

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Environment; Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation; Minister of
Energy*

Joelie Kaernerck
(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

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Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for the
Utility Rates Review Council*

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(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the
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Corporation*

Hon. Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;
Minister of Languages; Minister
responsible for Seniors*

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister
responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible
for Suicide Prevention*

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

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(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
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Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

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*Minister of Justice; Minister
responsible for Labour; Minister
responsible for the Qulliq Energy
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Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of
Community and Government Services*

*Minister responsible for the Status of
Women; Minister responsible for the
Workers' Safety and Compensation
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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, March 2, 2023

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, Mr. Simailak, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day, Inuit, and welcome. As well, my colleagues and those who are following the proceedings, welcome.

(interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 166 – 6(2): Anik F2 Satellite Successful Transition

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut and members.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in August 2022, Telesat publicly disclosed that its Anik F2 satellite suffered anomalies on two of its thrusters and that services currently supported on the satellite will be adversely impacted, some as early as January 2023.

The affected services for the Government of Nunavut are long-distance services, telehealth, videoconferencing services, and applications based in Iqaluit used by Nunavut community-based services.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Community and Government Services Information Management and Information Technology Division had assembled a team that worked with NorthwesTel on architecting a transition solution that will ensure business continuity and delivery of services to Nunavummiut. The Department of Community and Government Services explored all solution options with NorthwesTel, Telesat, and other vendors to ensure service delivery was not encumbered.

Mr. Speaker, the department engaged Government of Nunavut departments to discuss the impacts on their applications. As part of the risk mitigation planning, it was requested that all Government of Nunavut departments ensure their business continuity plans were up to date and ready to implement as early as December 2022, in the event services were impacted.

Mr. Speaker, based on information from the service provider, Anik F2 services started experiencing degradation in early January 2023. Telesat procured a new satellite to replace Anik F2 named Anik F4 and it arrived in orbital position on January 5, 2023, ahead of schedule.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, my department, working with Telesat and NorthwesTel, started the cutover of Government of Nunavut services from Anik F2 to Anik F4 on Sunday, January 15, 2023. The transition proceeded according to plan with all Nunavut communities successfully transferred to the new satellite. Final system configurations related to Anik F4 are now complete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the team that was involved, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Minister's Statement 167 – 6(2): Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is a complex disorder that impacts the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder affects every person differently. Individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder may experience some degree of challenges in their daily living, and need support with motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation, and social skills across their lifespan.

Uqaqtitsijii, preventing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is important. While pregnant or planning to become pregnant, it is safest not to drink any alcohol or use other substances, including cannabis. If you or someone you know needs support with substance use during pregnancy, help is available. If you have a friend, family member, or elder you trust, go to them for advice and help. Free and confidential mental health and addictions support are available at your local health centre.

Support for Nunavummiut with suspected or confirmed fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and their families is available at the Piruqatigiit Resource Centre in Iqaluit. Visit piruqatigiit.ca or phone 867-877-4155. The Kitikmeot Friendship Society based in Cambridge Bay also has a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder resource centre that provides support and programing.

If you want to learn more about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and ending the stigma, you can complete Piruqatigiit's free online fetal alcohol spectrum disorder courses offered in Inuktitut and English.

Reducing the stigma around fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is an important part of preventing it. There are several reasons someone may drink alcohol during pregnancy: they might not be aware they are pregnant, they might struggle with substance use, they might have experienced or are experiencing abuse or trauma, or they may not know the impact alcohol can have on pregnancy.

As we work on prevention of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and supporting those currently affected by it, Health remains committed to working with our partners right across the territory. We are also committed to working in a way that values all Nunavummiut equally, including those with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, David Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 168 – 6(2): Northern Lights Conference 2023

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): I say "good day" to the people of Quttiktuq. I miss you, but I will be travelling up once the sitting is over.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to provide the Assembly with an update from my department's participation in the 2023 Northern Lights Conference and Trade Show. I am pleased to see many important trade and industry events recently return to in-person meetings. While the COVID-19 pandemic showed that we are capable of conducting business in remote settings, nothing compares to the energy of like-minded individuals in the same room looking to the future together.

While in Ottawa last month, department staff and I met with representatives across economic sectors, including mining, tourism, fisheries, and transportation. Mr. Speaker, the message is clear: Nunavut has so much to offer Canada and the world, and businesses want in. Our government's vision for economic diversification as laid out in the *Katujjiluta* mandate provides a solid roadmap for advancing our economic interests both within our territorial borders and within Canada. Our lack of transportation infrastructure remains a barrier to growth, and my department will continue to advocate to the federal government to ensure our needs are addressed. Our local industries are ready to take off and it is my department's priority to develop the conditions needed to help them thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Labrador Chamber of Commerce for hosting this excellent event. It was an invaluable

opportunity for Nunavummiut, communities, and businesses to connect and look to a shared future of economic prosperity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

Minister's Statement 169 – 6(2): Minister's Visit to the Heritage Collections

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Igloolik and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, on February 10, 2023 it was my pleasure to visit the Government of Nunavut's Heritage Collections at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Gatineau. The tour was hosted by the Government of Nunavut's Inuk Curator, Deborah Kigjugalik Webster, and included viewing Nunavut's archaeological and historical collections, the archives, and recent acquisitions.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue to work with Inuit Heritage Trust on options for a heritage centre in Nunavut, my staff are working to make the heritage collections more accessible to all Nunavummiut. For example, the department is partnering with Connected North, an organization that delivers live, interactive virtual sessions for indigenous students in kindergarten to grade 12 across Canada. This partnership will help showcase artefacts from the Heritage Collections to Nunavut high school students across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, the Heritage Collections team is also exploring how it can expand the possibilities for traveling exhibits to allow Nunavummiut to see the collections in person.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share that an exhibit on the theme of “fishing throughout the seasons in a year” will be installed at the Iqaluit airport in the coming weeks. This exhibit will showcase prints and artefacts from the Heritage Collection, including prints from the Kinngait 2022 collection. I invite everyone who is passing through the airport in Iqaluit to visit this exhibit.

Mr. Speaker, through Ikajuqatigiinniq and Qanuqtuurniq, my department is committed to exploring ways to provide Nunavummiut the opportunity to access these valuable artefacts. These collections hold great significance to Inuit across the territory because they connect us to our history, our culture, our language, and our families.

Mr. Speaker, by displaying Inuit art and artefacts, we share our pride in the artistic and innovative accomplishments of Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 170 – 6(2): Wise Woman and Outstanding Young Woman 2022

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

As Minister responsible for the Status of Women, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to announce the 2022 recipients of Nunavut's Wise Woman and Outstanding Young Woman awards.

Mr. Speaker, our 2022 Wise Woman is no stranger to this Assembly or to the important advocacy work of the council. Our recipient is none other than Elisapee Sheutiapik, our former colleague and minister.

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) Ms. Sheutiapik's work to protect, bring a voice, and seek justice for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Nunavut has been a decades-long mission. She has been an inspiration to many and is very deserving of this honour.

Our Outstanding Young Woman for 2022 burst onto the entertainment scene with high-profile performances on screen in *The Grizzlies*, *Trickster*, and the crime drama, *Three Pines*. Twenty-two-year-old Anna Lambe is our recipient. She has a strong voice and uses it to fight for others and for what's fair. We are very excited to see what she does next and where her exciting projects will take her.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, these annual awards are presented to women who are role models in our communities and provide outstanding advocacy, support, leadership, and service to others. These women are dedicated to improving the lives of women and families in Nunavut. Each year we present these awards as a way of honouring women and to foster the growth of positive activities in our communities. We encourage all women to help create a strong, healthy and prosperous Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Congratulations to the recipients of the awards and Nunavut is proud of you.

Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Item 3: Members' Statements**Member's Statement 218 – 6(2): Update on Qajuqturvik**

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I spoke to the team at Qajuqturvik today, and over the last few days. and I have a great deal of concern right now, because their job is to distribute food and meals to Iqaluit residents.

As of today, Mr. Speaker, 2,000 meals have been missed by those Nunavut residents that rely on Qajuqturvik, and an average of 450 to 500 meals a day in a community of 8,000 is pretty significant. They're distributing food baskets, but those food baskets that they're distributing right now are only useful for people who have kitchens. If somebody doesn't have a kitchen, they're less able to make use of those food baskets, because they have to have somewhere to prepare food.

Today, I am reaching out to the community of Iqaluit to keep those people in mind, and if you know of somebody who is hungry, please do what you can to help fill the gaps, and fill some bellies. I will have some questions later on to the Minister of Community and Government services in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Member's Statement 219 – 6(2): Promotion of Inuinnaqtun

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say good afternoon to the people of Kugluktuk, and also to the visitors in the Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important efforts that are being made to help preserve and promote the use of Inuinnaqtun in the Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the Minister of Education recently announced that Nunavut Arctic College is offering the Inuinnaqtun language courses from February 20 to March 25 in the Kitikmeot Campus.

(interpretation ends) Inuinnaqtun levels 1 to 3 are available to support students in their learning journeys. The courses are recognized by the University of Victoria and can be used towards a certificate of language revitalization.

Mr. Speaker, the future of Inuinnaqtun depends on positive actions today, whether it is through programs, such as Inuinnaqtun language courses, curriculum development, learning materials, or through language instruction.

Mr. Speaker, this April Nunavut will be celebrating Inuktut Language Month. I kindly encourage my constituents of Kugluktuk to continue to strengthen the use of Inuinnaqtun in our homes and in our communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

Member's Statement 220 – 6(2): Tribute to Jamesie Judea of Kimmirut

Hon. David Joanasi (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I say good day to the people of South Baffin.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why I rise today is to recollect, pay tribute to, and to celebrate the life of a late resident of Kimmirut, a previous constituent, Jamesie Judea, As he was an integral part of Kimmirut's fire department.

(interpretation ends) Jamesie was Kimmirut's deputy fire chief and it warms my heart to hear he was able to fulfill an 18 year career-long dream of meeting Ottawa Deputy Fire Chief, Dave Mansky, Captain Peter Barton, and the team Fire House 35.

Mr. Speaker, with his family by his side, Deputy Chief Jamesie had the opportunity to meet his brothers and sisters at the Ottawa Fire Services and boy, was he overjoyed. This was a beautiful memory for this kind, caring, dedicated family man and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ottawa Hospital, including all of his care takers for allowing this moment to happen.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the late Jamesie was in Ottawa for medical treatment, however, the fact this uplifting moment could be provided for his wish caused joyfulness for the family in seeing that.

Mr. Speaker, this man Jamesie took his oath seriously as a firefighter, to protect his fellow residents facing dangerous situations and to save people's lives, and furthermore, to provide assistance to those who required help and to provide essential services.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to acknowledge and to recall his civic pride in serving his fellow Kimmirut residents, including Nunavut as well. I empathize and offer my condolences to his entire family, his friends, his fellow firefighters as well as the overall community of Kimmirut. I am also quite happy that others were able to fulfill Jamesie's dream while he was still alive to appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Minister Gross.

Member's Statement 221 – 6(2): Congratulations to Cambridge Bay Wolverines

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Nunavummiut and everyone in the House here with us today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Cambridge Bay Wolverines who were recently at the Cager Tournament in Yellowknife and came home with two medals. They won a bronze in their first tier and won a gold in their second tier.

The basketball players that attended were:

- Savannah Avalak
- Kiana Ikpakuhak
- Regan Evytaligak
- Willow Harvey
- Kylie Havioyak
- Paten Klinkenburg
- Emery Maksagak
- Simone Mala-McCullum
- Kirsten McCullum
- Kyra Tiktak Kaumajuk

I would like to say a special thank you to their coaches Zachary Krizenka Crooks and Emilene Klingenberg, as well as their chaperone Aislyn Omilgoetok.

Wishing all the wonderful basketball players all the best as they continue to play basketball and inspire other youth to continue and learn how to play as well. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish a good day to my colleagues today.

We have visitors in the gallery today from Baker Lake who are my fellow residents; Hilu Tagoona and her mother Joan Scottie. They are here in Iqaluit for an event tonight and I will state this in English here, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Joan Scottie is here to do a book signing at the Nunavut Research Institute this evening at 7 P.M. She's Baker Lake's newest author. I'm very proud and happy that a local resident has done another book. I encourage all those who are available to go down to the Nunavut Research Institute where at 7:00 P.M. she will be there with her co-author, Jack Hicks. I ask my colleagues to welcome them to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me. Good afternoon to my colleagues, and people of Nunavut who are

listening. I rise to recognize one of my top idols, Emily Illnik, who is here in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to be here today, particularly at a time where this individual, who we have worked with for many years is in the House; Elisapee Sheutiapik. Please welcome her to the House. Also, the other people, and I would also like to recognize a friend of mine; Hilu Tagoona and her mother. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize Elisapee Sheutiapik today.

I am following in her very large footprints as the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, and have so much gratitude for the work that you have done for Nunavummiut, as well as for those of us who are impacted by Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, and I will be forever grateful for that. Thank you, Ms. Sheutiapik. I would also like to recognize Ms. Emily Illnik who always has a kind word and time for me, and I appreciate that so much. Welcome to the House. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Welcome to all the visitors who have already been recognized today. I would like to recognize Jack Hicks, who has done some incredible work on issues of importance to Nunavut, including suicide prevention, very important work, as well as more recently, the topic of decentralization. Thank you for all your work. It is much appreciated. (interpretation) Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. I have no more names for recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Before we proceed to the next item, colleagues, I wish to advise that the Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaerner, and the Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak, are absent from the House. We hope to see Ms. Nutarak later on this afternoon.

Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 326 – 6(2): Granular Crushing Equipment Program

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say good day to my constituents in Naujaat and Coral Harbour. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the minister will agree that it is important for all Nunavut communities to have access to adequate supplies of granular material, and I am sure that he will agree that it is important for all Nunavut communities to have adequate equipment with which to crush the granular material.

As the minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved his department's 2023-24 capital estimates during our recent fall sitting.

His department's capital budget included \$5 million for a new Granular Crushing Equipment Program.

Can the minister update the House today on the status of implementing the new program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, we are very excited to roll this new program out for municipalities. It is going to be a proposal-based program, and starting this new fiscal year, April 1, 2023. We expect that applications will be forthcoming, and we do have the policy in place, and the budget in place for this. So we anticipate there is high interest.

We have already started talking with hamlets whether will be submitting. I truly expect his constituents in both Naujaat and Coral Harbour will be submitting an application. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. This is good to hear. Both of my constituency communities have submitted requests via this process, and with so many buildings being constructed in my constituency, numbering 150 units this will provide many benefits to my communities. (interpretation ends) Can the minister clarify how his department will evaluate applications for funding from municipalities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: We had a little interruption in our system. If you can repeat your question, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Can the minister clarify how his department will evaluate application for funding from municipalities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. My department, when we were setting up this program, had canvassed municipalities around what the needs are, including stockpile, equipment, and estimated life of the granular source. Some of these are part of our consideration when we're going to be presenting funding for granular programs. Alongside this, we do know that some communities already have a granular program, and some don't, so those are other factors to keep in mind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. (interpretation ends) Can the minister confirm when his department's policy for administering the new granular program equipment will be publicly available? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that. Since this program is targeting the new fiscal year, if it is not already out, we know there is much interest in it. When we deliberated on this budget item in the fall, we were going through some of the details, but as soon as April 1, if it is not available, we will make it available to all the municipalities and anyone interested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Uqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Question 327 – 6(2): Qikiqtarjuaq Marine Infrastructure

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the (interpretation ends) Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Government of Canada announced \$40 million in federal funding in August 2021 for the new Qikiqtarjuaq deep water port. During our recent fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I was proud to vote in favour of Department of Economic Development and Transportation's capital budget, which includes funding for this very important project.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the tendering process for the design and construction of the new Qikiqtarjuaq deep water port facility? (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this is a very important project that is going to help the nation. Currently, the work is proceeding, and right now we are expecting to complete the planning phase and issue a request for proposal for engineering and design in the fall of 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) During our recent fall sitting, I asked the minister to ensure that his department consult closely with municipal leadership of Qikiqtarjuaq with respect to such an issue as the location of the new deep water port.

Will the minister commit to meeting personally with the community's mayor and council to provide an update on this project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a long time since I last visited Qikiqtarjuaq, and I am quite happy to hear that you are inviting me to visit the community, and when I have the opportunity to travel there, I am committed to doing exactly that.

Now there will be others issues I will need to also discuss with the community. However, regarding the final details and decisions that are still required to be completed have yet to be finalized and once it is ready, actual consultation meetings will have to be scheduled with the different bodies in the community.

I urge the local groups to prepare their positions, and I actually provided two responses, so I apologize for that, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You will be warmly welcomed, and I think that we would be the happiest if you could come up. We haven't had any official visits for a very long time, and you, as a minister have been requested to go there.

(interpretation ends) Last week my colleague representing Tununiq asked the minister some important questions concerning the recent federal decision to turbot quotas. As the minister is aware, the new Qikiqtarjuaq deep water port is intended to support the development of the blue economy and fisheries industry, which has the potential to provide such needed employment to my constituents. Can the minister indicate the impact that quota decision will have on the construction schedule for the new port?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current unilateral decision by Fisheries and Oceans on decreasing our quota on turbot was very disappointing and I do not support that, but it does not have any impact towards that major project that we really need as a part of our blue economy.

We will proceed on making sure that this project proceeds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 328 – 6(2): Rankin Inlet Water Infrastructure

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day to the people of Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Community and Government Services. As the minister is aware, another boil water advisory for Rankin Inlet was issued on February 28 by the government.

This advisory highlights the need for improvements to Rankin Inlet's utilidor and water infrastructure. During the Legislative Assembly's recently fall sitting, I was proud to vote in favour of over \$23.6 million in capital funding for water-related infrastructure in Rankin Inlet. In recent months the government has awarded several tenders in relation to the utilidor. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this important work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. My department has been working hard to upgrade Rankin Inlet's aging water infrastructure there. We needed to be able to produce water that will meet the guidelines set out through the Canadian drinking water quality.

So as for status, on the Utilidor infrastructure upgrades, upgrades to the Johnston Cove... . There have been multiple places done and there is still more work to do, but the upgrades to Johnston Cove lift station scope has been completed.

Phase 3-A upgrades to the Williamson Lake pump house, Nipisha Lake pump house, and the Nuvuk Lake lift station have been substantially completed. This work is ongoing, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As I have previously noted, the federal government is provided hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for improvements to the water infrastructure in the capital of Iqaluit.

Can the minister indicate how much federal funding is being provided towards replacement of the Rankin Inlet utilidor? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are few different phases involved in this and there are breakdowns, but on the Utilidor itself, there is a total approved budget of \$29.2 million. For phases 1, 2, 3; \$4,589,159 is from federal sources. Phase 2 and 3, I don't have a breakdown on that, but also for planned upgrades to the water treatment plant, that work for the design and planning, we are anticipating both Vote 2 and Vote 4 funding including \$1.5 million from the federal government at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague representing Tununiq has been a sound voice for her community to respect the need of a new water treatment plant. Can the minister provide an update today on the tendering process for the design and construction of a new water treatment plant for Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member again for being a strong advocate for his community, and many other communities are anticipating water treatment, either upgrades or new plants, facilities. For Rankin Inlet, we are anticipating that detailed work will take place in early this year.

We have the business case that has been done and recommended schematic design and a new water intake pump house water treatment facility and distribution pump house and treated water storage tank, but it was trying to proceed with that project as well, full steam ahead, just the same way as the utilidor project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Question 329 – 6(2): Support for Regional Dialects

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good afternoon to my constituents, Taloyoak and Kugaaruk, and my household, and my mother. Good afternoon.

(interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the minister of Culture and Heritage. As my colleagues will be aware, I am in strong support of preserving and promoting our regional dialects. I am always pleased to hear of new initiatives that increase the visibility and use of our language.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on what projects are currently being undertaken to preserve and promote regional dialects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank our colleague for requesting more information on that matter with his question. At this time, the Department of Culture and Heritage is in the initial stages of a comprehensive review on the underlying factors of language loss, retention and preservation of disappearing languages, and to recommend ways to bring them back to life.

With this being the case, they are reviewing their options for their employees on how to address these challenges in trying to preserve a disappearing or dying language, or even in just strengthening the existing linguistic base. The work is still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for her response. (interpretation ends) It is very important to have such resources as story books, pamphlets, posters and other documents written in our language.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what specific initiatives are underway to support the development of other types of media, including film or video productions in our regional dialects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank him for inquiring about this matter. The Department of Culture and Heritage, if we're not working on a project, Inuit themselves can apply for funding to do their own project, as long as it comes from the communities, it would be stronger to bring back our

language. So you can apply for funding for literacy, for film making, or all sorts of media to train languages in the communities.

So these are projects that you can apply for funding for to bring back the languages. There are more and more interesting projects coming out in regard to language projects. I had tabled a report and in that report it also explains what is being initiated and what is being done to deal with languages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to thank the minister for that answer.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in June of 2022, I had questioned the minister about the development of community-based programs to support language preservation initiatives in different regions.

Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated that organizations could approach her department for assistance in this area. Can the minister provide an update on how many organizations, or community groups have contacted her department this past fiscal year to request support for language preservation initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to thank my colleague for his question. In just recent years there have been quite a few applications, especially for revitalizing languages from those who applied. There were over 200 applicants for funding to do language projects to revitalize the languages.

As well, this year, there are many applicants, and we expect to receive many more applications. With that, I urge them to please try and strengthen our languages. Let's try and revitalize our languages. Even if we have our own dialects, it is good. The more people who would like to work on their revitalizing languages, the better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Question 330 – 6(2): Activities of the Nunavut Development Corporation

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation. As the minister will recall I have spoken on a number of occasions about the importance of economic diversification.

As the minister is aware, one of the statutory mandates of the Nunavut Development Corporation is to “create employment and income for residents of Nunavut, primarily small communities.”

Mr. Speaker, Sanikiluaq is a small community with a need for more employment and opportunities for my constituents. Can the minister provide an update to the House on what specific new priorities he will be introducing, including in his 2023-24 letters of expectation to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Development Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for continuing interest in this corporation, and the wonderful work that they do. I don't have the letter of expectation in front of me to highlight what priorities have been taking place for this upcoming year, but I will commit to the member to provide that in more detail, and to work with the board of directors for the corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to your correspondence. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Development Corporation has a number of subsidiaries that focus on arts and crafts. These include Ivalu in Rankin Inlet, Jessie Oonark in Baker Lake, Kiluk in Arviat, Taluq Designs in Taloyoak, and the Uqqurmiut Arts and Crafts Centre in Pangnirtung.

As the minister is also well aware, Sanikiluaq is renowned for a number of distinct arts and crafts, including sculptures made from argillite, baskets made from lime grass, and clothing made with eider down.

I believe that the Nunavut Development Corporation should be investing in Sanikiluaq ventures or establishing a new subsidiary in the community. Can the minister clarify how the Nunavut Development Corporation decides whether or not to create a new subsidiary in the arts and crafts sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That corporation is very arms-length in terms of the work that they do. I rely heavily on their board of directors and the staff that are there in terms of doing the work that needs to be done, and any new ventures. For the member to raise it here in the House is a very good one, and something that I will definitely take to the corporation as whether that option has been reviewed and whether that could happen. So I will leave it at that, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Development Corporation has a number of subsidiaries that focus on processing country foods. This includes Kitikmeot Foods in Cambridge Bay, Kivalliq Arctic Foods in Rankin Inlet, and Papiruaq Fisheries in Whale Cove.

As the minister is also aware, Sanikiluaq is renowned for a number of distinct and delicious country foods, including reindeer, mussels, scallops and sea cucumbers. Can the minister clarify how the Nunavut Development Corporation decides whether or not to create a new subsidiary in the country food sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think one of the products that the community does great, he didn't mention was the maktaa sausage. That is wonderful, wonderful meat that I've eaten before. A lot of good meals, I have had in Sanikiluaq. Either through Nunavut Development Corporation or through our Fisheries Diversification Program, those opportunities are available. I would encourage the community economic development officer to take initiatives in terms of looking with avenue to take out of the wonderful wildlife that Sanikiluaq has to offer to the rest of the world, and if you have never eaten over there, you have to try it. Everything tastes really good in Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Question 331 – 6(2): Support for Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. Earlier today, I spoke directly with the leadership of Iqaluit's Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre concerning the crisis situation facing this vital organization.

Mr. Speaker, the food centre makes a literal life and death difference for the most marginalized and vulnerable sectors of our population. It's now publicly known that the centre has suffered immense physical damage as a result of a weekend freeze-up that was caused by the centre running out of fuel.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for everyone to have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and accountabilities.

As the minister is aware his department awarded a multimillion-dollar contract to the Uqsuq Corporation in December 2021 for fuel distribution in Iqaluit. Can the minister

clarify the extent to which his department is responsible for monitoring the private contractor's operations in respect to their deliveries to private homeowners, businesses and other organizations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question and it was a very unfortunate situation with Qajuqturvik Society experiencing that challenging situation.

As for the question, Mr. Speaker, my department and in our contract management, we do work with our service providers and our contractors that are in place. These are regularly monitored and if there are disputes around anything to do with one of the contractors not meeting expectations, this can be looked into and it's something that we can bring forward.

As my colleagues will appreciate, this is a very trying situation across the city, and again, it's a day to day ever evolving situation. We are trying to come up with solutions, oriented ideas, and so we are trying to work with everyone involved, including our third-party contractors and the city as well. We know the city has come forward with a request and we are meeting with them day to day and meeting the needs for Iqaluit residents and people passing through it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what I heard from that response is that those people who are impacted by interruptions in their fuel services are able to contact Community and Government Services in order to have their issues resolved and I hope that community members do that.

We understand and recognize that the recent cold snap in Iqaluit has impacted the operations of many organizations. Can the minister clarify what specific assistance and support his department has been providing in respect to ensuring community access to fuel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a detailed response on the question, but we do have a contract in place for fuel delivery and it's something that if we need to keep tabs on it, we will look into this matter. I know, if I recall correctly, there was communications put out around if your tanks are... to check your fuel tanks on a regular basis during these cold months and if it your tanks are running low, you can arrange for a top-up. I know there have been communications put out before, but I will follow up with the member at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, I'm not sure aware that there are some fuel tanks and some of the larger fuel tanks don't actually have external gauges, so it can be really difficult for organizations that have those larger fuel tanks and businesses to be able to check their fuel levels, so I think it's really important that the minister really does push Uqsuq to get back on track in their fuel deliveries.

As the minister is aware, his department's business plan indicates that one of its ongoing priorities is to "support efforts to renovate or repurpose existing buildings for use in the housing continuum." We spoke about that issue yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be worthwhile for the department to expand this work to also consider opportunities for transferring surplus assets to charitable organizations and societies, many of which simply do not have the funding to engage in major capital acquisitions. Will the minister commit to doing this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the member that on the past couple questions, my department will follow-up with the contractor to make sure that they're meeting their conditions.

As for the surplus of assets, my department is in charge of surplus disposal around our, whether it is each department's or it is CGS. We do give the opportunity to municipalities as well, so we will continue on that path according to our surplus policy in place. If there's opportunities outside of that, we would like to hear about options around that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Question 332 – 6(2): Iqaluit Vacancy Rates

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions today to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation. I was going to ask the question to the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, but he's got such a nice tie on today, so I'll save that for a further opportunity.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, back in November, I was asking questions to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation on unit availability here in Iqaluit, and in the responses and some supplemental information has been shared with me from the minister's office, back in May of 2022, it is listed as 26 units, public housing units vacant or under repair, and in November, when I was questioning the minister, there were 132 staff housing units that were vacant or in need of repair.

I would just like to get an updated number from the minister on one; I find the number 26 public housing vacant and under repair, to be a very low number for the city the size of Iqaluit. During my recent election campaign, there seemed to be a lot more units that were vacant.

I would just like to get an update from the minister on the total of the 132 staff housing units and 26 public housing units that were vacant or in need of repair. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make sure to look through Mr. Hickes' tie closet to ensure that I wear the same tie as him the next time. I appreciate the question. Right now, in Iqaluit, in terms of the public housing units, there are 14 units are under repair.

There is a distinct difference between those that are under repair to be rehoused, and those that are not under any repair and ready for demolition and so on. I could see how that number could be deceiving when you drive around town and see so many houses that are vacant, but there are. The latest information that I have as of this morning was there are 14 housing units in Iqaluit that are under major repair.

In terms of staff housing, Mr. Speaker, that's a revolving door, as we empty staff housing units, many of them have to be repaired. As of right now, there are 63 units ready for occupancy in staff housing, and 34 units that are needing major repairs or renovations in the city in terms of staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for those updated numbers. Back in November, the minister was quite clear that there is a floating number of units in need of repair, and it's typically around the number of 50, so to hear that there's 36, I think of it as progress.

Mr. Speaker, in that same questioning, back in November, I had asked the minister some questions on the planned builds here in Iqaluit for the 2023 season. The minister at that time had responded saying that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is looking at building 18 affordable housing units, and 46 market units, for a total of 84. I've got to check my math because that comes out to 64 in my head. I did check the updated *Blues* and that number hadn't changed.

I am going to try and sneak a two-part question in here, Mr. Speaker. One; a confirmation of the number, whether that's actually 64 or 84. If the minister can explain what an affordable housing unit is, and what a market unit is? The way I understand a market unit is market rent; unsubsidized. I am not aware of any units that the Nunavut Housing Corporation builds that are unsubsidized. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague is correct. Those are market units that we know of. There may be more than that, but we are aware that NCC, in this case, is building 46 market units that they will be renting out that are their own units, that the government does not build.

Outside that, we are building 20 affordable housing units. These housing units will be rentable, but made more affordable. Going at the cost of operating them, kind of thing, but we are working with in terms of affordable housing units, those are subsidized housing units out for rent in the short-term. In terms of public housing units, there will be 18, for a total of 84. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for clarifying that. Apparently, I had misunderstood that we are building, as I assumed that the Nunavut Housing Corporation building.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other topics that was raised during that discussion or dialogue that I had with the minister back in November had to do with Government of Nunavut staff retiring that are in staff housing. Again, we know that it's not the government's intention to create homelessness, but at the time, the minister had mentioned there might be a way to remedy that situation. We are currently looking at that, and trying to speed it up as quick as possible, so that we do not end up with retired homeless government employees.

Mr. Speaker, I know that with the lack of a distinct policy on retiring housing benefits, and I know that I had asked questions to the Minister responsible for Human Resources similar questions, I would like to get an update on what type of discussions are occurring, what kind of timeline we're looking at, and is there some way a temporary measure could be put in place to assist our long-serving civil servants, through the retirement? I know one circumstance where a staff unit was converted to a public housing unit. I am just wondering if the minister would commit to working with the Minister responsible for Human Resources to come up with a short-term strategy, in addition to the long-term strategy for the solution. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that's a record, five questions in one. Mr. Speaker, I know I do not need to answer all of them, but let me give it a 30-second attempt. Yes, yes, yes, yes and for sure.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, we are getting creative in terms of trying to make sure that people who have spent many long years serving the public, the individuals end up in a situation where they want to retire, but they will end up homeless so they end up prolonging their employment.

We are working with Human Resources to ensure the department to try to find creative ways so that we could move people from one sector to the other. One of the discussions that we're having right now, and I'll use that as an example, is we have government employees that are in public housing, who would like to move into staff housing but because of technicalities, for one reason or another, they are not able to get into public housing units.

So we are working to see if we can do some swaps in some situations. Again, depending on communities and availability of staff housing and public housing, the possibility of reverting some of the staff housing into public housing units. So we are taking a look at these, and I am very hopeful that in the next couple months we will be able to begin to nail down some of these situations because it is very serious, and we don't want to leave ex-Government of Nunavut employees homeless, or anybody else homeless for that matter, Mr. Speaker.

As we build up the number of housing units that are being built now, that will make all these kind of transitions a lot easier. I hope that answers some of his questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Question. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 333 – 6(2): Update on Nunavut 3000

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) I think the minister of Housing should get some exercise today. My questions are for the Minister of Housing, and they pertain to *Igluliuqatigiingniq*, Nunavut 3000, which is to build 3,000 houses by 2030, which is very ambitious as the minister stated, especially since it didn't come with any funding announcement. It was announced that the houses will be built, but there were no funding announcements to do what possibly is a \$2 billion project, that's with a "B."

To reach their goal, they have to start the construction of 428 units a year, every year until 2030.

Mr. Speaker, before and maybe now, the minister will explain. The allocation of public housing units were based on the wait list of all the communities. As of March 31, 2022, almost a year ago, Arviat had a wait list of 289. This is from housing corporation's documents, and by 2030, Arviat is supposed to get 165 public housing units, which is

really good, but they still will be short 124 units to have everyone on the wait list that is almost on the waitlist from almost a year ago.

So my question is: will the allocation of houses still be based on the wait list from the communities? The reason I ask that is, as MLAs, we know what the wait list is, it is public, and we can judge that the houses are being allocated to the communities based on the wait list, which is transparent. It is not political or boards, it is just straight-on needs. I would like to ask the minister: will the allocation of houses continue to be based on the wait list? Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will be heavily weighed and based on need, but there might be instances where it might be more beneficial or cheaper to build some extra units in another community that might not be number one, but when you bring a construction crew in to build a number of units, sometimes it's beneficial and cheaper to put in a 12-plex instead of a 6-plex into a community, seeing as how you've got the crew there, and so on. It will be heavily based and weighed on the wait list, but there will be other mitigating factors to get there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is from the same document, Nunavut 3000, preliminary targets for 2023 build program. The plan is to build 360 units within Nunavut, which is short of the 428 that need to be done every summer to get to the 3,000 by 2030. Arviat is supposed to get 20 public housing units and 20 affordable units. This was partially mentioned by the minister to Mr. Hickes there; affordable housing, which appears to be a new category.

We know that for public housing units there is rent scale. On the bottom end it's \$60 a month if you're not working and on the top end, and these are maximums, is \$2,443. That is for public housing unit rents.

I would like to ask the minister if these affordable houses are going houses that are rented. I'm about what affordable housing is. Houses that are rented or houses that can sold at a cheaper cost, but if affordable housing is for renting, is the rent going to be based close to what public housing units? Is it going to be higher? If we can just get an idea of what "affordable housing" means. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Affordable housing are houses that we will help with the private sector to build and/or help subsidize some of the cost of renting them. They will be run by private sector organizations or community organizations. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe they will be based on the housing rent scale, but as we move forward, they will be houses that if individuals want to rent, that they would not be at the

same of the public sector renting; the private sector market. They will be at a more affordable cost. That exact cost, Mr. Speaker, I do not know, but those will become more clear as we are going forward and some of these could turn into rent to own. Mr. Speaker, Thank you.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think affordable housing, the minister explained it a little bit, but in terms of rent, he says these will not be based on the public housing rent scale; it would be in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, we know that some private rents are in the neighbourhood of \$4,000 a month. That is not very affordable, especially if you have a single income family. They can't afford rents like that. They can't afford rents that are higher than the rent scale already. I'll leave it at that, but I think the definition of "affordable" when it comes to rent, would have to be defined in order to say it's affordable.

We use the figure of affordable housing here a lot, but it's never been defined what affordable means. Affordable may mean different things for different.

Arviat is supposed to get 40 affordable houses this summer. Can the minister inform myself, the House and Arviarmiut who is building these affordable houses; 20 affordable units in Arviat that are going to be affordable to rent or rent to own, but what company or entity is building these 40 units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I was quite clear with my colleague when I said that these will not be the \$4,000 to \$5,000 a month private corporation rental units; that they will be affordable. They will be subsidized either through the construction of them, or to maintain them so that they can be more affordable in the community's housing market, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of being built, as my colleague know and Nunavummiut know, we are working with Nunavut Construction Corporation to build some of the public housing units and the affordable housing units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 334 – 6(2): Support for Apprenticeship

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Nunavut Apprenticeship Division falls under the Department of Family Services, however, I believe that the Department of Education can play an important role in supporting and encouraging our youth to follow meaningful career paths.

Can the minister describe what initiatives are currently underway to promote training and pre-apprenticeship training in Nunavut's high schools? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. In regard to trades training and career pathing, it is our hope that with the proposed budget for the Department of Education that this coming fiscal year we will be able to introduce guidance counsellors, which will be offered and available to all of our high schools in Nunavut with the approval and the direction from the district education authorities, if they do not already have a guidance counsellor in their school already.

We know the importance of career pathing and having a guidance counsellor available to help students choose the direction of their preferred route past high school, and we do have some opportunity hopefully coming in the near future, Mr. Speaker. I'll put my other minister hat on of the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College. We are planning to, and have been working with the Department of Education, to get the pre-trades program into the high schools and have the trade entrance exam in particular, offered to our high school students. We're just working on the details for that to go through with the Department of Education. It has been done in the past before Mr. Speaker. I don't foresee any major challenges to getting that up and going for our high school students. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the Department of Education partnered closely with other departments to introduce young Inuit to the skill sets and challenges involved in providing community-based services. Can the minister describe what communications she had, if any, with her counterpart in Community and Government Services regarding opportunities for high school students to learn trades alongside local workers providing community services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. With the *Katujjiluta* mandate, we do have committees and one of the committees is the education and training committee. That work is being discussed as we speak, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to updating my colleagues when the time is appropriate after more conversations have been had around the topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along with many of my peers, I took part in a similar program and it sure helped me a great deal. We had a great deal of pride in what we had learned through these courses.

Will the minister commit to introducing more trades and pre-apprenticeship course opportunities for Nunavut's high school students, and if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. It's a great question as trades are a very important field and we are already working on more opportunities for trades.

As I mentioned in my previous answers, we do want more high school students to be gearing up for trades and we look forward to them entering the field of trades and working towards their journey persons in all different field, Mr. Speaker, and working towards *Nunavut 3000*. There is a partnership that we have and we look forward to having more Nunavummiut trained in the trades and going through that sector and working for Nunavut in all the different sectors of trade. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 335 – 6(2): NHC Programs and Criteria

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and are regarding the Emergency Repair and Renovation Program.

Throughout the life of the Fifth Assembly, I've been raising concerns over NHC's eligibility criteria of these programs and how they are excluding a considerable amount of Nunavummiut who may have had the opportunity to benefit from these programs.

Mr. Speaker, most recently, in more recent years, I've raised concerns about the eligibility criteria of these programs excluding condo corporations and how that could help offset the skyrocketing insurance affordability issues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on questions that I posed to the minister in our recent fall sitting about this issue, and I would like to read from the *Hansard* from October 26, 2022.

Mr. Speaker, "another issue that I have previously raised is the need for Nunavut Housing Corporation to ensure that its programs for homeowners to access support for repairs and

energy upgrades are also available to condo owners, as I believe that might help address the insurance issues.”

The government’s recently released Nunavut 3000 housing strategy in indicates that the corporation will, “Support cooperative housing and condo corporations and redesign homeownership programs for people interested in purchasing new, affordable and market housing units. If the minister will commit to ensuring that this strategy will address the need to ensure that all condo corporations and owners can access the NHC home repair programs.” The minister had indicated that he will definitely be looking into that.

I would like to ask if the minister would be able to provide the Assembly an update on any progress made in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. We are continuing to work on taking a look at the different emergency repair programs and non-emergency repair programs, heating oil tank replacement programs, and to see how they can be of use to the condo corporation.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleague knows, the condo corporations have one heating oil tank and one boiler systems and so on and so forth, so we are still reviewing how we can best make the condo corporations qualify for the different programs that are in there because of maximum allowable salaries and incomes and maximum allowable funds that could be allocated to them, it brings a little bit of a hiccup, I believe, in terms of what kind of grants and if these would be able to be accessed by the condo corporation.

We are still working on those issues around the condo corporations and how the condo corporation may be able to access some of the emergency repair, heating oil repair, senior repair, and so on, and how we can make it work with the programs we do have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that update. I look forward to furthering that discussion at a later date.

For the record, I highly encourage the minister and Nunavut Housing Corporation to scrap the income eligibility requirements for these homeownership programs if we really wish to encourage and promote, and more importantly, support homeownership and encourage Nunavummiut to become more independent, then we must expand the eligibility of those programs.

Moving on, Mr. Speaker, as was previously indicated by my colleague from Iqaluit-Sinaa, the Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre plays an essential role for our

community. Without the work of the centre and its volunteers, many of the residents in the city would be going hungry.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all members are aware of the incident that took place this past weekend, which resulted, from what I understand, to be significant damage to the centre's facility.

I would like to ask for the record, can the minister confirm whether charities and registered societies are eligible to qualify for assistance under these programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My interpretation of homeowner assistance, they would not qualify for these programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that serious consideration should be given by the Nunavut Housing Corporation to expanding eligibility under these programs, or to work with other GN departments to create something new that can be targeted towards assisting entities like the food centre in crisis situations as this.

I would like to ask for my final question: does the minister share my position? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are other departments that work with organizations such as the food hampers and the food baskets the the local community run, volunteer run organizations across the territory.

I think as of right now, we do not have that kind of funding within our department to help this those situations, Mr. Speaker. I think it's something that maybe the government can look at as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Question 336 – 6(2): Polar Bear Management

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I would like to direct my question to the (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment (interpretation) in regard to polar bear management, quotas and the previous quotas.

In the past, the sale of polar bear hides used to make a lot of money and now they're not able to be sold. So will the quotas be kept? Will they remain? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. Yes, the quotas will stay for now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if they're going to always have a quota for polar bears, can the total allowable catch for polar bears in the Foxe Basin be increased because I don't know if there has been any count of them lately? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The polar bears are counted, and there is an estimation done after the counting, and then the quotas are set. That process is going to continue. The Foxe Basin region that the member is asking about, I don't see that information in front of me. I don't know when it was surveyed last. If the survey happened recently, then the information is at the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

We work with the wildlife management board on these things. After surveys, we look at the new numbers, and we present the new numbers to the NWMB to make sure that people's concerns are addressed through that process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you to the minister. Can the minister explain to us what the polar bear quota is in both my constituencies of Coral Harbour and Naujaat, and can he tell us if that number will be increasing in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member's constituencies are in two separate populations, and I can speak to the one that is in the Gulf of Boothia.

It was recently surveyed in June 2022, and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board held a meeting about it, and in July 2022, the quota was 74 and they recommended to increase it to 84, and we have approved that. The regional wildlife management boards will divide up the 84 polar bear allowable catch quota.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 337 – 6(2): Housing Affordability

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to question the minister of housing again, we left our conversation sort of hanging.

Mr. Speaker, I think what affordable housing is should be defined. I am going to try again, and the minister will try again to define it.

Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that it won't be based on the public housing unit rent scales. I'm going to try and make this simple: how much affordable housing rent would be.

For example, a three-bedroom public housing unit, the maximum rent that can be paid is \$1792. That is the public housing unit rent scale. In affordable housing, what would the rent be on a three-bedroom house? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Member for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canada defines affordable housing as long as the housing is that a household can pay for, while still having money left over for other food necessities, and for transportation and health. That means that what is considered affordable depends on the household income.

So in this case, as long as it is not greater than 30 percent of the individual's income, Mr. Speaker. So it's not based on so much a month for a house, it's based on 30 percent or less of an individual's income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for clarifying that affordable is based on the household income of 30 percent.

Can the minister confirm that public housing rents are also based on 30 percent of a household's income? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot confirm that, but it is based on some numbers including: percentages, number of people, and disposable income. I believe it's around the 30 percent mark too, Mr. Speaker, but the difference being that there is a ceiling or a cap on most of the housing units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on our exchange here, would the minister agree then that affordable rent will be similar, as it is with 30 percent of public

housing units, but with no limits. It will be strictly based just strictly on the household income. It will be roughly 30 percent of the household income, with no limits for affordable housing rent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize where my colleague is trying to go with this, but no, it's going to be based on as long as it's 30 percent or less of the income, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 338 – 6(2): Trades and Apprentices

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, with seconds to spare. My questions today are for the Minister of Family Services and they are also regarding promoting trades and occupational training apprenticeships. Mr. Speaker, if I recall correctly, in 2019 the total number of registered apprentices in Nunavut had dropped to 156, down from its peak of 255 apprentices in 2010.

For my first question to the minister, I would like to ask if she would be able to provide an update to the House on how many registered apprentices we currently have in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for your question while I was relaxing.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Currently we have 90 active apprentices in Nunavut and 11 trade qualifiers in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the Fifth Assembly, members of the Standing Committee on Legislation met with the minister of the day to review the proposed *Apprenticeship and Certification Act*. At that time, I pointed out that Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada without a youth trades program. I recall that the minister of the day committing to work with the Department of Education to develop a youth trades program.

I would like to ask the minister to describe what steps, if any, have been taken to promote and support the next generation of young Nunavummiut to prepare for the rewarding and very well-paying jobs in the skilled trades. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Service, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your question. It's a very good one, especially because we have plans for *Nunavut 3000* to make sure that Nunavut residents are working in that field, and also to make sure that we have trades people to start working. That's what our goal is. We'll be working with the Arctic College adult training. Also, next week we will be recognizing and acknowledging students who have graduated from different Arctic College programs.

In regard to your question, we have been reviewing how we can improve the program, especially when we are working towards recognizing and training trades people in Nunavut. That's what we are currently reviewing at this moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response, and I was very glad to see that the *Nunavut 3000* strategy does include training opportunities for Nunavummiut to take advantage of.

Mr. Speaker, again I also appreciate that the Department of Family Services does not have a specific mandate to provide educational opportunities for youth. However, for which to provide career development opportunities for Nunavummiut, then we need to start as early as possible to set them on a potential career path in the trades as well as in academic fields.

I would like to ask: will the minister commit to working with the Minister of Education to ensure there are programs and opportunities for Nunavut youth to be encouraged, supported, and well prepared to begin training for future trades and occupational careers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Service, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your question. We will be working with the Department of Education, especially when we plan and strategize on how we can provide support in their livelihood. So therefore we will have to meet again, also through adult education. We provide support to the students prior to them getting into the trades school. We have pre-trades in school. There is one in Rankin Inlet. Also, we'll be working with the housing corporation to make sure that they can work on the job training. That's one of our goals that we will strategize too. So we will continue to work to establish to make sure there are trades people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members, be aware that time allotted for question period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening

Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. I recognize the Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Item 9: Replies to Opening Address

Reply to Opening Address 002 – 6(2): Mr. Daniel Qavvik

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great honour to be able to rise today to provide my second Reply to a Budget Address during our current Legislative Assembly. The days are getting brighter. The weather is getting warmer and I am optimistic that we're on the right track as a government.

Mr. Speaker, in anticipation of this year's budget address, I reviewed the reply that I offered last year. I will again try hard to focus my comments on the extent to which the budget address aligns with the broad commitments and goals that are contained in our *Katujjiluta* mandate.

Mr. Speaker, I will start with the issue of housing. I was pleased that the word housing appears in this budget address in almost two dozen places. I'm sure that all of my colleagues agree that we need to move from words to action.

Mr. Speaker, the *Igluliuqatigiiniq* Nunavut 3000 Housing Strategy is a very promising, very ambitious document. I am pleased that the strategy indicates that up to 10 new public housing units and 20 affordable housing units are planned for Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, I am personally aware of dozens of families in Sanikiluaq who are in need of housing. I support the new approach of ensuring that all Nunavut communities receive housing allocations. Our constituents need hope.

Mr. Speaker, I will be pushing hard for housing partners to move decisively over the next few years to make real progress in constructing new units. I remind our partners in the Inuit Organizations that they have significant resources that should be allocated to helping our people.

Mr. Speaker, under the "Aging with Dignity" section of our mandate, there is reference to the need to "accelerate the development of purpose-built housing units for elders and seniors."

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this objective, and I am hopeful that the government's... . My apologies. I've got ice in my mouth.

>>*Laughter*

My apologies.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this objective, and I am hopeful that the government's work to develop an Elders' strategy will complement work to flesh out the Nunavut Housing 3000 strategy in this area.

Mr. Speaker, our government must continue to collaborate with designated Inuit organizations and the private sector in the development and implementation of housing initiatives across our territory.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget Address made mention of investment in community infrastructure.

I want to express my appreciation for the support that Sanikiluaq has been receiving to address our longstanding water issues, as well as the rapid response to the disaster that impacted our key municipal facility.

Mr. Speaker, the government must continue to work toward finalizing a devolution agreement that benefits the territory.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of untapped economic potential in Nunavut.

I will continue to advocate for investments that align with the strengths of the community, including investments to develop the riches of the ocean and the blue economy.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I also support investments to green our economy and power grid, including investments to develop wind power generation for Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, we are almost a quarter of the way through the 21st century. That's pretty amazing to think about.

Although I recognize that there will never be a paved road between Sanikiluaq and Iqaluit, it is important that all Nunavut communities fully join the information superhighway, which is why I support investments in fibre and broadband for all of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, during the last general election campaign, I was clear that one of my top priorities was to push for an elder care facility for my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, when we were first elected to the current Legislative Assembly, we all presented petitions that called on the government to build care facilities for elders in every community.

We know that the government has been moving towards regional facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that smaller communities like Sanikiluaq do not necessarily have the capacity to host large facilities that provide very complex levels of medical care.

However, we need to do more to ensure that appropriate small-scale facilities are supported so that our elders who may only require basic levels of medical care can spend their final years close to home and family.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Minister of Finance to ensure that his future budget addresses address this need as the government moves forward with its elders' strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I was glad that the Budget Address made reference to the new \$10 per day childcare program, and I encourage the government to provide clear information to communities and parents as to how this program will operate.

Mr. Speaker, I was also glad that the Budget Address made reference to creating more than 200 new early learning and childcare spaces. I again note that the existing daycare facility in Sanikiluaq is aging, and I strongly support capital investments to ensure that such facilities are in good condition.

Mr. Speaker, the future of our youth depends on education, education, and more education.

If we are to make any meaningful progress towards meeting our Article 23 under the *Nunavut Agreement*, we need more Inuit youth who are educated and trained to take on the responsibility of serving as teachers, nurses, doctors, RCMP officers, social workers, airline pilots, engineers, tradespeople, accountants, and entrepreneurs to name a few.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I fully support investments in programs which relate to training Inuit for meaningful careers in the skilled trades. We need more apprentices and journey persons in all of our communities. In our community, we need a modern community learning centre.

Mr. Speaker, we know that too many of our people suffer from addictions, trauma and mental health issues. We need to be open and honest about this. I was pleased to note that the tender for the Nunavut recovery centre was issued last week and I will be keeping a close on its progress.

Our government must continue to work hard in ensuring that there is a deep and extensive cooperation and collaboration between partners to address these challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I am very confident that the Minister of Finance recognizes that mental health and addiction issues are made worse by homelessness and unemployment.

If we achieve real progress in housing and educating and employing our people, we will achieve real progress in reducing some of the dysfunctions that I have mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier that I was pleased at the emphasis that the Budget Address placed on housing.

However, I was disappointed that there was not one clear mention of the issue of suicide.

This is another issue that we need to be open and honest about.

Mr. Speaker, suicide prevention in our territory must be prioritized.

It is my understanding that we have the highest suicide rate across our country.

I recognize that previous governments have produced various strategies and action plans to address suicide, and I recognize that one of our government's ministers has formal responsibility for suicide prevention.

Our government must revitalize and reinvigorate our efforts to combat suicide in our territory. I look forward to next year's Budget Address reflecting this urgent priority.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude my reply today by paying tribute to our former Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Patterson.

>>Applause

During the darkest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Patterson was a calm presence in our lives, and I also pay tribute to all of the incredible nurses, interpreters and health care professionals who helped get us through this extraordinary period of our lives.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, we came together during the COVID crisis.

That spirit of cooperation and commitment and shared sacrifice should guide us as we seek to focus our limited resources on the important work that lies ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you and all of my colleagues for listening to me today, and I thank all of my constituents, especially the elders, for their guidance and support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Sammurtok.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 106 – 6(2): Rent Scale in Chesterfield Inlet

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to table today a document that includes the names and signatures of 27 Chesterfield Inlet residents who have written in support of a rent scale review and adjustment. Although this document does not strictly conform to the full petition on Rule 43, it demonstrates the position of my constituents on this important matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 14 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take 10-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:36 and Committee resumed at 15:59

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Hickes): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We wish to continue with the review of the main estimates and business plan for the Department of Education, followed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 18?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 – Education – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would now like to ask Minister Gross: do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Do committee members agree to allow the minister to have witness?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses to the table. Thank you. Minister Gross, for the record, if you could please introduce your officials.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. To my left we have Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu and to my right we have Ibrahim Suleiman, Director of Corporate Services. My mistake. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. As we have already completed the opening comments for both the minister and committee chair, are there any general comments to the opening comments from the committee members? Seeing none, we'll go to page G-4. Directorate. \$7,601,000. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome minister and your colleagues. On the business plan, on page 114, the third bullet "Develop a Retention and Recruitment Strategy for Educators with the goal of increasing Inuit and Inuktitut speaking educators in Nunavut schools." The department's business plan for 2023-26 make several references to educator retention and recruitment strategy. How many new teachers currently need to be recruited? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That is 85. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana*, for the response. "Develop and implement a stakeholder communication strategy with a focus on informing and engaging with key education stakeholders." What specific initiative will be implemented in 2023-24 to hire the number of teachers that Nunavut needs? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The department has established monthly meetings with the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities and the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to improve communication between our partners and our stakeholders. We have regular meetings to allow for consistent information sharing and relationship building.

Some examples of the information sharing that have been regarding to the implementation of the *Education Act*, the language of instruction curriculum

development, the Canada-wide early childhood agreement, and the review of the FANS program.

The department continues to have regular meetings the Nunavut Teacher's Association. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. This is my last question. The Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities is established through the *Education Act*. Contribution funding for the coalition in 2023-24 is just over \$4 million. What specific roles and responsibilities will the coalition be undertaking? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The work that the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities received was \$3.1 million for their operations, including increased costs associated with the new responsibilities under the 2020 *Education Act*. This was a significant increase from the \$665,000 they received annually in the past.

The Department of Education and the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities meet regularly to discuss common initiatives and the needs of the DEAs, and the department is also partnering with the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities on community engagements related to the language of instruction regulations which are currently underway. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and your officials. The district education authorities at the community level, do they provide proper training so they know what their roles and responsibilities are? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, the district education authorities get annual training. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are they also thought about the operations in the budgeting portion of their responsibilities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes they are provided with that information and trained on that information. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister, officials. Just a few questions under directorate. First question I would like to ask is what is the current graduation rate in our education system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Last year, we had 262 graduates in Nunavut across the territory. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, minister. So we have a total figure of 262 high school graduates last year. What rate would that equate to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We're reviewing the formula right now for the graduation rate, but I can say that Nunavut's number of graduates has increased roughly 10 percent annually since 1999. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sorry, Mr. Lightstone, I'm just going to interject here for a moment. Although the numbers seem to be increasing and it doesn't go into how many students were going in to get an actual percentage of graduation rates, I understand that the minister just said that you're looking into updating that formula. Can the committee get some confirmation of when we can expect to get more accurate graduation rates? Minister Gross please.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask deputy minister to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a small population in Nunavut, and there's different formulas, there's 262 that have graduated, and we are looking at improving the system, but we would like to make sure that we get a more accurate number. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. So the minister had indicated that the formula for the graduation rate is currently under review. I was

wondering if you can tell me what is included in the current formula for the graduation rate and what about it is being considered for review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The net graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates by the population for single year of age and summing the results. The gross graduation rates refer to the total number of graduates. The graduates themselves may be of any age divided by the population of 17 and 18 year olds. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Just for curiosity, would you be able to provide us a population estimate of 17 and 18 year olds? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We don't have that information off hand, but we can provide that at a later time through letter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'll move onto my next line of questioning. I would like to thank the minister for providing the correspondence to the committee after the committee review of the budget last month, but there was one crucial bit of information that wasn't included and that was the number of grade 12 students enrolled in the current year as well as the number of grade one students enrolled 12 years ago just to give us another rough estimate of graduation rates.

I would like to ask why that information was not included in the correspondence and if the minister can provide that information today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and my apologies to the member. I think that was a missed question and we will be able to provide that information through a letter of correspondence at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister for that commitment. I look forward to seeing that information. I'll move onto my other list of questions. In the business plan, on page 113, under the current year priorities that bullet at the bottom of the page indicates that "Work with community-based partners to develop enhancements

for school meal program.” Under the status it indicates that “Food programs are currently supported by community and school staff volunteers. The department has initiated an interdepartmental working group to identify needs and ways to enhance and standardize school meal program in all schools.”

I was wondering if the minister would be able to elaborate on that and provide some information about when exactly this interdepartmental committee was struck, how many meetings they’ve had and what progress has been to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We have had up to four meetings in that interdepartmental working group and at the staff level they’ve had great success meeting, and we are working to enhance the food meal program and I can say that I have met with the federal minister on the Child First Initiative to enhance the food meal program and we hope to have positive views in the future with the development of that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. That is very positive news to hear. I guess my next question is: when can our students start to expect to see enhancements of current meal programs being rolled out? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That work is going on in an ongoing basis, so we’re constantly working to help support food mail programs in our schools, and working to make them better, and having meetings with our federal counterparts and colleagues are a great step in the direction, as well as meeting with our stakeholders and partners to talk about, and work on food mail programs. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister had indicated that she met with the federal minister, and if I recall correctly, the federal government is working on a pan-Canadian Food Meal Program.

I was wondering what sort of input the minister has provided to that federal government initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Aside from the meeting that I had with the federal minister, I can say that at my last federal meeting, which happened in Regina last July, we did talk about Food Mail Programs in schools and daycares. It was at one of our

meetings where we discussed it at the inter-federal, provincial, territorial meetings. I expect Nunavut's concern with food and advocated for the need of more enhanced Food Mail Programs in our schools in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. In your discussions with the federal government on this initiative, did they indicate any, sort of, timeline as to when they'd like to initiate this, or roll it out in phases. Or any, sort of, timeline? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. At this point, there is no timeline, but I'm hoping it would be as soon as possible. We have work to do at our end with the Department of Education. Our schools do need upgrades. Some of them need more enhanced kitchens. All of that work is being integrated into the Act that we're looking for. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. This is a very important issue, not just for me, but for all of us, especially, our youth. It's something that I have been raising concern about since the beginning of this Assembly.

I am glad that this, sort of, crucial programming is enhancement is included in the mandate in *Katujjiluta*, as well as your priorities of the department. I am very optimistic that this will have lasting impact on a tremendous amount of people.

My next question on this topic is when does the minister expect to have any, sort of, deliverables, or announcements on food programs in our schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. This work has to still go through many hands, with more meetings that have to be struck, and they have been at the staff level, post my meeting with the federal minister. The information would have to go through the Cabinet process and be brought forward. I don't have a definitive timeline but, as I stated earlier, I'm hoping as soon as possible. Hopefully, we can have positive announcements in the near future. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Minister Gross and your officials. It's always nice to see you.

I have some questions related to stakeholder engagement, but first I have an overall question, and that's in the work that the department is doing in their planning and engagement reporting, that sort of thing. Are you using key performance indicators as a way to map out the work that you're doing, as well as to monitor progress towards your goal? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes we are using key performance indicators. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that. Just confirmation that that's across the board would be great. On page 114 there a bullet to further develop and implement the family engagement initiative, and I'm wondering if you can just give us an update on that and how often we can expect to hear about reporting on that initiative towards that goal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for that question. So the initiative is intended to support a long-term approach to encourage family involvement in schools, and among other things to promote attendance. The department is committed to developing a 10 year family engagement strategy, and the initial steps have been made through the completed current state report and the territorial scan, and our next step is to fill those gaps identified through the scan in the current framework, it starts at home.

Some of these gaps include creating and implementing mechanisms for evaluation and reporting. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister Gross. When we consider how important it is to engage families in participating in the education for our children, we must consider the impact of residential schools on families' abilities to feel comfortable engaging with an education system and with the educators, and even in entering a school premise.

So minister, I would like to hear from you how the department plans to help alleviate the stress of families and we engage them in the education process, and is that part of this family engagement initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Education fully understands the colonial impacts that have gone on through our territory, and we do work to support all people, and we encourage our families to send their children to school. We have a slogan right now that says parents motivate, students participate, together we can graduate. That really does mean that it is a family approach, a community approach and together we can have an increased number of students going to school, and I can say that we have had other campaigns as well in the past.

We do want to keep seeing student attendance rates rise and encourage students to be going to school. We have the new attendance toolkit for our district education authorities to support student attendance as well. That toolkit went out in the past few months, and we're hoping that the great example and different activities can be used throughout our schools to encourage attendance and encourage students to be going to school. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister Gross. I'd just like a little bit more information on the slogan. I think it's really important to know that it takes more than a slogan. It takes specific action that can help alleviate trauma related to the education system, and specific action that help parents, grandparents, and community members feel safe, and feel empowered, and to give them back the agency that, for so many generations, was stripped away from Inuit, in engaging the education system.

If you can elaborate on that, I would really appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the question. There are a number of examples of encouraging students and families to send their children to school, and for the children to go to school.

First of all, creating a welcoming environment and addressing safe and caring schools, is very important, as well as holding school events for families and the community to attend. Also, hiring an attendance worker has happened in a few of our schools. Hired through the District Education Authorities. We also have competitions between classes for attendance, and awards or certificates at the student assembly for attendance.

We're also offering our DEA and CFSN approved after school programs for students, and supporting the use of Inuktitut and Inuit culture in our school community, and also, lastly, involving our parents, community members, and Elders to all of our aspects at the school. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister Gross. In that process, in that family engagement initiative, is there also a process for educating teachers and staff about historical and current trauma, and how to engage with parents, families, and students who are acting out that trauma while they're engaging in the education system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for that great question. Our school staff are orientated in our culture, in the history of the territory, and are learning all of the important things to know about. When a new teacher does arrive in our schools, and we have the orientation at the beginning of the school year for those teachers that are coming into our schools from down south, or other areas. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In that orientation, are teachers and staff members oriented to cultural humilities, so that they have an understanding of their own privilege, and maybe, lack of understanding the impacts of this historical trauma? In addition to that, we know that the impact of residential schools created intergenerational issues that include attachment issues, so our teachers and employees aware of attachment theory and how that impacts children in their education as well as how it impacts families engaging in that education process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman, and *quana* for that question. The training, the orientation that does happen, there is a Nunavut series that's offered during the summer. We have the cultural awareness and trauma-informed practice, which is a 20-hour course that provides educators with the information and resources about education and teaching in Nunavut.

The educators will explore the history of Nunavut Inuit values, cultural competency, and trauma informed teaching. Throughout the course, educators will be encouraged in discussions by using a blog to record professional learning as these topics can be difficult. Information on available mental health supports are also provided.

We also have an introduction to the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangiit* Education Framework for Nunavut curriculum. This is a ten-hour course that provides educators with the information and strategies to incorporate *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangiit* as the foundation for all classroom activities. Throughout readings, videos, and discussions, educators will develop a greater understanding of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangiit*, the role of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangiit* in the curriculum, and how educators can deliver instruction reflective on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangiit*.

Both courses are fully online and self-paced with the dates of their offering. Educators are encouraged to work through one module or topic content each day to stay on track, but they can work ahead as they wish. In terms of the second part of the question, I would just like to ask the member to repeat that so we can answer that. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The second question was in regards to attachment theory and the intergenerational impacts of residential schools and how that has impacted families' ability to stay attached with each other. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. There is also a virtually developed and delivered workshop which there is one of them called "The Path: Your Journey Through Indigenous Canada." That is a six-hour workshop which participants use the history of Indigenous Canada, treaties, Indigenous rights, and Indigenous worldviews. There is another course that is called "Indigenous Intercultural Intelligence" and this is a six-hour workshop as well which address unconscious cultural bias, anti-racism, and stereotypes.

It helps participants become interculturally competent. "The Path: Your Journey Through Indigenous Canada" is a pre-requisite for this workshop. In terms of the residential school, I can't say if that is covered but based on that information, I'm thinking that it would be, but I'll ask my deputy minister to clarify. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman as well, for her question on (interpretation ends) attachment theory (interpretation) and when we speak of these issues, we don't use that terminology.

The teachers deal with different issues, and different communities have DEAs that choose different subjects or courses they want taught in their schools, and the curriculum changes. At this time, regarding the students who have suffered trauma during residential schools, this happened to all Nunavummiut, and today our work has a foundation on trying to make things better for everyone.

They can learn these at home, and I hope I answered the question, if I didn't answer the question properly, let me know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. I didn't really fully get the answer that I want, but perhaps we can have that discussion in person sometime later.

Minister Gross, you mentioned that in an earlier response that there is a training program that helps educators and staff to be aware of what mental health supports are available, and I'd just like you to expand on that, are those mental health supports available to the employees, or are they available to families? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Our mental health supports are offered to our staff and our students in our schools. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's really important that when we are engaging families that we are creating an opportunity for families to identify their own personal needs and issues, mental health related issues that may come up while engaging with the education system, and I wonder if there has been any thought put into creating that opportunity to engage parents in accessing mental health resources through that family engagement initiative in partnership, obviously with the Department of Health and other relevant stakeholders so that as the government, we're doing our best to wrap around families and communities so that as issues come up and arise that those of us who are working directly with them are able to connect them with the help that they may need or request. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. First of all, we have parental consent in everything that we do, and our responsibility is the students, and we do want to ensure that our students have all the resources that they need, including social emotional learning resources, and having those available for instances that may come up and have if there are tough times that we are able to have our educators aware of situations and be able to best respond to those needs. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I see this is an excellent opportunity to break the cycle that's related to fears about engaging in the education system, and I really do wish you the greatest success in that, and if the Chair and the minister don't mind, I did overhear somebody talk about the retention and recruitment strategy for educators, however, as some members may know, I've been a little bit distracted because I discovered that I ran out of fuel late this afternoon, and I've been able to confirm that I have been refilled, so I was not giving you my full attention and I apologize for that.

If possible, can I hear from the minister where the retention and recruitment strategy for educators is at right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman, and *Quana* for that question. So, our recruitment efforts have been continuing to increase over the recent years, and some of the initiatives include supporting the Nunavut Teachers Education Program, and working to recruit Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates into our schools.

We also participate in a university career fair and we have continued to use social media to target potential teachers. We use social media campaigns to continue through ads on Facebook, google, google ad works, or to direct potential job seekers to recruit to the website, that gov.nu.ca/teachinnunavut.

We also, this year our department has also expanded its national advertising to include a print in a popular national magazine called Maclean's. We also have increased.... sorry.... we will also be doing a review of our teachers' compensation and benefits package. *Quana* Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: You caught me passing a message. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have two questions. Sorry minister, I don't know if my question was clear enough because I don't think I heard a response. There is a bullet here that says "develop a retention and recruitment strategy for educators, with the goal of increasing Inuktitut and Inuktut speaking educators in Nunavut schools" and I just want to know where that strategy is at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. So that portion of the strategy, the development has been delayed due to capacity issues, so currently the department is working on solidifying a contract to support the development of a retention and recruitment strategy, which will roll out in 2023-2024. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you very much for that response, and thank you Mr. Chairman. A priority for 2023-2024 is to continue to work to accelerate the 20-year language of instruction implementation plan, by focusing on accelerating the work of resource development. Can you talk to us about that please? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Sorry, can the member repeat the question? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. The member is asking for an update on the 20-year language of instruction implementation plan, and what work is being done is accelerate that resource development. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and *Quana* for the clarification. Yes, the work is on time for the 20-year implementation, and we are working as we speak to keep developing more curriculum. Right now, we are working on kindergarten to grade six and we'll be going further in the next couple of years to grade six to eight. Sorry, *mamiana* grade nine, and then following that, grades 10 to 12.

I would like to say that this work isn't just going to come out 20 years from now, that work is happening as we speak and it's been rolled out. We have some examples: this past fall, we launched the new curriculum for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, which is a package of resources for different age groups, and resources on traditional knowledge and the residential school experience from Inuit and from other First Nations. We are incorporating those into our schools, so the more work that happens has to go through different levels and phases to be rolled out, but it's an ongoing evolution of creating the curriculum.

Quana, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, for clarifying that question.

Minister, can you tell me what are your top key performance indicators in this plan? You mentioned K to six, or seven to 12, that sort of thing, are your key performance indicators, for example, having more students who are able to converse in Inuktitut? Is a key performance indicator that you'll have more Inuktitut speaking educators? Do you have a key performance indicator that ties back into something like the family engagement initiative? Are they inter-connected somehow? Could you tell me a little bit about that, I'd appreciate it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the question. I think that's a pretty complex answer that I'll give, because it's everything. Everything that needs to be developed in the curriculum is going to be incorporated. Some of the examples, is in Nunavut, right now, we have different models of education. We have different streams, and we're working right now on language of instruction models, and going to each of our communities to figure out and meet with our stakeholders, through the work of the District Education Authorities, to see what our communities want, in terms of bilingual education.

It is our goal to have all of our subjects, and all of our curricula be made in Nunavut, to have *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqanit* in our curriculum, and to have all of that knowledge created and implemented within the new curriculum that is being developed. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Gross. I have no more names on my list, so I'll recognize Ms. Brewster one more time.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Going back to Priorities 2022-2023, there is a priority to work with community-based partners to develop enhancements for school meal programs.

Minister, I know from experience in raising children here, and sending them off to school, and knowing that some days I could not afford to feed my children. Part of that reason was, especially for Iqaluit, I didn't have a vehicle at the time, so I was taking taxis to and from to pick them up at lunch, and then trying to feed them.

I know that many, many, many parents, we know today that upwards of 500 meals are given to families through *Qajuqturvik* programming everyday, and it strikes me that we have an opportunity to impact both families and our children in their education by keeping them at school at lunchtime and feeding every child at lunch. I know that there are breakfast programs, and that there are some food programs.

I wonder, Minister Gross, if the department has put thought into taking the opportunity to give children that healthy start by ensuring that every single child is well fed, and no child is hungry while they're in classrooms, and that our educators are not burdened with bringing food and snacks for their children, because I know that many, many educators take it upon themselves to provide food for their students because they care. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and *quana* for the question. Right now our schools do receive funding through the Department of Health for school meal programs and some of our schools are accessing additional funds through the Child First Initiative. Those are through proposal usually through the district education authorities. So some of our schools we are seeing are having already enhanced school meal programs where they are able to provide hot breakfast a hot lunch and snacks.

The purpose of the meeting with the federal minister was to discuss that so that our schools don't have to apply for this initiative that we can apply a blanket application for our students so that they can receive the hot breakfast, the hot lunch and the snacks. So hopefully in the coming months we will be able to announce something. So I'm staying positive about that and we have work to do with our other departments; the Department of Health as well as the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Gross, I'm very happy to hear about this initiative and I would gladly give you any support that you need to make that happen. We know that one of the impacts of COVID was that there was an influx of federal funding that helped us to feed families here in Nunavut, knowing that well-fed bodies are healthier and better able to fight off disease and illness. That is of paramount importance in my mind.

On that subject of providing food; what we know about food insecurity in Nunavut is that many families do not have access to food on a regular basis and are relying on food programs and so the impact of that is that children are not necessarily learning how to prepare nutritious foods for themselves and for their families and those of us of more advanced ages may recall that there used to be home economics programs within schools that included food and meal preparation that helped to teach people, children and youth, how to cook and clean for themselves.

I would like to hear from the minister about whether or not these food programs and plans would include that very important part of building skills and knowledge, especially in nutrition education, because we know that because of food insecurity, many of those children are not able to learn that at home and we have an opportunity to give them those skills. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. It's an excellent program. I know I've spoken to a young lady here in Iqaluit who actually goes with her family shopping now to make sure that there are healthy choices around the home that through the program at the high school here, so I would love to see that rolled out more. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and *quana* for the question. The Department of Education gives the authority to the district education authorities to choose what programs, what courses, the school will offer. So each school is slightly different for our extracurricular courses and some of our schools do offer home economics and some of them don't. So it's up to the school and lobbying with your district education authority if you would like to see that type of program in your school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, I think that it's really important that this is just a baseline part of our education because it has a long-term impact on people's lives and their health.

I think that leaving it up to individual district education authorities to pick and choose whether or not they would want to focus on that over another really important focus that a community may need or want is unwise because we need to break that cycle of food insecurity. One of the best ways that we can do that is through education and having a baseline education program that includes nutritional education and hands-on experience so that children can grow into a life where choosing healthy foods and preparing healthy foods is a way of life.

I would like to hear, Minister Gross, your thoughts on whether or not you are able to commit to making a baseline education for every single student in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for that question. I can say that home economics is included in our new curriculum that's being developed, so it will be a part of our new curriculum that will come out. We've had revised capital standards in our schools and we want to ensure that our new schools have a commercial-size kitchen to support school food mail programs. As we know, some of our kitchens are not very adequate for this type of work at the moment. Every new school build that's there will have a commercial kitchen that will be able to host school meal programs and courses in home economics. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister confirm for me at what age that that starts? Is it in early childhood? In K to 6? Is it in high school or middle school? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I believe the target is for junior high and high school age students. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Gross, I can't stress enough how important it is to build these skills from the earliest age possible, and I would really like to see you come back next year and tell us that you're actually implementing that.

I'll move on from that and I thank the Chair for mentioning the program at Inuksuk High School. I know that the high school students really enjoy participating in that school meal program and cooking and baking. The fact that these food programs are currently supported by community and school staff volunteers really concerns me. I want to extend my gratitude to those volunteers who are working on those food programs because they are so important. I can't stress that enough.

I would like to hear from the minister on why these programs are run by volunteers and why there aren't dedicated staff or even paid community members in order to implement these school meal programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for that question. Right now we're working to standardize the food program with the Child First Initiative and addressing people that will be there to cook and look after the school meal program. It's an area that we do want incorporated so that our teachers or volunteers of the school community aren't volunteering or our teachers aren't volunteering their time, that this does become a paid position for community members to work in our schools and cook those nutritious foods that will be offered to our students. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for that response. I'll just close off by saying, on the issue of asking educators and school staff to volunteer to do any additional work like this, I think that it's really important to know that as families and communities, we appreciate that volunteerism and I again stress that I believe 100 percent that if a program is important enough to implement in a school, staff should be paid to implement that program. That's all I have to say on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment. Next name I have on my list: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Back in October 2021, NTI filed a lawsuit against the Government of Nunavut for violating the equal rights of Inuit and children, and I'll just read what it says here. It says and they have asserted that the Government of Nunavut, by failing to provide a public school system offering Nunavut Inuit equal opportunity to complete schooling in their own language and culture, is violating constitutionally protected equal rights of Nunavut Inuit guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I know the minister can't talk about it in particular, but if we can get an update, is it settled, is it stayed, is there a court date, just generally on it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We're currently awaiting a decision from the courts. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. It's the last name I have on my list. I would just like to get some clarification on a couple of Mr. Lightstone's questions, if the minister will indulge me. When we're looking at grad rates and the changes that are being looked at, it would make it difficult in some respects to have comparisons when you're changing the focus or the parameters of how you measure graduation rates.

As Mr. Lightstone mentioned earlier, when you look back 18 years ago of how many students were going into the school system to how many were graduating 18 years later,

and I'm assuming that the department is going to be keeping track of those numbers at different increments through the child's school.

I would just like to get a little bit more detail from the minister on what changes are being proposed and how, as legislators, are we going to be able to compare current or previous graduation rates to future rates so that we can have some oversight of the department's success. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Right now we're doing the review and we're trying to see if there's a better formula for calculating graduation statistics. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That doesn't really answer the question. What type of considerations are being considered to help measure and again, how are we going to be able to use those new proposed graduation rates to compare success or potential negative impacts on these rates? Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I would like Deputy Minister Hainnu to elaborate on that question. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, because we are a small jurisdiction in Nunavut, we are reviewing what other territories are doing in comparison to what provinces are doing in Canada and what would be more pertinent for Nunavut. The graduation rate has increased, but I couldn't say specifically what the difference would be between now and then. What we are doing is doing a jurisdictional scan of how the formula is created and/or different in each jurisdiction and what would be better suited for Nunavut if there was one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Just one final on that same topic, would this new graduation rate formula be in place for the next school year? Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it would. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I would just like to again go back to the line of questioning from Mr. Lightstone as well as Ms. Brewster on the standardized programs for breakfast programs and school meal programs. When you're looking at standardization of a program, I can think of a number of different things; when you're looking at bulk buying, third party purchasing agreements with Co-ops and the North West Company stores across the territory, timing of funding to take advantage of sealift, safe storage space for non-perishables, as Ms. Brewster brought up, lessons learned from the COVID funding. I would like to get some examples of what standardization of the school meal programs are being examined and explored. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. There are several different factors to consider, including food and safety, as well as food storage and a staffing program delivery and supervision that will be reviewed for the standards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. From a lot of the minister's responses to the same line of questioning, it seems to be very highly dependent upon an agreement with the federal government. If, for some reason, that funding doesn't meet the request, it may sound like a hypothetical, but it's not often that agreements with the federal government fully meet the request or the "ask" of a jurisdiction. I think it's a fair question, it's not a hypothetical, of what other options of funding that the department will be willing to explore with partners such as the Department of Health and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and other entities. Minister.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the question. If, for some reason, that partnership didn't go through with the federal funding, we would be coming forward with a business case to enhance school food meal programs. We are in discussion with outside partners who do want to support school meal programs and we hope that we can come to an agreement and have a joint announcement in the near future with one of the mining companies in the territory. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Page G-4. Directorate. \$7,601,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please turn to page G-5. Policy and Planning. \$2,730,000. I'll give members just a moment to get to the correct page. Mr. Malliki. ... (inaudible) ... your pencil up, but I thought you were trying to get my attention. Page G-5. Policy and Planning. \$2,730,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page G-6. Corporate Services. \$6,548,000. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask this question. (interpretation ends) A 2022 report in the media highlighted the number of violent incidents that occurred in Nunavut schools. The business plan indicates that "a new school violence reporting system" was released in October 2022. How will the system be implemented and what are the anticipated outcomes in terms of reporting the corrective actions? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Our new database for reporting violence in our schools was launched this past fall in November and I can say that we will report in

April after six months of reporting violence in our schools that we will be able to report on that six month increment. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you Minister. (interpretation ends) The business plan notes that new closed circuit television systems are being installed in all schools across the territory and these will enable “remote access.” Does this mean that school CCTV system will be monitored remotely 24 hours per day to prevent such activities as vandalism, thefts and arson? If so, from which central location. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman, and *quana* for that question. The CCTV cameras are not monitored, they’re recording for 24 hours. So if we do need to look at a particular incident, we can here at the headquarters office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you Minister. With the CCTV system and since it’s just a recording, the incident would have been over and then we would finally take the time to review the recording to see what happened. Why is it that it’s unmanned instead of being monitored on a 24-hour basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. It’s not meant to monitor behaviour, it’s meant to monitor incidents in the school. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don’t think you understood my question. Should somebody attempt an arson, or to enter the school illegally, if it was manned then they would take corrective action right away to disrupt whatever behaviour is happening. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Our principles monitor our schools every day and if there is an incident they do report those incidents. So if there is ever a need to look back at the footage, we can look back at the footage and give it directly to the RCMP if they need further evidence. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are the recordings monitored on a daily basis or are they monitored after the school hours? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The principles do not monitor the footage, but I can say that Community and Government Services do monitor the buildings after hours. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving on to another subject. (interpretation ends) The department is initiating a full-day kindergarten pilot program in five schools. How will the department evaluate whether full-day kindergarten will be delivered across all of Nunavut's communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Sorry for the delay. Built in to the pilot project we have included an evaluation component to the pilot project to test these schools and we will be evaluating that full-day kindergarten with the five communities and coming back with feedback from the experience that the schools have had with full-day kindergarten program after this fall. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the kindergarten students who are to be in class for the full day, has the department put aside funds assuming this is the route to go, and it's applied in all Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. So the full day kindergarten pilot will be monitored and evaluated throughout the year to determine if we can continue these five schools for the following year, and if additional schools can begin full time kindergarten, and that would have to come through our capital process or other school as we have asked. The schools might need renovation or additional classroom spaces to accommodate the needs of additional full day kindergarten in additional schools. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that. Still, on the same subject that the five Nunavut communities that they can also apply for this pilot project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I think there was a bit of technical difficulty, but if I understood correctly, the five schools are going to be piloted this fall, and we did receive money last fiscal year to support the pilot project, and this current year that we're in right now that will end in March 31 is when the renovations or alterations to the schools have been done. The cost for approximately five schools, which are the communities of Apex, Kimmirut, Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove and Kugluktuk. We received approximately \$820,000 for modification for the schools to incorporate full day kindergarten. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It doesn't answer my question. My question is, the five communities, I didn't get that either. I'm just going to go back to the answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Maybe Mr. Malliki, if you wanted to reiterate your first question? Which five communities information that you're looking for, the minister may have missed the very beginning part of that question, it was just leading to some confusion. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'll ask this in English. Are those the only schools that can accommodate this pilot project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. So those five school were chosen because they're the least intensive for renovation, and they represent our three regions, and going forward, we are working on a school plan to look at the capital of our schools and see which communities could possibly be next for full day kindergarten, should we be able to past the pilot phase. We are hoping that we are able to do that, but in the future, we might need to come forward with a much larger ask as we implement full day kindergarten because our schools are at various different levels, and some might need more renovation than others.

As I indicated, these five communities that were chosen, were chosen because they don't need as much renovation at the moment. We're hoping that we can accommodate more schools in the future. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for clarifying that question. Moving on, (interpretation ends) the business plan indicates that the department is looking to set up new database for Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS)

and a contractor has been hired to begin the process. What requirements for the system cannot be met by the current database? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Right now, we are doing a FANS program review and we are examining our program goals and objectives and it is known that the FANS program does have a very outdated database that requires a new system to enable changes to the FANS program.

Based on the review which we'll be concluding at the end of this fiscal year, we'll be able to determine what need of the database and from there we can outline what a new database that we're able to use that will be able to host all of our needs to run the FANS program more effectively. That work is commencing and we have hired a contractor, Hush Consulting, who is helping the specific needs for the FANS review. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. During the review of the schools and support for FANS, will that hinder those who have applied and those who are successful? (interpretation ends)

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. No. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) One of the department's priorities for 2023-2024 is to fully implement the revised student educator ratio staff funding formula. How has the new formula impacted communities with respect to numbers of teachers and support staff allocated to their schools. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and *quana* for that question. The student educator ratio, we're in our third year coming up to roll out new additional positions for enhancing our school community and the people that work there. So this coming year we are hoping that can hire guidance counsellors and other NTA position to support our school community and the work that happens in the school with the new net new positions. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to continue on with the topic of full day kindergarten. This a matter that I have been pushing for a number of years. I'm glad to see that the pilot project has commenced in those five communities that were previously named. I was wondering if the minister has received any sort of feedback from those five communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I can say that all of the district education authorities in each of the communities were very supportive of the full day kindergarten program and excited for the program to be offered in their schools. The full day kindergarten will commence this coming fall, so we can provide more of an update, hopefully, after the program commences. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. When I raised this issue for kindergarten in the past, the previous education minister indicated that there was eight of our eight schools, capable of blowing out full-day kindergarten capital-wide. Have the facilities able to roll out full-day kindergarten.

As there were eight schools capable, I would like to ask why five were chosen to roll out full-day kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The five schools were chosen because that money is coming from our capital dollars, and we still have other schools to maintain with that same fund. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm referring to a document that was provided by the previous minister of education, breakdown of the cost analysis of rolling out full-day kindergarten, both operations, as well as capital costs. In that report, it provides three options for the capital requirements to roll out full-day kindergarten, and that would be renovations of the existing facility. In addition to the existing facility, and the final third option is the use of portable classrooms.

For these five communities that were selected, which of the three options were utilized? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. They all went through capital renovations. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. My next question will be when can we expect to see the next phase of the full-day kindergarten roll out? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We're hoping that it can happen every year, but, as we know with COVID increased prices, the price has significant risen from \$19 million to over \$31 million to do this project. We're hoping that we're able to do this in a phased approach, with the capital be probably more significant to some of our schools than others. We'll slowly introduce the full-day kindergarten program, should it be able to go ahead in the near future. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. That's quite an escalation. For the next phase, the roll out of the full-day kindergarten, will the Department of Education continue to proceed with the low hanging fruit, the schools that just required renovations before going onto schools that require additions, or portable classrooms? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We're currently developing the capital roll out plan. That will be one of the considerations in the plan. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 118, Corporate Services provides strategic financial management to the department, and oversees the development, design, and planning of capital infrastructure projects, as well as facility and vehicle management. I am wondering if you can elaborate on facility and vehicle management? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That is our busing program and working and Community and Government Services to maintain our buildings. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we all know, all of the communities are growing, especially the smaller communities. Most of them are close to the shore and

they are growing one way. I want to use Kugluktuk as an example. It is growing one way and some houses are getting far from the school and kids are missing school from houses being too far to go home for lunch at lunch time.

How do you evaluate the communities expanding their school buses when they ask for more funding to service their school bus system in a much better manner? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We having a busing allocation policy and our department will rank the order of all requests for a bus on an annual basis for the purpose of identifying those which are deemed to be the most in need. We a few different point ranking systems. The first one is the number of students in the community requiring busing services and the proportion of the number of bus seats available. We also use the presence of wildlife in and around the community which poses a risk to student safety and we also look at the amount of daylight experienced in the community. We also look at the average temperature in the community and we also look at the presence of uneven terrain in the community which is difficult for students to travel across on foot, and the age of the bus that has been previously allocated to the DEA.

So all of those different factors are used when we are assessing busing requirements and that is based on the school busing allocation policy that we use as a criteria and a measurement to see which schools will receive buses in their communities as we are only able to provide a limited number which is with the amount of money that do receive. With \$280,000 we are able to purchase two buses, so two communities per year. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman and *quana* for that. I know lots of the communities are not the same, but I'm going to go with what I noticed in Kugluktuk. They have a bus service, but it takes funding to make sure it runs good, like repairs, tires, and even maybe the supervisor to be in the bus where I know lots of the bullying goes on in the bus when there are lots of kids in there.

I know Kugluktuk has requested for more funding for stuff like the repairs and payment for the driver. In Kugluktuk there is pretty much only one contractor there and sometimes the school mentions that it's pretty expensive to pay the driver and do repairs. Is there any easier way to help communities like that? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We did receive a letter from the district education authority in Kugluktuk as well as a letter from the member regarding the enhanced busing services and we're reviewing that information currently. Going forward,

we provide our busing contract with a template and they're able to fill out the needs that they need to provide for the busing services. We will be able to work with the district education authority to increase the busing services in the community for the next fiscal year. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just read that 1107 is reopening tomorrow, so I guess all the education staff get to go back to the office, and health and justice as well.

Minister, on page 119 of the department's business plan, the priority for 2022-23 to "Develop a robust health and safety program that compiles existing standalone components and meets legislative and regulatory requirements" is of interest to me and I understand that there is a workplace violence and harassment process that has been finalized as well as the new school violence reporting system. Can you elaborate on what the legislative and regulatory requirements were that were taken into account in this health and safety program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask Mr. Suleiman to elaborate on the answer to that question. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Suleiman, welcome to the party. Please proceed.

Mr. Suleiman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. When we're developing all our different health and safety packages and developing health and safety policies, we work with the Health and *Safety Act*. That is our backbone and based on that Act, we develop our different procedures based on our incident reporting or violence reporting or excursion policy for schools and all the other documents that we need to create to support schools and offices functioning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. I'm wondering specifically with the violence reporting system, which legislative and regulatory requirements are involved there. Does it relate to the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*? Are there any Acts other than workplace safety that you mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I would like Mr. Suleiman to further elaborate. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Suleiman.

Mr. Suleiman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. The violence reporting actually doesn't come out of one of the Acts. That came out of an OAG review that was done, I believe, back in 2013. One aspect that came out of the Act was health and incident reporting in schools and that's in regard to employee safety around environmental factors like fuel spills that we're very common with and knowledgeable on. That came out of the Act, but the violence reporting came out based on the OAG review in 2013 and that does supplement the work that we do and impact the other policies and procedures we create, but that's just a tracking of the incidents in schools and what happens. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The violence reporting act is a collection of data, then, is what I'm hearing from you. Is there also an inclusion of policies and procedures around reporting specific incidents of violence that need to be addressed and how does that violence reporting system tie into, for example, the family engagement initiative? Is that data being used to help students stay in school by engaging their families through that violence reporting tool? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The violence database is what it is. It's an online database for our educators and school staff to submit any instances that may be occurring in our schools onto a database and the Department of Education has access to work on any instances if they're needed or required by the Department of Education. That work just started this past November and, as I mentioned earlier, the report that will come out will be out this coming April and we will be able to evaluate and look at that in more detail. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, can you tell me what sort of information is being captured in that database? For instance, are students' names being captured? Is it the date of the incident, the nature of the incident, and are there certain classifications for violence that run from, for example, minimal to severe? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. There is confidentiality reporting on the database, so only the name and email of the reporter will be part of the submission and will only be used to verify the validity of the submission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any data that we can collect on incidents of violence is really important. Are you collecting the ages of the students? Are you collecting information on how large the classroom that the student is enrolled in and what's the student-teacher ratio? Are you collecting information on whether or not that classroom has a student support assistant? Are you collecting information on what the gender of the student is, on any special needs that the student may have, as well as information such as the makeup of their household and whether or not there is parental engagement? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That information is being collected at the school level and not being submitted on the database. We have to ensure that there is confidentiality and privacy of our students and that's one of the areas where we do ensure that there is confidential information that is omitted from the database. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have questions regarding privacy as well, but I just want to stay on the utility and the importance of collecting data. If individual schools are collecting this additional data that I just mentioned and I didn't get any confirmation on what data, by the way, is being collected, why collect information if it's not going to be pooled and used to inform? Why are you separating the collection of the data and how is each separate reporting mechanism going to be reported on, evaluated, and used as a tool? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask Deputy Minister Hainnu to elaborate on the answer. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu, please proceed.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Technical difficulties. Thank you. I thank the member for the question.

I think it's very important that we recognize that at the Department of Education and at the school level, when you bring your students to school, there is immediate help if there is an incident of violence and that the information that they are recording onto the student file is to help them immediately and to have a wraparound response, whether it be to modify the education program or the accommodation of the environment. For example, if a child is at the entranceway, and so maybe the response is the immediate response in classroom accommodation, that they are moved in a location or that if they have a hard time hearing, the Phonak system is implemented.

Some of the data collection is to ensure that student needs are being met, the accountability piece, and reporting violent incidents is to ensure that we are making the policy changes that we need to make. Sorry for the long answer. I hope I answered your question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: We will soon find out. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. It did partially answer my question. I suppose what I'm getting at is that we know when we collect data and when we're reviewing that data, we're reviewing it for trends, which is why I asked those specific questions about what data is being collected. If, for example, we know that children who are in grade 6 and of a certain age and of a certain gender are creating more violent incidents and we see that as a trend that's either within a community or across the territory, then the Department of Education can actually make an informed program or a decision that addresses that trend. That's what I'm asking for. I'm asking whether or not you are collecting data and reviewing that data for trends so that you can cause action to address the issues of concern that may arise as a result of collecting that data. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are collecting the trends of the data and we will be working to address situations with our various departments to better suit the needs of our schools, our students, and those that are affected by any incidents. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, can you tell me what data you're collecting, how you're collecting it, how you're reporting on it, and when you're reporting and who is receiving those reports? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I would like Deputy Minister Hainnu to elaborate on that answer. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. It depends. There are 10,689 students and 1,494 teachers. An incident from the last incident and the next one differ very much and so if there is a violent incident, a report may go to a teacher, a vice-principal, a principal, it may go referred to a team, the school team aid, which is the student support teacher, it may result in a referral for mental health help, it may result, if it's an assault, of RCMP being contacted. Definitely in all of these incidents, the parents are informed.

I'm not sure if that answers the question, but the question is very broad and it lends itself to almost every misbehaviour. I apologize if this is not the answer you were looking for. I don't mind you clarifying the question, if allowed. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a couple of things here. There's a collection of the data and a collation of the data. What is really important to me is that you have an opportunity... . If you are asking your employees to report and collect data, then there should be an end to that means or a means to that end. It should be useful. It should be useful of their time and the most useful thing that you can do when you're asking people to collect information is to act on that information, which is why I'm asking again: how is that information that is collected on individual incidents of violence collected so that the data can be put together in order to inform the department on how to address violence in schools in the best way possible for the protection of our employees and our students and our communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, did you want me to ask Ms. Hainnu to continue her response or did you want to address it? Minister.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I can work to answer and if I need her support to further elaborate, I'll ask.

Standardizing of violence reporting and tracking violent incidents in schools enables us, the Department of Education, and the Nunavut Teachers Association to have the data to support the development of future policies and programs. These programs will meet the needs of our students, teachers, and staff, resulting in a safe school environment in Nunavut.

We have a summary table which is a part of the database for the violent incident reporting and there are different categories. There's abuse, assault, there's discrimination, and there are threats and sexual incidents. Those are different areas where the person that is reporting the violent incident where they can put that information into those various categories and also information like student-on-student, student-on-staff, staff-on-student, or staff-on-staff. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I still haven't received a response on whether or not there is very important information being collected. I'm running down my clock, asking the same question over and over again. Is the age of the student collected? Is the gender collected? Is the size of the classroom collected? Is the student to educator ratio collected? There is a wealth of information there and you mentioned a standardized reporting template that talks about the different kinds of violence and who the violence is meted against, but you are not answering my question about what specific data about the student and the atmosphere of those incidences are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, I think it might have been missed, but that information isn't put onto the record on the database. That information is collected at the school level, and on the school, level is where its kept. So, that information is private information and it is not public information. The database does not collect that information, only the name and the email of the reporter of the incident is collected and that's the information that is on the database. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I did understand that answer which is why I then asked about how the additional information that is not being put into that database is being collected so that it can be collated.

Does that information that is being collected by the individual schools get reported to headquarters, whoever it may be, that has the responsibility to create violence prevention and safety plans, so that those violence prevention and safety plans are as informed as they possibly can be?

Again, I will say. You are asking people to collect data but you are not telling us what you are doing with that very good work that they are putting in, in order to collect this information. Again, I'm still asking the questions about what information is being collected.

You know, I've just named a few kinds of, baseline bits of information and data that could be so important to inform the work of the Department of Education in addressing and breaking the cycle of violence. We know that the sooner we start to help children to break that cycle, the better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. So maybe just to clarify, there are two different reporting mechanisms that our schools use. We have our new violence reporting system, which collects statistics. We also have our incident reporting system, which our schools use if violence, or any type of instance happens, and that is used in the schools to resolve any issues.

Using those two mechanisms, we work with, if its asked, as a department, we will work with those that need the support. The incident report does have all of the private information in it, and it also has investigation and implementing collected and preventative actions, as well as a legal requirement in the case of employees if there are injuries, and environmental incidents.

These reports were completed by the schools, and every month we get a principal report on any instances that may have occurred in the school, and we can review those for each of our schools from those reports as well additionally. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name that I have on my list, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to go back to Malliki's questions earlier, and some of the answers he answered to full-day kindergarten. Five communities were approved for renovations or updates, and Kugluktuk was one of them. I wonder if he could specify on what kind of updates or renovations the schools are going through. *Quana*.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The renovations for Kugluktuk will be done in the spring, and they have received \$256,000 for the renovations. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for that. If I could ask what type of what specific renovations are they doing? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. They're going to be changing the size of the teacher lounge, and accommodating the classroom with more kindergarten friendly age furniture for the classroom. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is just a comment. I look forward to checking it out this summer, or in the fall. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I take those as note, and we will make sure to accommodate the member for that request. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking at under the priorities of 2023-2024 business plan, as it states on the first line, "continue to develop and implement components the new health and safety programs."

I am just curious what the plans, or what has your department may have identified of needs under the health and safety program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. So, the department is working on an updated streamline of its health and safety process, and the recent work includes the development of the violence reporting form, to better track incidents of violence in our schools. We also developed workplace violence harassment policy and procedures document. We've also updated the school excursion policy to ensure all aspects for health and safety for students and staff are incorporated, which includes an update on the insurance for land excursions. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: By hearing that, now I have a second question. (interpretation) In the dental hygienist, for example, are there health personnel coming to the schools to do some work with the students? I have never asked the school staff about that type of system. How does it work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross, the member is asking questions about the dental therapists in the schools. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That program is run through the Department of Health. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Maybe if the minister could elaborate a little bit. I realize that it is run out of the Department of Health, but it's in collaboration with the Department of Education and through the school system as well. Maybe the minister could elaborate a little bit more on how that rolls out. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We work with the Department of Health to provide the space for the dental therapist to be in the school. Not all of our schools have that space or use that space to run that program, but if they do, we provide them the opportunity to go into our classrooms to work with our students and teach them about oral hygiene and how to maintain oral hygiene in our schools with our students. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more new names on my list. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll take another kick at the can here.

Minister, I did ask the question about how the data that's being collected is informing the family engagement initiative. Could you please answer that question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The report will come out in April and we will be able to have that information in April from the data that's collected. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Minister, which report are you talking about? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The violence report. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Is that a public report that you're talking about or an internal report? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We can work to table that document. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: If I may suggest, minister, maybe share it with the Regular Members' Caucus as soon as it's available and so we don't have to wait for a tabling date. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's really important to use whatever resources you have available in order to create things like a family engagement initiative that is 100 percent fully informed to the best of your ability.

To my knowledge as well as a former public servant, we often have access to information that our colleagues have so that they can help us to inform and build programs and policies that don't necessarily have to come from information that's published. That's really the key to what I'm trying to say is that I want reassurance that the Department of Education is collecting data and collecting the right data, the most important data, and using that data to inform the work of its employees that are committed to building the best education program and system that we can possibly have.

With that, I'm just going to move on from those questions and just go back to the question about privacy and ensuring that there's privacy and just to say that I do feel assured that students' privacy is being taken into account because you're certainly not breaking it with me, as much as I'm trying to pull information out of you.

I'm going to move on to the commitment to "Begin research on the procurement of a new database to support the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program" and that

“Procurement of the database is planned for 2024-25...” I’m just wondering if that database will be accessible to FANS students and their parents in real time so that those students can update their information, access information about where their applications are, where their payments are, and report problems in real time that will prompt the public servants to take action on those problems that the students are having. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The FANS database will be coming out in '25-26 and it is our intention that it's going to be more than a database, that it will be able to be a robust mechanism for our students to have wraparound supports, everything that will be there to help further support our students, and that's the ultimate goal of doing this review is to ensure that we are able to meet more needs for our students and enhance the program so that our students can go to school with ease.

We are, as I said, looking at different databases and have looked through a very wide range of different databases out there, including our fellow Inuit across Inuit Nunangat and what they are using to support their students, as well as other territories' and provinces' databases that they're also using. We look forward to accommodating more support for our students through the new database and that they will be able to access information and upload information with that database, as the member stated. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, will students be able to print off information that they can share with their post-secondary schools, like confirmation of a commitment to fund the student's tuition so that students can provide proof to their institution of choice that yes, indeed, their tuition will be paid and “please don't kick me out of my program because I haven't received the tuition funding yet,” that I'm here and I'm here to learn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's part of the program review. We do want to have those capabilities. We haven't purchased the database yet. It still has to go through the capital process, but we are looking to have the highest functioning database that's user-friendly for the staff and students to ensure that we're meeting all the needs for our students through that database. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will employees from other educational institutions be able to access that database in order to confirm a student's financial

assistance so that they can be assured that the student doesn't have to leave their place of education? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We don't know that information yet, but possibly we're hoping that it will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think what's also really important is not just the one-way access of information from these educational institutions but their ability to actually share information to FANS, things such as letters of acceptance, just to make it as easy as possible for students. I would like reassurance that that's under consideration as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that is under consideration. We do want that ease for our students, as I mentioned earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: How will the students' privacy be protected from nefarious hacks and remote access by people wanting to steal information? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. It might be a bit presumptive as they're still working on what that program is going to look like, but Minister Gross, if you have any early indicators. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Every software that we do purchase, we do have to do a privacy information impact assessment, so we will be looking for that information to ensure that the privacy is maintained. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also on page 120 there's a commitment to "Complete the replacement of CCTV systems in Nunavut schools to provide a standard and enable remote access to all school CCTV systems." The question is similar: what will protect those systems from somebody remotely accessing and perhaps viewing our students or our employees remotely through that CCTV system? That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Essentially only two people have access to that CCTV database. I'll ask Mr. Suleiman to further elaborate. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Suleiman.

Mr. Suleiman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within these remote systems for accessing CCTV, as the minister mentioned, there are only two access points which are two individuals within HQ that have access. The computer that they have access to is locked off for them to only be able to use and they have their own security passwords for that computer and nobody else has. If anyone accesses it besides them, it would be some sort of ransomware attack of some sort, of some sort of phishing, but it's secure and we work with CGS to maintain the security of it as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. Also on page 120 for Priorities (2023-24) the "Fully implement the revised Student Educator Ratio Staff Funding Formula by establishing the Nunavut Teachers Association positions," when we talk about the "Student Educator Ratio Staff Funding Formula," how are volunteers and staff volunteer time taken into account? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. They're not. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Gross, is the department tracking volunteer time put in by staff at all? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We don't require that. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's really important to collect that information, number one, so you can acknowledge it, and number two, so that you can use that information to take corrective action if you're putting too much of a burden on staff to volunteer their time for really important programs that our children can avail of. Can you commit to that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We do have an outside activity disclosure form that our teachers and school staff fill out so that we can monitor their volunteerism and that's tracked on the school level. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. Again, same question: are you pooling that data together to inform the department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. No, we're not collecting that data at the moment. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Minister Gross, will you commit to collecting that data at a full territorial level, please? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I can't commit to that right now, but we can have further discussions on the topic. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. I appreciate that. On page 121, Priorities (2024-25), the commitment to "Monitor and evaluate the success of the pilot project for full-day kindergarten in select schools across the territory and develop a phased plan for full-day kindergarten in all communities," can you tell me what your main key performance indicators are on those pilot projects for full-day kindergarten? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We're currently developing the program expectations so that we can incorporate that into the review of the pilot program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Are you collecting information on the students that are participating in the pilot program, information such as their ages, their family make-up, whether or not they're housed or not housed? I know at one point the minister told me that there are no children who are homeless. However,

we know that children are homeless. This information is really important. Are you also collecting information about the student-educator ratio? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. There is a working group established for the pilot project for full-day kindergarten. I can say that right now we do have the attendance registration forms that are collected and the information that is there for the student assessment before they do go into kindergarten, and that's as far as we have at the moment.

In terms of the working group, there is a guide that is there to shape allocation of additional instruction time within the kindergarten class and that's based on the existing kindergarten curriculum that we have right now. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You may have already shared this information and I might have missed it; however, I'm going to ask: are these full-day kindergarten pilot projects Inuktitut immersion kindergarten projects? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they're all from Qulliq Model schools, so yes. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For Capital Planning, "This unit provides capital planning expertise and support for the development of new facilities..." and on page 120 of the business plan, "Finalize new capital standards relating to school builds."

In respect to my community of Taloyoak, they still haven't gone to school since February 7 and now the principal and teachers come up with alternatives by sending the school kids to the community hall and not just the community hall; to the preschool now, and *naglingnaqtut*. It would be great if they can get back to the school. The hall is always being utilized greatly by the community and the preschoolers want to get back to their school.

With the "Finalize new capital standards relating to school builds" and it states that "...full implementation of the new standards will be in place by April 2023," would that be the Netsilik School and the school build in Taloyoak? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the new school build for Taloyoak does include the new capital standards. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to talk about the CCTV systems. I cannot understand why they don't have a server in place for all schools, like for a reporting system, and it would be great if they have a TerraBlock server, for example. When the school does their reports, all they have to do is just do the reporting on the computer. What the headquarters can do is it can monitor those reports and they would absolutely know for a fact that there's an incident reported.

I would highly recommend the department come up with some kind of a server or a TerraBlock server that the schools can sign into and then they could do their reporting and in headquarters, let's say for example, the minister's office or the deputy minister's office can sign into the TerraBlock server to make sure that yes, these issues of concern, the bullying and all the abuses that are happening at the school, and the school needs to come up with something. Bullying is happening in every Nunavut school and a lot of those "bullyings" don't get reported.

It would be great if the education department can come up with a TerraBlock server of some sort. It caught my attention when they were talking about data. I'm a certified multimedia archivist and it's something that I highly recommend that the department look into, to come up with a server, and that way all the data that's being entered by all the schools, the headquarters can just pull out that data when they sign into the TerraBlock server and the incident reports can be dealt with in a timely manner.

It kind of troubles me that when the schools come up with an incident report and they have to report it to the department. It troubles me. What if the schools are not reporting the incident reports? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

That was just a comment. If the minister could clarify or come up with something, that would be great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the comment. Our administrators do have access locally and the footage is stored for a duration depending on the number of cameras and the hard disk space available. At this time the footage is available for between 60 and 90 days and after this period, the data will be overwritten, but the data is also here at headquarters. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: For that data, it bothers me, 60 to 90 days, and to my understanding, the data information will be deleted and be gone forever. That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I believe the minister said that it would be overwritten, so then it would be gone. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now my question is: why is that data going to be deleted and gone after 60 to 90 days? Is it due to the fact of overcapacity of the data or not enough data space? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. We don't keep that data if nothing happens. If there is something that does happen, it does go to the appropriate authority; if the RCMP has to be involved, then they will get that data. We do work to ensure that bullying isn't just recorded from these devices. If there is bullying happening in our schools, we address it right away, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you for mentioning about bullying. I had a constituent who had a concern of bullying and it seems like the school was not listening to this parent. The parent tried to tell the school multiple times that bullying is happening and nothing was being done. What it led to is not great, it's not nice, and it leads to mental health. It makes the children not want to go to school. I have a lot of constituents that didn't want to send their children to school due to the fact that there is bullying happening.

I highly recommend that all Nunavut schools take bullying seriously. If there are reports, if they're not reported to the school, but are aired on social media, I think it needs to grab the attention of the education department. Does the education department monitors what goes on social media? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) No, we don't monitor social media, but sometimes some images from social media do come our way and we do address that. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the area where I feel that I have to keep trying for our youth, for the children in all Nunavut schools. I kind of highly recommend that the department take the issues of concern that are posted on social media so that we don't have any kind of posts going on social media. I think it's time for this to stop. It's time for the bullying to stop. For that reason, maybe we could have children that are

happy at school. They're our future. They're going to be in this House someday. It would be sad to see it still continuing in this trend.

A lot of children don't want to go to school anymore for the fact that bullying is still happening today and we cannot hide from all that bullying. I love all the children. It's sad to see children sad because of being bullied by another student. It's not only the students that are doing that, Mr. Chairman; it's teachers too. I had to file complaints about a teacher, which is not nice and it shouldn't even be happening. It's going to continue.

I know for a fact that bullying is always going to be here. It's going to always be there when we're gone, but I feel that we need to come up with something far greater so that this bullying can stop, and I love all the children. I want them to get educated. They want to go to school. They like the school meal programs and the programs that are led by the school, afterschool programs and for the fact that when they miss school, they miss out on programs, let's say for example, they can't get into a sports team.

My apologies for going too far, but this bullying has to stop. I'll be asking the minister, maybe before the end of our winter sitting and maybe during our spring sitting, to come up with ways for this bullying to stop and if the minister can respond, it would be great, but thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's it.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll just take that as a comment and as the member mentioned, he will be following up with the minister at later opportunities. We're on page G-6. Corporate Services. \$6,548,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to report progress.

Chairman: Thank you. There is a motion to report progress on the floor. It's not debatable. All those in favour. Against. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Sergeant-at-Arms, can you please escort the witnesses out of the witness table.

Speaker: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 18 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. David Akeeagok. The motion is in order. To the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Ball.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Mr. Ball: *Orders of the Day* for March 3, 2023:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 12
 - Bill 16

- Bill 17
- Bill 18
- Bill 19
- Bill 20
- Bill 21

21. Report of the Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members, due to a family emergency, I will be travelling to Ottawa tomorrow and hence, Deputy Speaker Mr. Hickes will preside over tomorrow's proceedings. I'm sure that Mr. Hickes will make sure that you all behave.

>>*Laughter*

This House stands adjourned until Friday, March 3, at 9 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House commenced at 18:38*

