

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. David Joanasié
(South Baffin)

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. David Akeegok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

Hannah Angootealuk
(Aivilik)

Edward Attagutaluk
(Aggu)

Hon. Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Hon. George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Premier of Nunavut; Minister of Justice; Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut; Minister responsible for the Labour Standards Board; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal

Jamie Kablutsiak
(Arviat South)

Gordon Kautuk
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Brian Koonoo
(Tununiq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Simon Kuliktana
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall
(Netsilik)

Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board

Johnny Mike
(Pangnirtung)

Fred Pedersen
(Cambridge Bay)

David Porter
(Gjoa Haven)

Abraham Qammaniq
(Amittuq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Hon. Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade

Hon. Annie Tattuinee
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, May 26, 2026

Members Present:

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk, Mr. Edward Attagutaluk, Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak, Mr. Gordon Kautuk, Hon. Brian Koonoo, Mr. Simon Kuliktana, Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall, Hon. John Main, Mr. Johnny Mike, Mr. Fred Pedersen, Mr. David Porter, Mr. Abraham Qammaniq, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Craig Simailak, Mr. Steven Taqtu, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasie) (interpretation): Good afternoon. To start off, Mr. Simailak opening the meeting with the prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Simailak, and good afternoon, MLAs, and Nunavummiut. A beautiful day here in Iqaluit. Welcome.

Orders of the Day. Item 2, Ministers' Statements. My apologies. Government House Leader, Mr. Simailak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 14 – 7(2): Minister Absent from the House

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise members that the Honourable David Akeegok will be absent until further notice.

During the minister's absence the following ministers will be acting for the following portfolios:

I will be Acting Government House Leader;

Premier Main will be Acting Minister of Education; and

Minister Healey Akearok will be Acting Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Minister's Statement 15 – 7(2): National Nursing Week and the Naturally Rewarding Campaign

Hon. Janet Brewster: Mr. Speaker, earlier this month Nunavut recognized National Nursing Week, and the important contribution nurses make to health care delivery.

Nurses provide front-line care, emergency response, primary care, public health services, and ongoing support to patients and families. Their work is essential to communities and to the functioning of our health system.

Mr. Speaker, strengthening and stabilizing the nursing workforce remains a priority for Nunavut. We continue working to recruit and retain permanent nursing staff, strengthen continuity of care, and support reliable services in communities.

Strengthening the Inuit nursing workforce is also a key priority. Inuit nurses bring knowledge of language, culture, and community that strengthens patient care and helps ensure services better reflect the needs and realities of Nunavummiut. We continue working with education and training partners to encourage and support Inuit pursuing careers in nursing and other health professions.

As part of this work, we launched the Naturally Rewarding recruitment campaign in 2025 with support through the Working Together Agreement. The campaign promotes nursing and other health careers, while highlighting the opportunities and realities of working in northern and remote communities.

Recruitment efforts are showing progress. Between January and March of this year, eight indeterminant nursing positions and 17 nursing job-share positions were filled. In addition, 45 candidates were successfully interviewed and added to our casual staffing pool that builds on our existing capacity.

We also continue supporting professional development and long-term workforce planning to help strengthen nursing services.

Mr. Speaker, I want nurses to know that their work is valued and appreciated. Every single day, they provide care and support to Nunavummiut under demanding circumstances and in communities across Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Minister's Statement 16 – 7(2): Long-Term Service Awards in Kivalliq Region

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this year the Department of Human Resources has had the honour of hosting two Long Term Service Award celebrations to recognize employees who have dedicated more than two decades of continuous service to the Government of Nunavut.

The first ceremony which I spoke about during our winter sitting was held in Iqaluit on February 12 for the Qikiqtaaluk region. The second ceremony was held in my home community of Rankin Inlet for Kivalliq recipients on May 12. Unfortunately, not every recipient was able to participate, due to weather delays, but we will ensure that these employees receive their awards shortly.

Mr. Speaker, these awards are an important way to express our gratitude and to highlight the knowledge, experience, and continuity that long serving employees bring to their work. These qualities are essential to a strong and stable public service. They help ensure that programs and services are delivered effectively and that our government remains responsive and reliable for Nunavummiut.

Each award recipient has contributed decades of meaningful work that has shaped our territory and supported essential services across all sectors. Their professionalism, resilience, and deep sense of responsibility to their communities set a powerful example for current staff and inspire the next generation of public servants.

I would like to take the opportunity to highlight three recipients in particular for their contributions: Nellie Ell of Coral Harbour, recognized for 40. Ears of continuous contribution to public service in Education.

>> *Applause*

Dimaris Saimaut of Coral Harbour, recognized for 40 years of continuous contribution to Health.

>> *Applause*

And Uliut Iksiktaaryuk, of Baker Lake, recognized for 50 years of continuous contribution to Education.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to recognize these individuals and acknowledge the lasting impact of their service. Their dedication continues to strengthen our government and make a real difference in the lives of Nunavummiut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation) : Thank you, and we are proud and appreciate the long serving individuals. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 17 – 7(2): Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier and Noah Paniyuk Scholarship

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our young people deserve every opportunity to pursue their education, and those choosing careers in the trades and engineering can make a meaningful difference in fields where Nunavut needs more skilled workers.

Today, I am glad to share that applications are now open for Qulliq Energy Corporation's two scholarships: the Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier Scholarship and the Noah Paniyuk Scholarship for Excellence in the Skilled Trades. These awards help Nunavut students pursue training and careers that we very much need here at home.

For nearly 20 years, the Laura Gauthier Scholarship has carried the name of Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier, a community leader who worked hard to give Nunavut a utility of its own. This year, Qulliq Energy Corporation will again award \$5,000 to two post-secondary students who show strong leadership and a commitment to their community. One of these awards goes to a student in a Canadian-accredited engineering program. The second is open to students in any field of study. Nunavut needs people working in every field.

In addition, the Noah Paniyuk scholarship will continue for a second year. This award was created in memory of Noah Paniyuk, a journeyman with the Qulliq Energy Corporation, whose legacy lives on through this scholarship and the support it provides to the next generation of Nunavummiut pursuing trades.

Two awards of \$5,000 each are available to Nunavummiut enrolled in recognized skilled trades programs in Canada, an investment in the future tradespeople who will help keep our communities running. Our future electricians, mechanics, and technicians deserve our support.

We encourage all eligible students to apply by June 30, 2026, including students just out of high school and those returning to school later in life. Applications are available on the Qulliq Energy Corporation website.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Acting Minister of Education, Minister Main.

Minister's Statement 18 – 7(2): Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an important and inspiring initiative that has been taking place in Kivalliq Schools. Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week is an event that continues to strengthen opportunities for Nunavut students, and supports the growth of our future workforce. This event, which originated in Baker Lake, has now expanded Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week this year brought together educators along with many partners to introduce high school students to a wide range of trades and technical careers. Partners in Task Week included: Agnico Eagle Mines, Peter's Expediting Ltd, Arctic Fuel, Eskimo Point Lumber Supply, Nunavut Arctic College, and Nunavut Skills Canada.

This year's program in Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet was especially successful, offering hands-on learning in areas such as carpentry, electrical work, mechanics, culinary arts, digital skills, welding, sewing, cosmetology and basic first aid. These experiences help our youth build confidence, explore career options, and see themselves in roles that contribute directly to Nunavut's development.

Mr. Speaker, the success of Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week is rooted in partnership. I want to acknowledge the many partners, individuals, and organizations that shared their expertise. Our collaboration with industry partners, including trades professionals, mining sector representatives, and community mentors, ensures that students see first hand the opportunities available to them here at home. Their contributions demonstrate a shared commitment to building a skilled, confident, and resilient generation of Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, initiatives like Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week show what is possible when we work together to support students through programming that reflects Inuit values, community priorities, and the long term needs of the region.

As Acting Minister of Education, I remain committed to strengthening partnerships that expand learning pathways, promote Inuit employment, and prepare our youth for the opportunities of tomorrow.

I thank all those who contributed their time, knowledge, and enthusiasm to make Trades Awareness, Skills, and Knowledge Week in Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet a meaningful and memorable experience for our students.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister for Housing Corporation, Minister Lyall.

Minister's Statement 19 – 7(2): NCH Partnership with Agnico Eagle

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Housing remains one of the most pressing issues facing Nunavut communities. Meeting this challenge requires practical partnerships, shared responsibility, and a commitment to results.

Today, I rise to recognize the continued partnership between the Nunavut Housing Corporation and Agnico Eagle Mines Limited to support housing delivery in Nunavut.

This work reflects *Ikajuqatigiikta*, our government's new mandate, which means "let's help each other." It is a practical example of government and industry working together to make better use of resources, improve delivery, and support stronger communities.

Mr. Speaker, in 2025, Agnico Eagle provided an important in-kind contribution by covering marine shipping costs of 20 modular housing units delivered to Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake. This support saved the Nunavut Housing Corporation close to \$2 million, allowing those resources to be directed toward additional housing priorities.

Building on that success, Agnico Eagle and the Nunavut Housing Corporation are working to finalize an agreement that would carry this partnership forward. The next phase would support the transportation of approximately 20 to 25 modular housing units

to communities in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions each year over the next five years, starting this year.

Mr. Speaker, this partnership supports *Igluliuqatigiingniq*, Nunavut 3000, by helping increase housing supply through coordinated, collaborative action.

It also shows the important role industry can play in supporting long-term community development in Nunavut. When resource development is connected to local needs, it can help deliver practical and lasting benefits for Nunavummiut.

I want to thank Agnico Eagle Mines Limited for continuing to work with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to support housing delivery and stronger communities across Nunavut.

Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community Services and responsible for Mining, Mr. Simailak.

Minister's Statement 20 – 7(2): Hope Bay Mine Tour

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I say good day to all my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to provide an update on the continued advancement of the Hope Bay Project in the Kitikmeot region.

(interpretation ends) Recently some of my colleagues and I had the opportunity to visit the future mine site, and see first hand Agnico Eagle's operation, and long-term plans for the project.

The visit provided an important opportunity to discuss Inuit training and employment, workplace safety, and caribou management planning as well as the broader economic opportunities associated with the project.

I would like to thank Agnico Eagle staff for their hospitality, and for the opportunity to learn more about the work taking place at Hope Bay.

Mr. Speaker, mining continues to play a critical role in Nunavut's economy. It remains one of the territory's largest sources of private sector employment and economic activity.

The Hope Bay project has the potential to create significant, long-term benefits for Nunavummiut through employment, training, business opportunities, and regional economic development. Permits are currently in place for the Doris, Madrid, and Boston deposits, and the project has the potential to become one of Nunavut's major gold-producing operations.

Mr. Speaker, in early 2024 the Government of Nunavut, Agnico Eagle and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen collaboration and coordination on shared priorities related to the project. This partnership supports ongoing work in areas including education and training, employment, infrastructure, community wellness, and social economic monitoring.

These efforts align with the Government of Nunavut's objectives under *Parnautit* that help ensure that resource development contributes to long-term benefits for Nunavut communities.

Mr. Speaker, the advancement of Hope Bay represents an important milestone for Nunavut's mineral industry, and demonstrates the value of strong partnerships between government and Inuit organizations and industry. Through continued collaboration we remain committed to maximizing the economic and social benefits of responsible resource development for Nunavummiut.

Ma'na, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 35 – 7(2): Health Care Services in Cambridge Bay

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to you all, and to constituents watching back home in Cambridge Bay.

With my statement today I'm giving notice to the Minister of Health that during question period today, I'll be asking questions regarding health care services in Cambridge Bay, and very timely, I must say considering her minister's statement of today.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn't that long ago that long ago that residents could look forward to various clinics being offered at the health centre, in addition to walk-in patients anywhere being seen.

It's no longer like that today. Today it seems that only emergencies are being treated. When one calls in to make an appointment, the person must first leave their name and number with reception. Reception then gives that information to the nurse on call, who will then phone the patient to get the information on their condition. It can take anywhere up to 24 hours later for the patient to get the call back.

The nurse on call then schedules an appointment with the patient, again which can be anywhere up to 24 hours later.

This is not the type of health care that patients deserve, nor is it the type of health care that this government wants to offer. I'm getting this information from constituents, as well as my own lived experience in dealing with the health centre.

Mr. Speaker, for a few years now the government has talked about bringing care closer to home and improving wait times. It's obviously not happening, as it is still being talked about.

The Department of Health needs to find a way to attract and retain full-time nurses for our health facilities. The use of agency nurses and paramedics needs to be reduced.

The patients are falling through the cracks, and their health is deteriorating while they await to be seen, and as some of my colleagues have mentioned, this often results in patients being diagnosed with serious conditions way too late for anything to be done to help them.

I'll be looking forward to the answers that the minister will give later today when we get to the question period on our agenda. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Member's Statement 36 – 7(2): Arviat Graduates

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to recognize the graduates from the John Arnaludjuak High School in Arviat. I will read their names:

Ryan John Ahmak, Lillian Akatsiak, Adrienne Aliktiluk, Avery Arnalak, Ashley Joy Curley, Jasen Curley, Samantha Enowyak, Delphine Mae Gibbons, Meagan Ishalook, Betty Issumatarjuak, Roberta Ivunirjuk, Trisha Kablutsiak, Cam Kaludjak, Dexter Kalluak, Ruth Kigusiutnak, Ruth Kigusiutnak, Jenna Komak, Matt Boss Kritaqliluk, Mia Brianne Kritaqliluk, Logan Manik, Neevee Mikeeuneak, Reepa Mickpah, Margo-Katelyn Mukyungnik, Trinity Mukyungnik, Alinke Mukyunik, Mario Nibgoarsi, Vincent

Nibgoarsi, Heidi Obszarski, Charlie Okatsiak, Melissa Owlijoot, Meadow Spence, Morgan Tookoome, Mary Ruth Uluadluak-Gibbons, Jordan Williams, Maggie Williams.

I highly encourage the graduating class of 2026 of Arviat's John Arnaludjuak High School and students across our territory to consider further pursuing their education by enrolling to various universities and colleges across our nation, and also consider enrolling with Nunavut Arctic College, as many of our young people across Nunavut have potential on working within the Government of Nunavut in accordance with Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): I celebrate with them. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 37 – 7(2): Recognizing Uliut

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am from Baker Lake. It was mentioned earlier about Uliut. I would like to talk about that again. It's great that person was recognized. He has been working for 15 years in education, and he has been working forever, and you're still working. And I'm really glad that you taught me.

(interpretation ends) You were one of my teachers, and I always remember that. Congratulation on this moment, this occasion for you.

Uliut has also been a member of the Qilautimiut elders society in Baker Lake, so she has not only has been contributing to the education, but to helping her fellow elders in Baker Lake. Thank you, Uliut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Let us proceed. *Orders of the Day*, Number 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Please feel welcome all the visitors.

Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to take this moment to welcome Noel and Kate McDermott to the gallery, now retired, but former long-term educators here in Nunavut. In fact, Kate was an elementary school teacher at Nakasuk when I was a child, and I would like to welcome them.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Item 6, Oral Questions. Who would like to start first? The member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 33 – 7(2): Time Change in Nunavut

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you. I would like to say hi to members of Kugluktuk.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue time change in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the Department of Justice is responsible for Nunavut's territorial *Time Zone Regulations* under the *Legislation Act*.

The issue of time change in Nunavut has been raised by a number of my colleagues in this House and by previous members in previous assemblies. I guess times haven't changed.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, many Canadian jurisdictions are considering or are in the process of moving towards and removing the practice of daylight saving time.

Can the minister confirm if his department is considering ending the practice of seasonal time changes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for raising this issue, as more and more jurisdictions across the country are looking at standardizing their time, and it is something that we are considering.

Encompassing three time zones makes it a little bit more of an added complication factor for Nunavut to take on something like this, and it does require some legislative changes.

But with our neighbours to the west and Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, they had made some adjustments to their legislation about five years ago to allow that to happen there, and as recently as earlier this month, my officials from Justice have been in communication with other counterparts in Northwest Territories to discuss this matter. So yes, it is something that's in front of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your response.

Mr. Speaker, as of May 14, 2026, the Alberta government is the latest Canadian jurisdiction that has officially changed to permanent, year-round Mountain Daylight Time.

Mr. Speaker, in response to Alberta's decision to end time change, our northern neighbours, the Northwest Territories government, recently announced that they too will be ending seasonal time changes.

Can the Minister indicate if his department is actively considering entering in discussions on the process of ending time change with other Canadian jurisdictions, including the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Minister Hickes. Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as more and more jurisdictions across the country are standardizing their time, it's become more apparent and more I guess relevant to continue looking at other jurisdictions and how they came about it.

There is a lot of complexity overall. You think it's just as simple as your cellphone, the time on your cellphone, Mr. Speaker. You need to make sure that all the technology will be able to recognize the time zones that are recognized in the jurisdictions, and like I mentioned, Nunavut encompassing three time zones makes it very complicated.

But we are looking at different ways to either look at phasing standardization in as it becomes more apparent with our pathways to our neighbours and our partners to the south to maintain similar time zones for medical travel, duty travel and just life-work balance, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to continue that dialogue.

I can assure the member that we are in discussions with a number of jurisdictions on how actually to implement something like that, and I do look forward to continuing this discussion. I think I've brought it up in the past a couple of times myself.

So I think as our neighbours become more aligned with this practice, I think it's something that we very seriously need to consider. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your response.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, Nunavut is the largest territory in the country and represents one-fifth of Canada's land mass, with a total of three different time zones.

Mr. Speaker, the changes in time zones and the practice of Daylight Savings Time impact many Nunavummiut and disrupt daily life. Many of our hunters and fishers rely on the sun and tides, rather than the times on the clock.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavik and the Northwest Territories conducted a survey for residents to hear their position on ending time change in their region.

Will the Minister commit to having his department conduct a public engagement survey to hear more about Nunavummiut's thoughts on ending the practice of Daylight Savings time and commit to ending Daylight Savings Time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I know it's just anecdotally, but I know a number of people have approached me on this matter, and I believe that it's an archaic system to continue to change the clocks twice a year.

As far as going to a public consultation, it's something that would normally be a part of the process to make a change such as this. So as we develop our strategy going forward and how we're going to address this and look at potential implementation, there would be an opportunity for people to express their opinions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Kuliktana, your time is out on this line of questioning. I will move on to another member. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Oral Question 34 – 7(2): Activities of the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Good afternoon to my community of Qikiqtarjuaq.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on some issues that I raised with the minister during yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

As the minister will recall, I asked her to indicate when the contribution agreement that the Nunavut Housing Corporation has recently signed with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated under the Build Canada Homes Program will be

made public through tabling in the Legislative Assembly, or posting on the Nunavut Housing Corporation's website.

The Minister's response to my question indicated that the Nunavut Housing Corporation would need the permission of the other signatories to make the information public.

Mr. Speaker, I see no reason why the details of this important contribution agreement should be secret.

Will the Minister commit to asking the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik for their consent to release the contribution agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: *Qujannamiik* Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. Typically these types of agreements are not made public and they would not be tabled in the House.

Again, this is not a unilateral agreement that we're making. For this agreement to be made publicly available, we would need the consent of Canada to do so.

We're able to share aspects of the agreement, like the amount that we shared during that announcement and the number of builds we're anticipating. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved the Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2027 capital estimates during its recent winter sitting.

At that time, the minister indicated that the Nunavut Housing Corporation "plans to execute construction contracts for approximately 180 new public housing and staff housing units in 2026."

During yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister indicated that she would get back to me with information concerning the community allocations of the new units.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all Members of the Legislative Assembly should know where the units are going and who will be building them.

Will the minister commit to tabling this information in the Legislative Assembly before the end of our current spring sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for our Housing Corporation, Minister Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question.

For the allocation of the units, we are still in the process of awarding some of those contracts for the targets for this year, and all of our contracts are submitted for tabling when we submit our annual contracting reports. So they would all be tabled at a later date, which is normally done annually, so at a separate sitting of the House.

As we are still in the process of awarding some of those contracts, I would not have all that information currently.

We are targeting for public housing units in the Qikiqtaaluk, we're targeting 96 units; in the Kivalliq, 23; and in the Kitikmeot, 40, for a total public housing allocation of 159.

Once we have more information on this and once those contracts have been signed, I can share that with members. But as we're still in those negotiation processes, I don't have that information currently for all of those contracts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for the response.

During yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister indicated that a number of new housing units will be modular units.

Can the minister explain why the Nunavut Housing Corporation is moving in the direction of acquiring modular units and can she explain how this approach differs from traditional construction methods in terms of cost and Inuit labour content?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister for Housing Corporation, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question. Historically modular housing units have never been utilized a lot for public housing in Nunavut for reasons that the member indicated, where there is no ability to have that local labour force within there, as these modular units would be manufactured outside of Nunavut for a large portion of that.

Currently right now under Builds Canada Homes, a set portion of all units need to be modular housing units. Typically, modular housing units are more cost-effective than the traditional stick build, but there's the offside of that as well too, because that's removing labour from the territory. So it's weighing those, balancing that for the territory.

Right now we are looking at contracts for this build season with a number of different modular manufacturers, and where possible, we're looking at utilizing manufacturers that are here in Nunavut if and when they become available and come on line. So that is something that we are exploring as a corporation.

So we are looking at an increase in the utilization of modular housing when we are looking at housing in Nunavut, be it with public housing or staff housing. So going forward that will be something that we're looking at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluktuuttiaq, Mr. Pedersen.

Oral Question 35 – 7(2): Health Care Services in Cambridge Bay

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, my questions today are for the Minister of Health.

Yesterday we just completed the review of her department's 2026-2027 operational budget, the single largest allocation of funds for any Government of Nunavut department. We are all hopeful that this will assist in fixing our health care system.

Currently the department relies on many agencies nurses and/or paramedics to provide medical services. They don't stay in our communities for any length of time, and because of that can't get to know the patients' medical history very well.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize and understand that there is no easy solution; if there was one, it would already have been fixed.

My first question is: What is their department doing in collaborating with Nunavut Arctic College or any southern-based educational institutions to increase the number of Inuit into nursing programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for those questions.

As everyone is aware, there is a nursing program at Arctic College, and that is one that is the most important factor in training and recruiting nurses in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From previous reports, we have heard some of the challenges to retaining indeterminate staff, which includes such things as wages, housing and working conditions.

Can the minister confirm if these are in fact barriers in the recruitment of indeterminate nurses for our health centres, or are there additional factors involved? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just actually did jot down some of those issues. Of course there are the national shortages of nurses all over the country; housing. Some of our salaries are no longer competitive. For example, nurse practitioners and in-patient registered nurses' salaries are no longer competitive with other jurisdictions.

Some of the issues as well are lack of child care for nursing staff, for their children. And as the member is aware, in yesterday's budget we raised our commitment to funding more daycares in Nunavut.

And as well, one issue that has been emerging for quite a number of years is violence in the workplace. One of the ways that we have addressed that is to raise the money that we are spending on security in health-care centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my final question, and it's regarding what I mentioned in my member's statement today: Administrative staff should be doing administrative duties, and our nursing staff should be doing nursing duties. Will the minister look at ways to have reception positions book the appointments for clients, rather than having to wait for one or two days to have those appointments booked by a nurse? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The reception staff are really important in taking information from clients who are calling in, and the next step is for nurses to call in order to triage patients. And they do that in order to ensure that they are taking the patient's needs into account when booking the appointments, and when it's an emergency issue, the reception staff will obviously encourage a client to come in immediately.

We are always looking at ways to improve our services. One of the things that I can tell you is that the Office of Patient Relations received 18 complaints in the Kitikmeot region about care and treatment attitude and access, and so we take that information and we look at it through a continuous quality improvement lens, and we bring that back to our team in order to help them to have a better understanding about what the real experience is of clients in accessing health care.

We are certainly already looking at what we can do to improve service in those specific areas in the Kitikmeot, which includes in Cambridge Bay. So I really appreciate you bringing this to everyone's attention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Taqtu.

Oral Question 36 – 7(2): Water Infrastructure

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Community Services.

As the minister will be aware, the government issued an advisory yesterday concerning drinking water in a number of communities. Arctic Bay has been under a boil water advisory since August 2024, almost two years ago.

As the minister is aware, the government issued a request for proposals in June 2021 to develop a business case for new water treatment facilities in Arctic Bay and Grise Fiord. The previous Legislative Assembly approved capital funding for the construction of the Arctic Bay water treatment plant upgrade.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: I thank the member for the question regarding boil-water advisories and an update on the water treatment plan for Arctic Bay.

Boil-water advisories could be for a few different reasons. We want to ensure that there is safe drinking water, effective water treatment, as well, to ensure the health and safety and resilience of communities is vital.

Regarding the Arctic Bay water treatment plant, it is currently in progress, and as of November 2025 the contractor had completed the season, having erected the camp, set up the construction site, produced aggregate and performed testing, and construction will be underway with the targeted completion of the summer 2027. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In December 2024 the government issued a tender for the construction of Arctic Bay's new water treatment plant. The contract for this work was awarded to Arctic Fresh Projects in April 2025.

The tender documents indicated that the Inuit labour requirement for the project was 20 per cent. Can the minister indicate how his department is monitoring the contractor's compliance with this requirement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question regarding Inuit labour content with this project.

Community Services, along with our partners with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, look at other projects, and project leaders for brief updates on what's going on with the projects and to see if they are meeting the content or not. We routinely check with the contractors to see if they are meeting the targets or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Minister, for the response.

As the minister will be aware, Grise Fiord relies on glacier melt for the community's drinking water supply.

As glaciers recede across the world, climate change has raised concerns about the long-term future of this supply.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a previous government undertook a study on the long-term water supply for Grise Fiord.

When I raised this issue with the Minister during the Legislative Assembly's winter sitting, he indicated that he would look into the findings from that study.

Can the minister highlight the findings and recommendations from the study? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for his question around the water treatment facility needs.

For Grise Fiord, it was deemed that they would need a new water treatment plant, and time to construction of the Grise Fiord water treatment plant is dependent on many factors that are challenging to predict.

The community experience high winds and quick fluctuations in temperatures and weather conditions, and make construction activities difficult.

Currently it is in progress. A contract was signed last year and the project is underway. And as of November 2025 the contractor completed the season, again having erected the camp, set up the construction site, and produced aggregate and perform testing, and the work will continue on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Following my list of names, member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Oral Question 37 – 7(2): Banking Services

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll share my two cents with the Minister of Finance.

My questions today are for the Minister of Finance, and they concern the issue of banking services in Nunavut communities.

Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns that my constituents have frequently raised with me is the need for expanded banking services in the community of Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, people living in Iqaluit and larger population centres take it for granted that they can walk down the street to their local bank branch and open an account in person, make an investment, or resolve a problem. However, this is not the case for Nunavummiut living in smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department issued a request for proposals in the year 2016 for the government's banking services contract. The request for proposals required proponents to "outline the details of a Community Banking Program that can be offered to Nunavummiut."

Mr. Speaker, the government's current banking services contract has been in place for a decade. Can the minister indicate how satisfied his department is with the extent to which the successful proponent has met this objective, and can he indicate when his department will issue its next request for proposals for banking services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the member, for banking services. I don't even have two cents.

(interpretation ends) Looking at banking in Nunavut right now, the department is aware that this is a concern in many communities, including Arviat, and so as the member indicated in his question, the government has in the past leveraged its contract with Royal Bank of Canada to expand availability of banking services in Nunavut communities. We looked at the most recent additions in terms of RBC, the expansion to Arviat in terms of an agency presence was in 2018, and then in Pangnirtung was 2019.

So that contract is coming up to the end of its life in terms of it was a ten-year contract with RBC.

So in terms of going forward, we are looking to incorporate similar initiatives or similar requirements where we want to see more presence, more services delivered to more communities in Nunavut. And the exact approach is yet to be determined. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) As the Minister will be aware, the Royal Bank has established a number of agency outlets in Nunavut communities, including Arviat, Kinngait and Pangnirtung.

I believe that the bank should be encouraged to build on this work and expand these facilities so that they provide a wider range of services.

Can the Minister indicate how his department will work with the bank to achieve this goal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) They work with our contract holder, who at this moment is RBC. I mean, we can work with contract holder through the administration of the contract that we have, and how we structure the contract going forward, looking at our next contract. We can put requirements into the contract in terms of agency banking or presence in communities.

Looking at Nunavut as a whole, we have three institutions: First Nations Bank, CIBC, and RBC, who have presence across Nunavut. Right now nine out of our 25 communities have a physical banking presence, whether agency or an actual branch, and we want to see that expand.

But Mr. Speaker, at the same time the Department of Finance also wants to keep pace with the times, and we want, as we're determining our approach going forward, we're also looking at newer institutions that are fully online. There are a few of them out there that I've heard of Nunavummiut using where you no longer have to walk into a branch to get a client card, to deal with your account. It can all be done through a mobile app.

So that's something that we're also looking at in terms of wanting to expand the services to reach as many Nunavummiut as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for his response.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he made a statement in the House during last Friday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning the subject of seniors.

One of the specific issues that he raised in his minister's statement was the importance of "preventing and addressing financial mistreatment of elders."

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister describe how the government works with its banking services provider to expand the range of Inuktitut services that it offers to residents of Nunavut, especially unilingual elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I don't have that level of detail here in terms of my briefing information, but I can commit to consulting with officials, reviewing the contract myself that we currently have, and then getting back to the member with more details.

But I can say, without that detail here, that banking services would fall under the language protection legislation that we have in the territory, which applies to all service providers. And so through the languages commissioner's office there's also that important lever to make sure that as much service as possible is being provided in Inuktitut.

That is something that we want to see as a government, and we want to see as much service provided in Inuktitut to those who need it, whether it's elders or young people or anyone in Nunavut falling under our language protection legislation, and also our official languages legislation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Hudson Bay MLA Mr. Qavvik.

Oral Question 38 – 7(2): Port of Churchill Plus Project

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the premier. Mr. Speaker, as the premier will recall, he and a number of other ministers recently received correspondence from me concerning the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project in northern Manitoba.

As the premier will also recall, I recently tabled a copy of the agenda from the recent Hudson Bay Summit that took place earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of attending this important event as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Hudson Bay, and I want to take this opportunity thank outgoing Governor General Mary Simon for her wise words at the event.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project was raised by a number of participants at the Hudson Bay Summit.

I would like to ask the premier if he can confirm when he will be tabling a copy of his reply to my correspondence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Churchill Plus Project that has been raised, as he said in English, this activity is one area where the Manitoba government presented and the, he's been provided with some information.

After his letter to us, we are writing up a response and will table it to the House if he calls for it. However, first, if the correspondence is coming from the MLA, the response first is to the MLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik (interpretation): Earlier this year, the Premier met with his Manitoba counterpart to discuss the proposed Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link and other initiatives.

The official announcement from their meeting indicated that:

“The Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link will connect to Manitoba Hydro’s grid near Churchill. The project will complement and enhance development of the Port of Churchill by helping to unlock northern resources and opportunities.”

I would like to ask the minister if he can describe what discussions they had concerning the impact of the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project on the marine environment of Sanikiluaq and other Hudson Bay communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker(interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of the exact detailed discussions that we had in that meeting, I’m not going to get into too much detail here. I want to not get in the habit of, it was a closed-door meeting between the premier and I, along with Kivalliq Inuit Association president, and so I don’t want to get into the habit of providing too much detail of closed-door discussions. There was a news release that came out following our meeting which gave a high-level overview of some of the topics.

But whether it’s Port of Churchill Project or whether it’s Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link or any development that’s going to impact Nunavummiut, our expectation is that all the regulatory, environmental, consultative approvals will be met, or all the processes will be followed; that Nunavummiut will be given opportunity to comment, to understand the potential impacts, and ideally to be involved in any development.

So that applies to projects that are happening in Nunavut. That also applies to projects that are happening outside of Nunavut, but have the potential to impact Nunavut residents. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Pangnirtung MLA, Mr. Mike.

Oral Question 39 – 7(2): Medical Travel

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health, concerning medical travel. A question to the Minister of Health on the concern of this issue.

As the minister is aware, her department recently issued a public service announcement concerning the installation of a new medical travel phone at the Iqaluit airport.

This is great, it is satisfying, and will have benefits.

The announcement indicated that this will enable medical travellers to get support when they encounter issues such as flight delays or need to contact the boarding home, if a delay occurs, and so forth.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that this will perhaps benefit residents of Pangnirtung who are travelling to Iqaluit, or in some cases Ottawa.

Can the Minister confirm if the phone will be answered by employees of the Department of Health? And can she clarify if the service will be provided in both Inuktitut and English? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department does have a number of staff who are fluent in Inuktitut that work in medical travel, so during working hours there's always an opportunity to be transferred directly to somebody who speaks Inuktitut if the person on the other end of the phone does not speak Inuktitut, and every effort is made in the evenings as well to ensure that, or off hours to ensure that there is somebody available who does speak Inuktitut fluently to be able to help medical travellers.

The medical boarding homes also have within their contracts that they must provide service in Inuktitut as well, and the department staff that manage that contract are in constant dialogue with them to ensure that that service is provided.

Certainly, if a traveller is not able to receive help in their language of choice, one thing that they can do to make us aware of that incident is to call the Office of Patient Relations and lodge a complaint so that we're aware of it, and that will help us to act on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister. The minister perhaps is aware as well, her department's public service announcement also indicated that it "plans to install dedicated medical travel phone lines at additional airports across the territory over time."

I appears that this is going ahead. Can the Minister indicate when this will occur at Pangnirtung's airport that medical travellers may be able to use? When do we foresee that being installed?

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health, Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say that the Department of Health is working with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut to ensure that there is a direct line installed in the new Rankin Inlet airport, and currently there are not those phones available in any of the southern locations.

We are in discussion internally, along with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, to talk about the feasibility of making a phone line available to the public.

And in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we have launched a Call Medical Travel advertising campaign on social media that shares the toll free numbers on a regular basis. We have the toll free numbers also available in the client packages that medical travellers receive.

What we hope to do is to follow through and get those phone lines installed, and in the meantime to encourage people to be helpful with medical travellers who don't have a cellphone, and loan a phone in order to help a medical traveller who might need extra help.

It takes a community to make sure that we provide services really well, and where there are gaps in services, we look to our good Nunavummiut to help fill those gaps in those times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for the answer. Now I would like to ask the minister:

As the minister is aware, recent changes to Canadian North's schedule, like for example in Pangnirtung elders who need to go to Ottawa, and sometimes they go through difficulty, especially if they need to fly on Saturday. People going hospitals, I'm talking about elders, if an elder comes from Pangnirtung, goes to the other direction, to Qikiqtarjuaq first, and then they fly to Iqaluit, and then from Iqaluit to Kuujjuaq, and then Kuujjuaq to Ottawa, this is an elder that is trying to go to the hospital. And we have

witnessed this happen many times, ever since Canadian North started the Qikiqtarjuaq route, for example, if I leave Pangnirtung in the morning and then get to Ottawa at night, after four stops along the way.

Can the minister direct her officials about medical travel. People who need to go on medical travel, especially elders, can it be made so that they're only allowed to have two stops before they get to their destination on the same day? Can the minister look into this? That is my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that suggestion. I know that it's really important for people who are booking medical travel to look at the shortest route possible based on a client's needs, and they do take that into account.

We always encourage that elders and people with specific medical needs have the shortest flight possible, and sometimes it's not possible to book them on the shortest route possible, just because we need to get them to their destination at a certain time.

One of the things that is really important for clients, medical travellers to do, is when they know that they have medical travel coming up, that they talk to their healthcare practitioner and the team at the health centre to let them know what their needs are.

I know that a lot of us, I get to stand next to the tallest person in the room everyday, and I'm always very much aware of my height, and I know for myself personally when I sit on an airplane for a number of hours, it can become uncomfortable. So I always try to have something to put my feet up on. Or when I'm sitting here I have something on my back so that I'm sitting a little bit farther forward.

And it's possible for medical travellers, and especially elders, to talk to their healthcare providers to ask them for something to raise their feet, or push their back forward so that they're more comfortable on their flight.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we do our best in order to make everybody's flight and trip as comfortable as possible, and that happens when they actually give us feedback and tell us what they need and we will try to accommodate the best that we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Oral Question 40 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm getting tired of sitting.

(interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. I want to follow up today on issues that I raised during the Legislative Assembly's winter sitting.

During my recent visit to Naujaat, the municipal council told me that one of the community's top priorities is to extend the airport's runway.

As the minister will recall, letters were tabled in the House during the previous Legislative Assembly concerning the urgent need to extend the runway at the Naujaat airport.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's 2026-2027 capital estimates included funding to develop "engineered drawings design" for the runway extension.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member raising this issue again. As we do know, the runway in Naujaat is one of the shortest ones in the territory, and we do recognize that at some point we're going to have to do an extension on that.

We're looking at different options that are available to us right now, and I look forward to updating this House in the very near future on an advancement of that project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends).

When I raised this issue during the Legislative Assembly's winter sitting, the minister indicated that the cost of extending Naujaat's runway is estimated between \$30.0 million and \$40.0 million.

Can the Minister indicate if this project will be eligible for federal funding under the new Arctic Infrastructure Fund?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for continuing on this line of questioning.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers I gave were just basically some estimates, so there was not any, I guess it's a range of money that we are kind of looking at.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to applying for different federal programs, we're always looking at taking advantage of federal programs as they become available and looking at projects that meets the need, and in my opinion this is one that would meet the requirements for a federal funding proposal.

Again, Mr. Speaker I do very much look forward to an announcement in the very near future on this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's 2026-2027 capital estimates also included funding for the construction of an airside access ramp at Coral Harbour's airport and the replacement of a fuel tank.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the process for the new airport access ramp and new fuel tank?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with regards to the ramps, as the member mentioned, it is in the capital plan, and we're looking at going out for tender this summer on that.

With regards to the fuel tanks, I had my Naujaat briefing note open, so when we switched communities it's going to take me a moment to get that information. I'll have to provide that information to the member when I have it in front of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. We'll proceed with the *Orders of the Day*. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Return to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Replies to Opening Address. 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. 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. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Item 19: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 2 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2026-2027 – Second Reading

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2026-2027* be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill makes supplementary appropriations to defray the capital expenditures of the Government of Nunavut for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion, all those in favour? Against? The motion is carried and Bill 2 is ready to be presented to Committee of the Whole.

Second Reading of Bills. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 3 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act – Second Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 3, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this Bill makes changes to multiple statutes to allow for electronically published codes and standards to be incorporated by reference, and to make various clarifications and corrections. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. The motion is in order. Comments to the motion? All those in favour? Against? The motion is carried, and Bill 3 is ready for review for standing committee review.

Second Reading of Bills.

Bill 4 – An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act – Second Reading

Hon. John Main: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill amends the Income Tax Act to increase the value of the Nunavut Child Benefit and fully index the value of the Nunavut Child Benefit to the Consumer Price Index. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the Bill?

A Member: Call.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 4 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Item 20, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Before we proceed to Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*House adjourned at 15:00 and Committee commenced at 15:31*

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

Chairman (Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak): Good afternoon, Nunavummiut. We're back to the Committee of the Whole. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 1 and 2. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to commence with the consideration of Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027*, and the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates of the Department of Education. And if time permits, we will then proceed to the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Are we in agreement we first deal with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 1 –Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027 –
Consideration in Committee**

Chairman: I would like to ask Minister Main: Do you have any officials you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, thank you.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. For the record, Minister Main, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) With me today are Rebecca Hainnu, Deputy Minister; and Matthew Loosemore, who is Director of Corporate Services.

(interpretation) First of all, I would like to remember Minister Akeegok. He's unable to attend this session. That's why I'm replacing him. I also think of his family as well.

Chair, I am pleased to appear before you and committee members today to discuss the Department of Education's proposed 2026-2027 budget.

For the 2026-27 fiscal year, the department is requesting a total of \$309,853,000 in operations and maintenance funding. This represents an increase of \$20,308,000 from the 2025-26 main estimates.

Of this increase, \$6,118,000 is required to support the new Nunavut Teachers' Association collective agreement, and \$2,190,000 is required for the Nunavut Employees Union collective agreement. These adjustments ensure that teachers, support staff, and departmental employees are appropriately compensated so we can remain a competitive employer and keep our schools stable and well-staffed.

The largest single increase to the Department of Education's budget is a \$12 million enhancement to the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, or FANS program. This investment increases the funding available to students to remove barriers to accessing post-secondary education, and responds to the growing demand for training, and skills development. Supporting adult learners is essential to building Nunavut's future workforce.

Chair, the department is also making several important internal reallocations to ensure funding is aligned with program needs across the territory. This includes reprofiling

\$4 million to early learning and child care, to increase funding to licensed childcare centres and help stabilize services for families.

The Department is also providing \$2.7 million in additional funding to our Corporate Services division to address funding gaps related to fire safety in our schools, increased operational and service costs, and to support a new territory-wide custodian, cleaning supplies, and training contract. In addition, \$260,000 is being allocated to support language committees for all 26 district education authorities, ensuring they have the resources needed to fulfill their responsibilities under the *Education Act* and the new *Language of Instruction Regulations*.

In 2026-27, the Department of Education will also re-profile existing funding to strengthen system leadership and support the implementation of bilingual education and new school infrastructure. This includes the creation of an Assistant Deputy Minister of Early and Advanced Education, reprofiled from an existing position, to allow more dedicated strategic oversight for program development, and system-wide instructional improvement.

Chair, the Department is also adding two new positions within the Support Services Branch, a Director of Language of Instruction and an Advisor, Bilingual Education. These positions will directly support the implementation of the *Education Act*, The *Inuktit Protection Act*, and the *Language of Instruction Regulations*.

In addition, six new positions are being added to support the opening of Pangniq High School in Taloyoak, including a principal, two teachers, two custodians, and a school secretary. These changes will be critical to ensuring the department can deliver better services, support its 11,170 students and 1,516 employees, strengthen bilingual education, and ensure our schools are prepared to welcome students in September 2026.

Chair, the Department continues to focus on improving outcomes for early learners, students and adult learners, strengthening bilingual education, and ensuring that schools and communities receive the support they need. We remain committed to using our resources effectively and to delivering high-quality programs and services across Nunavut.

(interpretation) I want to thank this committee for allowing us to appear. Your collaboration enables us to carry out our mandate and provide the best education possible to all our students. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Mr. Porter, please proceed.

Mr. Porter (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Education.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 operations and maintenance budget is \$309.853 million. This represents a 7.0 per cent increase from the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The number of positions in the department is increasing from 1,508.5 in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 1,516.5 in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Members raised a number of issues and concerns during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that two of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year are to "develop an Inuit-specific educator recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Inuit teachers in schools" and to "develop an educator recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of, and maintain high-quality, teachers in our schools." Members look forward to ongoing updates on the implementation of the strategies.

On February 28, 2025, the federal and territorial governments announced a bilateral agreement under the National School Food Program. The announcement indicated that "the total federal investment in school food programming in Nunavut will be approximately \$7.6 million over the next three years, with an emphasis on improvements to kitchen facilities and essential infrastructure for school food programs in the territory."

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "develop Nunavut-specific school food program guidelines." Members look forward to ongoing updates on the implementation of the program.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "review the Crisis Response Guidelines for Nunavut Schools Staff Manual and the Safety in Schools Principal's Planning Manual." The standing committee encourages the department to work closely with the Nunavut Teachers' Association and the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities to address the issue of violent incidents in schools.

The Department of Education's 2023-2024 annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 17, 2025. Members look forward to the timely tabling of the 2024-2025 annual report. The 2023-2024 annual report indicated that the attendance rate in K to 12 schools in Nunavut was 69 per cent for the school year. A school-by-school breakdown of attendance rates was not included in the report. This information was last published in the department's 2020-2021 annual report.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "work with district education authorities to better promote attendance, including use of the principal's report to share best practices related to increasing attendance." The standing committee strongly supports measures to increase school attendance and decrease absenteeism.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "implement the new Nunavut curriculum in grades 2 and 3." On June 2, 2025, correspondence from the Minister of Education was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The correspondence included a timeline for implementing the Nunavut curriculum from kindergarten to Grade 12. The correspondence indicated that the department "hopes to have our Nunavut curriculum fully implemented in all grades and all subjects by the year 2036."

New *Language of Instruction Regulations* under the *Education Act* were published in July, 2025. The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "plan for the implementation of bilingual education models for grades 4-7." Members look forward to ongoing updates on the implementation of these initiatives.

A new *Early Learning and Child Care Act* received Assent on June 3, 2025. It is not yet in force. The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2027-2028 fiscal year is to "develop regulations for the *Early Learning and Child Care Act*." A new *Post-Secondary Student Support Act* received Assent on March 11, 2025. It is not yet in force. The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "develop the *Post-Secondary Student Support Regulations*".

New *Student Financial Assistance Regulations* were published in 2025 under the *Student Financial Assistance Act*. The act and regulations will be repealed upon the coming into force of the new *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the budget for grants under the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program is increasing from \$8.916 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to \$23.428 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 162.7 per cent.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "introduce a new Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program based on the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Comprehensive Review." Members look forward to future annual reports under the *Education Act*, including detailed information on the program, including information regarding the number of post-secondary graduates who enter Nunavut's labour force after completing their studies.

In February 2026, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami announced that the main campus of the new Inuit Nunangat University will be located in Arviat. The Department of Education's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "begin a review of the *University and Degree-Granting Institutions Act*." Information published by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami indicates that the Inuit Nunangat University plans to offer major and minor degree programs in a wide number of fields, including education, nursing, midwifery, social work, Inuktitut interpretation and translation, arts, and environmental protections. Given the overlap with Nunavut Arctic College's current program offerings, it is clear to members that close co-ordination between the institutions will be required prior to the new university's planned opening in the year 2030.

Chair, That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Education. Thank you.

Chairman: Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question, I was asked to ask this question regarding the school that is undergoing renovations. This summer the youth will not have much to do in the community, and I'm wondering if we can utilize the new gym or community hall, or do we have to wait for the official opening of that renovated school? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Angootealuk, I will give you an opportunity when we go to School Operations, section G-5.

(interpretation ends) We'll proceed to the page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 main estimates starting on page G-4. We will now review the Department of Education, Directorate Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that two of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year are to develop an Inuit-specific educator recruitment and retention strategy to increase a number of Inuit teachers schools, and to develop an educator improvement and retention strategy to increase a number of, and maintain high quality teachers in our schools.

How will these strategies be different from the department's current recruitment and retention strategies for teachers? Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. So in terms of the Inuit-specific educator recruitment and retention strategy, I think it will differ from a broader strategy in that it will be tailored to Inuit who the department is looking for. The department acknowledges that increasing the number of Inuit educators is critical in terms of meeting the new Nunavut curriculum, implementing the new Nunavut curriculum and meeting the needs around Inuktitut instruction.

And so we don't know what will be in the strategy at this point, but it will identify specific actions that will support Inuit educators who are already within the system, and also recruit new educators.

So the department is in early discussions on this. Nunavut Tunngavik has been reached out to in terms of feedback and support. There are some things that have already been started in terms of targeted actions around Inuit recruitment and retention, but I can go into more detail if the member would like. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think you need to go into more details on that, thank you.

As of today, how many Nunavut Inuit are currently working as certified teachers in Nunavut schools? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There are 808 filled Nunavut Teachers' Association positions and out of that 808, 298.5 – I guess that represents a half-time position – are Inuit and 509.5 are not Inuit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Questions? Any other questions? Daniel Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Main, and your officials. I would like to get back to the first question from my colleague from Cambridge Bay in regards to recruitment and retention. In our territory we continue to see, most likely in every community, where housing shortage is a factor getting teachers across the territory.

What is your department doing with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to fill in staff housing for possible and future teachers in our territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is a great question. It is an issue for Department of Education. It's an issue for many departments. Working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the department does seek to increase access to units, but we do recognize that we are not the only department who's looking for units in the communities.

We do, the department does take measures to make sure that every available staff housing unit is well-utilized. An example of that is that there is a practice of some staff sharing staff housing units. It is usually in the case of an employee who doesn't have a family or children. They would in some cases be sharing a staff housing unit so you could have more than one staff in a single staff unit.

We recognize it's not ideal. It's not the preference of everyone to be sharing a unit, but there are some upsides. It results in a lower monthly rental cost in terms of the employees.

We are continuing to work with the Housing Corporation in terms of looking for opportunities to bring on more units. A good example is Taloyoak, where with the new school there will be some new positions added, I mentioned in the opening comments. And so when we have additions to staff complement, we certainly work with our partners to try and get more units. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Daniel Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. You mentioned that there is an ongoing, there seems to be an ongoing issue with sharing a unit with staff within the school system. Some teachers tend to leave early or find different professions within their roles because they're sharing a unit that might not be within the school systems.

I'm wondering if your department can fix ways to house teachers with families or individually that place them in a unit that they can be alone so they can focus on their professions and provide education to our territory.

So what is the department seeking to make improvements in that area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) in terms of the staff housing issue, we recognize that there is a shortage of units right across, affecting many different departments.

One of the things the department is doing is tracking very closely the deficit in terms of the housing units that would be needed in communities, and then making sure that that information is provided or shared with our partners at Nunavut Housing Corporation and elsewhere within the government.

It is one of the key -- there's no dancing around it -- it is one of the key factors that is affecting our recruitment and our retention. And so the department plans to keep working hard at this.

I think another potential avenue for us to help address it, or that could help, would be greater supports around home ownership. And so the department welcomed the increase to the homeowner support that came through recently, in the previous government, which means that school staff who are maintaining their own homes or out renting on their own and who do qualify for the subsidy got an increase. And so we see that as a positive. It's not only just about staff housing units. It could also be on the home ownership side where we can see benefit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Daniel Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. Under the action business plan item bullet 4 "Explore funding options to support the capital costs associated with the continued rollout of the full-day kindergarten", my first question is: How many full-day kindergarten are in Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In 2023 the Department of Education rolled out full-day kindergarten in five communities. I'm sure the member recalls; the member was around at the time. In 2024 full-day kindergarten was implemented in seven more communities. So right now it has been rolled out in 12 communities.

In terms of the remaining 15 schools for it to be implemented in, the department has estimated the cost that would be associated with renovations. Essentially it boils down to needing more classroom space to implement it. And it is a significant cost. The estimate from the department is approximately \$80 million to roll out full-day kindergarten to the remaining 15 schools. Oh, my apologies. If we include the École des Trois-Soleils here in Iqaluit, it is actually 13 schools that have full-day kindergarten. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Daniel Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Minister. Do you have the list of those communities that do have full-day kindergarten and the ones that don't? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qavvik. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have the list so I can simply read it out. So these are the communities that have full-day kindergarten: Chesterfield Inlet, Kimmirut, Resolute Bay, Gjoa Haven, Kugluktuk, Sanikiluaq, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Taloyoak; Iqaluit, which includes Apex school as well as the École des Trois-Soleils, and Qikiqtarjuaq and Whale Cove. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Do you have any more questions, Mr. Qavvik?

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Minister. Switching to the third last bullet under "Business Plan Action Items: Develop Nunavut-specific school food program guidelines", what kind of food is being provided? Country food? Or like breakfast programs? Afternoon rations for the students? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Right now it's a variety. It has really changed a lot since I was a kid. I remember going to school and they used to give us chicken soup with barley in it, and that was the big, we used to try to have as big a cup as possible so we could get the most soup.

It depends on the school right now. Yes, country food is included, where possible. It's not guaranteed, every day kind of thing, it's variable. School staff do make efforts to provide nutritious food, such as fruit, dairy products, fresh food wherever possible.

But one of the key objectives that we want to get to as a department is the creation of a food policy and guideline, which would help staff take out some of the guesswork in terms of what they can serve. So the department's working with a nutritionist, also consulting with the Department of Health around creating those guidelines. There's also a piece in there around safe food handling.

So the school food programs are important and we want to support them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. I would like to acknowledge the department for providing food programs across the territory. I survived

in an era where food programs were not provided at all, so I acknowledge the department for their continued contribution in this area.

My last question that I would like to ask on the action items 27 and 28, the fourth bullet: "Roll out full-day kindergarten in one additional community." Which community would this rollout kindergarten be placed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department right now is looking at Rankin Inlet or Arviat for the next community to be rolled out to. But that's yet to be determined. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Do we have any more questions under the Directorate Branch?
(interpretation) Mr. Kuliktana?

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question today I would like to find out is: How many non-certified teachers are currently working in Nunavut schools under letters of authority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The number right now is 89. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This issue with letters of authority, to me it's very concerning because we have teachers that are not certified teaching our students, and to me they are not receiving the best possible quality care of education. And that certainly puts us behind the eight ball with the rest of Canada.

To me, letters of authority in our education system, I know it's a last resort, but Education should do their part in every possible way to ensure that we have no letters of authority being signed in our schools.

So my question is: What is Education's plan of action to reduce the letters of authority that are in our Nunavut schools? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) First of all, I want to acknowledge the member's concern and thank the member for sharing

that concern. I think this is one of the reasons we're here, in terms of the budgetary approval process and the Standing Committee of the Whole. The government wants to hear the concerns from members so that we can work towards addressing them.

First of all, I want to correct myself, it's actually 93 letters of authority.

In terms of the hiring process, there is a validation that needs to be completed in terms of the decision to hire an unqualified teacher. Individuals who are hired under letters of authority must possess a set of skills or knowledge that teach a specific core subject or grade.

And I think the bigger context, Mr. Chairman, is one of teacher shortage nationally, and a tight labour market where the department does need to continue making efforts to be an attractive employer, providing competitive benefits and supports.

Part of the budgetary ask here in front of you is tied to the new collective agreements, both the Nunavut Teachers' Association and Nunavut Employees Union. Under both of those new agreements, there's an increase to pay, there's an increase to benefits. Not that that's going to solve the teacher shortage necessarily on its own, but it is a piece.

And so we do acknowledge a concern, and the department is working to ensure that letters of authority are not being overly relied on. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Questions for the Directorate Branch? Pagnirtung MLA, Johnny Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Concerning the schools, on the school safety, the plan for 2026-2030 business plan indicates that the planned action would be in effect for 2026-2027 fiscal year is to review the process response guidelines for Nunavut schools staff manual, and the Safety in Schools principal's planning manual. What specific changes are being considered?

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think at the heart of this is wanting to ensure that schools are safe places for our children. If you think about the children in your life or in your family, you want to make sure that they're safe and well looked after every day, whether they're in school or at home.

Looking at these Crisis Response Guidelines, they were last updated in 2019. Schools have emergency response plans that include lockdown procedures, hold and secure

procedures, shelter in place, and evacuation protocols. These plans are reviewed annually and updated as needed.

The department is looking to modernize these Crisis Response Guidelines so that they are appropriate in 2026 and beyond, looking at things like controlled access to the school, looking at intrusion alarm systems, emergency procedures and also how the schools partner with local authorities, like the fire departments or RCMP. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Just so that we all understand better, it sounds like the review will cost money. (interpretation ends) What specific changes are being considered? (interpretation) What exactly are you thinking of changing? What changes are you thinking about making? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you will allow Deputy Hainnu to respond? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the question. The crisis guidelines show teachers what to do if there's a safety concern or an accident. So the funding will be for training the teachers and principals, and the money won't be that high. So the students would be taking a short break while the teachers are being trained how to use the manual. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.

The next question I would like to ask about the previous year, while looking at five years: Have the number of violent incidents in Nunavut schools increased or decreased in the last five years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As to if the number has increased or not in terms of violent incidents in schools, the Department of Education does not have that number, but they have worked harder on prevention. To say it in English:

(interpretation ends) We have seen an increase in efforts around trauma-informed practice, increased efforts around de-escalation and co-regulation approaches, understanding anxiety in schools, and safety planning.

The statistics aren't readily available in terms of the last five years, but the department has made increased efforts around planning, training, and preparing. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): The member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister. Can you produce a document answering my question about the past five years, what has happened? We need to know about the schools. Are they running more into trouble, or are things calming down? So that we'll all know: If the problem has been getting worse in the last five years within the schools, then we have to consider the danger.

And in my first question I had: What kind of changes are you considering? And so that my question will make more sense.

And the next question, the other question I would like to ask is: There are things happen in the schools. Some things always happen in the schools, ever since school started. Is the Department of Education working closely with the Nunavut Teachers' Association and the local district education authorities in Nunavut about these problems where within schools they need to have like a serene atmosphere? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Education, we can produce the numbers that the member was asking for so that it will be easier to understand. But I cannot tell you right now what the numbers are going to be. The teachers association, we do work closely with the Nunavut Teachers' Association with curriculum for teachers, and also the local district education authorities. We always work with them as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for the high Arctic, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. the Department of Education's 2023-2024 annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 17, 2025. It indicated that the attendance rate in K to 12 schools was 69 per cent. What was the attendance rate for the 2024-2025 school year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just bear with us here. We are just bringing up the number.

for 2024-2025, the overall average attendance rate was 65 per cent. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for the high Arctic, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the response. Your department's annual reports under the *Education Act* have not included a school-by-school breakdown of attendance rate since the year 2020-2021 annual report.

Will you and your department commit to ensuring that future annual reports include this information? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department a few years ago, as the member noted, the department stopped reporting school-by-school attendance rates, and went to a regional reporting practice. And that's the plan going forward.

The school by school attendance rates were seen as, in terms of reporting them, were seen, I think the concern was around potentially shaming communities that have lower attendance rates than others, and so the intention is to still give as much detail as possible, give that regional number, and protect or avoid targeting or shaming the staff and DEAs the families tied to specific schools. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for the high Arctic, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I completely understand your response, so thank you.

(interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "work with district education authorities to better promote attendance, including use of principals report to share best practices related to increasing attendance." What other actions are being considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking at the principal's report, it's something that goes to the DEA and then it also goes to the Department of Education.

And so the department has noted that over the years that certain schools, certain school leaders can make a real positive impact in terms of school attendance, through various initiatives, engaging more with family, extracurricular activities, et cetera.

The department wants to use the principal's report as a tool to make sure that the good tools or the good practices that are happening in one community can be shared with another, because we want to increase attendance.

The department is not necessarily satisfied with the attendance that we're seeing right now. We know that there are so many benefits to children's future when they go to school, and the department wants to support parents and children to attend as much as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I asked earlier, I have another question. First of all, let me say we visited, Barry and I went to visit the school. It's a very nice school now, and they have a nice gymnasium. The completion was done very well.

But my question is I was asked to ask about the school gym, if it can be used during summer break when the students are on a break, that new school. I was asked to try and consider how to do it. So that's my question. Can it be used? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Over the summer months, the use of gymnasiums is managed through the district education authority, and so if there's going to be something like, I don't know, for example a summer camp, or there's going to be an event, the request would be put into the DEA, and then they would be the ones who can look at the requirements and whether or not they want to allow it.

Without speaking directly to Coral Harbour, the need for protection of the school assets, making sure that there's proper cleaning that's done after events. So that's the kind of thing that's looked at.

The department does recognize that these are important assets for the community, and so through the DEA tries to support as much use as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Main. I'm sure they are watching and listening and hearing the answer that I got. We are kind of worried a little bit, because it's so new and it hasn't really completely opened yet, so I don't know how that's going to run. We shall see. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main, do you want make a comment on a comment?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Yes, thank you.

(interpretation ends) So in terms of the project in Coral Harbour, the project is not scheduled to be completed until late 2027. And the new gymnasium may be used for a period, in terms of storing some furniture and equipment that's part of the commissioning or part of renovation project. So that might be another consideration that will come into play there. I just wanted to share that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): I have no further names for questions. I'm sorry, member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to providing food in the school, in regards to that, I have a question in regards to that on the school food program.

February 8, 2028 the government had an agreement in regards to a food program in the school, that they provide food 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for 2026-2027 fiscal year is to develop Nunavut-specific school food program guidelines. What specific issues will these guidelines address? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So I think the things that will be addressed in there will be giving some guidance to staff in terms of what types of foods should be prioritized. And because right now if you're put in charge of a school food program, there's some general guides you can use, but nothing that's Nunavut-specific, so trying to take some of the guesswork out of planning meals for the staff.

And also there's a component in there around food safety that's trying to be addressed. So it's nutrition as well as food safety, those two main components. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you as well, Mr. Minister. Sometimes we have to consider or think of, we think of kitchen facilities to be used for food program in the schools. Have you been considering those aspects while this is being reviewed or being planned on?

I know it's understandable that the Department of Health and Family Services in Nunavut and NTI also work with the schools on the school food program. I don't know if there's a breakfast program or if it's a lunch program. So that the public out there listening, the public don't understand what kind of programs you provide. So if you can explain further on what kind of programs you have. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question. In regards to the funding, the \$7.6 million, part of it will be used for the school program, and there will be used for investigation, and also they can be used for new purchases, like for example the cooking equipment.

But we do recognize that the \$7.6 million is insufficient, and we still need more funding. And we understand that NTI provided \$15 million for a school food program. We were provided the funding to help with the food program. NTI was provided the funding, according to my understanding, that they are working with coalition of DEAs. NTI is working with the coalition of DEAs, and the funding will be allocated to the DEAs. And we understand and recognize the fact that the funding is not sufficient as yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. When is it going to be built in 2026-2027 for Nunavut specific, when is the food guideline going to be ready for Nunavut schools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) the department's intention is to have the guidelines completed by the end of the fiscal year, so by the end of 2026-2027. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the Directorate Branch's budget for service contracts is increasing from \$2.185 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to \$4.884 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 123 per cent. What accounts for this increase? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There are a few different things that are driving this. There is increased requirements around fire watch expenditures, services; increased requirements under custodial supplies and training. And also captured in there is some contract in support for policy development, information technology modernization, communications, as well as departmental planning. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): I don't believe we have any further questions under Directorate Branch. (interpretation ends) Do members agree with the Department of Education Directorate Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$23,467,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page G-5. We will now review the Department of Education School Operations Branch. Do members have any questions? (interpretation) Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimate indicate that the school operation branch budget for compensation and benefit is decreasing from 184.681 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 181.734 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents a decrease of 1.5 per cent. What accounts for this decrease? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) What has happened here is that the department has, due to vacancies within positions, there has been a reallocation, where the decrease represents savings that were redirected to other pressures within the department. Specifically, those funds were put towards Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for your response. (interpretation ends) On June 2, 2025, correspondence from the previous Minister of Education was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The correspondence included a timeline for implementing the Nunavut curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12. The correspondence indicated that the department “hopes to have our Nunavut curriculum formally implemented in all grades, in all subjects by the year 2036.”

Does the department still consider this to be a realistic timeline? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, looking at it, everything is, the department, (interpretation ends) I will switch to English because I’m not sure how to say “curriculum” in Inuktitut.

The department is fully committed to this. The department realizes that providing curriculum that reflects the Inuit world view and the Nunavut context provides a best opportunity for our students to graduate with a quality bilingual education, and the project or the initiative still currently is on track. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department’s draft 2026-2027 main estimates indicate the number of positions in the Kitikmeot school division is increasing from 242.5 PYs in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 248.5 PYs in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. What positions are being created? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So in Taloyoak there’s an addition of a principal, a school secretary, two teachers and two custodians, and that’s around the opening of Pangniq High School. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister, for the answer. Currently 248 PYs are allowed. How many of the division’s positions are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you could bear with us. The staff sitting beside me are pulling up the numbers. I can provide vacancy rates. In terms of the Nunavut Employees Union positions within the department, there's a 25 per cent vacancy rate. And within the Nunavut Teachers' Association positions within the department, there's a 10 per cent vacancy rate.

I understand the member is looking for the vacancy numbers. I can give the numbers. For the Nunavut Employees Union, there's 105 positions vacant, and for Nunavut Teachers' Association there's 91 positions vacant. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): The Department of Education School Operations Branch, Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. New language of instruction regulations under the *Education Act* were published in July 2025.

Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to plan for the implementation of bilingual education models for grades 4 to 7.

What challenges are schools facing in implementing the Language of Instruction models? Thank you. Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking at the new bilingual education models, by far the biggest challenge for the department is supply of Inuktitut-speaking or Inuinnaqtun or Inuktit-speaking teachers. That's the biggest limiting factor that's being encountered.

I think that's why the Department of Education is so closely engaged with Nunavut Arctic College around delivery of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, and looking to support more cohorts of students across Nunavut who can become the teachers of tomorrow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In October 2021, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated announced that it had filed a lawsuit in the Nunavut Court of Justice in Iqaluit concerning Inuktit language of instruction in public schools. I'm just wondering what is the current status of that matter? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you'll allow the deputy to respond. Ms. Hainnu.

Chairman: Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the member for the very important question. Any litigation in the territory is going to cost an immense amount of money. And so the resources in terms of funding is going out instead of going into the school system. And so there is a loss in terms of monetary limited funding that it could be utilized in the school system going out of the system into a litigation file, which is to pay for lawyers.

There are positive outcomes from the relationship with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated with the Department of Education and government as a whole, because the real first thing to address an issue is to acknowledge that there is an issue. And so in the last several years since the litigation was launched, there have been very meaningful and heartfelt discussions.

I invite the territory – if I may, with the premier here – I invite the territory to step up for our kids so that our kids can start discussing the reputational damage when there is an ongoing litigation and the reputational damage is the education.

And so if we don't get along and highlight that life level up with education, there is a loss, the loss of ambition, the loss of a likelihood that could be if we didn't speak ill of the education system. I hope that answers the question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk. Following my list of names, I have no more list of names for the School Operations Branch.

Do members agree with the Department of Education's School Operations Branch total operations and maintenance of \$215,182,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page G-6. We will now review the Department of Education Support Services Branch. Do members have any questions? (interpretation) Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 2026-2027 main estimates indicated that the number of positions in the Curriculum Development Division is

increasing from 20.0 PYs in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 22.0 PYs in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. What positions are being created? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There is a Director of Language of Instruction and an Advisor on Bilingual Education. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Aggu, Ms. Angootealuk. Mr. Attagutaluk, I'm sorry.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response. (interpretation ends) How many of the division's positions are currently vacant? *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just need a little bit of a clarification. Which division is the member asking about in terms of the vacancies? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Aggu, if you would clarify your question, please.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the support services, how many of the division's positions are currently vacant in the Support Services Division?

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So in terms of student support we have seven vacant positions. In terms of student assessment we have four. And so the total under the Student Achievement Branch is 11 vacant positions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of the planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to continue developing the curriculum for grades 7 to 12, including curriculum and programs directly aligned with Nunavut's labour market needs.

What are the specific examples of curriculum and programs that are directly aligned with Nunavut's labour market needs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So the grade 10 to 12 curriculum, the plan is that it will include opportunities for experiential and hands-on learning, such as work experience and job shadowing programs.

An example would be in the trades. The department wants to make sure that the education that youth are receiving is aligned with the real world, the labour market, and to help them to get engaged with potential careers as early as possible. So it's very exciting work.

I know in Kugluktuk, quite some years ago there was a very successful trades initiative at the school. It's things like that that the department wants to see more of and support through this curriculum work. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question in regards to action items on the second last bullet: "Develop and provide targeted training to teachers under letters of authority."

Can the minister outline what steps is the department taking to develop and provide targeted training for teachers working under the letters of authority, to ensure that they are fully supported in the classroom? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So when we look at the teachers who are filling, or are under a letter of authority, most of them are filling a specific need in the school, such as Inuktitut, Inuktitut language instruction, working in the shop, providing carpentry instruction, or other specialized needs.

In terms of what support that can be provided to them, the department is looking at planning, assessment, reporting, classroom management and instruction delivery strategies, as well as ways to engage with parents, guardians and community members. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. How is the department ensuring that teachers under the letters of authority receive ongoing mentorship and classroom support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Teachers under a letter of authority have equal opportunity to access training modules, so there are other training opportunities that are available to teachers in the school, and so the teachers on letters of authority have the same access.

That is basically the department's strategy, is to make sure that they're on a level playing field with other teachers in their school. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. What timeline has been set out to roll out this targeted training across all schools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department is planning to make this an ongoing initiative. In fall 2025, for the first time the department hosted an in-person training session for teachers hired under letters of authority. There were over 20 participants. The department is planning a similar training session this fiscal year. It is planned as an ongoing initiative, not necessarily just a one-time offering. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Under Department of Education Support Services Branch. (interpretation) MLA for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask a question on daycare. The Department of Education 2026-2027 action plan had prioritized Early Childhood Program daycare, and the budget, being \$2.15 million in 2025-2026 fiscal year, went up to \$6.15 million for 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Could you clarify here on the increase, because it has increased by 186 percent. How is that increase determined? Curious about the increase in the amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mike. We revert back to this in G-7 for early, because it does talk about advanced education. My question with be Department of Education, Support Services Branch. Hudson Bay MLA, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: On the business plan, action item 27 and 28, fiscal year is to continue to develop the Nunavut curriculum for grades 7 to 12, including alignment with the Government of Nunavut's Devolution Strategy.

I would like to ask the minister if he can provide an update on the ongoing development of the Nunavut curriculum for grades 7 to 12? And how is this work being aligned with the Government of Nunavut's Devolution Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you'll allow Deputy Hainnu to respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for the question. Nunavut is a land of opportunity. We're talking about devolution, and so devolution has been working with our curriculum services to go into schools and discuss what employment opportunities there will be.

They are talking to our high school students about what types of programming they need to engage in, perhaps a graduation pathing, and they are dealing with content. And so we are working closely with the Department of Devolution. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Department of Education, Support Services Branch. I don't believe there are any more questions. (interpretation ends) Do members agree with the Department of Education Support Services Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$34,396,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page G-7. We will now review the Department of Education Early and Advanced Education Branch. Do members have any questions? (interpretation) Perhaps we'll go back to an earlier question. Mr. Mike, Pagnirtung MLA, your question.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you. My apologies, I made a mistake earlier. On the issue of childcare and the planned 2026-2027 budget, and we have 2.15 million budgeted for 2025-2026 fiscal year, and for this year 2026 and 2027, \$6.15 million for the budget this year. This is an increase of 186 percent. I have no problem with it, just a question why this has increased. Why has this increased? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The increase \$16.1 million, a number of things associated with this: Support for students in Nunavut, and plans, which is \$12 million. Or it has an increase of \$12 million to provide more support for students going to school. And it also includes daycare and early kindergarten, full-day education, a \$4 million increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): MLA for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. The increase up to \$6 million, so is the anticipation that there will be an increase for 2027-2028 fiscal year? Do we foresee an increase? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can't determine that at this time whether or not there will be an increase for 2027-2028 year. However, there will be a request for more funding, however, on part of the Education Department.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to begin a review of the university- and degree-granting institutions at. What specific amendments to the legislation are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Specific amendments will be identified through the review. Right now the department knows the current legislation is outdated. The department knows that a more comprehensive piece of legislation and/or regulations will be required to better regulate the post-secondary institutions. So the project and the need has been identified. The solutions or the specific changes have not.

But that's the department's plan, through their business planning that has been laid out. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): MLA for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In February 2026, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami announced that the main campus of new Inuit Nunangat University will be located in

Arviat. To what extent will your department be involved in planning for the new institution? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department's involvement has yet to be determined specifically in terms of the Inuit Nunangat University. It is an exciting project. It's Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's project. It's a unique one, I think, and has attracted a lot of attention.

The department is corresponding with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. And the larger picture is that the government is working towards a memorandum of understanding with the organization to define the scope and set the stage for a relationship with regards to this project at this point, soon to be a future institution. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): MLA for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your departmental business plan, bullet number 3 indicates "leverage available federal funding to maintain affordable childcare and equitable childcare labour force, including review of the early learning and childcare wage scale to ensure rates remain competitive."

I would like to ask the minister if he can provide details on how the department is leveraging available federal funding to maintain affordable childcare in Nunavut, while also supporting an equitable and sustainable childcare workforce. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a great question. Early learning and childcare is so important for children's upbringing, and support parents, of course, if they're in the labour force or they have a need for childcare.

In February 2025, the federal Early Learning and Childcare Agreements were extended to 2031, which in a nutshell meant that an additional \$109.9 million was secured.

However, although the department welcomes that contribution, Nunavut is working with other provinces and territories to advocate for increased federal funding needed to sustain these programs in terms of making sure that the \$10 a day childcare continues, and that the wage scale for childcare workers can be properly supported. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Department of Education Early and Advanced Education Branch. The Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you. The Department of Education is what we're reviewing. I just want to understand more, because it's very interesting to hear when there's a request to increase funding. I will be asking about financial assistance for Nunavut students.

The Department of Education's 2026-2027 (interpretation ends) main estimates indicated that the budget for grants under the FANS is increasing from 18.916 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to \$23.428 million in 2026-2027 fiscal year.

This represents an increase of 162.7 percent. How was this amount of this increase determined? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you look at the changes to the program, it was informed by the review that was done. In terms of the review of the FANS program, there were 35 recommendations that came out of that. The department is working to make good on those recommendations or try to respond to them.

There has been an increase. Without getting into too much detail, there's been an increase to the supports and the benefits that can be provided to our students. So more supports in terms of things like rent for students. There has been more support provided around travel for some students.

Right now the department is working under interim implementation. The new legislation, the *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*, hasn't been brought into force yet, so we're in this period between when the old legislation or existing legislation is still in force; the existing regulations have been amended to I guess partially act on some of the recommendations under the review; and then right now the department is working to develop new regulations, which will allow for the new act to be brought into force, hopefully by spring 2027. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): I just wanted to ask more questions about that. In 2027 to 2028 fiscal year, does the Department of Education expect that they will need to request for more funding for that fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As to how the budget will be set up in 2027 to 2028 is not yet known, but we do have the estimates that we are proposing. It is for the year 2026-2027.

And in 2025-2026, I'll speak in English.

(interpretation ends) In terms of financial assistance for Nunavut students, the approximate expenditure was \$24 million in 2025-2026, so that includes different components of that program.

The estimate in terms of the full implementation of the new program is that \$33 million a year. So there is still the need for additional resources if there is to be full implementation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): We are on Department of Education Early and Advanced Education Branch. If there are no more questions? (interpretation ends) Do members agree with the Department of Education Early and Advanced Education Branch total operations and maintenance of \$36,808,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page G-3. Do members agree with the Department of Education 2026-2027 main estimates, total operations and maintenance of \$309,853,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Education?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Any closing comments, Mr. Main?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. First of all, I would like to say thank you to the committee for asking good questions, very good questions, because we're talking about the future that will affect the future of Nunavut looking at young people and children.

And my support officials here, I would like to thank them from the Department of Education and all the people working in the 1516 are working in school and all strive, (interpretation ends) they all strive to help, and so I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Please escort the officials. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. There's the motion on the floor which is non-debatable. Those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? Motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

>>*Committee adjourned at 17:23 and House resumed at 17:24*

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Going back to the *Orders of the Day*, Item 21, Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. Who seconds the motion? Mr. Mike.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk: Thank you. Just a reminder, there's meeting of the Standing Committee of Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts at 10 a.m. in the Nanuq boardroom tomorrow.

(interpretation) *Orders of the Day* for May 27:

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 the 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 Motion
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
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. Our session adjourns for the day, and we will reconvene tomorrow on Wednesday, May 27 at 1:30. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:27*

