say hello to Taluryarmiut and I will see them in the near future. Tomorrow will be Inuinnaqtun Day and also today I will say Happy Easter to all my constituents as well as all the Members of this House. Have a safe trip going home. And also, my biological mother Nilaulaq in Gjoa Haven, I would like to say thank you since she is always helping everyone. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Ms. Aglukkaq. Member for Sanikiluaq, Mr. Kattuk.

Member's Statement 099 – 2(4): Government of Nunavut Budget

Mr. Kattuk (Interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Today is Inuktitut Day so I would like to say hello to my constituents in Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, the concern that I have is the budget of the Government and we talked about it at length yesterday. The Minister of Health and Social Services stated that the, about the Sanikiluaq people going to the southern institutes or hospitals.

Even though this has not been resolved, I am not in support of the operations and maintenance budget for the health department, because the people in Sanikiluaq still have a concern that if they go to Ottawa for medical attention, they will have to go, if they go to Montreal, because the weather changes very quickly and they don't have a place to stay, and they have to overnight in one of the southern communities. I have gone through Montreal, every time I go home to Sanikiluaq, or every time I'm going to Iqaluit, and I really feel for the elders because they must be very stressful having to travel and without English language, they must have a difficult time because they'd like to be able to go from point 'A' to point 'B' and not overnight anywhere because they have a hard time with the language and the way of southern communities.

So when we get to Item 10 I will be tabling a petition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 100 – 2(4): Banning Pit Bulls in Nunavut

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a short statement. I was told by an elder they do not have an opportunity to voice their concerns. This has to do with dogs. The elder was saying that the dogs that we hardly ever see come up north now such as those small dogs. Some of them are very vicious dogs.

The elder was saying that when he was talking to me, he had a vision. Some dogs that are over here that are brought to Nunavut communities that are very vicious are very dangerous for the children. He has a grandchild who is a little bit blind and those Rottweilers are being brought up to Nunavut.

He felt that the government should be able to ban those pit bulls to come up north. I think we have to think about making sure there is a ban against those vicious dogs or perhaps we members can do a private member's bill because Ontario has legislation whereby pit bulls are banned from the province of Ontario.

I think we should, because this elder had an elder and he was worried about the children being attacked by pit bulls while they are walking in the community. He is very worried and he is probably listening to our debates this morning. I told him I would be able to voice his concern here in the House and I expect there might a legislation banning those vicious dogs such as pit bulls from entering Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Member's Statement 101 – 2(4): Dog Team Race from Igloolik to Repulse Bay

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a short statement. When our premier was talking about the dog races from Iqaluit to Kimmirut and back and also our Cabinet Member, Mr. Simailak talked about dog races to Churchill return.

James Arreak, Steve Mapsalak, and Tununiq Member James Arvaluk and Member for High Arctic Mr. Barnabas; there is going to be a dog race from Igloolik to Repulse Bay. I would like those members to know that the people of Igloolik and Hall Beach will be involved. Just to let you know. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Members' Statements. Orders of the Day. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Coral Harbour, Mr. Netser.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome my brother-in-law, Tommy Bruce from Coral Harbour.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. There are no more names. Thank you. I would like to welcome the cadets to our House. Thank you for coming and welcome.

Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 128 – 2(4): Power Rate Increases

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Energy. Last week we heard him say that there would be a rate increase. I think that's what he said.

It just seems like that the Qulliq Energy Corporation just took a big cookie out of the cookie jar and took a bite and the rest of it goes to the customers. It seems like he said that last week.

Perhaps he could give us some information, when Qulliq Energy Corporation applies for a rate increase, he didn't say whether they would be rejected or not. It seems like the customers don't have any right to reject the rate increase. It just seems like it's just taking a cookie from the cookie jar and taking a big bite and giving the rest to the customers. Why was that done?

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Curly. Minister of Energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker I wanted to take this opportunity to say that the member has wonderful way of using phraseology and I appreciate his analogy of the cookie.

What I would like to say is that cookie has crumbled. There is no rate increase and for the clarification and for the good news of Nunavummiut, last week what I said was "when" a rate increase comes forward we have the Utility Rate Review Council review that rate increase to see what it should be. And that's part of the check and balance.

For every one cent increase, for every time the fuel goes up one cent, it means an extra \$400,000 cost to the government. So the good news is there is no increase in the fuel cost, to the power rates right now. We have no rate increase coming forward. The cookie has crumbled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation). Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Curley

Mr. Curley: Mr. Speaker, we're going to have to have the minister go out to the floe edge today maybe, and probably find a better energy source down there.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, I do want to ask the minister to clarify exactly. I alluded and quoted that the application was I believe before the Utility Rates Review Council that asked for a rate increase to be effective April 1 to October of this year if approved.

Has that application been rejected by Utility Rate Review Council for rate rider?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to take the member with me to the floe edge, and at the time maybe I would become the "cookie" monster.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, no, again for clarification there is no rate increase. What is before the Utility Rate Review Council is a rate decrease; actually, the Power Corporation is actually asking for less money.

Right now the rider that was in place that had been approved was for 7.87 cents a kilowatt hour. And what the power corporation is now asking for is a rate decrease to 6.65 cents, which would be effective April 1 to October 31 2007. That application is still pending, that is a rate decrease, no increase. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley:

Mr. Curley: I appreciate the minister's advice and invitation to join him on the floe edge; I'll join him anytime as I know very well that traditional *Qulliq* does require seal oil fuel. So I'll gladly join you in hopes that we get enough supplies for *Qulliq*.

But I do have an additional question with respect to the cost being applied. It was clear in the application that the true cost of energy, including transportation and all the other costs would now be proposed. Will the minister be seeking or considering approving that, or is that the role of another minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Energy, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we have said in the House and we have brought it up during debate over the last several days in this sitting, is that with the Energy Strategy that we have tabled in the House, we're looking at ways of showing

more transparency where all the subsidies are in place for fuel and for cost of electricity, and so on.

We know that over 20 percent of our budget goes toward energy and energy-related costs. One of those ways that's becoming transparent is to put in place what we call an Affordable Energy Fund, or the AEF. With the discussion paper, the strategy documents before us, I would hopefully look at something this fall when the session goes forward and bring forward something to look at then with the Affordable Energy Fund and see if we would actually enact it.

So right now, it is on hold. We're still looking at it. It's in the Energy Strategy document that we tabled in the House, which we're asking feedback for from all of the public and from Members in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister of Energy is that we're hoping, at least this side of the House, hoping to have that discussion paper tabled during the Committee of the Whole sitting in May. If that were to happen, would the minister consider bringing in an independent energy analyst or experts so that we will have a fair discussion of world prices including alternative energy sources for Nunavummiut? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the member has made an excellent suggestion and that is if we move the Energy Strategy to the Committee of the Whole during May, then I would be given an opportunity to explain in more detail about the Affordable Energy Fund and some of the other issues around energy. If the members needed, we would have the experts available for that time in May.

So that's something I would entertain. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Before I move forward I had missed one of the regular members' names. Thank you. I already know who it is. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 129 – 2(4): Nunavut's Promise to Children and Youth

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's department includes the position of coordinator for the Nunavut's Promise to Children and Youth Initiative. It's commonly known as the Children's First Secretariat.

My question for the minister: can the minister provide an update for this House on what activities and accomplishments have been achieved by this entity over the past year, and when we might see a report on this entity's achievements? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Education, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member has indicated, this is an interdepartmental position and coordinating group that has been working with, I believe, with the outside interests, which is the general public in Nunavut, as well as internally with the Government of Nunavut's different departments to ascertain and see, for example, issues around that the member has raised - child advocacy - and where we can look at not only improving the quality of life for our children in Nunavut but to look at the policies and programs that also fall under that mandate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister mentioned that the Nunavut Promise to Children and Youth is an interdepartmental initiative and as such it relies on a large number of partnerships to address many issues facing children and youth.

My question for the minister: can the minister provide some information on the types of support, funding and resources that are provided to the Nunavut's Promise to Children and Youth to support various activities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Education, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would hope to be in a position in the spring, in the next session which I believe will be in May, to actually table a five-year strategy for the Nunavut's Promise to Children.

As we've said earlier, the interdepartmental group includes Education, the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Social Services, and Culture, Language, Elders and Youth.

We're looking at parenting and early childhood development. We're looking at healthy living, and school health. We're looking at areas around the Stay in School program. Probably more important, we're looking at getting youth involved with activities and programs within the government, but also in the general public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer.

The minister mentioned working on a five-year strategic plan. I am wondering if the minister can advise the House as to what stage the strategy is at, and what solutions have been implemented to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Community groups, elders, and youth have been consulted on the strategy. It has to go before Cabinet, and then tabled in the House, as I said earlier in May for some discussion from the members.

I believe that there has been some very good progress under the Nunavut Promise to Children and Youth. The member should take some credit in also helping bring this forward in the last couple of years in the House, under the advocacy for children that he has raised. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer and I thank the minister for his kind comments about my advocacy on behalf of children.

As members know, I strongly believe that the government should focus on ensuring the health, safety, and wellness for our children and youth in Nunavut. They are our future; we hear that all the time. We're surrounded today by many youth.

My question for the minister: can the minister provide an update on what initiatives are currently being organized by Nunavut's Promise to Children and Youth and how their success and effectiveness will be evaluated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a Coordinator for the Secretariat in the Department of Education now in place. That person reports to the Deputy Minister of Education.

One of the things that we've been involved in, under the Children's First Secretariat, is looking at ways of incorporating youth ideas within the general program in Nunavut. A good example of that are the hip hop workshops that we've run. We've run them outside of Iqaluit, as you know; I think we had one in Clyde River recently. These are quite effective tools to bring forward some initiatives and strategic alliances with youth and with our communities.

The strategy, itself, will outline some of the things that we've just talked about. That will become a public document when we table it some time in May. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 130 – 2(4): Update on KBDC Contribution Agreement

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation. For some time I have been asking questions in regard to information that was committed to be provided by the minister in regard to contribution agreements and other things with Keewatin Business Development Centre in Rankin Inlet.

I would just like to ask the minister if he could provide me with an update; if he was able to obtain any of that information that they've committed to provide. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I now have the Keewatin Business Development Centre Report from 2003.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In November of 2006 I asked the minister at the time if they would be able to provide copies of minutes and motions where the board would have approved any actions that the board had taken on behalf of the government.

Has the minister been able to obtain that information as well, as the minister of the day had indicated that he would be willing to provide? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, I have not seen the minutes, nor have they sent the motions of the KBDC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was back in November so I'm just wondering if the minister or the department requested that information from KBDC, and if so, why haven't they received it yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why they have not given me the minutes and their motions. The only things that were given to me are the ones that I mentioned. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the contribution agreements that have been in place, I would just like to just ask the minister if KBDC was required to provide that information to the department on an annual basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Economic Development and Transportation was not able to locate any copies of minutes back from 1995 currently in our possession, including the files of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and our own community operations office in Rankin Inlet. We requested copies of the minutes from KBDC and we were told that no such record exists. That's the extent of my knowledge of the situation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 131 – 2(4): Update on Social Worker for the High Arctic

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding counselling services.

We don't have counselling services in the High Arctic to date. For the past two years now, I've been asking the same question. Two years ago I raised the same issue with the minister at the time. My constituency of High Arctic still remains the same. Could the minister update me on what has been happening in regard to the full-time social worker in the High Arctic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current arrangement for Grise Fiord is that the social worker in Resolute Bay covers that community as well to date. We haven't increased the complements of the social worker positions. There are 46 total positions and we have not increased that in the last year due to fiscal challenges that we're facing.

As it is right now, the services are provided by the social worker from Resolute Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is evident that sometimes the flights don't always make it to the other communities. When the flight doesn't make it to Grise Fiord, it takes a long time for another flight to get back into the community.

The issue I raised in my Member's Statement, the needs of the High Arctic have not changed and this issue has not changed. I raised this issue quite a few times in the last two years in regard to the lack of social service in the High Arctic.

Can the minister indicate in the House what kind of problems that you are encountering? What's the problem in obtaining a full time social worker in the High Arctic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Barnabas. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, again, the social work function is being carried out by the social worker from Resolute Bay. In terms of caseloads, it's manageable for that social worker for Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to be responsible for those two communities. One of the challenges, again I mentioned, is our fiscal challenges in terms of funding for various positions that is one of the challenges that we have.

The member also rose the other day, the question around the Community Health Representative position. We've been advertising that position now for two years in Grise Fiord and have not been able to find anyone in the community that is interested in that position. So that is one of our challenges in terms of the workforce in the community, but as it is right now, the function is being provided by the social worker out of Resolute Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabus (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to provide services to my constituents in Grise Fiord is it possible for the Minister to bring a social worker up to the High Arctic community to make sure that the residents have services provided.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, these services for the community are being provided by the social worker from Resolute Bay, and I believe that individual travels regularly to Grise Fiord. I will find out the individual's next travel plans for Grise Fiord and report to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 132 – 2(4): Polar Bear Population Increase

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment, and since I am going to be leaving, I would like to have good weather.

I saw a very good article about this one issue that we keep referring to. As a government, we keep talking about Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and there is one thing that I saw that was very interesting when a polar bear biologist stated that the Inuit were right and that there is an increase in the polar bear population. It is something that I found very interesting, and I think that if a scientist can say that, we can also convince the Department of Fisheries and Oceans of the increase in the population. Will the minister let us know about the polar bear population increase or are they going to increase the quota?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And also, I would like to commend the people for lobbying. We have agreed with the hunters and trappers organizations that after they do more studies or if they are clear on the population then we can slowly increase the quota. Thank you.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do know that there is an increase in the polar bear population. When is the next time you are going to do a polar bear study? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we have 13 zones in Nunavut and it takes quite a while to do a polar bear count. When we find there is an increase in the polar bear population, usually we do a study on the 13 zones first before making a decision whether there is an increase or a decrease in the population and I can't respond to your question at this time. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Your second supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister. Does the minister know if there is a polar bear increase in any of the 13 zones that he mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is an increase in the polar bear population in the Davis Strait area. There were 628 in 2005 that were counted and 841 in 2006. We also did studies on the other zones. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we know there is a polar bear population increase, can we anticipate an increase in the polar bear quota? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): As I stated earlier, we are currently doing a study in the Davis Strait area and in 2007, we will complete the study. After the study is completed and reviewed, we will then make a decision on whether to increase or decrease. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. (interpretation ends) I would like to quickly welcome John Legate and his grade nine students from Inuksuk High School along with students from Etobicoke, Ontario who range from grade 10 to 12 students. Welcome to the Gallery.

>> *Applause*

Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 133 – 2(4): Small Craft Harbour Report

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. The minister came in from Ottawa yesterday and I am sure he had a meeting with the Minister of Finance and also the Minister of Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. I am very positive he had a meeting with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Can the minister inform this House about the port facilities or harbour projects? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister for Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you. I apologize. I didn't go to Ottawa. I went to Arviat to see the dog team race between Arviat and Churchill. In regard to your question, we don't know yet about the monies for the Small Craft Harbour Project. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister stated that a report was done by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the Small Craft Harbour Project in Nunavut. On the first page, it states that Nunavut could benefit from small craft harbours, economically and to have transportation provided between Nunavut and southern points and to increase employment.

It also states that there have to be small craft harbours in Nunavut. Since Nunavut is a part of Canada, I'm very positive that we're not going to be moving down south. We are going to be staying up here in Nunavut. Is it possible to make changes to the report so that it's more Nunavut and culturally friendly?

We're talking about Pond Inlet and we're not only talking about fishing. And even with the local economy it becomes quite crowded when you are talking about the Mary River Project. Is it possible to make changes so it's more Nunavut relevant?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. If you keep reading it indicates that we can't, we're not going to be moving south, and because of that, we are lobbying hard to make sure that money is provided to build the infrastructure and also to provide harbours, because of the mining development and so on, that is happening up here.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Simailak. Your second supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Arvaluk (Interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate if he is going to lobby the Department of Fisheries and Oceans? I'm not sure when we're going to be having the next meeting and I would like to get assurance from the Minister if he could get the response to my question before the May 29 sitting?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the other departments are well aware of the urgency in building the infrastructure up here.

But that is the federal government. It is up them to respond to us and I can't indicate at this time whether they are going to be able to respond before May 29.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Simailak. Your final supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. We are well aware that you cannot respond to when they might reply, so what happens if we don't get a reply? Is it possible for the minister to go up with the federal minister to Pond Inlet September 12 or the beginning of October so he can see exactly what type of climate we have up there.

We have had two fatal accidents during rough weather and we lose boats every single year. I would like to ask the minister if he could invite the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to go up to Pond Inlet to see first hand our environment.

Speaker (Interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (Interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and our department, wrote up that report jointly, and every single community that is mentioned was visited.

I can't exactly tell you when but every single community was visited and they saw first hand the lay of the land. I will ask the federal minister to come visit Pond Inlet with me.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Question 134 – 2(4): Status of Polar Bear Study

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister of Environment in regard to polar bears.

We were always told not to talk about polar bears otherwise they would arrive. In south-eastern Hudson Bay there will be a study, with a completion date of 2008. What is the status of the study at this time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. I believe it's south western Hudson Bay where we're doing a population study. The numbers are not decreasing but their health is a concern though. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's nice to hear, and in some area, not so nice. I would like to ask the minister: we envied some communities where the quotas were increased. I wonder, as he stated earlier, that the population is not

decreasing. I wonder if the quota for Sanikiluaq will be increased in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would look at it to see if we can increase it. I believe it's in Northern Quebec. It's the same population and they don't have a quota, so what we are hesitant about is that because they don't have a quota and we do, we are in the process of negotiating to see if they can get a quota. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As he stated earlier, the polar bears seem to be quite thin. Do they know what the reason is?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are not exactly sure why they seem to be losing weight. We keep a constant eye on them. Thank you.

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

Question 135 – 2(4): KBDC Contribution Agreement – Meeting Minutes

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is again for the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation.

In his last response to my last question he had indicated that the minutes and motions that were requested, I guess he indicated that they don't exist.

Under the contribution agreement that they have with the KBDC, are they required to provide that information to the department? He indicated last week that they were going to be entering into a new contribution agreement with them for the upcoming year. If they're not living up to the requirements under the contribution agreement that's in place, why are they still giving them funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't had the opportunity to personally research what information is required for the contribution agreements. I still have to do that, go through the records to see what requirements have been there in the

past and what the requirements are today. And once I have done that I will be able to get back to the member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is I believe that there was a requirement under the contribution agreement. And, the simple fact that there are minutes and motions made to give the board the authority to move in a certain direction, whatever it is, something that would be deemed necessary for any action to be taken whether you're approving a loan or not. If there are no minutes or records of decisions or anything kept in place, then how does the minister or department determine where the authority came from to do what they've done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Speaker. I would have to get back to the department on that question to see exactly where things are at and why things are happening the way they are. I would have to ask the department to research that further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would just like to ask the minister, as this is something that came up four months ago, why we still don't have information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Honourable David Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, all of this information has been very, very slow in coming. As mentioned it was in December 2006 that copies of minutes were asked for, and it was only recently that we were told that no such minutes exist. In terms of the rest of the documents that were asked for we're just finally starting to receive them now. That's unfortunate, it's the way things go sometimes and we just have to keep working at it and try to get as much information as we can, as quickly as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation) Thank you, Honourable David Simailak. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that KBDC has just recently filed all their audited financial statements with the department of legal registries. This is something that they haven't done since 2003, and that shows where they spent their money.

But given the fact that there are no minutes, motions or copies of motions that tell them how to go ahead and proceed in spending that money or how to approve loans, how can the minister determine whether or not they're actually doing what they're supposed to be doing, and it's not just one person or two people deciding something on their own.

I mean that's the whole process or whole idea of having that process there, of having a board that would review applications and make decisions on that. How can the department determine that things are being done properly if their minutes and copies of their motions don't exist? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The KBDC is an independent public agency. And as such, my department does not interfere with the independence of such an agency. But as has been mentioned by my colleague for a number of months now, there are a number of legal requirements, financial statements, agreements, and annual reports, that all have to be tabled with the department.

We are still in the process of trying to find out what's happened in the past. Then we'll eventually find answers, but it's apparently taking a whole lot longer than it should have. But we will eventually find out exactly what is going on and we will come up with a way to make sure that those legal requirements are met in terms of agreements between the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and the KBDC.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 136 – 2(4): Passport Photos

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was very nice to hear what the Minister of Immigration mentioned earlier in his statement. I would like to ask him questions on passports. (interpretation ends) Will the hamlets have to pay for the cameras and the training? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. (interpretation ends) Give me a second here. Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, Homelessness, and Immigration, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you. It all sounds so important but too bad there's no budget with it.

>> *Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. What we envision is that we would be purchasing the equipment for all the hamlets, and would also facilitate the training of the equipment that would be used. We don't see a cost to the hamlet. We're asking them to participate with us and help their residents to be able to access the passport photos. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his statement that they will train people on how to operate the cameras in the communities, when will this training start? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would see rolling the whole program out in the next several weeks. First, we need to be able to purchase the equipment and then provide the training on the equipment, and have it brought to the hamlets. So this will happen in the next several weeks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just last week I raised questions in regard to this and I stated that at this time of year a lot of staff want to go out on the land or on holidays. I wonder if the applications for passports will be done before people start going out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the budget constraint of the government ... after April 1 is the new fiscal year and so on. What we would hope, again, is we have identified what equipment is needed, where it is located, we need just to purchase that, and then arrange for the training program through different government departments, the MTO, or what have you.

That's something that we're following up on, and then it's just a matter of handing it to the community, and at the person's own convenience, they would be able to get the passport photo taken. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He mentioned that they will probably raise about \$125,000 with the fee of \$30 to \$40 for a photo but this is the responsibility of the federal government. I wonder if the minister had requested the federal government for more so it won't cost so much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member makes a good point. As we have said continually, the member has raised the issue on the passport photos and several members have raised issues on the passport photos.

As the minister responsible, through our office in Ottawa, we've had discussions and meetings with our federal partners to see if they would be interested in helping us facilitate some of these costs, not only the administrative costs but the logistic costs as well.

The federal government was not able to come to the table in a substantial way with the dollar value, and that's something that we will continue to follow up with our federal partners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 137 – 2(4): Victims of Crime Funding from the Federal Budget

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Justice. On March 16 the federal government announced the new Government's Federal Victims Ombudsman and new funding of Victims of Crime. In their press release they said there will be new funds for the federal, provincial and territorial governments to respond more effectively to the needs of victims of crimes. My question for the minister: can the Minister tell the House how much of that funding will be for the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a very good question because that is something that is badly needed, particularly in Nunavut. But at this time, we haven't been advised as to how much we are actually getting under that fund, so as soon as I get that I undertake to provide my colleagues the same. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the answer. The minister indicated that funding is short for victims of crime in Nunavut and I'm sure he'll agree with me, that more funding is required. In reading through the press release, it is unclear, but in Nunavut there's a perception that more funding is available for offenders who commit to the crimes. My question for the minister: will the minister commit, using as much of those funds as possible, to help the victims of crime to receive counselling? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said during my appearance in front of my colleagues in Committee of the Whole, we're looking at any way that we can utilize what we have on the ground. Whatever resources that we can find elsewhere will be much appreciated in trying to provide services for victims in particular so healing can take place with the offenders and the victims.

So that's something that my department is working with other departments, making sure that the law that we enacted will be implemented to the fullest for the benefit of all residents. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. After a crime is committed there are many more victims, and troubled victims. In the short term they receive help, but in the long term they don't seem to receive help. When I'm talking long term it could be decades. My question to the minister is: how does the Department of Justice plan to implement programs to help the victims of crimes long term? Thank you Mr. Speaker

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As I stated this is one area that we are working on in implementing the legislation that we enacted.

We're working with all the various departments, in particular Health and Social Services and Culture, Language, Elders and Youth. So, that is something that we want to do properly and we will make sure and will continue to make sure this part is addressed and make sure that it's done properly throughout Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. In the regions we have regional law societies which seem to be established, more or less, to help people who require lawyers to proceed through the judicial processes. I wonder if the minister could commit to the House to establish a victims of crimes organization in each region that will allow the victims to go there to receive counselling and advice on how to deal with their issues, short-term and long-term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) This is one area we are focusing on and is something that has to be done. That's what we will be looking at as a department, along with other departments in our government in utilizing what we have and maximizing and finding additional resources that need to be found.

Unfortunately, the Charter of Rights sets out clear rules as to who requires representation and that is something we have to provide for offenders, regardless of their background. If they can't afford one, they are required to have one, by government. That's why there are offices that represent offenders.

In the same token, we have to do our part in making sure the families are healed properly so that hopefully they won't re-offend in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 138 – 2(4): Food Mail Program

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Food Mail Program. I will talk in Inuktitut for a few minutes so Inuit people out there can understand my question.

In one of our sessions in this House, I talked about the Food Mail Program and how it is run. We were told this would be clarified by the government to see how it is going to operate in Nunavut and how the people of Nunavut can utilize the Food Mail Program. I wonder if the minister can give me some clarification on the Food Mail Program. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. (interpretation ends) Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this has been fixed bit by bit, and they have never fully resolved this issue, I have told Minister Prentice that this issue is not resolved yet, I was pleased along with the Rankin Inlet people last fall when they could finally order from Winnipeg, and likewise here in the Baffin region we experience same difficulty because we have to order from Val'Dor when Ottawa is right next door to us. Those are some of the issues we face, and I am sure Kivalliq residences are still waiting, but we are pleased for Rankin Inlet and we envy them, but we need this issue resolved, and we are fully aware of this and we will continue to lobby the federal government minister to resolve this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your first supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it just seems like it has been since the time it has been brought up, we have been having problems. I understood that there are a lot of people that write English and can speak English are already using it and ordering food from Thompson, Manitoba, from the Kivalliq region.

The stores have been given information about the Food Mail Program and they pay for the food but not for the freight. It is very good for them. However, it is not all like that here in Nunavut. I would like to urge the minister to try to resolve this problem because we would like the Kivalliq people to have advantage of the food mail.

When do we expect this program to be resolved by the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Food Mail Program was set up back in the 1970s, and it has been changed slightly last fall, and like I said to the member before that this issue is not resolved yet, and I cannot respond to his question on their behalf.

Mr. Prentice had stated in the past that this needs to be reviewed and that it would be reviewed, but I cannot respond when they are going to finish at this time, but I am sure I will need to bring it up again. It is not complete yet, because we can see where the changes should occur, the funding they use seem to go to waste, because they have to freight the food from Val'Dor to Ottawa, and that increases the costs of groceries and the time it takes ruins the food on their way.

I am sure that Kivalliq residents see this occurring also. This needs to be resolved because the foods we order have to be freshly supplied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I understand where the minister is coming from because this is a job that has to be done correctly. Can the minister go and talk to Mr. Prentice's officials in Ottawa to try to make sure this Food Mail Program is resolved so that the people of Kivalliq can get fresh food.

Yes, I think you understand that we need fresh stuff. If you were to appoint a minister to have a portfolio regarding food mail ... I think if it was started in the 1970s, that's a long time ago. I'm not saying I'm old but that has been a long, long time. I was working for the federal government in Coral Harbour at that time. It's almost 40 years ago.

So I would like to urge the minister to work with the Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to resolve this and to appoint a minister from your department, or from

the Cabinet to deal with the Food Mail Program. This is not a question; it's just a comment.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. If you have any comments, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member because this is very important for our government, and I will continue to hold on to this portfolio because I want to show the federal government how important it is to our government and I will continue to talk to Minister Prentice and I will not stop working on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Question Period is now over. Going back to the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. (interpretation) Item 10. Petitions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Item 10: Petitions

Petition 001 – 2(4): Medical Services for Sanikiluaq

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here from my constituents in Sanikiluaq. The petition has 200 signatures asking the government to maintain the community's medical travel to Winnipeg, Manitoba. I repeat, 200 signatures asking the government to maintain the community's medical travel to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing of Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Item 12: Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

Committee Report 001 – 2(4): Bill 8 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability has reviewed Bill 8, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, and wishes to report that Bill 8 was amended and reprinted is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. I seek unanimous consent to wave Rule of 68(6) and have Bill 8 moved into Committee of the Whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is asking for unanimous consent to wave Rule 68(6) and have Bill 8 moved into Committee of the Whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 8 is ready to be considered in Committee of the Whole today.

Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Premier.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 068 – 2(4): Leases and Article 24 of Nunavut Land Claims Agreement – Correction to Statement Made on March 26, 2007

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, during debate in the House I inadvertently misled the House regarding the lease of property. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement *Article 24* does cover the leases of property. I wish to withdraw my comments from the record and apologize for any confusion that may have arisen and I would like to table my letter to the members in which I correct my mistake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Please bring that document. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Minister Aglukkaq.

Tabled Document 069 – 2(4): 2005-06 Annual Report on the Tobacco Control Act

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the 2005-06 Annual Report on the *Tobacco Control Act* as per the statutory requirements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Can we have that document brought forward please? (interpretation) Thank you. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motion. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 008 – 2(4): Location of Health & Social Services Positions – Notice

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice...Location of Health and Social Services Position. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday March 29, 2007 I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Quttiktuq, that the Legislative Assembly recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services bring forward a plan to establish the client services coordinator function in the department's Pangnirtung office and relocate that office's medical travel coordination functions to Iqaluit. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 14. Notices of Motion. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Motion 009 – 2(4): Performance Audit of the Department of Health & Social Services – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 29, 2007 I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Arviat, that the Legislative Assembly recommends that the Executive Council of Nunavut, pursuant to section 47 of the *Nunavut Act*, advise the Commissioner of Nunavut to request the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a comprehensive performance audit of the financial management practices of the Department of Health and Social Services and report thereon to the Legislative Assembly as soon as practicable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Notices of Motions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Motion 010 – 2(4): Referral of Tabled Document 049 – 2(4): Discussion Paper for Ikummatiit – An Energy Strategy for Nunavut March 2007 to Committee of the Whole – Notice

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 29, 2007, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Quttiktuq, that Tabled Document 49 – 2(4) be referred to the Committee of the Whole for discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Motion 011 – 2(4): Censure of the Executive Council – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 29, 2007, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that the Executive Council of Nunavut be censured. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for the First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 1, Bill 2, Bill 3, and Bill 9, with Mr. Arreak in the chair. According to the authority vested in me by Motion 4 – 2(4) the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out.

At this time we'll take a short break and come back to the session at 1:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 11:52 and Committee resumed at 13:34*

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

Chairman (Mr. Arreak): I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 1, Bill 2, Bill 3, Bill 8, and Bill 9. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of Bill 1, and the main estimates for the Department of Education, followed by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, Finance, and the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Are we in agreement that we continue with the main estimates of the Department of Education?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 –Consideration in Committee – Education

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Picco, do you have witnesses that you would like to bring to the table? Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask the witnesses to join me at the table at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask them to join you later. Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials.

Minister Picco, for the record, please introduce your witnesses again.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased this afternoon to have at the witness table with me the Deputy Minister of the Department of Education Kathy Okpik and on my immediate right is Director of Financial Services with the Department of Education Mr. Jeff Chown. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. We were on general comments yesterday. We were at Mr. Tootoo and Mr. Curley that made their general comments. Are there any more general comments? There being none, we'll proceed to page by page review of the departmental estimates starting with page G-5 on the 2007-08 main estimates, and this includes G-6. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister Picco, and your officials, welcome.

I have a question here in regard to G-6. (interpretation ends) Homelessness Secretariat, a contribution of \$200,000. (interpretation) With this Homelessness Secretariat how many homeless people are assisted? Where do you provide the contributions in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Homeless Secretariat was under my previous portfolio in the other government of the Department of Health and Social Services and when I became the Minister of Education we transferred those monies to the Department of Education. Pam Hine acts as the Director for the Homeless Secretariat itself.

Over the past 12 months we have been able to, as the members know, move and open up a new shelter here in Iqaluit, where the majority of the homeless people are located. We've helped fund a study on homelessness in Cape Dorset. We've also worked with the Agvik Society, which is the spousal assault, family violence group, to help them do a study on homelessness for women. We've also worked with the YWCA on issues of homelessness, specifically for women. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding line item is smaller than the previous year by \$150,000. Why is that so? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had extra funds last year; the members might remember to help facilitate the transfer that we talked about from the one facility to the other facility. That's when the transfer went from the Ilitiit group to the Salvation Army. That accounted for the majority of the extra funds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we hear from the homeless individuals sometimes they're homeless because of their doings and sometimes they're homeless not at they're own perhaps due to huge arrears with the housing

association, perhaps they were kicked out. This funding that is not used. If they need assistance in personal bankruptcy in order to ... do you have any officials working on something like that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct in when we look at homelessness there are two broad definitions of homelessness: one is the absolute homelessness, and second is relative homelessness.

In the south when we see people on the street panhandling for money, for example in Winnipeg and Ottawa and so on, that's known as absolute homelessness. They don't have a place to live and they sleep on the side of the street and curbs and so on.

In Nunavut, we have what's called relative homelessness. If people were walking around sleeping on the streets and so on in Nunavut they would freeze to death. What we have is a situation of overcrowded houses where people may be sleeping 10, 12, 13, in a two or three bedroom house.

What this money here fundamentally is to do, and we are the only jurisdiction in the country other than the federal government that actually have a secretary for homelessness, is to try to help facilitate a place for these people to stay, especially in our larger centers.

Under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative Program which is the federal program, there is a little over \$1million for homelessness over about four years. That money has been used for the urban areas of Nunavut. And the only area that qualified was the City of Iqaluit. In conversation with the Mayor of Iqaluit, Mayor Sheutiapik, the majority of the funds have gone into supporting the homelessness initiative, the shelter, as well as funding the soup kitchen and looking at issues around the food bank. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister Picco for elaborating further on that. It's evident that the other communities are increasing in population, so therefore they should have homeless contributions because there are quite a few people that are homeless but they have relatives. Just because they have relatives they have places to sleep. So do you as a government provide some funding so that these people can apply for funding through that? Do you have that kind of funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we do. The money that you see there is what we have under the Homeless Secretariat and if there is a need for extra funds then I

try to reallocate that within the Department of Education right now to see if we can cover off some extra costs or needs.

I gave an example earlier, when we used money to help support the harvest program in Cape Dorset where they actually did a study on homelessness and overcrowding in houses in Cape Dorset. And as I said earlier we're working on a program right now with the Agvik Society and the Canadian YWCA on issues surrounding hidden homelessness, especially for girls and women, in our larger communities specifically right now in Iqaluit.

Right now, Mr. Chairman, it's important to point out that we do not have any facility anywhere in Nunavut for homeless women. The shelter we have here is 99 percent for men and that is a serious need in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Questions. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what I'm going to make a comment on. I asked the minister if he would work with the Housing Corporation a little closer because they're probably the ones who understand homelessness more. There are several problems here; we have working homeless people in our community due to lack of housing.

And the standard criteria that the Housing Corporation imposes, what type of home you should have for yourself; otherwise, it will not be insured or it will not be connected by the Power Corporation. There's a number of things right there.

So I would urge the department to work with the Housing Corporation because some of these working people can't build their own modest homes, like in a trailer park, or homesteads or something along that line. Not necessarily a \$240,000 house.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct, of course, and I would suggest to you probably 80 percent of Nunavut is still involved in public housing and so on because people can't afford, as the member has indicated, to have a private home.

What the Nunavut Homelessness Secretariat has been trying to do with myself as minister, it is to try to advocate on behalf of and for homeless issues. And we were successful, as I said earlier, to be able to achieve some economies of scale with a little over \$1million from our federal partner.

We have worked very cooperatively with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Part of the study, for example, that we were sponsoring in Cape Dorset last year was to look at

issues around the overcrowding in houses and how that affects not only the social wellbeing but the health of the individual and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We are on Page G-5 and G-6. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I would like to ask the minister (interpretation) I believe we extended a welcome to you already.

I would like to ask you about the new *Education Act*. Is it being coordinated by the directorate? That is my first question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Curley, I appreciate your comments yesterday, by the way, especially when we were talking about reconciling some different ideas on the *Education Act*.

The *Education Act*, I believe, is on G-7 which is under policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. You know, this particular page also has a section on development of legislation and policy including other budget coordination and so on. So I'm going to ask you, minister could you very quickly outline exactly the status of the proposed new *Education Act* from your perspective, whether or not you have a timeline now for tabling a draft legislation and if so when would that likely be done? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the *Education Act* is probably one of the most important pieces of legislation this Assembly is going to try to bring forward in this term. Just to update the members, we have completed all the community consultations and we have, as the members are aware of, a process that involves the local education authorities, the district education authorities as well as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as signatories to the land claim, involved in a steering committee.

We are in the process right now of checking off sections of the Act to ensure that we have agreement or consensus on them. One example that we don't have consensus on is the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated position of moving forward with re-establishing the Education Boards. As the members are aware the cabinet and the government has said that that's not on the table.

So when there is a dispute, there is a dispute resolution mechanism in place and that dispute resolution mechanism is to meet again as a group if there is no consensus on that, to bring it forward to ultimately to go back to the cabinet for a decision. Right now I would suggest to you that we have about 70 percent of the Act agreed to; there are about

30 percent outstanding issues. We are trying to, over the next six or seven weeks, to get consensus on those.

After that's complete then the instructions go to the drafters of the legislation and from there the drafting of the legislation would become a bill, and then the legislation would be introduced.

I am still working toward having that introduction sometime at the end of May, the first week of June, that's our goal right now. As the members have said in the House we want to make sure that when we bring that bill forward that it's the best bill that we have to do it. So I don't want to rush the legal drafter. I don't want to get into pushing a decision for that timeline because I still have the file to bring forward.

Two questions remain on the timing. The number one question on timing is when I bring it forward in June to do first and second reading that means that it would be referred to the committee. Would the committee hold hearings in July and August? Or would they wait until September? Would it be better for me to bring it forward in the October session and then the members would then have then an opportunity to have hearings after that in the fall, and in the winter.

So those are the types of things when we get to that point we would have to look at, as the minister and the department, but also with the Cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I knew that earlier that you have your work cut out for yourself with all these huge issues.

I think we need to help in defining exactly what we mean by regional boards, or local boards, or school boards. I am not 100 percent sure what we're talking about when school boards are being talked about. I have never seen local schools boards in my life in Nunavut. I assume we're talking about regional boards, is that what you're alluding to? What Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated wants to do? Because we have to be very clear that we have never had local school boards in communities.

I don't know what we have right now. Could the minister outline what it is that we do have in the communities? Maybe that'll help me with the meaning of regional boards. If the district educational authorities are not school boards, why is it that they don't have that distinction? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think what the terminology is being used is that in the past we used to have three regional education boards; in the Baffin, the Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot.

The member is correct. It wasn't a regional board, as such when we talk about school boards in the traditional sense, for example, the Yellowknife School District Number One, which the member would be very familiar with. That's not what we have at the community level; we have regional boards.

There has been some move, as I suggested earlier, to bring back the three regional boards and that's not something that we're inclined to do as a government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. That clarifies my question that regional boards will not come back, nor will the local school boards be established.

What are we going to have since we won't have regional control? We won't have local school boards. What is it then that we will have in our communities if the new Act is finally tabled in the House? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, we're trying to develop that right now with the *Education Act*. Right now under the current *Education Act* every community has a district education authority, which is the duly elected body representing the community itself.

Under the current *Education Act* the district education authority sets the hours of school instruction, sets the language of instruction, on bad days weather days close the schools, are involved in private contracting. For example, they may have a contract to provide school bussing services, and so on. In actuality, in an ex officio way they act as a school board. Under the current enabling legislation they have all the powers of a district education authority.

What we're trying to do in the new *Education Act* is to provide more opportunities to take over more responsibility for education at the local level. That may include, for example, terms and conditions of the school itself, looking at more involvement in the hiring practices at the school. There are things that the local DEAs have asked for.

One of the things we don't want to move towards is to duplicate efforts. So for example, we don't want to have a position where you would have a DEA in Clyde River advertising for teachers and principals competing against the DEA in Pond Inlet, competing against Igloolik, competing with Whale Cove, and so on, there are no economies in scale in doing that.

What we want to be able to do is facilitate more community empowerment and not community encumbering the education authority. I think we're getting more and more consensus on that.

At the same time we have helped set up the DEA Coalition, which is a forum for all the DEAs in Nunavut to act in an advocacy role for DEA concerns and issues that they would be able to present in that forum. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, I appreciate the minister's comments. I have part of the clarification that I want because there have been local DEAs that are to have certain responsibilities as the minister indicated, you know setting out the schools and those other categories.

Why is it that the local school DEAs are not authorized to hire teachers, or recruit them? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The DEAs right now, and have been for a considerable amount of time, are involved in the early aspects of the hiring of teachers. They have someone from the DEA who would be involved in the hiring process; the screening of the applicants, and so on.

What the DEA doesn't have is the authority to pay the teachers, meaning when they hire teachers from the south they don't have the logistic, or the administrative, or the financial ability in most cases to be able to facilitate that. That includes ensuring that the collective agreements that are in place, whether it's with the NEU or with NTA, that the *Public Service Act* is followed and so on.

The involvement of the recruitment, and so on, of teachers is carried out at the local level and DEAs are involved. However, they don't actually facilitate the intricacies of the administrative process of payments and so on of the employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. So it leads to my second point that you appear to be saying that you are affording the community empowerment but how can you really empower communities if you don't provide that through legislation and policy? Could you explain that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member has raised what the crux of the problem is here, or maybe a bit of a disagreement.

What we're saying is that we believe, I believe as minister, the government believes that stronger DEAs means stronger education, it means stronger communities. So I want to

move forward to be able to empower DEAs to do a lot of the things that they have been asking for. However, I don't want to get to the position of encumbering them.

So for example, if I put in the legislation, in the Act, that all DEAs will hire and fire all teachers, for example, and will be in charge of the superannuation, would be making the deductions, and so on and so forth, you would have 25 payment agencies in 25 different Nunavut communities. And, a lot of communities may not have the ability; may not have the human resource people, the HR people, to be able to interpret a collective agreement; may not have the person to be able to cut the cheques, and so on.

So what I'm proposing to do with the legislation, and this is some of the discussion that we have, is that whatever is in the Act, I would have enabling legislation. And what that would mean is that let's say the DEA in Rankin Inlet wrote to the minister and said, "Minister, we have the financial resources and the human resources to be able to be involved in the hiring processes. We would like to take on more of that responsibility." So in the Act, it would be enabling because the DEA would be able to write me and say, "This is what we would like to do." We would be able to say, "Okay. Based on what you have available in Rankin Inlet you can take on those extra duties." Grise Fiord, being the smaller community, may not want to have that responsibility, and of course, if they wrote us, they may not have the human resources and the capacity to do that.

So that would still allow the check and balance to make sure that all the schools in the communities are on an equal footing. That is the direction we are taking right now. That is not in place in the Act right now, the member is correct. That is not there and that is one of the things we are trying to do through the legislative process and the new *Education Act*. It would empower communities with that opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I appreciate the minister's response. Again, that leads to the question why, I suppose we will have to see exactly what the community empowerment means as well as offloading some of the community and educational responsibility to local.

I cannot ever really understand that we would do that without a legal basis to off load programs because surely there is such thing as transferring personnel from the government to local. You just explained to us why should the DEA take on more responsibility they don't have. It really depends on which ones you are transferring. You have the authority to transfer the personnel to those local DEAs like Iqaluit.

Why should the communities that are able be prevented from doing so in carrying out the full aspects? For instance, the economies of scale used are normally, we understand when you are able and have the capacity to do so, you are given that ability. For instance, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay and other communities are probably getting to the point where they can be given a whole lot more authority but why would you keep them from doing so because communities like Grise Fiord are not ready?

These communities are really not comparable to a place that is more advanced. They are prepared to take on the burden that the Department of Education is carrying right now and I am surprised that you still are defending the central control instead of local control. I would like the minister to explain why should Iqaluit or Rankin Inlet be held back because one of the smaller communities is not quite at that level yet? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is interesting to hear what the member is saying because on one hand, the member is advocating and agreeing with the position that I have been trying to articulate on. On the other hand, he comes back and is disagreeing.

What I am trying to say, for the record, very clearly is that I don't want, as minister, and this government doesn't want as a government, to get into community encumbering, not community empowering. In the past, we have seen where things have been, as the member has pointed out, and I think the member is really 100 percent correct on, is downloading services and programs to communities and expecting them to pick that up.

As governments go through different transfers and phases, maybe the dollar values that we are able to do the encumbering and empowering at the beginning is not there later on. A lot of the communities don't have the resources to be able to take on those responsibilities. So what we are saying is we want to, as the member has just indicated, is to help build that capacity, where a DEA and community has the capacity to take on those responsibilities, that will be articulated in the Act.

Then on written submission to the minister, they would say, "We are in the process right now and we have the ability to be able to be more involved in the Human Resource capacity of our schools. We would like to take this responsibility on." Then we would be able to do that in the Act. It would be enabling legislation.

I don't expect that every community in Nunavut, number one, would want to do that, and number two, has the ability as the member has suggested. So, I am in agreement with that, what the member is saying. So we are interested in community empowering, not community encumbering. We need to build that capacity at the community level. That is part of what we are trying to do right now, through the Act.

That is why we need enabling legislation, and that brings us to the crux of the problem we are experiencing right now with some of the delays. How do we work out what is needed? We want to make sure, when legislation comes forward, we do exactly what we are trying to say we want to do in the advocacy and the capacity role, and not what the member is trying to say may happen, because we agree with him.

But that is not what we want to happen where we encumber a community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's Statement. I have never seen any empowerment that really works during the last few years because the agreement was never really been backed up by any major comprehensive policy and legislation. In the end they disappear like any season when the spring comes through they melt with the snow and everything disappeared, couldn't really be backed up because there was no legislation policy to back it up. That's really what these empowerment initiatives are all about.

What I am saying is, and I was once told that if you're not ready today, you are never going to be ready. In Iqaluit, if they are not ready today to have either more autonomy given to them and administer educational policy and all that type of thing, moving towards education or school board, it probably will never happen unless we have a standardized or same policy to be applied through all Nunavut communities.

But I don't think this will come about in a short time at all. I think that's going to take quite a long time if we waited until all the other communities are ready before we get some of the communities like Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay and larger centres that are ready which would off load some of the pressures as far as the case the headquarters are facing where they can take on more of the authority. So that's what I mean. Why do you feel you would have to wait until all the other communities are ready before more autonomy can be given to those places that are ready and really have a capacity to take on the job? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Maybe I'm not being clear. Again, it seems what I say; he is looking at a different angle. I'm saying left, he's saying right and we are agreeing it's in the center. What I am saying, maybe I can try it again. When we develop the legislation, the legislation is developed, and what we are trying to say is this: if the community would like to take on additional responsibilities, in the new legislation, it will be an enabling legislation, where I will have a process in the legislation and will be able to say: Rankin Inlet, as a community, you would like to do more on the Human Resources side of things, meaning they'd like to be involved in a fuller process of hiring teachers as an example.

They would write the department as a mechanism and say, "We would like to take on more roles and responsibilities." We would then see if they have the capacity to do that. Maybe Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit and Qikiqtarjuaq would like to do that and they have the ability. Maybe Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay don't want to. So, we wouldn't be forcing anything. We would have to provide that check and balance because when they would like to take something on, we would ensure that they have the ability logistically, administratively and financially to be able to do that.

So that's what we are suggesting in developing the legislation. We want to empower, not encumber. Because, again, I agree with the member when we talk about in the past, we're working on empowering communities rather than encumbering communities, not giving them the opportunity to grow. That is the way that legislation would be developed and put in place. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Yes, I appreciate the minister's clarification. I think it really is a timing issue. I think that's what he is talking about. I don't want to try and pretend that we had the same interpretation of what Nunavummiut want. Surely you know from the community that communities are our priorities just, they're not all the same, I agree.

Legislation will be the one that will be clear and that will be a standard and we look forward to seeing those standards been finally tabled.

I have other questions that I asked the minister the other day, I alluded to the fact that Inuit language is being asked for by many communities to be used primarily for language of instruction. Where does the minister himself stand with respect to the issue of language of instruction which should be applied throughout Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his comments. I think we agree in the process we're empowering communities. Again, stronger DEAs would make stronger communities. Before I answer that question, I just want to make an observation.

It is same thing when you look at tax based municipalities. There's only one tax based municipality in all of Nunavut, and that's Iqaluit. More than 20 years ago it became a tax based municipality when its population was almost 60 percent of what it is today. Now we have Cambridge Bay that recently in the media has talked about how they could come forward as a tax based municipality.

That hasn't been raised, for example, in Rankin which is the second largest community. Do they want to do that? Should they be forced to do that? Should the legislation be empowering, to enable that community itself to decide if it should move to a tax based status?

That's what we're saying with the *Education Act*, if the DEA wants to take on more roles and responsibilities they would have that opportunity under the new Act because they would be able to write the minister and say, we would like to do this and here is what we have in place to be able to accomplish what we would like to do, and here's where we would like the Department of Education to help us, whether that's in the policy side or on the administrative side.

Quickly, on the language of instruction, Mr. Chairman, the language of instruction and the bilingual education model as all the members know, and I am sure Mr. Curley, among many members have read the Berger Report which has endorsed the bilingual education strategy which was introduced by this minister and this government in 2004.

Mr. Berger points out in his report that the direction of a dual language model and the language of instruction, the bilingual model itself is the correct model to move forward with. We have three types of the bilingual education model, and each community decides, not the Minister of Education. The DEAs decide which will be the language of instruction under the Bilingual Education Strategy.

We have three models which is a two way dual model system, we have the immersion model, and we also have what's called the Qulliq model and those three models depends on each community, for example, if a community has more English speakers, something like the Iqaluit situation, they would look at taking on probably the two way, or dual model system.

If you're in, for example, Kugluktuk or Cambridge Bay with Inuinnaqtun, they would look at the immersion model of the language of instruction. Most other communities in Nunavut would have the Qulliq model of instruction and we have already talked about that.

That process and the language of instruction have already been passed by Cabinet and the Bilingual Education Strategy has already been tabled here in the House and I am sure the members are aware of it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I thank the minister for the response. I think there is quite a lot of interest in that from our constituency. I think the impact really has yet to be seen, so you know when you deal with something of that kind, how is it going to impact on the students for post-secondary education ability?

When we have three choices it really sounds good, but do you really, as a minister, do you feel that from K to 12 if students have gone through all these three models or three choices will have the best tools to go into post secondary education and then on or these people that are continuing to rely on local language instruction, are they primarily targeting themselves for local market in terms of jobs and so on rather than preparing themselves for the broader educational opportunities.

So has that been thoroughly researched that we have the best option? So we're not just opening it up, like one young student down south, Inuit student said "I believe we have too many choices right now."

So, as a result of that, they are not working as hard as they should. So what will the impact on all our graduates be, you know... if we're not prepared to enter into the global criteria, or to those needed to challenge the world, these are the kinds of things that I think about when we're ... in some areas would we be weakening the *Education Act*? Or we're going to have Nunavut made only, Nunavut employees only? That sort of thing.

I need your thoughts on that because I think there will be tremendous impact on our students with so many, not standardized but three different types, as you indicated earlier. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of the three models that we talked about, again it's up to each of the communities through the local DEA, to decide what should be the language of instruction at the school, at the local school in a given community.

All three models outcome at the end of the day is to provide a bilingual student who would be proficient in their first, the child learns English, French, or Inuktitut and a secondary language whether that be English, French, or Inuktitut.

Mr. Berger in his report as the members know and his panel of experts believe that is the way to move, to move towards having language nests, move toward having the bilingual strategy in place. Mr. Berger points out that it could take 15 to 20 years to do that.

We have to revolutionize and revitalize what is occurring right now in our school system. Mr. Berger points out that since 2003 and before the education system and the system that we had in place was not turning out the outcomes that we needed. He does suggest though that since 2004 with the bilingual education model that we have introduced and those three types models that we talked about: the *Qulliq*, the Immersion and the dual or two way model, is the correct way to move.

So each outcome would be to have a bilingual student. Again, Mr. Chairman, as the member has pointed out before, it's very important that second language instruction begin in the home. It's important that we continue to have for example, Inuktitut spoken in the home, what happens in places like Iqaluit, when you have Inuktitut spoken in the home, you have what's called a passive flexible language, and what that means is that, when I'm home for example, if my wife or I say to my kids Kujjangajuktuq, they are going to come back and say "it's up side down Dad," but they won't say Kujjangajuq, however their comprehension is there.

And that's what we see when we look at the loss of language as it is occurring. Now Mr. Curley smiled at that because he knows there may be some *Kutak* there as the minister, but that's okay, I can take that.

I think Mr. Chairman again, and I'm sure that Mr. Curley has read the Berger report the outcome over a 15-year period; it means a huge influx of money to be able to deliver that

outcome. I think Mr. Berger says about \$20,000,000 and that's part of the reason why NTI has gone to court to sue the federal government, is to be able to move these models forward and that's what we are doing.

This year alone, Mr. Chairman in the last few months we've held language of instruction workshops throughout the Territory and as the members know, I just recently announced in the House an extra \$10,000 for each DEA to look at that Language of Instruction and have the language experts in their communities involved in that process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-5. Education Branch Summary. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Mr. Chairman, I really very much appreciate the minister's frank discussion on that policy. I do want to ask you, are there more choices now for bilingual students graduating out of high school? That's one question.

The second point that I want to raise is, I have not fully seen yet, that my culture, my language really has any significant benefit in the public service, or whatnot, in the workforce in Nunavut.

I think I am a pretty good Inuktitut speaker but it has really has never been one of the criteria, or what not, required in any jobs that are available.

Will there now be more choices for Inuit students graduating with the Inuit language and as proficient as I am because I have not benefited from that. I see more unilingual people in high profile jobs, or boards of corporations. So is the minister now saying with that choice, fundamental changes will be made within the employers and government jobs, the Inuit language, are we not deceiving our young people that they will have more choices now in the government workforce with that?

I need the minister to clearly address that so that we're not ... I fully support my culture, my language ... but really I have gone along in jobs and anywhere that I've worked not because of my ability to understand my culture, my society, Inuit values, and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. I had pretty much part of all those but I'm saying to you it really hasn't been a requirement in any jobs that I ever had. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wouldn't strongly disagree with the member. I would strongly argue against his statement. What I would say and suggest to the member is that Minister Tapardjuk is in the process of bringing in two very strong pieces of language legislation. We are moving forward as a government, the Premier is saying he would like to have the public service bilingual and he has given a firm date for that.

I believe, from my own perspective, and my children, I keep telling them that you'll have a better opportunity for employment if you can speak two languages; if you can speak Inuktitut and English and be able to be literate in both.

I think it's very important that we as leaders, as Members of the Assembly, endorse and support Inuktitut at all levels of our society, our community, and the government.

So I would disagree with the member in that part of it. I would suggest to you that if you have the ability to have Inuktitut skills, that the member has said he has, then I would suggest to you that there would be a better opportunity in Nunavut.

What I'd like to do at this point is ask the deputy minister if she would like to speak to that point as an Inuktitut first language speaker and see how that affects her job and is she able to carry out her position, or seen more of it because she's had the opportunity of being in several senior positions, including the Deputy Minister of Human Resources, which is in charge of hiring people for the public service. Ms Okpik.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps if I can answer by saying it in Inuktitut, because I can speak Inuktitut and that's beneficial for my job because there are a lot of people out there in the public that I can speak with in Inuktitut. Also, before I became a Deputy Minister for Education and the other department I was a teacher. I taught the lower grade kids and that's why I got the job because I was able to speak Inuktitut.

Those are the answers that I can give right now. If I'm bilingual, whoever is bilingual, whether it's French, English, or Inuktitut they get a bilingual bonus, because it's recognized that you can speak two languages. I know that some jobs require bilingual employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik, for your response. (interpretation ends) For the record, don't misunderstand me. I appreciate the culture of Inuit but I just see that it hasn't really been fundamentally recognized in any major job forces.

For instance if you look at the government's advertisement for a job, it may have stated in there, "The Inuit beneficiaries will be given the first opportunity." It may so be, but really in the end, the numbers don't speak all that good about that.

So what I'm trying to say at the same time is that I think unless we have the bilingual status, for instance, on all these civil service jobs like they do in the federal public service, bilingualism means a lot to the French Canadians. I think it has helped them a lot. Unless we have a similar policy that's saying we are having an Inuit language clearly stated in that legislation as fundamentally part of the job requirement of the public service

or whatnot, are we really just saying we're hoping that your Inuktitut language skills will help you but it's never really been a requirement?

So it is based on that and I'm asking the minister, it's like we have a whole lot of choices, hopefully, that eventually that will be translated into something that can really benefit those that chose to go through bilingual programs in Nunavut.

So I just want the minister to clearly understand that because many of us are really quite bilingual but we have not really seen that in the job descriptions and whatnot of the government. So can the minister reassure us again that we will see the light of day someday in the future? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation) We're on Education. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It takes time for a society to develop, especially around the language in the bilingual model that we've talked about.

Mr. Berger, in his report, pointed out that in 1968, 1969, 1970, when Prime Minister Trudeau decided that there should be bilingual public service members across Canada, whether you're in Cape Breton, or you're in British Columbia, or you're in Nunavut, or in the Northwest Territories that the French Canadians should have the opportunity and the right to be able to communicate in their own language with their federal government.

At that time there was a disproportionate number of English speakers. The money that the federal government at that time put into the program, as Mr. Berger pointed out, and now, two and three generations later, it's come to be a fact that having both languages, English and French, would give you a better opportunity to move forward with jobs and positions, and so on, which wasn't the case in the late 60s.

So I think when you look at where we are right now in Nunavut since 1999, to see that you have several of your deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, and senior directors in government being bilingual and being Inuk, I think is an important road and step to take. And I think we will grow with it as we move forward with the bilingual models that we're talking about. Inuktitut will become more important with the language legislation that we've talked about tabling also.

So I agree with Mr. Curley that sometimes it doesn't seem where it is important. We know it's more important and I think this government has taken the proper steps in ensuring that there is not only viability in having Inuktitut as a language but it should be a priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We're on page G-5. Education. Branch Summary. Directorate. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on G-5 in regard to some of the questions that Mr. Curley already asked but if we are going to go to

school and we have to be bilingual and if we tried to be bilingual because we don't see social workers speaking Inuktitut. I think they have to be able to speak Inuktitut.

They have to not just have the language ability but they also have to know the culture of the Inuit as well as the Baffin Correctional Centre employees and the wildlife officers. Like income support workers have to be able to communicate in Inuktitut and know the culture of the Inuit people, that's what I would like to see.

What we are saying is we worry about the high school students because we don't know whether they are going to be able to enter the university programs or not or trades schools. We worry about some of them because, like Tagak mentioned, there are too many choices. Sometimes they don't complete their math and they get into grade 12.

Under Directorate, I would like to ask a question. Are you planning right now whether we can have in place five or six compulsory subjects that they have to pass before they graduate from grade 12. The mathematics does not involve just doing numbers but it has to do with your thinking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. We are on Department of Education, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To graduate whatever grade, like grade 10, grade 11, and grade 12; let's say we use the three high school grades. There are different levels in math, as the member is aware, you could be doing applied, or basic math where you might be doing adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing whole numbers, fractions and so on.

You may also be involved in doing the second level which may be algebra and geometry, different types of statistics and algorithms and so on. You may be doing the higher level in math, which may be a university course equivalent.

At the grade 11 and grade 12 level, and at grade 12 specifically the students has to write the Alberta Departmental Exam. A combination of the Alberta Departmental Exam and their own school mark in their home community schools is weighted just for that student to pass, and they need to have so many credits to pass the grade 12.

So that's the standards that are in place. If they graduate with the departmentals then that grade 12 is recognized across Canada and is recognized as is the transferability of that credit to any university or college in Canada.

On the income support workers that the member talked about earlier, and I think he made a good point, I think you were picking it up with social workers, or income support under the department. All of our income support workers are Inuk and are needed to speak in Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I only asked one question but he did not respond to the question that I posed. In regard to when you use the Alberta curriculum and you get so many credits and then you can complete your grade 12 with that departmental exam.

But the question I was posing, what kind of compulsory subjects are there in order to complete the 100 credits. So what are the mandatory subjects in order to graduate grade 12? Could you specify if there is none? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member again when you start grade 10, grade 11, and grade 12 you start earning so many credits towards your final completion of grade 12. As an example at the grade 12 level you have to have either English Language Arts 31 or 30-2, you also need to have 10 credits to grade 12 level to do that.

Also as I said earlier the grade 12 departmental exams are written which is equivalent from the Alberta exams, and the same as Alberta and Northwest Territories. You could write those exam courses again depending if the 30-1 English for example, or the 30-2 English would have to be passed. And also as we said earlier, the math. At the same time the combination 50/50 of the final exams departmentals is weighted with the mark from your school. So hopefully that helps answer the member's question in more detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Honourable Ed. Picco. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope that this is the last clarification question that I would like to ask. What are the compulsory credits you need to do, you need to pass in order to get your Alberta Curriculum Graduation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Honourable Ed. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again to graduate from high school the Nunavut students are required the credits of the grade 12 level and either English Language Arts 30-1 or 30-2. So that's the answer and of course it's the number of credits they need for the three years. They work on credits each year but they need to pass those specifically to get their grade 12 pass. Hopefully that clarifies the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Page G-5. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned in my opening comments a lot about the *Education Act* and I know the minister said that he would very happy to give us an update on that if he was asked. And as that division or the director of the division that is dealing with the development of legislation and that, I'd like to ask the minister to give

us the status on the new *Education Act*, and if he has an idea of when it will be introduced here in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we just discussed that at great length with the *Education Act* and the time frame and what has occurred and everything I can again recite goals for the information again for the record if needed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can he indicate when he plans on bringing it forward into the House? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I read with interest over the last couple of days hearing Mr. Tootoo talking about ensuring when that legislation is brought forward that it meets the criteria and that it's done right the first time. And that's what we're trying to do as I said earlier to Mr. Curley.

About 70 percent of the Act is complete right now. There are some outstanding issues with our partners Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated through the steering committee and we're working those out to get some consensus. We haven't begun to draft the Act yet, we need to be able to complete that work first, the policy side of the equation.

So if all that goes well I could be in a position to table the Act in May, but if I do that in May, then nothing would happen with the Act until the next fall in September of course because we're into the summer June, July, and August. I doubt that we would be holding public hearings or so on in our communities during the summer time.

It probably would be better, more expedient for me, if I actually brought the Act forward in October and had it read first and second time referred it to the committee and you would do your hearings on it. Again, I want to ensure that the Act is complete. So that's our timeframe. I'm still working towards June, but it will be you know, in that six-month period.

So it will be either in June or this fall. Again, depending on how we work out not only the logistics but some of the administrative issues with the Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Your TV audience says you're chewing gum. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to hear that the minister likes to read what I say. Maybe he's not listening so he's got to read. Mr. Chairman, he indicated that

it's 70 percent done and they haven't started drafting the Act yet but the business plan indicates that the department is developing the regulations, policies, and procedures to go along with the new *Elections Act*.

I'm just wondering, usually, as we saw with the *Wildlife Act*, those regulations are developed after the Act is brought forward and passed. So I'm just wondering if you could explain how or why they're doing regulations before the Act is even ... they said they haven't even started drafting it yet, then how could they be doing the regulations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. We will need the bells before we vote on this branch summary, so standby.

Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question and I always read in here what the member says. I take it very serious.

Just very quickly, Mr. Chairman, what I'm trying to say is that on the *Education Act* itself, we haven't began the drafting instructions, meaning it hasn't gone to a lawyer to have the proper legalese put into place. We have signed off several areas, for example, under policy development for a new Act and I could give you some examples, like hours of instruction, inclusive schooling, and so on.

The regulations of the Act itself, after the drafting instructions are given to the lawyer, then we would do the regulations also. A good example is the question Mr. Curley had raised earlier on the power of the district education authority, their roles and responsibilities. Once we have the policy developed for the Act, then there would be regulations that would go along with that, indicating, for example, what the drafting instructions would be under the regulation.

So we would do that in conjunction and parallel, not as separate things, unlike the *Wildlife Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the minister be willing to commit to providing those draft regulations at the same time as he introduces the new Act? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would hope to be in a position to be able to do that. If I commit to doing what the member's asking, then I may not be ready to do that in June but I would be able to, for sure, have it in the fall. And that's one of the considerations I'm looking at right now when I talked about logistically bringing the Act

forward when I have not only the policy supports but the regulatory supports, too, in the Act.

So if I commit to doing what the member wants, then for sure I can say almost 90 percent that I won't be in a position to deal with the Act in June. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister has indicated that they're looking at it logistically and administratively and stuff with dealing with the Act, itself. He forgot one of the things he always usually throws in there as well, and that's financially.

I am just wondering if they've looked at any financial implications that the 78 percent of what they have so far could have on the government. Will there be financial implications as a result of what they're looking at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the development of any legislative process, you have to have a financial component; what those costs would be to the government. That's part of the process that we're involved in right now with the Act is costing out some of those issues with policy there that we want to incorporate into the Act.

We haven't completed it because we haven't completed the Act yet. We're still, as I said earlier, looking at, for example, some of the minority language rights issues, which we haven't completed yet. We're also looking at issues under the DEA rules and regulations. For example, we haven't cost those out. And we're looking at some of the things under the *Public Services Act*, the teacher exemptions, and so on.

Those types of things haven't been completed yet so we haven't completed the costing of the Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to hear that they're doing that in conjunction with developing the legislation. I would assume then if the minister would be in a position, whenever he does bring forward the legislation, whether it is in the spring or the fall, that they would have an idea of the cost implications to the government as a result of that legislation? Assuming if what he is saying is correct, that he wouldn't be in the position to provide that information as well. So my question is will he at that time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are three steps with the process of the legislation. One is the consultative phase, and we've completed that. Now, we've taken what we've heard and are developing policies and regulations around it. And third, is to have that policy and regulations put into the bill.

A component of that is to cost out the bill. So I would commit to the House, once the bill is ready to be brought forward, there will be a price tag attached to that bill, and that would form part of the Bill too. So before I can get to the House with it, I have to go back to Cabinet and say, "Here is what I think the bill is going to cost." And then you need to have support for that because you can't bring the bill forward with cost implications and not have the funding place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister also indicated earlier that they're working out some things that they don't agree with on the *Education Act* between the department and NTI and also the other stakeholders involved there as well, Nunavut Teachers Association and the DEAs.

Can he indicate what types of fundamental areas do they have disagreements on in regard to the legislation they are developing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier, we're looking at areas around the roles and responsibilities for DEAs. We're also looking at some of the issues with the organizational structure, itself, how we move forward in the *Public Service Act*, and the teacher's exemptions that have been requested by some groups in that Act. I don't see these as really major stumbling blocks. We want to try to reach consensus with our partners. That's what we're trying to do. We do have a dispute mechanism in place if we can't get an agreement at that level.

So that's where we are right now. So hopefully, at the end of the day we will be able to finish the Act and have consensus on the majority of the act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister touched on a couple of issues dealing with the DEAs and things like that but I also understand, as he has indicated, there are some fundamental areas of disagreement between the department and NTI. I was just wondering if he could let us know what those areas are and how they look at coming to a consensus on it or if they feel they will or they'll just agree to disagree. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working with NTI again on some of these issues. One is the language on instruction and how we can accommodate the wishes of NTI; at the same time looking at the Berger Report as a landmark study which both government and NTI endorse, which talked about having a bilingual model. So that's one of the disputes that we are having right now that when we move on with the resolution and proceed with that resolution with NTI.

At the end of the day, as we come closer and closer to trying to wind up the work on the *Education Act* we need to move forward and hopefully we won't have to go to conflict resolution on a lot of the outstanding issues. The majority of it, as I said earlier, about 70 percent, is complete. So at the end of the day if we can't get an agreement, we have to bring a bill forward to the House and let the members vote on it. At the end of the day, that's where the bill will be approved or rejected here in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know in the first go-around of the *Education Act* in the last assembly, one of the concerns that I raised, it was brought to my attention, was that the DEA for the Trois Soleil School had brought in an opinion that there was some constitutionality issues with the way that the legislation was drafted. I am just wondering if the minister could indicate if those issues have been taken care of and we won't see those issues crop up again this time around. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Canadian Constitution the minority language rights for French speakers, and particularly what the member is talking about, is guaranteed. There's nothing in our legislation that we can do or allow to do that would constitutionally override that. We are in discussions right now, one of the outstanding issues is the Francophone minority language rights and I've had good discussions with CFSN representing the Francophone population in Nunavut.

That work is continuing. I believe we are going to have an adequate resolution to this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope the minister is right. That was a major issue last time even though it didn't get brought out as much of an issue, but that could have been a major legal issue, they could have caused problems. I don't want to see that happen again.

I am just wondering, I know the minister has said there have been extensive consultations taking place on this piece of legislation. I'm just wondering if he could give us an idea to let us know what the cost associated with the department's consultations and other

activities relating to the development of this new *Education Act* have been to date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just looking at some numbers here, the majority of expenses, the members know, have been funded internally by the Department of Education. We expect the net cost of 2006-07 to be about \$600,000. For 2005-06 we spent about \$349,000, so at the end of the day, we'll be around \$800,000 for the bill. That includes everything from the legislative point of view to the drafting to community consultations and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: I know it's been a long day. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad I don't get bills like that.

I know one of the things that also was a bone of contention the last time around was that the DEAs didn't feel and other stakeholders didn't feel that they were given an opportunity or an explanation to what types of changes were being made and why they were being made to the Act.

I know the minister will more than likely agree, sometimes you make changes for whatever reason, not everyone's going to be happy with those changes but at least they have the courtesy to let them know what it is and why, those changes were made.

So I guess we know would the minister commit to ensuring that this time around that process has been gone through with the stakeholders so that they are aware what changes the department is making to the *Education Act*, and why those changes were made. Will he commit to doing that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not only do I commit to doing it, I have been doing it. I met with the DEA coalition at least twice in the last six months.

I've had an opportunity to have met with every local DEA, had three different regional meetings within the last two and a half years, and the DEA coalition is also involved in part of the working group when we are developing those, not only the language for the *Education Act* but getting their input on some of the policy and other issues that we're trying to implement and integrate into the piece of legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, That's good to hear that things are learned from past mistakes, because as I indicated in my opening comments, last time around the

DEAs were all sent a copy of a draft piece of legislation, and were asked to let the department know what they thought about it and they had a couple of weeks to get it done.

You know, that time when we were having public hearings in Cambridge Bay and we met with the mayor and council at the time there, and they just said that, we don't, this is a volunteer board, we don't have the time to sit down in two weeks to be able to go through a piece of legislation and adequately respond to it. So I think that using that process throughout will get a lot more buy in and comfort from the stakeholders, and hopefully help things progress a little better than they did last time.

The minister indicated he had some meetings with the DEA Coalition. He's mentioned also there is a steering committee. I'm just wondering if he could give us just a general indication, or an idea of what the relationship is between the coalition and the steering committee is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me tell you, again, I'll try and keep my answer short for the benefit of the members.

The steering committee and the DEA Coalition, the DEA Coalition is the representative body of the DEAs across Nunavut. The members may remember when I met with them almost a year ago now, last spring, I suggested at that time that here's an opportunity if we could get representatives of the DEAs to sit together as a smaller group, so that we could have individual meetings. And then they could facilitate information being received out to the member DEAs; they were in agreement with that. And that's where the DEA Coalition came forward.

So the DEA Coalition works as if it were as an advisory group to bounce ideas off. As the member indicated earlier, they're not always pleased with everything that we've brought forward. We can't please every group, or whatever, but we're trying to do the best we can to get that type of consensus.

The steering committee, again, consists of interdepartmental staff, NTI people, as well as DEA members. Again, there's another group that is affiliated with the coalition that has the DEA members but we also have, for example, NTI and some of the regional organizations on them. That group, again, we use as a conduit to develop policy ideas on some of the areas that we've heard from different areas on the *Education Act* to try to get a consensus.

So there's a cooperative model between both groups and the Department of Education, and I would suggest NTI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We're on page G-5. Education Summary. Directorate. I may give you ten minutes for your questions. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to use all of it. Next speaker is Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope you weren't directing that warning at me. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials to the House.

I want to follow up on a line of questioning that my colleague, Mr. Alagalak, had earlier about homelessness in Nunavut. The minister mentioned a different category the definitions of homelessness, and I think I heard him say absolute homelessness, relative homelessness, and hidden homelessness. Could the minister clarify, there are those three categories of homelessness; are there any other categories of homelessness in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I think those questions were answered earlier but I will let Minister Picco decide on it. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for Mr. Arvaluk, again, earlier on the question he had asked on me on 100 credits; the student needs 100 credits and I gave the major core courses, for example, that usually need to be passed to graduate grade 12. So that's for Mr. Arvaluk's information.

It's actually very interesting, there are two designations that the federal government and homelessness advocates use to illustrate the categories of homelessness: absolute homelessness and relative homelessness. Absolute homelessness is what you see in the southern cities, for example, in Ottawa, in Winnipeg, and in Toronto where people are living in sleeping bags on the streets and so on.

What we have in Nunavut, which is no less more shocking, or no less more important is relative homelessness and that's because in Nunavut, if you are homeless and you're on the streets you are going to freeze to death. In Nunavut relative homelessness means when you have 10, or 12, or 13 people in a three-bedroom house sleeping in shifts and so on.

In Iqaluit we actually have absolute homelessness and it's the only community we have actually identified where we actually have absolute homelessness. We have a shelter here that is full every night and we've actually enlarged the shelter, as the members know, from about 12 beds to 25 beds, which is almost full every night. As the community continues to grow, we have more and more people who fall through the cracks and are marginalized in society. There are different reasons for being homeless, as the members know.

So hopefully that helps answer the member's question on the definition of absolute homelessness and relative homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I knew those two definitions but the minister also used another word called hidden homelessness when he was responding to my colleague.

So I was hoping for some clarification here, hidden may actually mean relative homelessness.

I wonder if the minister could tell us, as the part of Homelessness Secretariat, have they collected data on the absolute and relative homelessness figures by community in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I say hidden homelessness, I was talking in relative terms again to the relative homeless situation in Nunavut, where homelessness is really hidden because we don't see, maybe in a given community Clyde River, or Pond Inlet, or wherever the community may be there may be hidden homeless because you wouldn't see them on the streets. Nationally they would be considered relative but in Nunavut we know they're hidden because of overcrowding in the houses and so on.

Studies on homelessness have been done in the past two years specific to specific groups. We help fund the Harvest Society in Cape Dorset to look at the issue of homelessness in their community specifically and right now as I said earlier we are involved in a process with the YWCA and the Baffin Regional Agvik Society and looking at specific issues around homelessness for women. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. When we were dealing with the Nunavut Housing Corporation we learned that they are over 3,000 houses short in Nunavut and that number is growing yearly. If we use their figure that they used for the average 3.96 persons per household, we are 3,500 houses short and if you multiply those two numbers that's a lot of relative homelessness in Nunavut.

I know when the government goes to Ottawa and talks about the housing crisis in Nunavut they use the terminology, overcrowding, which means one thing to one group of people but to other people it means nothing. Homelessness has a more significant meaning if you are lobbying in Ottawa and I think the Homelessness Secretariat and the Nunavut Housing Corporation should get together and discuss the terminology that they use to lobby in Ottawa for housing.

I have constituents in my riding, as I mentioned the other day, 15 people in one house but six of them are living in one room, that's an entire family, and they could be living there for years. I wouldn't call that overcrowding, I would say they are homeless in Nunavut and that's definitely not acceptable to us here in Nunavut.

We need some help from Ottawa. I know you are putting \$200,000 worth of resources towards the Homelessness Secretariat and I think in the view of the numbers I'm coming up with here just by simple calculations using the information you provided me, it seems like it's a crisis situation of epic proportions. That has to be dealt with; we can't hesitate any longer to deal with homelessness and the absolute homelessness in Nunavut.

I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, if the minister can comment on my suggestions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the statement made by the member. I think it's important to point out what we all know, and we have been successful as a government, in receiving funding for 700 new social housing units to be built over the next three years. Those public houses will help alleviate some of the issues that the member is talking about.

At the same time the Nunavut Housing Corporation works to advocate on behalf and for the erection of new units and houses and so on. What the Homeless Secretariat has been trying to accomplish is to deal with the people who have issues around the absolute homelessness in Nunavut and I think there is good cooperation and work between the two groups and when we have gone to Ottawa we have used the same message.

Again, we have been very successful on accessing the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative Program that is in place by the federal government to deal with some of the issues that are around homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Before we go on, before we go on, I'd like to take a 20-minute break.

>>Committee recessed at 15:10 and resumed at 15:46

Chairman: I would like to call the committee meeting to order. I still have two more names on my list. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, for your reminder. It won't be ten minutes.

I like that in the Directorate where at least it has the responsibility for standards and at least consistency with the policies, and so on, for the department. I also hope too that you're the minister who can regulate certain guidelines to the local DEAs.

I want to ask you minister, and I raise it again once, it has to do with the weather policy. The weather policy, I believe, is set by the local DEAs but I am wondering minister whether it is consistent, even in my hometown. They now have a clearly written policy

where in two out of three conditions, including the wind and the visibility, and temperature.

If you score two out of these three then it's up to the parents to send their kids to school, but because it's not...there is no real guiding individual who says the school should be closed down. The school is never closed really. It really is up to the parents. Many parents wondered in Rankin Inlet whether or not there is school on today or not, because of the wind chill factor is so cold. That's factored in the policy. But because there is no clear direction from the principal when the student doesn't attend school, their marks are not consistent; in some cases they are marked late for school or didn't attend school.

I wonder if minister you could find a way to make it consistent so that at least the principal has a role because I believe only the principal and his officials can register, or define, whether or not the student in question was away from school for legitimate reasons. I don't believe it's the role of the secretary.

Could you explain to us how that should be applied? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I like the suggestion that the member is articulating.

The government does have a standard when we close government offices. I am prepared, within the next couple of weeks, within the Directorate Division of the department to look at if there is an opportunity to bring forward some uniform standards when we look at closing the schools; closures, especially on weather issues.

Right now, as everyone knows, it's a local DEA concern. We wouldn't try to impose our wishes on them. We'd like to have some maybe some opportunities for guidelines that they could look at; which aren't in place right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That may be the agreement that the responsibility probably falls with the DEA, but when the parent is wondering whether or not it is too cold because many of our unilingual individuals don't know the wind chill factor to factor into policy. Because as I said earlier you have to score two out of three provisions in the policy whether to send your kid to school or not.

So the parent phoned the school, as an example, recently. And the parent didn't know what was going on with the weather because she knows enough from *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* that it was very cold. She was worrying about the wind conditions and that it was extremely cold so she phoned the school and said she didn't know what the wind chill factor was, so she was advised to phone the weather station.

So these are the kind of things that are happening. There are two reasons one is that we certainly want to send our kids to school but if they don't go to school because of the weather they should not be penalized for missing a day in school. So, surely, you can have a little more consistency if the school is to operate and not operate. It should be one person.

Right now we have so many, it's the DEA, it's the parent, it's the school, weather station is involved in two out of three score requirement out of wind chill factor, wind and visibility; it's all over the place. So I wonder if you could standardize that simple problem. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier, I like what the member is saying. There should be an opportunity to look at some standards; maybe look at some of the criteria we have for government offices as an example. And that's something that we would be prepared to look at to make those suggestions to member DEAs, but at the end of the day the DEA does have the responsibility for closures.

But at least if they had a set standard of criteria as the member has mentioned then everyone would know what those criteria are when the decision is made. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last point is this; I know a couple of members who have alluded to their DEA status and so on and how the minister has developed the case that the regional boards will not be instituted in the *Education Act*. I think to be very clear the document that is titled "The Voice of Parents" submitted by the coalition of the DEAs stated: very short, in 1999 the minister said ultimately managing more of the direction of education would come under the authority of the new *Education Act*.

In 2004, it was stated there would be a new direction and new powers brought forth for DEAs. In 2006, it was also stated again in the letter that the decision to dissolve the boards, was guided by the belief that decision-making should be more local and that DEAs should have more responsibility. In the current system the minister can choose which powers to allow each of the DEAs to take on.

This is unlikely to happen. So in short, the reason is in practice if the DEAs may have all the great power, but that's not in practice, because the minister ultimately has that power. How are you going to respond to those kinds of points? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, the member brings up one of the areas of, I wouldn't say contention, but there is a concern that has been made by the DEA Coalition. I had an opportunity to meet with the DEA Coalition, including the writer of that article that the member's speaking about. And I tried to reiterate what I feel, and I believe what the government feels, is that when we see a stronger DEA, we see stronger schools and a stronger community and that's what we're trying to accomplish in the new *Education Act*.

I think we had a good debate on that earlier today when we talked about what should the role of the DEA be, and what types of powers or new roles can the DEA take on at the community level. And to ensure that we can support them in doing that but also making sure that they have the abilities to do that before they're given that power.

So that's where we are with that right now. I agree with the statement. Again, what I'm trying to do is find that middle ground between what is wanted and what is needed, and how I could facilitate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. One more question, really. Do you not agree that the new *Education Act* will give you more power than you ever had, or any minister has ever had since 1999. And it's really up to the minister to grant new powers or new roles under the Act, under your authority. Is that correct? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I disagree with the member's assumption that, again, as I said earlier we don't have an Act, we're still in the process of drafting it and so on. I don't see the Act giving some type of totalitarian powers to the minister and that the minister, with that, would somehow usurp any type of program or process that's in place.

What we see is an enabling piece of legislation that will allow our schools, our communities, and specifically the DEAs, take on more roles and responsibilities with education at the local level, at the community level, and at the school level, and that's why we're trying to emphasize that we see strong DEAs meaning strong schools.

However, everything that the DEAs want we're not able to provide for various reasons, as Mr. Tootoo had said earlier, logistic, as well as administrative, and financial reasons. So we're trying to meet them halfway. I think it would be a good piece of legislation once we're completed but like anything, we can't please everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-5. Education. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$1,208,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page G-7. Policy and Planning. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$841,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. G-8. Education. Branch Summary. Corporate Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,109,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: G-9. Education. Branch Summary. Income Support. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I talked about this earlier during the committee meeting but I just want to ask a question. He was talking about gifts to income support recipients. I know he's going to talk about tickets and all those other gifts and stuff, but I'm not talking about that.

What I'm trying to say is if income support recipients receive something from their relatives and they're given a gift, like somebody was saying about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* that if we know that they really need whatever, we have to try to help them out. So that's *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, and according to the policy, will the policy be changed to reflect *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the member knows, we've tried to reflect *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in all programs and service areas of the department, specifically under Income Support, where we have moved to make sure for example that the Co-op tax dividends and benefits are not any longer counted as earned income.

We've made changes in the federal benefit programs that are received so they're not considered earned income. We've increased, under earned income, the allowance of \$200 per individual and \$400 for a family, again, by taking into account what the member has said.

So I think we've made some really good strides in looking at that under the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Perhaps if I use an example, perhaps he can respond to me. If I'm working very hard for example, and I get a new snowmobile because mine is three years old and my old one is still workable. If I give my old snowmobile, which costs approximately \$4,000 if I sold it, if I give that to an individual who's under income

support, according to this policy, would he not be allowed to receive his income support? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the member, and I think I've said this in the House, if the member provides his machine as a gift to his relative or whoever or gives it to them, it doesn't come off the Income Support Program because the person who's using that machine, let's say they use it to go hunting to provide food or something for their family, then that's making a productive choice, a healthy choice because they are providing for the family.

The Income Support Program states specifically if you are trying to make a productive choice to provide for your family as an example, we don't deduct the income support amount. And again, one of the questions came from the House, if a member knows of a case, someone for example received a machine and they are using that for a productive choice, you know for example to get country food for the family and the income support worker has taken that off their account, then they should let the minister know immediately in writing so I can review it, because that is not the case and that is not to occur. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Does that also apply to Harvesters' Support Program? Because Harvesters' Support Program really helps those who cannot have enough capital to purchase equipment. Does that affect their income support? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the hunter is receiving support from the Harvesters' Support Program like you know, getting a machine, which should be like \$15,000 or so, that is not taken off their income support, because, again, they are able to supply food and so on for their family. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-9. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question under this. The income support or the subsidy program for elders who own their own homes through the access program, the program is not very visible. I saw an elder who had filled out an application form and they sent the application form to Rankin Inlet and he was told that his application was approved and he was waiting for them to deliver fuel.

They didn't deliver the fuel because he had to go get the fuel, go to Rankin Inlet, go get the fuel and then the next day bring the fuel. He didn't know the actual procedure. The procedure has not been explained to my community.

The elders who are Inuktitut unilingual speaking people can't read and write in English, so they don't understand the English language and so forth. I was wondering if you've already rectified this situation. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, the Income Support Program, the Seniors Fuel Subsidy is more of our important programs. We have changed the form and the format to ensure they are available for usage to a unilingual Inuktitut speaking person only. We also have, like I said earlier, income support workers, which I think are 100 percent Inuk who are able to help the customer or in this case, the client, to be able to access the program.

So the changes have been put in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, even though they state that then why don't they explain to the elders? The income support workers don't even explain these. I think they started in November until April and I don't know how long the program is for.

But what would be the problem if they just fill up the unit in the cold winter months; perhaps twice a winter. What kind of problem would that cause? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The rate is put in place depending on what community that you live in as a senior. So as an example Mr. Chairman the rate goes from 2,500 litres to 3,175 litres that would we cover under the subsidy program.

It is up to each individual client or elder when they apply for the elders' subsidy program to make sure the fuel truck comes, for example, to fill up their house. We don't do that for the income support client. However, in conversation when the person is applying for the subsidy I am sure the income support person would be available to help the elder to make sure that those requirements are put in place.

Again, we streamlined the process in July and we also did it again in September to ensure that. Over the last several months, at least December, I can say that we have not received any complaints in the office, my office, concerning the subsidy program for the elders since the changes that we have put in place.

And the member is correct: before those changes were in place we did have a lot of concerns but I haven't received any since before Christmas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Don't worry, I am not going to finish all my seven minutes but what I am trying to say is that when they first put in the fuel in November after they were approved, because they took a month for their application to be approved, all they had was \$50. And in the middle of the month when he receives their social security then that \$50 is only good enough for 10 gallons and he expected to receive the full 2,500 litres. The money they receive is insufficient to pay for the whole 2,500 litres.

Perhaps consult with the elders and get their input and I believe you need to enhance the program and to explain it further to the elders because the elders don't have large sums of money and they can't afford their fuel. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just noticed that we have our Director of Income Support, who is the expert in this area: Ms. Sandy Teiman, who is here at the Legislative Assembly. Bear with me. I would like to ask the Chairman if Sandy could join me as a witness at the table at during the income support area and then I will answer Mr. Alagalak's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Does the committee agree to have the witness to be escorted to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Welcome Ms. Teiman. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe, there is some confusion around the subsidy program so I will go through it just very quickly. To be absolutely eligible for the senior fuel subsidy, the person has to live, of course, in Nunavut. They have to be 60 years of age or older. They have to own their own home that they live in and they should not be on income support.

That means when the member was talking earlier that they all have their income whether that be pension or what have you. And they also have to meet the maximum allowable household income, which we've increased. The maximum income now has been increased from \$38,000 to \$50,000 per income.

So those are the criteria that are in place. If the elder is living in public housing then those costs are already covered for them. The only people that we're talking about here are elders who own their own homes. I don't have the numbers right now. How many people were on that program last year? We had about 60 people, 59, 60 in all of Nunavut who qualified for that program last year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Well, the issue I brought up if you can look into the 60 individuals that are receiving this program because I know for sure in those months while this program is being used that they are unable to get that support even though they try to apply for it because there's no funding available for them to get 2,500 litres of fuel. Perhaps discuss this matter to make sure that you improve this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the elder is eligible under the program then we cover all costs, and the program runs all year; so any period in that 12-month period, not just in the winter months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: One of the things that I wonder if the minister would agree with me to look at the program again by interviewing someone that uses that program because they're eligible for 2,000 to 2,500 litres of fuel but they don't have that money to buy that much fuel during the duration that the program is open.

I was wondering if the minister would be able or willing to go back and interview some of the users of the program and make adjustments according to what their wishes are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand what the member is saying and just for clarification under the program. There were a little over 60 people who used it last year in Nunavut. We do cover all the costs. On each season there is a one time top-up meaning that you get your tank filled up and then we would reimburse those costs, or you would receive credit for those costs.

We don't expect the elder to pay for a full tank and then send a bill in and then get the money back. Once the tank is filled up the one-time shot they would get the credit back on it. That's the way it would work. They pay to get their tank filled up and then they can bring that receipt in and get that reimbursed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-9. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome Minister Picco, and your officials.

(interpretation ends) A supplementary question to my colleague's, Mr. Alagalak. The business plans shows that the overall budget for the Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program will increase in 2007-08. Will eligible seniors be entitled to an increase in benefits in 2007-08?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The cost of fuel has gone up. That would be one factor for the increase. The second cost of the increase is the program numbers. As we said earlier, we increased the household threshold income from \$39,000 to \$50,000, and therefore the larger increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How many individuals take advantage this program on a yearly basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The latest figures that I have in response to the Member from Arviat, we said that it was around 60. The numbers I have for 2005-06 was 66 eligible elders who own their own homes were qualifying for the subsidy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business plans state that in 2005, over 75 percent of all households across Nunavut were on income support at some point during the year, with steadily increasing demands on income support services, especially by younger, single households across Nunavut.

How does the department plan to address the on going sustainability of this program?
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member has raised a really huge area and that's how do we help our people get employment so that they are not on income support. And if we can't get them off income support, how sustainable is the program itself? We've seen the cost of income support increase as the population increases

I would suggest Mr. Chairman, that by having more economic opportunities in our communities for employment and so on, we see, you know, less people on income support. And that is where the sustainability of our program would come into play. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We know that there has been a fuel increase, a fuel price increase and there are some increases in fuel riders, power bills and so forth and so on. Specifically, how has the cost of income support increased since mid-2003? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the biggest increases we saw in the income support program is when we indexed the amount that was received by income support clients. We increased that amount by 10 percent and then five percent, so that would be a 15 percent increase in the income support amount, so we actually gave out more benefits.

The second increase that we see in income support is because we have more people on uptake on the program. What that means is to be eligible for income support you have to be 18 years and over. So that would all be covered under forced growth within the government itself. And changes in the rent scale would also mean more income support because again the income support pays the rent changes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last year members of the standing committee recommended a review of government social assistance regulations. Has the department done so and if not, are there any plans to do so in the upcoming year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've reviewed the program as the member knows, and a good example is the increase we just talked about, increasing the elders' fuel subsidy amount. That was again, in recognition of what we've heard here at the House.

So the last formal review of the regulations of the program was in the year 2000 I believe and we've changed many regulations over the years based on what the members have said here and what we've talked about. For example, clawing back the co-op dividend was another example that we heard in the House that we implemented.

Also looking at the threshold for family income from \$35,000 to \$50,000 to be eligible for the subsidy program again was another change that we made to the regulations to reflect what we've heard here in the house. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the business plan G-11 there is income support payments of maybe \$33,610,000 and in G-9 there's no identified amount. Can the minister explain where that money is? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first amount that the member gave is the total amount of income support that is paid out. The second amount that the member gave was the amount under the headquarters budget of the area of income support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I can't find out where it is located. Could you identify exactly where it is? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe if we check on tab G-14, you will see the total amount of income support there, which is \$26,603,000. That is the tab G-14. The other amount, as I said earlier, is a little over \$2 million with the headquarters amount for staff at headquarters to facilitate the program of income support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I also would like to thank the minister. (interpretation ends) What is the status with individual communities to deliver the Income Support Program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are developing an options paper right now to look at that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When will the income support electronics delivery system be fully operational? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've been looking at the implementation of a full electronic system for several years now and we can finally see light at the end of the tunnel. I would hope to be in a position, that the department would have it in place by December 2007. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Have any new positions been assigned to implementing the system? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Not directly, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): My last question, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page G-14, will the implementation of the income support electronic delivery system result in any cost savings? Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you. Yes, we do look at; we have estimated some cost savings of about \$300,000 a year on an annual basis. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G 9. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and his officials. I wanted further information on the Elders' Fuel Subsidy Program. It seems like it is a very appropriate program, in regard to the elders. I think it would be a lot better if you filled up the tank. Did I understand it correctly when you said that if you fill up the tank that the individual would get the money back or get reimbursed from the government?

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we said was that under the Fuel Subsidy Program, depending on what community that you live in, between 2,500 and 3,175 litres of fuel are covered under the subsidy program.

So if you have paid for fuel, they come by and fill up your tank, and it's 800 litres, then you pay for that, you keep your receipt and then you go get to income support and then you will be reimbursed for that amount. The question the member for the Arviat riding raised was what if you don't have the money to pay for that right at the beginning? Then we said that as a one time deal each season, we will pay for that up front and you don't need the receipts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that simplified version. It's different from the one that you provided to me last year; it appears to be much simpler. When did that change in policy occur because I was asking questions to you about it last year we had a maximum salary cap and if you exceeded that you did not qualify for the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. Which one of the versions are we using now? I did not appear to see any announcement, or anything that this policy has changed. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. What we have done is moved very quickly from the concerns raised in the House to simplify the program and make it more open and accountable. So what we've done and changed is we've gone and set the household income from \$35,000 to \$50,000 for individual seniors. That has allowed a little bit more of an uptake on the program.

In the past the incomes ratio was set, that we brought forward from the GNWT, and I think it was set at \$35,000 or \$39,000. We've streamlined the program again and made it more conducive and more user friendly for the end user. As I said earlier, 66 elders in Nunavut took advantage of this program last year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is good news. When did the policy come into effect because it certainly was different? The reason why I am asking is because there have been some elders complaining to me about the way which they had to go through and it was so complicated. You pretty well had to have a form similar to an Income Tax form, and so on, last year. Exactly when did this change in policy occur? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: September 1, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Did the minister issue a press release? I must have missed it. I was out somewhere. I want to say though that this is a good news announcement. Is that pretty well publicized now in the communities? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We made that information available at our income support offices, as well as through the local media, for example, in the newspapers, including, for example, the Kivalliq News. We have a new ad in the newspaper next week again on the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. I'll take a good look as well. Aside from the newspaper information available could the minister or his officials provide me with the details of this program and the policy changes with respect to that? Thank you, Minister.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In every member's community at the income support office there is a package available. At the same time I'll get through to staff that we'll make a package available for all the members that they'd be able to take back with them on the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I appreciate the changes. I compliment the minister and his staff for making that change because it is a very welcome change to the elders.

I have another follow-up question with respect to the, I don't know exactly what you call them. Some of the benefits that the elders receive out of income support and beneficiaries are obviously penalized if they do get it. How about a couple of programs; one you definitely indicated that the Nunavut Hunters' Support Program was considered an income, which comes out the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

So to me the person who receives the snowmobile and that is about \$10,000 worth or slightly less if it is a smaller machine. That is likely the whole year or almost a whole year income support and benefits package. So can the minister confirm that isn't the case that the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement provides through the Hunters' Support Program is considered income? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In questions in the House, and here again in the Committee of the Whole, it is the third time today and I guess there is some confusion on this and I want to categorically state again for the record that all hunting equipment received is exempt from income support. Meaning, if you received a machine from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, we don't take that off from Income Support Program because you are making a productive choice and you are trying to provide sustenance to your family. That is not taken off. It is not deducted. There is not a subtraction or a minus from the income support amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I'd like to thank the minister for clarifying that. I appreciate it and if I speak in Inuktitut I probably get a little clearer. But the other question I have is with respect to

the elders NTI related NTI benefit program, the \$150 as well as a slightly less amount for certain groups and categories of people. Can the Minister state whether or not these are considered income or exempt. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, when that is paid out to the elders it is exempt. It is not included in the income. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I appreciate that. Thank you for that answer. I have a new question with respect to whether or not the policies or the guidelines are all the same in each given community, including Iqaluit. They use the same guidelines for applying and I see out there people that go through very difficult times. I had one person, not long ago, a young lady who is a single parent going through a very difficult time as a homeowner with no heat and wasn't able to go any where to get fuel.

The only consolation I can offer was I feel sorry for you. What should a Member of the Legislative Assembly in a presence of that young lady do when she does receive a bit of income but not enough? That is all I had to offer was some sort of consolation. What should we do in a case like that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a very difficult position to be in and I think most of us as Members of the Legislative Assembly have had to represent people who run into situations like that where people come to you for that type of help.

What I would suggest is that we have a look at reviewing the case. If a constituent like that comes forward then the member can ask that the income support worker review the person's case to see what type of help we can do. In some cases, for example, they can do an advance on the next month's income support and I know that there have been some cases like that done. So there are some options available and that is what I would suggest to the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I appreciate the response. But in a case like this that would have been a different supplementary benefit because the person is not in an income support category but going a very difficult time. Is there such any one-time income support benefit or an emergency benefit? Is there is any regulations that states so? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: There are different categories under the Income Support Program. One of those programs would be in the case of an emergency situation. Again, that's judged on its own merit, it is judged on the situation regarding the individual client. That may be an avenue that the constituent in question may have an opportunity to have uptake on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-9. Education. Branch Summary. Income Support. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,247,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page G-10. G-11. G-12. Adult Learning and Post-Secondary Services. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my old subject about student assistance; I think it is in G-11 and G-12. It is G-11 of Student Financial Assistance, \$5,607,000. I have been barking at the government, I don't know what a better word is for it, to analyze, review and reconsider some of the student loan programs, student grant programs under FANS, especially for a very important part of our society, those essential services like nursing and teachers.

I applaud the government for playing a lead role in getting a partnership for Akitsiraq Law School Program and now I read in the newspaper that the government will get \$23 million for professional accountants; the federal government is partners. Now for the nursing program and teacher education program, can you be more active or proactive in convincing those two departments the Department of Health and the Department of Education, I don't know if the minister knows, Mr. Ed. Picco, to try to get a better living allowance because a lot of these students suffer from poverty, especially those with families when they are taking these courses.

Can you tell the House if you have plans to encourage those two departments to get a partnership from the federal government and in recognition of the shortage of nurses across Canada and in Nunavut? There is a very urgent need to have Inuktitut speaking nurses, especially to deal with elders and children.

The children also need to have familiarity with the person from the community to be comfortable in talking to them. These are the basic community needs and they should be reviewed more proactively to encourage Inuit to participate in that program. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I couldn't agree more with the member on the premise. The member will remember in 1999-2000 when, myself as the Health Minister and the member as the Education Minister went forward and tried to introduce the nursing program at that time. I must say, and I am sure the member would agree with

me, that we had quite a fight because there was \$1 million a year to train nurses and we didn't have support.

The member I am sure will, and we had quite a debate on that at a given Cabinet retreat. But we were successful and we did bring the program forward and I think it's probably one of the better programs that the government has brought and I agree with the member that there is a need for trained nurses.

The nursing program itself has a number of scholarship programs available within it, including the Queen Elizabeth II Bursary that was introduced by this government to make it more cost conducive for the Nursing Students.

The bigger problem here, the bigger issue here is the total program, or the FANS benefit program and the degree program. Those are longer programs, a three to four year program that the students have to take and if you are a person like most of our students are not like in the south, where you are 16 years old and you've graduated and you go to college.

A lot of our students, 80 percent of our students would be single mothers or in common-law relationships or married and have dependants. And when you try to go to school for three or four years in a situation like that, it's very difficult. I think the government realizes that.

What I'd like to do under the FANS benefit program, not just for the Nursing Program, but also for the NTEP program, because Mr. Berger points out that if we are truly going to have a bilingual education system from K to 12, we've got to have trained Inuktitut speaking teachers teaching. Not just teaching Inuktitut class one hour a day or one hour a week, but teaching the core courses in Inuktitut, geography in grade 10 to 12, teaching history in grade 10 to 12, so on and so forth. So I would support what the member has said again, we need to be able to look at what those cost factors are and be able to have that type of debate. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-10. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Picco and his staff, welcome. Nunavut Arctic College has been designated to take the lead in a number of roles such as reviewing the *Public Colleges Act*.

Minister, can you tell me what specific recommendations of the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy will be addressed as a priority during the upcoming fiscal year? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. At this time, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Sandy Teiman from Income Support who's one of the longest serving

income support workers in Canada in that role, for joining us at the witness table and take this opportunity to invite the President of Nunavut Arctic College Mr. Mac Clendenning to join us at the witness table. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Minister. Thank you, Sandy. (interpretation) Does the committee agree for Mac Clendenning to come to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witness please.

Thank you. Welcome, Mr. Clendenning. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. One of the major priorities of the government was the tabling of the Adult Learning Strategy, which we did in the last session. There are over 300 copies of the strategy that have been released throughout the Territory, and in the country.

Indeed we have highlighted the report from a wide variety of sources including the Canadian Polar Research Network as well as the Arctic Research Consortium in the United States and several different groups that have commented on the strategy.

Work is underway right now, to implement the Adult Learning Strategy. That would be the priority of the department over the next 12 months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also, thank you Minister. As well as offering the current level of programming, Nunavut Arctic College has been tasked with leadership roles in a number of initiatives. How will the college be able to maintain its current level of service delivery and take on the new responsibilities without significant additional resources and funding? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct; it's going to be a challenge for the college to look at how to balance the fiscal realities of the allocation with the new services that have been thrust upon it. Over the last couple of days and today the Nunavut Arctic College Board of Directors is meeting, the Board of Governors is meeting. In this meeting, I believe they have actually picked a new Chair of the Board of Governors and a new Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors and they are tackling those issues right now.

As we work through our budget and with new monies presented, maybe there will be some opportunities to do some rebasing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Minister. During its recent public review of Nunavut Arctic College, the standing committee heard a number of community concerns with respect to the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program.

What has the department done to improve service delivery of the FANS Program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been some issues with the FANS Program; they were highlighted again in the Nunavut Arctic College review not only from the committee members but also internally through the department. We have put together several steps including working with the Auditor General for Canada on the review of the FANS Program itself and making recommendations internally.

That is occurring right now as we speak. I also would like to be able to move forward and look at the monthly living allowances that the members have raised again to see, can we make some improvements there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Minister. How has the department's support for literacy programming across Nunavut been affected by the federal government's recent cut to literacy funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department base funds adult basic education, literacy programs, ABE programs in all of our community learning centres. The cuts from the federal government are a little over \$17million nationally by HRDC.

It occurred when I was at the Ministers of Education meeting in the south and we weren't very pleased with that and I have written the minister responsible and let them know that that is the case. We are also looking at where we can help the Nunavut Literacy Association to try to make up those differences in funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the federal cuts on literacy has the Nunavut Literacy Council had to cut any positions as a result of the federal cuts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Kim Crockett is the person in charge of the Nunavut Literacy Association, and is well known to most members here in the House. She's been doing excellent work on trying to not only advocate but lobby to get extra funds for the Nunavut Literacy Association.

My understanding is that they had to cut a position because of the cuts in the federal funding and again that is federal funding, it wasn't Nunavut funding. We did not have the luxury as a government to actually put the money back in that the federal government had taken out, but then again, there may be some opportunities to review and to see where we can help out the Literacy Council with the new monies that we have received. Again, those decisions will be coming in the next two months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Minister. Will the Government of Nunavut step in to replace the federal funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On top of delivering the ABE programs that we talked about, we put another \$100,000 in what we call community specific programs. As an example we have had literacy projects in Taloyoak, Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Cape Dorset, and Pangnirtung.

We have not replaced any specific amounts of dollars that have been cut by the federal government. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have more questions here. What is the status of the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Board? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the board is up and running, we have just recently appointed new members to the Trades Apprenticeship Board.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Minister. What activities was the board involved in over the past year. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you. With the appointment of the new board members to the Apprenticeship Board Mr. Chairman, it is very important that not only an orientation session be held with them to give them direction on what legislation they follow, but also to give them an overview on what is occurring with the apprenticeship programs in Nunavut. I had an opportunity to meet with the board just before Christmas and that was some of the work that they were involved in at that time. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business plan states that the department will begin working on the development of mature high school graduation options, including the general equivalent fee diploma. What other kinds of qualifications will the mature high school graduation options offer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the key recommendations by Mr. Berger was to have mature graduation options in the school system. I believe Mr. Berger put the cost about \$600,000 to \$700,000 annually. We have begun the implementation of that program in Nunavut at the same time we have re-initiated the GED testing program or Grade Equivalent Diploma, the GED and that continues in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Minister. My last question is what kinds of staffing and resources will the department be contributing to the community based training component of the Nunavut Housing Trust Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: I am quite pleased, Mr. Chairman, with some of the work that Mr. Clendenning has been doing on the Nunavut Housing Strategy Trust. Right now we have courses already underway in several communities including Igloolik, Pang, Clyde, Hall Beach, Sanikiluaq, Repulse, Coral Harbour, Whale Cove, Kugluktuk, and Taloyoak, and these are programs that are the pre-trade courses to help us have people in place to be able to start construction and working on those units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. G10, G11, 12. Mr Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. The minister just indicated that they have a new President and new Vice-President. Can the minister invite the Board of Governors to the Visitors' Gallery for tomorrow, it would be a good time to indicate that we want to work together and give them our blessing? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, we are quite excited that the board of governors has a new chair and a new vice-chair and I've asked Mr. Clendenning if he would, they are in their meeting right now. Mr. Clendenning has stepped out of their meeting to be with us here today, and he will invite them to be here tomorrow to be introduced to the Gallery.

Members will have a chance to see the new chair of the board of governors, as well as his team. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate that. I will just call him Mac in view of time. I have difficulties some times pronouncing his last name. Welcome to the chambers.

I have a question with respect to trades and apprenticeship programs. I know that the minister and college president have been working very hard. In view of the fact that I wasn't here in the fall, could you maybe just give us a bit of a rough schedule and timeline with respect to the trades facility in Rankin Inlet, as well as the residence. I am sure these are well in the planning branch of the Adult Learning and Post Secondary Services. I think that'll help us. I don't need a lot of information. I just want to get a bit of a rough timeline for the eventual facility being built there? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're looking at a rough timeline of having a tender in place for the construction of the trade school by 2008 and open the facility in 2009. The same process is in place for the student accommodations, however, that may be a little earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the minister and his team cost out these facilities. I don't need the figures now but the costs are in the approval stages. If not, will they be introduced as supplementary needs in the fall? Or will the full costs be contained in the fall session of this year? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that the member because of illness was not able to be with us in that debate. For the record, the money has been approved for Rankin Inlet. It includes \$10.5 million in the Capital Budget for the accommodations and the trades' school. The trades' school tenders should be out early, in the next couple of weeks, should be out early this New Year, and the design for the trades' school.

As I said earlier, the construction schedule for 2008-09 should be met. We don't see any problem with that moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Clendenning for the information.

I also want to compliment the minister and your colleagues and the President for appointing a specialist in Rankin Inlet to deal with all these trades' facilities. I know Mr. Ittinuar is working very hard. Shortly after I got back to work he dropped into my office, along with Mr. Clendenning and his team. That was good news stuff.

I also want to compliment all of you for changing the site as originally proposed because it was well known that I did not fully support the site originally chosen because it is in a contaminated site, as far as I'm concerned I know that if you had conducted an environmental assessment on it you would've brought up a whole can of worms. I really appreciate the fact that there is now a search for a new location. I have a feeling that you guys are narrowing your eyes on a site.

I know the hamlet has been making a number of sites available to you. I want to compliment all of you for that. We're all excited in Rankin Inlet with David Ittinuar as the man in charge of the trades' facility. He is really working very hard.

I do have one other question with respect to with the NTEP Program. I believe that it is something that the minister, and again with his colleagues, are working toward to having a full program established in Arctic College in Rankin Inlet or something and I know that there is a whole contingent right now in Arviat and I would like the Minister to respond to that as well as maybe give us a brief outline exactly how many students are in Arviat that are taking I believe University training courses in Arviat and how many they are. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the ways we are trying to move forward with an implementation of the bilingual education strategy that we talked about, is having a community based TEP Program for example like the one in Arviat.

What we would like to do and what the TEP review, which included Jackie Bishop and Nellie Kusugak who chaired that committee for us, and the recommendations that look at expanding the NTEP Program and looking at a base funded program. What we would look at is to try and base that program in Rankin Inlet and again that is something that we would like to be able to move towards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, thank you. I also asked a question about the number of students that are in Arviat that are taking I believe they are taking some McGill U, or some university program. Could the minister or the college president explain to us exactly the nature of that program and how many students are taking part in that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have 14 students in the TEP Program in Arviat and 19 in the program here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. *Taima*. Page G-10, G-11, G-12. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister if he could give me an overview of what he and Nunavut Arctic College have planned in the upcoming year to provide training for the residents of the Kitikmeot with respect to mine training or other occupations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Adult Learning Strategy is really key at looking at opportunities within the mining resource sector. As the member knows and I want to thank the member on the record for facilitating meetings with me and with several mining companies in the area in the Kitikmeot during the Mining Symposium last year when I was over there.

Right now we are looking at several different programs in the Kitikmeot. They may not be just mining specific for example the pre-trades programs we talked about are running at least three programs in the Kitikmeot and for the pre-trades programs that person could move into for example some type of mine training also. At the same time we have opened the Heavy Equipment Operator Training Program. We have over 60 graduates from that program and I believe that the employment for the graduates of that program is 90 percent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Yes, last year we did meet with the mining companies. I don't know if there were any commitments made but the mining companies have contacted me to ask if I could follow up with the Minister of Education about putting on some training programs and working with them. One mining company in particular, Miramar Mining, when I arrived back in Cambridge Bay after standing committees last month, I had an opportunity to talk to the President of the mine Tony Walsh and their Project Manager Jim Curry and they said they have a project that they want to proceed with and they need the involvement of the Department of Education.

I emailed the minister's office to get an update on the progress that has been made to date with respect to working with mines on some of their projects and identify a contact person in the department who I could give to Miramar mines that they could liaise with.

I wonder if the minister could update me with respect to what specific activities you have been working on over the last 12 months with mining companies and if they have identified an individual in their department who can be a contact person for the mining companies in the Kitikmeot to contact when they want to develop training initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Curley mentioned earlier we have two key people now that are in place to facilitate that training that the member has talked about. One is David Ittinuar who is based in Rankin. He is in charge of the trades programs and so on Nunavut-wide.

We also, the member is very familiar with Fiona Buchan-Corey. Fiona could help facilitate that type of meeting with the mining company to look at what type of programs we could bring forward. She is available as the member knows in Cambridge.

For 2007-08 we have trades access, there is 100 days of ROA that will be occurring at the Cambridge Bay Kitikmeot Campus. In 2008-09 we are looking at trades' access again of another 100 day ROA. We are also looking at the millwright program, 18 weeks, which is pre-employment and then we are looking at the millwright, eight weeks, which is the level 1 program.

So those are some of the things that are occurring in the next year, year and a half in Cambridge and are occurring right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Can the minister tell me, has that information been communicated to all the mining companies in the Kitikmeot? I am thinking of Wolfden Resources, Tahera Corporation, Miramar Mining specifically. They are either in production or close to being in production. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that we have been working very closely with the KIA and with George Bohlender and I received some emails from Mr. Havioyak on some of the training programs that they have been working on with the Department of Education.

It's my understanding that the mining companies are quite aware of who we have on the ground in the communities for community contact. However, if the member has information where any mining company in particular has not been contacted or needs information on what types of training opportunities there may be for their employees, or potential employees, he can let us know and I will make sure it is followed up through the Campus in Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I guess in the education field, career development field, it's almost getting like the permitting and regulatory industry where there are so many groups or organizations involved that if a proponent doesn't know who they should go to for funding...yeah we have all kinds of funding but you may or may not qualify under that program and may have to go to another program which may include another department, another organization.

There's a lack of coordination with respect to accessing funding and developing proposals to implement in the Kitikmeot. I am wondering if the minister could comment on whether he thinks it's a worthwhile idea for some of those organizations that you just mentioned, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Kitikmeot Economic Development Commission, the Nunavut Arctic College, the Department of Education could get together, form a group, not a bureaucratic group but a group that can work together, and would help facilitate development of programs and services that is sort of like a one-stop shop that mining companies or other organizations, if you want to access some training, they just have to go to one person or one organization and then they have access to them all.

Instead of having to go to three, four, or five, or others, that one stop shop type of organization could also access funding through the federal sources, which are in Ottawa, that have programs and I wonder if the minister could comment on whether that would be a worthwhile idea to look at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have two offices in the Kitikmeot. One through the campus in Cambridge Bay and also our regional office in the Kitikmeot and Brenda Jancke is working on proposals out of Cambridge Bay with the Department of Education. We are also meeting with KEDC at the mining symposium next month.

And also, we are meeting with Miramar next month. Miramar is also involved quite highly with the Skills Canada that we talked about. But Mr. Chairman, that is something that we could look at, that one-window approach.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I think it would be a worthwhile thing to do. That one window is not a new concept. It is a concept that has been around for quite awhile. In my opinion and opinions of many people involved with one-window organizations, they're worth their weight to implement. It not only helps the organizations applying for finances it also helps other organizations to share information and share staff and share data, contacts and connections to other funding sources.

I wanted to follow up on an outstanding project or application that I asked the minister about a few years ago. It is called the AESP. I think it's an application that was a year or two in development. In fact it did involve a lot of folks and organizations across Nunavut. I think the department submitted that application to the federal department in Ottawa and I don't think it received a favourable review. I wonder if the minister can update on whether that application is still winding its way through the halls of Ottawa or if it is an application that has died and we shouldn't expect it to be reactivated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the AESP, the Aboriginal Employment Skills Program, Nunavut's proposal at that time I think was number two in Canada on the ones that were received. There was a change of government. There was a new government came in and I understand now with the new federal budget that there may be new monies available. So that is something that we will be following up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that confirmation with those plans and I hope to receive an update over the next few months. I would like to ask the minister about a project that the Kitikmeot Inuit Association is trying to submit to the department or get support. It is called the Mine Training Pilot Project. They've indicated to me that they're not receiving much of a favourable review of that project under the Department of Education. I wonder if the minister can update me on that aspect of that project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been good work done on that proposal through the Kitikmeot and with the department. I've had an opportunity to discuss it with Donald Havioyak who is the President of the KIA, and I just received e-mail from him. We have proposed to meet with them next month during the symposium in Cambridge Bay to follow up on the proposal, what they are asking for and see what we can do to help facilitate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that update and I look forward to receiving some information on it from the minister or perhaps from KIA at some future date, hopefully within the next couple of months. Is it next month's meeting, or certainly by May in time for the spring session?

A question on the FANS Program, can the minister give me some information on here? There is \$5,607,000 budgeted. Can the minister tell me how many Nunavut students accessed that program in 2006-07? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The uptake on that program is that it continued to be strong. I am just checking to see if we have actual numbers on the program. I don't have the number with me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I am not sure why the minister doesn't come with all this information in anticipation that we're going to have some questions.

I want to know how many students in Nunavut are receiving it, and how many Nunavut students in the south are receiving it and a total? I'd like the breakdown by region, and by community, if the minister can provide that information.

I know FANS includes student loans. I was looking on page G-13, there's a student loan fund, and a number jumped out at me. I have it highlighted here. There are \$3,328,000 estimated provisions for remissions and doubtful accounts. That's quite a large number.

I am wondering if the minister could explain why that number is so large. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to be able to find that information. I know that Lori-Ann and the two of them were up there and they were working hard trying to find it. So I thank Kathy and Sandi for providing that information.

In the FANS breakdown and I'll just do it very quickly. There are 163 beneficiaries in Qikiqtani for 2006-07, 113 in the Kivalliq and 74 in the Kitikmeot for a total of 350. Non-beneficiary the total for the three regions is 97, for a total of 447 on FANS. That was from the academic year August 1 to July 31 of 2006-07. Total assessments were 455, with approval of 387, withdrawn 58.

The other question that the member was asking about the loan fund; the \$3 million, and so on, that was a tabled document that we put in place. It is an allowance made for the collection of the loans, as well as the, as I said earlier, the review that we've done through the Auditor General, also and looking at the amounts of money that would be collected.

It may seem a little bit high but we have to remember that there is a remission of loans amounts, so they wouldn't be collected; meaning for every three years that a student attends a school in Nunavut they are eligible for one year of remissible loans in the amount of \$1,600 per semester, or \$3,200 per school year. That accounts for some of that monies that the member sees there.

So it's not all the write-off of loans; it also includes the remissions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information on the FANS applications for students. I didn't mention the word 'write-off.' I just said less estimated provision for remission and doubtful accounts.

Perhaps the minister could give me an idea of on an annual basis how many student loans that they do have to write-off? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't really write-off the loans. What we would do is put in an allowance for doubtful accounts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Can the minister tell me if the department has any students who have graduated from university or college, not returned to Nunavut and not repaid their loans? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have had some of those.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister give me an idea of how many he has had and what the department does to try to collect the loans? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As part of the FANS review we are looking at our collection methods right now. When you're looking at the remissions and doubtful accounts and also the loans amount for doubtful accounts it could be as much as 30 percent of the total outstanding amount of the loan fund. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I am aware that the student has six months following the completion of their graduation to start repaying their loans. I am wondering what happens at the end of six months if they haven't started repaying their loans, in many cases it is possible that the student doesn't have a job so they can't repay the loan.

I am wondering if the minister could tell me today what initiatives or activities in the department begin to go after students to get them to repay their loans. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been some concerns with the student loan collections process in the past. Part of the student loans review that we have done includes new ways at looking at how the collections are done and bringing them up to auditing and the accepted accounting practices for accounting and for collecting those loans. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We are on Page G-10. G-11. G-12. Education. Branch Summary. Adult Learning and Post-Secondary Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$24,412,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page G-13 is an information item. G-14. Career and Early Childhood Services, which includes G-15. G-14 and G-15. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you look at the business plan for income support for \$33 million and the fees and payments in G-14 for \$27,644,000, why is there this discrepancy there? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Maybe just two quick points. I would like to thank Mr. Clendenning for being with us for that section and ask the Deputy Minister, Ms. Kathy Okpik to join me back at the table. At the same time, if Mr. Arvaluk could just clarify that again because I'm looking at the page and I don't see the amount of the difference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Does the committee agree that Kathy Okpik should go up to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Would you escort her in, please, Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you. Welcome, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page G-11 business plan, Co-op business that there is a budget for 2007-08, line five, Income Support, \$33,000,610. I believe that when the minister told me that the Income Support was on Page G-14, I see fees and payments. I suspect that is the Income Support for \$27,000,644. Is that the difference that the Income Support distribution for \$27 million for Income Support on the business plan is totally including the staff and the distribution of Income Support? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On G-11 of the business plan, the amount of \$33,610,000 the member is correct. That is the total amount of the Income Support line, which is both the administrative side and payments. It's for headquarters and so on.

The amount on G-14 in the main on the fees and payments, \$27,644,000 also is inclusive of the social assistance payments, which would be \$26,603,000, Daycare Subsidy Program, which is \$655,000 and the Seniors' Fossil Fuel Subsidy that we have been discussing which is \$169,000 and the building careers line for \$78,000 for a total of \$27,644,000. That's the amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for clarifying. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. G-14. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think in this area the department's adding, it looks like approximately 6.7 PYs. I'm wondering if the minister could tell us what those PYs are and where they are going to be based. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are income support worker positions that are transferred. Originally many of them were the hamlets, until the contract is transferred back to the government so we assume their employ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. That's an interesting answer. Could the minister tell us which hamlets transferred their income support workers back to the government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just trying to get that information right now. We have several that have changed; we talked about before the Income Support Program can be very complex. In 2006-07 there are community contribution agreements for the delivery of Income Support services across Nunavut.

The communities of Kugaaruk, Baker Lake, Hall Beach, Igloolik, and Whale Cove returned their community contracts to the GN effective April 1, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister tell us why they returned the income support workers positions back to the government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the communities felt that delivering the Income Support Program was outside of the scope for their businesses in the hamlet. Some communities felt that the amounts of the return or the administration fees that were being paid did not make it equitable for them to continue doing the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I would like to ask the minister about the Healthy Children Initiative that is on Page G-11 of the business plan. Can the minister tell me how many communities in Nunavut access funding through that program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You are moving very fast, you're not giving me a chance to go through my big binder here. The number of programs that are being run under the communities, I can't see it here right now.

If the member would like to ask another question, I will get back and get that answer while he is asking his next questions. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I should ask five questions while he is working on looking for the first answer.

My next question is related to the healthy children issue, but I'll move on and come back. The Northern Student Education Initiative on page G-15 of the main estimates, it says, "... to provide support for students from Nunavut who attend post secondary institutions and training programs in the Edmonton area."

Could the minister tell us how that initiative provides support to students in the Edmonton area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Kitikmeot region for the Healthy Children's Initiative, first of all a total is committed of \$176,000 for Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, and Taloyoak. In the Kivalliq region, Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Rankin Inlet, Repulse Bay, and Whale Cove. In the Qikiqtani, or the Baffin region, Arctic Bay, Cape Dorset, Clyde River, Grise Fiord, Hall Beach, Igloodik, Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq, Resolute Bay, and Sanikiluaq.

There were no programs in Qikiqtarjuaq, Resolute Bay, Sanikiluaq or Grise Fiord. There were no programs in Arctic Bay, Whale Cove and the rest of the communities in Nunavut had programs under the Healthy Children's Initiative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I was going to ask him to provide the answer to my last question. We can go back to the Healthy Children.

I notice that the funding has decreased by \$30,000 for 2007-08. Can the minister tell us why there is a decrease in the funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Northern Student Education Initiative, that program was set up, as the member knows, from the GNWT and was grandfathered into Nunavut. That's where we have the student support person who is available for northern students that may attend programs, or particularly post secondary schooling in Edmonton, specifically.

On the \$30,000 that was transferred, that money was transferred from this line item in the budget to another line item in the budget, which is a program that we inherited from CGS. It did not deflect or take anything away from the program areas that we had available to us under the Healthy Children's Initiative. So hopefully that helps with the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I hope people reading the *Hansard* tomorrow can follow what's going on here; back and forth between questions and answers.

When the minister replied earlier, he gave me a list of communities in Nunavut that had applied under Healthy Children's Initiative. He also mentioned that there were some communities that didn't receive any funding.

I am wondering if the minister could explain how the department is planning to help those communities that didn't receive funding in the past, if they can access funding in the next fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a proposal-based system so when we receive proposals we look at it and we try to assist, where possible, to help the communities facilitate their application. So it's proposal-based.

I would suggest to you that we didn't have a commitment of funds because there was no proposal that was brought forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So can the minister clarify for me then: is the program well advertised and promoted throughout Nunavut so that all the communities have an opportunity to develop proposals to submit to your department for consideration? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This program has continued; it's a program that has come forward over the last couple of years. It's administered through our regional Early Childhood Learning offices so I think it's pretty well known. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the main estimates under early childhood programs - daycare contributions, there is an amount of \$1,595,000 and it looks like an increase of \$10,000 over the previous fiscal year.

Could the minister tell me how many daycares in Nunavut or how many childcare centres are supported through the funding in this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman there are 44 licensed childcare facilities operating right now in Nunavut.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister tell me how many of the 44 licensed childcare centres, how many childcare/daycare seats or positions are available for children, total? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are almost 1,000 licensed spaces presently in Nunavut.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. In Cambridge Bay the facility there hasn't expanded for many years. I can't put a time on it. There is a pressing need for more spaces in my community so the parents can seek employment. I wonder if the minister is working with colleagues in federal government to access additional funding for Nunavut so that we can make more space available for working parents in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've paid out about \$1.2 million from the Early Learning Childhood Trust Fund from the federal government over the last year and a half, which has been a real godsend to many of our daycares. At the same time, the government has announced that any time we do a major renovation to our schools or build a brand new school we would actually put in new daycare spaces so that we have actually have more childcare spaces available.

At the same time we also provide O&M support and help as well as license daycare facilities. We don't build daycares as a government. We are trying to work with our federal government to see what other avenues are available to us. The new federal government has brought in a different program where they subsidize the family as

opposed to giving money to a government to actually open up new spaces. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. The minister mentioned that there are 1,000 licensed spaces in Nunavut. Can the minister give us an idea of how many spaces are actually required in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We haven't done as a department any type of inventory or stats number to see how many spaces are desired or needed. What we can say is that we have almost a thousand spaces licensed in Nunavut right now and we would suggest that there would be probably you know at least half again, a guess. It would be a rough number and we don't have any real numbers to prove that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-14, G-15. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: One very quick question Mr. Chairman. In the business plan G-12, right under the daycare branch contributions, Young Parents Stay Learning for \$220,000. It says that is for parents who are under the age of 18. Is that under the present *Education Act*? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we are trying to do here is use a new initiative and what it proposes to do is to provide 100 percent subsidy for daycare fees for a young mother who is trying to attend school and help cover her daycare costs. It's not under the *Education Act* it's in the Income Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. G-14. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I have a very short question to the daycare and I think the information page stated, we're not just talking about daycare centres, but there are also family centres. Could you explain the difference between these two? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we talk about a licensed daycare space, in most cases we're talking about the classic situation, we have an actual daycare, a daycare building where children would attend something like a school. When we talk about a family day home, family care, that's where a person has licensed space within their home and they are taking care of children in their home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the minister give us, out of the 44 licensed childcare centres, does that include family daycare day homes, and if so could the minister provide a breakdown of these facilities please? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the 44 licensed childcare facilities currently operating, 151 spaces are under the aboriginal head start basis. We have 524 full time pre-school spaces, 154 full time infant spaces, 43 part-time pre-school spaces, and 118 after-school spaces.

We are in the process right now with the opening of the new daycare for four infant spaces and 16 pre-schoolers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Could the minister explain to the committee exactly how the funding formula works with the daycare facilities that probably have heavier operating costs than a family day home and explain to us exactly how family day homes are funded? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under a licensed space what we try to provide is a subsidy to the operator of that childcare space, or in most cases when we are talking about childcare facility it is a non-profit society and the amount of funding available to that facility is based on the number of kids, the number of spaces, the age of the kids and so on.

When we look at the day home program, because that's for profit, and in most cases we don't provide the same subsidy. What we do is license that space so that it's inspected and licensed so that parents who put the child in a day home for example, they know that the facility or the day home is getting quality care, and is up to standards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: So the family day homes are for profit? I would have thought these were more of a charity types in view of the fact that the family homes I would assume are not necessarily troubled by all the other, the insurance as well, the WCB requirements and so on. How is it determined that the minister or the department would pay for the profit margins of these operating family day homes when in fact they are more likely just a family home. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Just for clarification very quickly, when we talk about family homes, we're talking about a family who decides to take care of three or four children in their homes during the day, it is a daycare service. They go to the regulatory body, which in this case is the Department of Education; we inspect the home and license it.

Those people who are running the daycare home receives money from me, or from Mr. Curley, or anyone else who has children there.

We don't subsidize those costs for that person because it is running for profit they would be trying to get a profit from running the day home. That's different than a childcare space, which is a non-profit society that we're mostly familiar with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: The funding then is based on the numbers of kids that are going in. Is there a requirement still to comply with the legal requirements of liability requirements of operating a facility, in view of the fact that there needs to be some type of protection for kids, rather than just straight family rules? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's why we say when we inspect the family home, which is a home to take care of kids for a fee basis, we inspect that then to make sure that there's insurance and other codes brought up to snuff, and insurance is there, fire protection, and so on, and so forth.

A parent who puts their child in a licensed facility like that, they are eligible for a subsidy but the owner/operator of that facility does not receive any kind of subsidy from the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question has to do with that again. The minister did not indicate whether the compliance requirements for liabilities, for instance, insurance for injuries, or what not with the WCB.

Do you require then that they do have that coverage before you grant them any funding? Or is it just sort of your family's home looks pretty good. What references are required in order to comply with all these other legal stuff that business related facilities normally go through. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's a licensed day home then all the regulatory requirements have to be met. That includes Workers' Compensation Board, health and safety, and so on. The owner/operator of the day home would have to have that in place before they could be licensed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page G-14, includes G-15. Education. Branch Summary. Career and Early Childhood Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$38,097,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. G-16 includes G-17. Education. Branch Summary. Curriculum and School Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$11,391,000. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this particular section I think there's four person years that have been projected for 2007-08. Can the minister tell us what those four PYs are, and where they will be based? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. He's asking about positions. We have positions in Pangnirtung, Kugluktuk, Baker Lake, Pond Inlet, Arviat, and Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Just for the record, could the minister clarify what those positions are? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was part of the extra money that we received through the FMB; the \$2.96 million that the members had approved. It includes positions for student assessment, as well as money for the education and trades training, as well as looking at the coordinator in bilingual education and secondary programming. Those are spread out amongst the communities that we had talked about earlier.

So the idea is to put those positions in place to help serve the education system itself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Page G-16 and G-17. Education. Branch Summary. Curriculum and School Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$11,391,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. G-18, which includes G-19. Education. Branch Summary. School Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$108,649,000. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'm on the wrong standing committee if I have to ask all these questions so that I can get the answers. Education is very important in my riding, so I feel I have to ask a few questions here.

The issue came up two years ago and I've been banging away on the minister about it. The issue is the semestered versus non-semestered programming in the high school in Cambridge Bay. I haven't got a satisfactory answer from the minister about why our high schools switched over from a non-semestered programming to a semestered programming. It affected a good number of our students and they weren't prepared last summer when they had to write departmental exams. I think it's still affecting them now and it's affecting the students that are enrolled in the current school year.

I'm wondering if the minister could tell me why that particular school switched over to non-semestered programming, and whether they're planning to continue to offer non-semestered programming. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I don't mind anybody asking questions during debate, but what I would like to see is putting your hand up before I seek an agreement to the budget we're debating. So go ahead, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a huge debate on semestered and non-semestered schools. There are some schools and some districts that really favour them and some others aren't, and the member said that he hasn't got a suitable answer.

There are benefits to non-semestered timetables. It means, and I will just go with some of the examples: there are more achievements and academic retention levels that are higher; there's more time for the English as a second language for the transition of skills of the first language to the second language, which is important, especially here in Nunavut; students who miss chunks of time for seasonal activities, for example, for sporting events, miss less time of each course, and it makes it easier to catch up when you're on the non-semestered system; less classroom management issues; students experience greater variety in school and so on.

At the same time the benefits of having a semestered timetable includes something like generally semestered course delivery is more cost effective; teachers, students, and families prefer semesters and they feel less stressed; teachers are responsible for fewer students over the course of a semester, and thus they're able to have more one-on-one interaction with the students. There are currently 13 high schools in Nunavut put on the non-semestered system and we have 12 schools in Nunavut who are using the semestered system.

So it's either one or the other. Some people really like it and some people don't like it, and so on and so forth.

The reason for the Cambridge Bay move was that there was a discussion between the staff, I believe to the best of my information that they felt that they would move in that direction. They have found that now there is some concern from some parents, not all parents. Some parents actually like the position the school is in right now and some who don't like the move to semestered versus non-semestered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. He mentioned semestered and non-semestered; there are pros and cons to both. He didn't mention the cons. He mentioned the pros. Can he mention the cons to the semestered and to non-semestered programming? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Mr. Chairman, if you just go back and look at what I said on the pros, the opposite would be true for semestered or non-semestered. For example, if a semestered school for example, or a non-semestered school gave more time for English as a second language learners, then of course the semestered school does not because of the way the semester is set up. So that would be a con.

Students who miss a lot of school, for example, under the semestered system, have a harder time academically because of the way the semester is set up. Under the non-semestered system, students who miss a lot of school, as an example, for seasonal activities or going to sporting events: Arctic Winter Games, Canada Winter Games and so on would miss less of each course because of the way the semester would be run. So those would be part of the pros and cons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I have heard that there's another option, there's the mixed semestered and non-semestered option where you don't have all students on non-semester or conversely you don't have all students on semestered.

The students, and their parents can say, we want to take a mixed, sort of suits their specific lifestyle. I wonder if the minister could comment is there any merit to that and if so, have they considered that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been some discussion around the mixed semester system. You only really see that in a smaller school where you would

have an opportunity, where teachers would be able to coordinate between students that will be on the semester, students that would be on a non-semester.

It is probably something that we could look at. I talked to the deputy minister and that's something we are looking at right now, is that a viable option for us? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. One of the issues that some parents have with the non-semestered program is that students who attend school an entire year, the way the non-semester program worked, they start school in August and attend school for eight or nine months, and then write their final exams. So, what happens in May or June, you're writing all your final exams.

If for any reason, personally or otherwise you are unable to write your final exams then you basically fail your course, because you can't write your final exams. That's something that concerns me. I am wondering if the minister can tell me how his department would address when a student can't write the final exams for personal reasons. Perhaps a young lady is expecting, giving birth, or the student had an accident and is in the hospital, it could be any reason. So I'm wondering if the minister could explain that to me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Incidents happen in a student's life, pregnancy and so on, that happens. It is my understanding that the student can still reapply to write the exam or the tests. So I don't see that as being an issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I believe it may be possible if you are writing Nunavut exams, but if you're writing a departmental exam to get into a university, it's only written at certain times of the year. You need to write those exams to gain admission to post-secondary institutions so it may not be an option for all students.

I wonder if the minister could tell me or explain to me how students who have to write the departmental exams would be able to write those exams and still get their marks back in time for to submit applications to universities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, there is an opportunity to re-write the departmental exams, a challenge to the exam if you are not able to write it because of

illness or injury or something like that. There is a time limit of course but there is that option there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The daunting thing about writing departmentals when you are on a non-semestered system you may have to write six to seven departmentals in same period of time. Week to week it would happen. That is very arduous and strenuous. That's a lot of pressure for the students, unlike the semester system program where your first semester you take three courses and you write three departmentals. Under this non-semestered you may take seven to eight courses where you have to write seven to eight departmentals in a two-week period or less.

It is quite stressful to the students. I am wondering if the minister can comment if that is fair of the education system in Nunavut to impose that kind of pressure, stress and strain on Nunavut grade 12 students who are trying to study and remember everything they have learned from August of the previous year till June of the year that they are going to write their exam. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier, almost half of the schools in Nunavut are on a semestered school system. It's in the same thing in the south where you have a majority of schools going either way. The challenges for a Nunavut school to write the departmental exams are no different for the challenges for all the other students and our students who write the departmental exams and they are successful are indicative of that. Again, the exams are staggered to allow the student to be able to study for the exam and so on. And the success rates show that with the semestered versus the non-semestered system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I'd like the minister to table some information for me and my colleagues to review that shows the comparison and success rates of semestered versus non-semestered schools graduating grade 12 students who are going on to post secondary school. In particular, I am referring to university level post secondary institutions in the south that require quite high averages in the 80s and 90s percent range. I wonder if the minister has that information available if he can table it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I mean that's the point. When you are in university you sit there and you cram for seven exams in a three-week period. You burn the midnight oil studying for 10 to 12 hours. A student that has gone through that in grade

11 or grade 12 writing exams when he gets to university those types of pressures they are used to them because they have already experienced them.

There is an analogy to be made that those students would probably have more opportunity for success. What we can do is to try to make the numbers available to the member. I don't know if we broke them down by school, semestered and non-semestered, but I could find that out and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I don't know what university he went to but when I went to university I wasn't cramming for seven or eight exams in a 10-day period. I think the maximum course load I took was six and it was over a two to three-week period, which made it quite a little bit easier than doing it as a grade 12 student fresh out of high school trying to graduate and write seven to eight in two weeks. So, I would certainly like to see that information from the minister as soon as possible.

I take that as a commitment he made. I wanted to ask also on Page G-15 of the business plan, the minister mentioned that the grade three math criterion standard he mentioned in his minister's statement the other day. Can the minister clarify or tell me how that grade three math test process is going to help students proceed through the grade four, five, six levels in elementary school? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Again, I'm just wondering, either we are not aware of where on the exam schedule where students are doing seven or eight exams in a two-week period or something. I was trying to be facetious when I said in university you try to cram in seven or eight, I am not aware of that either. So I would like to find out that information and bring that forward. If that's the case then we need to be able to review that.

On the math criteria standard, what we're trying to say is when you get to grade three, each student would be tested on a criterion standard. Let's say the standard said you had to add, subtract, multiply, and divide a whole number, you had to identify a fraction and so on.

If a student is not at that criterion standard for grade three math, then the teacher would be able to come in and have extra resources and so on to help bring that student up to that standard. That standard would be the same standards that you would use in Cambridge Bay, or Iqaluit, or Clyde River so that the schools would be on the same criterion standards.

So that would help facilitate the education abilities of the students and the schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister tell me when that grade three math test would be given to the students? Would it be at the start of the grade four year or during the grade three year? At what point would you have the student do that test? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The test is, as the member knows, is the first roll out of several tests for which we're trying to develop criterion standards. So that test will roll out this spring, in the next several weeks. What we would hope then, after that point, is that that standard would be in place and would be done on an annual basis in our schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. So is the minister telling me that if a student doesn't achieve the grade three math level that they are supposed to achieve that they will not be promoted to grade four, they will stay in grade three until they pass our grade three math test? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's not what I said. What I am trying to say is this would be a criterion standard test that would be in place to ensure that the students that are at, in this case, grade three math that the student understands and comprehends adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing a whole number, adding a fraction if that's the case, and so on and so forth.

If the student doesn't have that, they might have still passed English, writing, reading, Inuktitut, syllabics, whatever. So that's not what the idea of the test is to do, the idea of the test is to create a given standard, the criterion standard across Nunavut so that we'd be able to make sure that all students are on an equal footing in school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Peterson. G-18. School Operations. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I'm not going to make a long comment but although I want to speak Inuktitut to this issue but what I am reading is in the English language under. (interpretation ends) This mostly is a comment. I am very concerned about attendance and homework, lack of homework. I've looked after all my cousins that are in grade 10 and in those six months he never had homework in high school.

When I was going to high school in Ottawa the evening was too short to get my homework done. By the time I'm finished I was usually tired. I had to walk to school, again for another hour to get to school.

I would like to encourage the minister to start working more closely with DEAs to give the students more opportunity to succeed in high school. That includes good attendance and given homework. That means they will have to work with parents to encourage parents to participate in the development of their children. I know some parents do not give their children breakfast simply because they have no cereal or milk that morning. I was in fact laughed at when I said I don't have cereal for my kids. I give them *Uujuq* at 7:30 in the morning. They don't mind. Kids eat anything.

Why are we becoming traditional in some ways and not in some other ways? I think that Inuit pride will have to come back because I grew up eating *Uujuq* for breakfast everyday, and there's nothing wrong with it.

Giving the information about good food is misleading in some ways because it's only that the breakfast materials have bacon and eggs, and cereal, etcetera. That's doesn't really include traditional food. I would like to expand on the idea that these are not necessarily Inuit traditional food. If you're feeding children, especially boys at age two, they cannot tell the difference what the breakfast is supposed to be. My two boys think that any kind of food is breakfast, as long as they are awake. Some of the kids were laughing at them for eating *Uujuq* in the morning. Of course, my other son said that hunters eat anything anyway.

I would really encourage the department, especially the school operations can't you get the regional offices to work more closely with the schools and expand the idea of how to succeed in the schools; including the attendance and guiding the parents that traditional foods are good at any time and try not to pay too much attention to what southern breakfast is, because in England they eat fish for breakfast. It is only in North America that we have cereal and bacon and eggs. I am not sure.

I just wanted to make a short comment under that program because I worry that we're not doing enough to encourage the success of the students. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. If you'd like to respond, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In many of our schools the teachers and the staff put a lot of work into preparing some type of nutritional meal for students early in the morning because a lot of students do go to school without having anything to eat.

I think Mr. Arvaluk was correct when he said that as long as the kids have something to eat, whether that is traditional *Uujuq*, or *Ullaaqsiut*, then it is okay. Again, his point is well taken. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. G-18 and G-19. School Operations. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also have on my list why there are no consistent policies with respect to homework.

When our boy was going to school here a few years ago, and two of our grandchildren at different times, they were loaded with and, in many cases, were excited about doing their homework. Why is it not consistent throughout Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Homework is not unique just to Nunavut when we say that it's not consistent between schools, and indeed, between communities, or it's between teachers.

In most cases where extra schoolwork is needed, the student would receive that as homework. Like the member, I have three children in school; two of them bring home a lot of homework, the other one doesn't. I go to the parent-teacher interviews and I hear from the teachers that they have done, or if one of my children has completed all the work at home.

So there may be different reasons for it. It's not something that the department would say you've got to give homework; again, it's based on what's occurring with the student, the school, and indeed, the classroom itself and the classroom setting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. The minister is making it sound quite simple but I think he should be a lot more concerned about the lack of consistent policy. It is a policy issue. We don't have school boards and we don't have local control, and yet when we go to other provinces, and so on, we see the equivalency of Nunavut programs they say is way below.

I can tell you in a place like second to this community, the local DEA, or the teachers or the principals don't have homework policies. It's mandated into that. The minister has to explain: why is it different than Iqaluit, for instance? Iqaluit students work very hard with their schoolwork and they got used to it. Students need to work hard when they're at that age. They have to be made to work hard. The minister stated those might not be too casual and I stated earlier, there must be consistencies. And even your students succeed, they're going to have to learn to work hard, and one of them is to bring in regular homework.

I have an idea of why they don't but the idea is not something that would be appropriate for me because there have to be standards established. Why are you allowing more discretion to some communities not to allow or have homework for high school students,

and yet in places like Iqaluit, is it because the headquarters is a department issue of the government, but they do work hard here in Iqaluit.

I have to let you know because when our son went back home, he thought that life was so easy in town. No homework, no commitment to extra work and everything, and it begins a bad habit.

So I'm asking the minister: why are there no consistent standards for those kinds of things? Don't elude it to something of what the local DEAs may think of that, but I believe there should be standards in this. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In particular, the teachers don't give homework for the sake of giving them homework. The focus should be on the child and the success of the child in a curriculum that the child is doing. In that case, each child is different. Some children will have more homework, as I said, than others and some might not have any. Again, it's not the standard staff policy, or what have you.

However, I would like to ask the deputy minister, who was a teacher not only in Iqaluit but in other communities. Maybe she can give an overview of what happens at that teaching level in the classroom from that expert point of view. So I would ask Ms. Okpik maybe to answer the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Okpik, if you would like to respond.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a teacher and if you look at K to 12, if there was some teacher to teacher then obviously there is going to be more homework for the students who are at a higher grade, but if you look at the elementary students they start taking homework gradually starting from taking a book home, or having a reading buddy at home so that would be the beginning of getting the student adjusted to having homework.

Teachers vary and there are various reasons. There are some teachers who get the assignments done in class. For example, if you look at K to three, half an hour would be used for relaxing and during that half hour, the students who need help would be working with the teachers working with the other group. So it depends on the teacher and as they grow older they start getting adjusted to taking homework.

We don't give homework just for the sake of giving homework. What was not completed in the school is taken home to complete and in regard to the curriculum and in some schools, for example, reading is usually done at home. The teacher chooses what will be done for homework. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and his deputy but I can say that we already know that. We know that assignments that aren't done in school are taken home and there is more requirement of high school graduates, but as parents we think it is very important that assignments are completed and high schools students don't just take home work that has not been completed.

We are talking about high school students in Pond Inlet and Rankin Inlet. They don't have any homework. Why is it that it's not the same here in Iqaluit? The minister has to tell us. (interpretation ends) Minister you are the school board, you have that standard that's in front of you.

(interpretation) You must respond; I am not the only concerned individual. We talked about it at home this winter and there were a bunch of parents who were saying that they are too lenient on the students and for the parents who have their students go to school here in Iqaluit, they do a lot more. You don't just take homework that was not completed in the school, that's what I'm getting from you, that shouldn't be the case.

(interpretation ends) True homework is to work the mind. Why no consistency throughout Nunavut? (interpretation) If you would inform us please, Mr. Minister?

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have tried to answer the question; I think the deputy minister tried to answer the question. In a conversation just now with the deputy minister, maybe here is an opportunity within the department itself, we have just set up our new school assessment program and part of that is to look at the standards and criteria in our schools and so on.

Maybe the opportunity then is to see what amount of work is being brought home by students and look at it by, and we don't want to specially indicate a community or whatever. That probably wouldn't be fair. But look at two to three communities in two to three different schools and see what the amount is and compare it to a school for example that we know where maybe a lot of stuff is coming home. And then we will be able to report back to the members to see if there is something specific happening or is there some consistency in that, not in policy, but in what is occurring in the schools. And so I would make that commitment to the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, thank you. I think that would be important. I fully understand the explanation. I also understand what the parents expect from the schools. And one of them is a positive one. More work they could do. When we do see the hard working student they tend to have better marks and so on. So those are some positive suggestions from parents.

But, I want to lead to another question. I want to assure the minister with respect to teachers, violence against teachers and I think it is really not acceptable to many parents. I met recently with the elders and they are 100 percent behind seeing some control brought into schools with violence against teachers. Could the minister indicate to us what type of strategy or policy that each school has in respect to this kind of situation happening in schools, and what steps should the local DEAs take to address that kind of problem? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is something that is an issue that is a national issue, as we talked about earlier in a question today from Mr. Peterson in formal session.

There are a lot of programs going on right now in Nunavut where we look at behaviour modeling and making our schools a safer environment not only for the students, of course, but also for the staff. And the member again is correct when he says violence against students and violence against staff has increased and statistically we can see that.

We need a safe and positive school environment in place. We have effective behaviour support as well as restitution approaches. School improvement plans that many of our schools and the local DEAs have put in place and I guess through the new *Education Act* or again reviewing our school discipline policies on how we deal with violence and other behaviours in the schools and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Education. Branch Summary. School Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$108,649,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: G-20 is information item. So is G-21. Go back to G-4. Education. Department Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I just wanted to say I used to live here in Iqaluit and my twins were in grade 1 and as Mr. Curley alluded to, when my boys were going to school here they use to bring homework when they were at grade one and they had to know how to use computers and calculators. They are now at grade three and they don't take any homework at all. And the younger one was put to grade four because he speaks English and he is in the grade four to five class and he teaches them how to read and to do math because he used to do them when he was here in Iqaluit.

So we have to look at whether there's consistency in the Nunavut schools and the requirements to bring homework in all the Nunavut schools. It wouldn't be good if a student from Pond Inlet had a lower grade level than a student in Igloolik, or Iqaluit, or somebody from Iqaluit lower than a student in Ottawa.

We have to have higher expectations so that Nunavut students will be properly educated. They don't have the discretion. We are the parents. We are the trustees, and we have to make sure that there's consistent education taught in the Nunavut schools.

I would like to urge the Department of Education to look at each of the schools. We have a very expensive office. There is one for the Qikiqtani operations and then the regional office and then there are some based in Pangnirtung. We have lots of employees who work and I think there are more employees than teachers.

So I would like to urge your department to make sure that we are going in the right direction and not just leave it to the DEAs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. That was just a comment.

(interpretation ends) G-4. Education. Department Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$188,964,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree that the Department of Education is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister, Mr. Chown, and Ms. Okpik. (interpretation) Minister, do you have any closing remarks? Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sure. I'd like to thank the members and the committee on some of the comments and observations that have been made. We'll be following up on Mr. Curley and Mr. Arvaluk's suggestions. Hopefully, we'll be able to get a response back to them in the next couple of days. Thank you to the committee and thank you to the House.

>>Applause

Chairman: Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): We've been meeting until eight and a lot of times we finish when the restaurants are closing, so I'd like to finish early before I get too thin.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. There is a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion, raise your hand, please. Thank you. Opposed. Only two. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Members. Back to Orders of the Day. Item 20. Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Arreak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and the main estimates and would like to report progress. Also, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. There is a motion. Is there a seconder? Thank you, Ms. Brown. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you.

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. Orders of the Day for March 28:

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 1

- Bill 2
- Bill 3
- Bill 8
- Bill 9

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 28 at ten o'clock.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:36*

