

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, October 26, 2010— 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

Introduction of visitors.

Returns or documents for tabling.

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 111: Introduction and First Reading

Mr. Cardiff: I move that a bill, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Leader of the Third Party that a bill, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 111 agreed to

Speaker: Are there further bills for introduction?
 Are there notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Nordick: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges Yukon's Member of Parliament, Hon. Larry Bagnell, to vote against Bill C-300, *An Act respecting Corporate Accountability for the Activities of Mining, Oil or Gas in Developing Countries*, presented by a Liberal Member of Parliament, that is opposed by the Yukon Chamber of Mines as it believes the bill will kill jobs and impede mining exploration and development in Yukon.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Parliament of Canada to pass Bill C-300, *An Act respecting Corporate Accountability for the Activities of Mining, Oil or Gas in Developing Countries*, a private member's bill standing in the name of Hon. John McKay, MP, and currently before the House of Commons, in order to ensure that:

(1) Canadian extractive companies follow human rights and environmental practices when they operate overseas;

(2) the accountability of the Government of Canada to Canadian taxpayers is maintained; and

(3) government financial and political support will not be provided to companies that breach human rights or environmental standards.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all documents that outline the process, scope and time frame of the recently launched *Our Towns, Our Future* review, including any backgrounders and discussion documents.

Speaker: Thank you. Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Youth homelessness

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the MLA for Klondike introduced a motion to develop a homeless shelter in downtown Whitehorse. Yet this is something that hasn't been on the government's agenda for the past eight years that it has been in office. In previous debates with the Health minister, he told us that, quote: "Some people will be homeless no matter what we do."

As I said to the minister then, "I don't think it's acceptable for us to decide that some youth will remain homeless regardless of what we do."

This is not a temporary problem in Yukon and it deserves more than a temporary solution.

Who should we believe on this issue — the Health minister who has never supported a permanent youth shelter, or the MLA for Klondike, who apparently does?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I have mentioned many times in this House, we do provide many essential services for both youth and adults in need of shelter throughout the Yukon and specifically here in the City of Whitehorse. We will continue to provide assistance to those in need and to provide shelter for youth. We already do provide that service that is here, but as I stated previously in the House, we are working with the stakeholders involved — I think there are almost 28 of them — and doing an evaluation and data collection for that process, which we anticipate will be completed shortly. We look forward to the results of same.

Mr. Mitchell: Well, I sense a difference. The Health minister is collecting data; the Member for Klondike is urging for action. Now, on October 4, the Health minister said that this Yukon Party government is providing for, quote: "youth in need of emergency facilities on a temporary basis." He has repeated this today. Unless a permanent youth shelter is established to provide at-risk youth a safe place to live, these young people will always be so focused on day-to-day survival that they won't have much chance of pursuing their life goals.

Yet the Health minister has told us that, quote: "it's their choice." Creating temporary emergency shelters for youth is a start but it's not a long-term solution. Does this Yukon Party government believe that the concerns of at-risk youth are just

temporary problems that only warrant temporary solutions? Or are they committed to a permanent solution?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, as we have stated in the House many times on many occasions, this government has provided many services for individuals throughout the Yukon, involving all members of all ages.

We provided \$34.4 million for 48 units up at the college complex. We've provided at 36-unit student housing complex at Yukon College. We've also provided an innovative Falcon Ridge affordable housing project. We've spent \$10.5 million on a 32-unit Whitehorse affordable housing project over in Riverdale. That is presently very close to being completed. They are currently working on the exterior of that facility and it should be completed in time for occupancy to take place later on this year.

We have many units. We have \$4.5 million or 12 units for senior housing in Watson Lake. We also have \$2 million or six units for seniors housing in Faro. With the Habitat for Humanity threeplex located at 810 Wheeler in downtown Whitehorse — we were there yesterday to look at that facility. That is well underway. That's a very excellent process and does provide a great amount of work for Yukoners, as well as those individuals, to take that place over.

Mr. Mitchell: I'll ask the Health minister to focus on youth at risk. That's what we're discussing here. Now, this Yukon Party government has had eight years to address the issue of housing at-risk youth but they continue to rely on band-aid solutions.

Now, as an election nears, this Yukon Party government is suddenly focusing on issues that it has largely ignored up until now.

Why has it taken this Yukon Party government eight years to realize that providing adequate shelter for Yukon's at-risk youth is an important issue?

Hon. Mr. Hart: We have provided a substantial amount of funding for local youth within the Yukon. We have provided funding for BYTE; we have provided funding for the Boys and Girls Club; we have provided funding for the Youth of Today Society. All these individuals provide programming and assistance to those in need, those youth at risk and those youth in need of shelter and otherwise. We also provide shelter facilities through Skookum Jim — again, a partner in the process of dealing with youth at risk. As I stated previously, we are working very hard with all of the stakeholders involved on the homeless issue that runs right across the Yukon. Not just the youth — we're looking at the homeless situation throughout the Yukon, and we look forward to the recommendations coming out of the report, as well as the input from all the stakeholders involved in the situation.

Question re: Territorial health access fund

Mr. Elias: I have questions for the Health minister regarding the territorial health access fund. This funding is used to provide mental health services in rural communities. This program has positive and far reaching effects on the individuals who use these services.

Mr. Speaker, the number one priority here is helping Yukoners deal with mental health concerns, especially in the area

of substance abuse and addictions. An ounce of prevention is worth a thousand pounds of cure in this case. If the government cancels the mental health support program in rural Yukon, there is a direct link with a rise in crime.

What is the Minister of Health doing to ensure rural offices will not be dismantled at the end of March 2011 when THAF expires?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite's verification, THAF expires in 2012. We will continue to provide all the services that we can that were previously provided under THAF for mental health. That includes the programming in which we had great success in dealing with youth with mental health issues. We are working our department to ensure that we can provide those services to all Yukoners.

Mr. Elias: I have correspondence suggesting that mental health services for nurses in the territory are going to be expiring as of March 2011.

This is about Yukoners who need health care support services in the communities. This is also about those Yukoners who provide those health care services. They care about their clients and are worried for their jobs. It is hard enough to recruit and retain qualified and committed health care workers.

We have been successful in this case, and the individuals involved have worked hard for many years to earn the trust of the Yukoners with whom they work. Dismantling the program will affect jobs, the stability and trust the nurses have with their clients, which has taken a long time to develop, and that has serious ramifications.

Will the minister commit to making sure this program is not eliminated altogether?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I previously indicated, the funding for THAF continues to 2012. We are working with the Government of Canada, through Health Canada and its corporation, on the funding of THAF and how it's related. In fact, all three territories have been in consultation with Health Canada on the issue, ensuring that the health care money provided by Ottawa for the three territories gives assistance to all three territories on an equal basis, previous to what it was when the agreement was first initiated.

Mr. Elias: There are two rural mental health nurse positions that need to be made permanent full-time positions to address the demonstrated need in our territory. The territorial health access fund has been instrumental in helping us deal with health issues in rural Yukon communities. This program uses preventive measures to help affected Yukoners stay out of the justice system. This program uses education to help affected Yukoners help themselves.

The mental health nurses and support nurses use trust — trust to help affected Yukoners to improve their lives and make their communities a better place to live. The territorial health access fund may not be available next fiscal year, but the need to provide those services will still be there. What is the Health minister doing specifically to ensure those mental health services will still be available next year?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, as I stated previously, we will be providing funding under THAF, as we have in the past. The funding programs the member indicated

are important. In fact, to assist those valuable staff members in the performance of their jobs, we now have technology in place in those rural areas to assist them in dealing with the psychiatrist from Outside, and to help them make those assessments for those mental health patients. We look forward to the increase of that process to assist, not only the nurses, but also the clients.

Question re: Municipal sustainability review

Mr. Cardiff: We were pleased to hear yesterday that Yukon citizens will have opportunities to participate in the municipal review. We ask whether or not the review would address the sustainability of local democracy and citizen participation. “Yes,” said the minister. We asked whether the review would look at the court case that has weakened referendum provisions. “Yes, the review,” he said, “has to do with all aspects of municipal government.”

Add to this the public musings about municipalities getting in on independent power production and this looks like a review that will take far longer than six weeks. We thought the review was essentially about funding and financial matters.

Can the minister clarify the scope of the review, the issues that are on the table and the dates of the public meetings? And we would most appreciate any documents that are at the heart of the review.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Certainly, the review is going ahead. The panel has been struck. The meetings will be scheduled as fit into the schedule of that committee. We’re looking forward to the recommendations that come out of that committee’s travels through the territory and we certainly look forward to being able to address some of the issues. I remind the member opposite that it’s not all about the economics of municipalities. That’s one of the issues, and it’s a fairly large issue. It’s about municipalities — how they are run and how the municipalities navigate within our system. All the issues will hopefully be brought forward and there will be a public part to these discussions.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, we’re addressing any First Nation government that would like to hear from the panel. That will be addressed too.

It’s all-encompassing. I’m not going to stand here and state on the floor what is going to come out the other end. That’s not my job. The actions have been triggered. Now it’s up to the committee. It’s up to municipalities to come forward with their ideas — bring them back to us, the government, and we will work with them to see how we can address them.

Mr. Cardiff: New Democrats are glad to see that the long-term financial sustainability issues will be addressed. We think this issue is big enough for the current review. We are also glad the minister has opened the door to discuss other problems with the *Municipal Act*, particularly the democratic deficit in part created by the Darragh case. The B.C. Court of Appeal ruled that a citizen can’t organize a referendum on municipal planning issues, and the City of Whitehorse applied that court ruling to deny a referendum on Riverdale in-fills. The petitioner thought she was within her democratic rights to gather signatures for a petition, but found that the act has no provisions to protect her from legal action. After years of ef-

fort, the petitioner was ordered to pay \$14,000 in court costs. The minister should know about that, as she sent him the bill.

Another case recently concluded in the B.C. Court of Appeal around the *Municipal Act*. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent in years of litigation to hear *Knapp v. Town of Faro*.

Does the minister have any solutions for addressing the increasing litigiousness around the *Municipal Act*?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I’m certainly not going to debate the court decisions that are made, on whatever level the court decision came from.

But as far as the *Municipal Act* is concerned, we of the government have addressed it in some of the changes. These are some of the questions and issues that will come out of this review, hopefully, that we, the municipalities and AYC are putting out there. I’m not going to second-guess what comes out of these discussions which are going on over the next six to eight weeks, but I look forward to looking at them when they come back to my desk, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Cardiff: I hope the minister will stand up for the legislation for which he is responsible. We think there must be alternative dispute mechanisms that allow for redress by citizens without lengthy and costly court action that the taxpayer ultimately pays. Under the *Municipal Act*, the minister has the discretion to ask the Municipal Board to perform any duties delegated to it — that would be the minister who does that. But he has rejected letting the board hear disputes before they get to court. We raised the issue of expanding the scope of the Ombudsman to hear complaints from citizens. The minister rejected this lower cost alternative option as well. There is a real problem when we rely on courts to interpret our legislation. We are the ones who make the laws and the minister should stand up for it.

Why has the minister not used the alternative dispute options available to him instead of forcing private citizens and municipal governments to slug it out in the courts at huge expense to the taxpayer?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I’m not going to stand here and argue about decisions that come out of courts. Everybody in the land has the right to go to court. Individuals have the right to go to court; municipalities have the right to go to court. That is one of the rights we have as Canadian citizens. Mr. Speaker, once those are decisions made by the court, so we as a government have to live with those decisions, and, by the way, as citizens in this country.

Question re: Takhini River Road improvements

Mr. Cathers: Traffic on Takhini River Road has increased significantly in recent years due to more families living on it and it is used by people travelling to the Trans Canada Trail. Parts of this road need to be reconstructed, especially where there is a dangerously steep hill west of river level properties where a number of vehicles have spun out or slipped in recent winters.

There are also other sections of the road that are in need of work — some in need of major work and others need minor repair. There is also the question of whether the road should be chipsealed.

When I last asked him about the status of plans to improve this road, the Minister of Highways and Public Works told me his department needed to do some more engineering work. Would he please tell me whether that engineering work has been completed now and, if not, when he expects it will be completed?

Hon. Mr. Lang: The Takhini River Road is a well-used road. This government has spent considerable resources on that road. We've extended the road into Granite Road, and Granite Road has been expanded, and we look forward to investing more money on that road. But I do agree with the member opposite — it is a well-used road now. It has grown and needs some upgrading. We look forward to doing that in the future.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for the partial response. I hope he can be more specific later. I recognize that significant dollars have already been invested in this road, but constituents of mine living down Takhini River Road are concerned about the current state of the road, particularly the dangerously steep hill west of river-level properties, where a number of vehicles and trailers have spun out or slipped in recent winters and where some have even been stuck across the road, creating a very obvious traffic hazard, if a vehicle comes down at the wrong time.

There are also other sections of the road needing repair. In the first response, the minister didn't give me details on when the engineering would be done. Can he either tell me that or commit to getting back to me in a letter? Can he give me an indication of when and how the department will be making the plans for this road available to the public?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Certainly, the Takhini River Road has issues like the member opposite has just stated here this afternoon. I remind the member opposite that we have done a lot of work on the road. I would have to get back to him on the engineering on that road because I certainly have been working on the Hot Springs Road, so that in itself is a big investment. The Takhini River Road has many issues besides the road itself. They have foundation issues. They have the hill, which the member opposite talks about, that has always been an issue. The engineering on that is fairly complicated because where the road is it's very soft and there would have to be an investment in a foundation to start with. So it's a work in progress, but I would get back to the member opposite on the engineering.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for that commitment to get back to me, and I certainly recognize the technical issues there and the fact that there has already been a significant investment in this road. As both the minister and I know, there is more work that needs to be done, particularly to deal with some of the safety issues.

My question, based on his previous response — I'm sure he'll have to commit to getting back to me on this as well: when does Highways and Public Works expect to be able to do work on the ground regarding this road? I'd appreciate if he'd commit to providing the information in letter form about that when he gets back to me about the engineering.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I will get back to the member on the design of the road, but as far as timelines and what phase we're at on that thing, it's something I have not had discussions about. A lot more engineering has to be done on that road because of the questions the member opposite was talking about — the foundation and all of the issues that go along with building a road. But we certainly will be working on that and I will get back to the member opposite in letter form on the engineering and where we're at with that.

Question re: Great River Journey

Mr. McRobb: I have a simple question for the Economic Development minister. Two years ago, he invested a significant amount of taxpayers' money into Great River Journey. At the time, he said: "all is set out in the business plan." Based on that, Great River Journey would be a financially and environmentally sound, sustainable, and long-term business. Those are his words. Unfortunately, that business is now bankrupt, and a lot of Yukoners' money was invested in it.

Can this minister give us the total amount of taxpayers' money this government lost on this now bankrupt venture?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Since 2005-06, the Department of Economic Development has provided \$576,581, roughly, to Great River Journey and the First Nation Investment Corporation to support the development of the project.

It's the maximum allowable amount under the strategic industries development fund, which any business can apply for. The staff from the Department of Economic Development remain in contact with representatives from Great River Journey and the First Nation stakeholders, and are prepared to continue to work with the company in attracting further investors and restructuring. The Department of Economic Development has advised Great River Journey that operating funding is not eligible under its programs and that interim funding for this purpose will not be provided.

Mr. McRobb: The minister at the time also referred to the business plan. Given other recent examples, people are probably wondering if the minister even read that plan. In the minister's press release, dated February 7, 2007, the minister said the Department of Economic Development is providing \$500,000 funding support to Great River Journey. The minister called it an excellent example of diversified economic development.

Today the minister indicated the actual amount spent by his department was some 12 percent or more higher than the amount he identified then. He has already responded to the amount question. For the record, I would like to ask him: did he actually read the business plan?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Great River Journey has entered into the initial stages of the bankruptcy process and is seeking investment partners to invest in the company so they can produce a restructuring proposal. There have been meetings up until January 12, 2010. Great River Journey has also approached the federal government, which did not commit to additional funds or agree to convert their existing debt to a contribution.

The federal government-commissioned assessment of the Great River Journey project was completed in August 2009.

For the record, the federal government has contributed \$2.78 million through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, through the so-called "TIP" program — \$1.58 million through the First Nations, and \$1.2 million directly through a TIP program. Part of that is a grant and part of it is \$712,500 repayable.

Economic Development and Tourism and Culture have worked collaboratively with this. Our staff has gone over this in great detail. It is unfortunate that at this time the project is in bankruptcy. Many, including some tourism gurus, so to speak, have been in the papers recently saying they still consider it viable with restructuring.

We wish him all the best and we will continue to work with him.

Mr. McRobb: Now, government officials reported this past February saying they've already given the company \$630,000 as a start-up contribution. That's considerable higher than the amount identified earlier today by this minister. I think the big question that remains unanswered is this: are these monies secured or unsecured? Will the Yukon government be in the lineup behind the banks as far as creditors trying to recover their money, or is the investment completely gone? Can he indicate what the status of all these monies is?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: For the record as well, the member opposite ignores the fact that Tourism and Culture was also involved in this with, I believe, an additional, roughly, \$100,000 to support Great River Journey's restructuring, marketing and sales efforts. The commitment was conditional on Great River Journey receiving private sector debt refinancing and additional investment, neither of which has materialized, so that matter is still sort of debatable. But the matter is now in the courts; the company has filed for bankruptcy.

The definition of "secured" versus "unsecured" is a court matter. I'm not a lawyer — fortunately, some days. I will leave that for the courts to make their decisions.

Question re: Great River Journey

Mr. Fairclough: I'd like to follow up where my colleague left off. Perhaps the Tourism minister can tell us how involved her department was in this venture. When she spoke at the project's unveiling in 2007, the minister said this, and I quote, "I'm very confident that this will be a success story." She invested her department's money with great confidence. Can the Tourism minister tell us how much money she put into the Great River Journey?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I believe, as my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development, just outlined for the member opposite, our Department of Tourism and Culture, through existing programs and services available through the Department of Tourism and Culture, has invested — I believe it was about \$118,000 in total since 2006-07. So, in fact, we have made dollars available — like we have made money available through a whole host of other initiatives and businesses throughout the Yukon — through our existing funds.

Mr. Fairclough: The Minister of Economic Development and the Tourism and Culture minister cited a dollar amount that's different from what I have, and it's quite a bit higher than what we have, according to the contracts that are out there. The media and industry tours were supposed to help

Great River Journey become a known and desired tourism product. At least eight different tours were paid for, costing between \$3,000 and \$12,000 each. A flight charter was also paid for by the Tourism department.

The Minister of Tourism and Culture says it is over \$100,000; we thought it was around \$50,000. We have the contracts that break it down. Can she tell us what the other \$50,000 was put toward? Are they additional contracts?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I don't have that breakdown at my fingertips, but what I can say is the Department of Tourism and Culture, as already articulated earlier today, has provided \$118,000 in total funding support to Great River Journey over the last number of years since the inception of the business, and it has been provided through a number of different funding mechanisms throughout the Department of Tourism and Culture and through media marketing initiatives, as are available to each and every other individual or business, when applied for.

Mr. Fairclough: We want to know how much of Yukoners' money was spent on the tourism venture that is now bankrupt? We want to know the exact amount. We hear of different amounts that are out there right now, and we know that the Minister of Economic Development authorized more than half a million dollars toward this project and more money flowed out of the Tourism and Culture department. It's not clear whether or not Yukoners will get any return for their generous investment, because this company is now bankrupt.

Can the minister tell us — if not have the information flowed over to us on this side of the House — how much money was spent on Great River Journey, and will Yukoners get any of that money back now that they are bankrupt?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: The Government of Yukon, we recognize the very importance of tourism to the economic and social well-being of this territory and that is in fact why this government has invested so much in a whole suite of programs available to all Yukon businesses, whether it be through the tourism cooperative marketing fund, enterprise trade fund, strategic industries development fund, tourism product development partnership program — those are some, very few, but some of the examples of the programs and initiatives that this government has invested in since this government was elected.

This government has invested in this particular initiative; we saw the value of this initiative — Great River Journey — and, as I believe I have already articulated, we were able to invest approximately \$118,000 through a number of funding mechanisms, through marketing media initiatives, which is available to every other Yukon business, when subscribed to through the proper application process.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the government private member to be called on Wednesday, October 27, 2010. They are Motion No. 1217, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike and Motion No. 1218, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike.

Speaker: We'll now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now continue with Vote 8, Department of Justice. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: We will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

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

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

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 22, *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now continue with general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice.

Department of Justice — *continued*

Mr. Cardiff: When we left off yesterday afternoon, I was asking the minister some questions about *Modernizing the Human Rights System in Yukon*, the discussion paper that was out. I was asking about the recommendations specifically that the funding of the Yukon Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Board of Adjudication be removed from the Department of Justice. It was a recommendation of the select committee. This was a recommendation and yet the discussion paper, to my mind and the minds of others in the public who have been able to go through this document in the short period of time that we've had, that it even creates even a greater conflict of interest. What the minister told me yesterday was that it was the Department of Justice that put the discussion paper together. The paper argues in favour of the funding remaining in the Department of Justice. I went over yesterday the reasons why it should be removed from the Department of Justice — that there's that perception of conflict when the Department of Justice is a respondent for the Government of Yukon in a complaint that is against the Government of Yukon.

Whether the conflict is real or perceived, there is a perceived conflict of interest in the public's mind about that. The question was basically: why does the discussion paper argue against a recommendation that the minister made as a member

of the select committee reviewing the human rights legislation two years ago?

The other questions were to do with the other recommendations: using more contemporary language, adding protection for volunteers under prohibited discrimination, strengthening the preamble to further guide the rest of the legislation to increase the promotion of human rights and responsibilities — the awareness and education — and to have it modernized around duty to accommodate; specifically, "duty to provide for special needs" be changed to "duty to accommodate". I'm concerned that the recommendations we made two years ago are sitting in someone's office gathering dust, and I'm just wondering how long the minister intends to let this file go before it's addressed. These were important issues. Yukoners came out and spoke to the select committee about these important issues two years ago and we're seeing no progress on that section, and we're actually seeing, in some instances, the discussion paper that the minister has authorized to go out argue against the recommendations of the select committee.

I would be pleased to hear the minister respond to my comments, answer the questions and clarify her position on the recommendations of the select committee.

Hon. Ms. Horne: In reflecting back on our discussions yesterday, I noted from the Member for Mount Lorne's remarks that he does not quite understand the purpose of the discussion paper. I will therefore take the liberty to remind the Member for Mount Lorne of some of the things that the select committee said in reference to its own recommendations. I will quote from our report: "The Committee would like to have included an in-depth discussion of its recommendations, however, the reporting timeframe did not allow that to happen. We believe that virtually every recommendation could form the basis for a chapter of its own."

You know, we were criticized for being too hasty in making the changes, and now we're being criticized for being too slow. We want to make sure that this *Human Rights Act* is done correctly. When it was first released, it was a leader in Canada as far as human rights acts were concerned, and we want this one to also follow suit. This report was released in August — our discussion paper — and I think people have had ample time to go over the discussion paper. I believe it very fairly represents the recommendations that were put forward from the select committee.

So now we understand the Member for Mount Lorne to be perplexed by the inclusion of a major recommendation in the discussion paper that is meant to elaborate on some of the recommendations — a notion that he wanted to do in the first paper, but couldn't. Let me preface some of my comments by reiterating what I said yesterday and is outlined in the discussion paper: as I have said in this House before, it is extremely important to ensure the commission is independent. Similar funding arrangements are in place across Canada with the funding of nine provincial or territorial human rights commissions through their departments of justice, including Yukon.

Funding arrangements are based on the requirements of the *Financial Administration Act* and associated policies designed to ensure transparency and accountability. The member stated

that there was a perceived conflict of interest and the discussion paper certainly discussed this topic openly, clearly and honestly, discussing both sides of the issue.

Members opposite have complained that just because the funding comes from the Department of Justice, that Justice is somehow in a conflict of interest. I would note that my job as Minister of Justice is to ensure that the framework to deliver a justice system is in place. As part of that —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Ms. Horne: Excuse me. Do I have the floor here? Thank you.

I would note that my job as Minister of Justice is to ensure that the framework to deliver a justice system is in place. As part of that responsibility, the Department of Justice funds the Territorial Court. Department lawyers appear before those judges on a regular basis. They are at arm's length as well.

There is a very clear separation between the roles of a lawyer representing a client and the role of the administrative authority that provides funding.

When the Department of Justice is functioning on behalf of a client, it takes instructions from that department. Work is shielded, based on solicitor/client privilege. We are very cognizant of this responsibility and so, on occasion, we do hire Outside counsel to act as prosecutor when it is required.

So let me review for the member the questions we are posing for discussion purposes so that he can be refreshed in his memory of recommendation 16. It is not the intention of the discussion paper to influence anyone's decision. Each organization can bring forward their thoughts. This is solely a discussion paper. We are not trying to keep the decision to move under the Department of Justice. If the recommendation come back that it moves, then we will consider that recommendation.

The questions for discussion: (1) Do the existing processes by which the Yukon Human Rights Commission and tribunal are funded strike an appropriate balance between independence and accountability? (2) Should the funding for the tribunal or the panel of adjudication be continued on the current basis, i.e., an amount set through the regular budgeting process, supplemented as required based on hearings, et cetera, or should it be changed? (3) Are there other means for ensuring accountability that should be considered?

Readers can submit their comments by the form attached to the discussion paper. It would seem to me that we made the recommendation 16 to remove this funding model from the Department of Justice and that we are clearly following up on that with these questions, which are designed to follow through on that and seek public input on what that might mean.

As to some of the other issues the member raised, let me say, as I have said before, that issues outlined under recommendation 23 dealing with the applicability of the *Human Rights Act* to Yukon First Nations are very complex legal issues that depend on the individual facts in any given case.

Jurisdiction will be determined by the Human Rights Commission at the time of a complaint. Our government is working on this issue currently with northern strategy funding — a joint project between the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, the Yukon Human Rights Commission and the Yukon First

Nations Self-Government Secretariat. This project is designed to work with First Nation governments to develop a better understanding of the processes in legislative and constitutional framework by which Yukon First Nation human rights issues are currently being addressed.

The project will assist First Nations in addressing human resource management issues as they relate to employment and human rights, as well as in the provision of services for all Yukoners whose human rights are protected under existing federal and territorial legislation. It will help to ensure access to human rights for all Yukoners and will build the capacity of self-governing First Nations to handle human rights effectively within their own organizations. Building healthy and safe communities requires inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory workplaces and a provision of services accessible to all.

Leadership of First Nations can provide a framework for a culture of human rights in their communities with supportive legislation, policies and procedures. Human rights public education and awareness campaigns in the community can also support attitude and behaviour changes at the individual and community level. On behalf of the proponent, the self-government secretariat will oversee the project and will contract out the following core objectives or deliverables: determine in collaboration with Yukon and Canadian human rights commissions and individual Yukon First Nations the existing internal and external processes for dealing with human rights issues; determine the limitations and perceived problems in serving the present needs of aboriginal people in Yukon in regard to their human rights; provide an opportunity to listen to and dialogue with First Nation people about their human rights concerns; identify the constitutional and legislative questions faced by First Nation governments in handling human rights issues; research and document current and traditional aboriginal ways of resolving disputes; identify the current obligations of self-governing First Nations in dealing with human rights issues; and provide support to First Nations in determining processes for handling human rights issues; increase awareness of human rights issues by providing for dialogue with First Nations on the impact of human rights on employment and services provided by First Nation governments and organizations.

Finally, I will comment on the fact that this process has been very open and the public can participate through our website, if they wish. The Yukon First Nation Self-Government Secretariat is dealing with the First Nations, and that is where it belongs: with the First Nations. We are working on that issue.

We will also be making the *What We Heard* document public when it is received and the public can access all related documents through the dedicated website. There will be further discussion in phase 3 to address the remaining issues, and this process will take time to complete.

Our government committed to addressing the recommendations of the select committee. This work is continuing in good faith by the Department of Justice staff, as directed by me. I do look forward to seeing the end result of the work.

I think I can quote the human rights awareness in the educational system. I have before me the *Education Act* of Yukon, and I'll just quote some parts of it. In the preamble: one section, recognizing that rights and privileges enjoyed by minorities as enshrined in the law shall be respected — that's in the *Education Act*. Under goals and objectives, section 4: "The minister shall establish and communicate for the Yukon education system goals and objectives which are ..." They are listed there and the member opposite can ask for a copy of the *Education Act*. "(e): to promote the recognition of equality under Yukon peoples consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Act*." That is enshrined in the *Education Act*; "(f): to develop an understanding of the historical and contemporary role of women and the reinforcement of the principle of gender equality and the contribution of women to society."

These are only parts of the *Education Act*. We do ensure that human rights are observed and respected throughout government in all departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Cardiff: I thank the minister for the answer. I do recall being on the select committee, or I wouldn't be asking the questions that I'm asking.

The minister answered some of the questions but, in my mind, not all the questions. Actually her response offered up more questions.

With regard to education, there is a recommendation. When the select committee went on tour to review the *Human Rights Act*, we knew what was in the *Education Act* back then. I'm sure the minister remembers having that discussion. But what the public was saying was there needed to be increased education in the school system. It's not what's in the act; it's what's in the curriculum and what is being taught in the schools. That was the issue for people. I'm sure she will recall there was a survey done — I believe it was done by the Human Rights Commission — of students, a lot of whom weren't aware of their rights or their responsibilities under the human rights legislation.

That was one of the reasons the members of the committee decided to put that in there. It's not a matter of whether or not it's in the act; it's a matter of whether or not we're effectively communicating it to our youth who are in the education system.

With regard to recommendation 23, I'm pleased to know that the minister has started work on this issue. The discussion paper says that recommendations on scope and coverage issues are the next part of phase 2. There's no indication in the discussion document that anything has started, which leads me to ask the question: when did that actually begin? They have received funding from the federal government for this. When did the minister announce it?

It would have been, I think, rather respectful of the minister if she had notified the other members of the select committee who participated in those discussions that this process had actually begun. So when did the minister begin work on recommendation 23? And my next question would be: when did the minister make that announcement?

The other question that comes to mind concerns the general recommendations that applied to all phases of the review,

the first one being recommendation 8: "That if draft human rights legislation is brought forward by the Yukon government, there be the opportunity for the public and for stakeholder groups to have the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation." So I'm wondering if, at the end of the current phase that we're in — and I hope we have time to finish all the phases of this before next fall, when we're pretty much guaranteed to go to the polls after the fall sitting, of course, when the legislative renewal committee reports its findings — whether or not there is going to be an opportunity for Yukoners and stakeholders to review the legislation that's going to be proposed from this review.

Will that legislation be brought forward in the spring sitting or in next fall's sitting, and will Yukoners have an opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation? I remember exactly where this recommendation came from, and it came from a number of different people, but it kind of rang true with members of the committee or we wouldn't have made that recommendation.

The other recommendation is recommendation 10: "That strong consideration be given to a plain-language approach when revising the Act." My question around that is: is the minister considering doing a thorough review of the entire piece of legislation and rewriting it — changing the language — so that it is in plain language, so that it is easier to understand?

That was one of the concerns that was raised — that a lot of the terms are technical and legal and it can be difficult to understand. There's a plethora of questions there for the minister to answer, and I look forward to her response.

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I said earlier, our government is currently working on the First Nations issue with northern strategy funding, and that is a joint project between Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, the Yukon Human Rights Commission and the Yukon First Nations Self-Government Secretariat. These were funds that were issued to the Human Rights Commission and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. This was announced over a year ago. It is undertaken independent of the Department of Justice and it was announced as part of the northern strategy funding process.

I do acknowledge that we did receive further recommendations on our select committee. This phase 2 that's going through right now, which is the structure of the Human Rights Commission, is a very important step and the rest of the recommendations being brought forward depend on the method that will be used coming out of this discussion paper and the recommendations from those individuals who want to put them forward.

With respect to legislative change, we need to follow through with the process that has been established. The results of the current round of consultations will be brought forward to me by the end of December. We will then be in a better position to consider possible legislative amendments. Indeed, any legislative amendments will be brought forward in plain language, which is one of the recommendations that was put forward by the select committee.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister answered a few of the questions. I'm not exactly sure how we missed the northern strategy

announcement, but I would have thought the minister could have pointed out to the other members of the select committee at the time that this was actually taking place. I certainly am pleased that it is happening. I think that it was an important issue. It was one that the committee struggled with because of its importance — the sensitivity around it and the multi-jurisdictional nature of the question — so I am pleased to find out that something is happening about it.

I would like to find out more about exactly what is happening with that process. I believe the minister would probably tell me to contact the Human Rights Commission to find out exactly what's going on with that project, and that's what I will do unless she can provide some written documentation about what has actually transpired to date and the work that has been done. If she could provide that, that would be appreciated.

One question the minister didn't answer — she might have touched on it, but there wasn't a clear answer — is whether or not the draft of the new, written-in-plain-language revisions to the act — whether or not there will be an opportunity for the public or for stakeholder groups to comment on the proposed changes to the act that come out of phase 2.

I would like to also ask the minister whether or not she believes that in her current term of office she expects phase 3 to start. I was led to believe by her comments that she believes we need to complete phase 2 — or the first part of phase 2, depending on whether we're talking about what's written in the document or what the minister is saying, I guess, because she mentioned phase 3. When will the next phase start? Will it be after the changes are made to the legislation coming out of the current review or will it begin before that time?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I reiterate that the northern strategy project is independent of the Department of Justice and I would encourage the member opposite to contact the Human Rights Commission to get an update on the progress of that project.

With respect to legislation, as I mentioned previously, we need to let the current process run its course and then we'll be in a better position to consider possible legislative amendments and the next steps for phase 3.

Mr. Cardiff: I'd like to thank the minister and the officials for their attendance in the House today and for providing the answers that they've provided to the questions. I think they're important questions to Yukoners and that this is about, as I was mentioning earlier today in Question Period, the laws of the Yukon and the importance of upholding what is said in those laws that we have created here in the Legislative Assembly. I think that's very important.

I'm going to stand down on any further questions because I believe we covered fairly thoroughly a number of important issues, but I didn't hear the minister clearly state whether or not there would be an opportunity for the public to review the proposed draft legislation.

If she could clearly state, yes or no, whether or not that is going to be possible, I would appreciate hearing that answer. Once again, I would like to thank the minister and the officials for being here today.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I appreciate the comments coming from both parties opposite. I will take the suggestions into consideration.

As to the phase 3 of the act, phase 2 of the act, we have to let it run its course. There is no question that there will be an opportunity for public opinion, for their input.

There were some questions the other day from the member of the Official Opposition and I would like to respond. That is the dollar value of the drug trade. I would like to respond to that before we do finish the department.

The RCMP is committed to combating the sale of illegal drugs in the Yukon Territory through active enforcement and education of Yukon citizens.

Enforcement alone is not enough. The RCMP believe in a balanced approach, including education, awareness and enforcement. Raising awareness helps protect individuals from becoming victims. The RCMP M Division has a dedicated drugs and organized crime awareness service coordinator. The DOCAS coordinator assists the detachment to deliver educational programming, such as DARE and community presentations about drug awareness.

In 2009, the M Division drug section successfully infiltrated a major drug operation, Project Macer, culminating in the arrest of five individuals and the seizure of property, money and drugs. Two persons were arrested from the Lower Mainland of B.C. All accused have subsequently pled guilty and have been sentenced.

The use of illegal drugs has a huge impact on Yukon society, not only affecting the personal lives of Yukon citizens, but it has far-reaching impacts on health and welfare, and socio-economic impacts on all communities.

It is difficult to capture the true cost of this sale of illegal drugs within the community, let alone the entire Yukon Territory. The street value of drugs is a fluid, ever-changing market subject to many factors, similar to those in the real economic world of supply and demand. The true cost of the illegal drug trade in Yukon cannot be determined without including the cost of treatment, loss of employment, addictions, extended health care, and other factors that are direct or indirect consequences of illegal drug use. It is well-established that the sale of illegal drugs is directly linked to organized crime. It is believed that the illegal drug trade in Yukon consists mostly of low-level street dealers, and that any link to organized crime is, at best, tenuous. The RCMP M Division is working hard with its partners to gather and analyze information to develop intelligence and to identify those street-level dealers and any links that may exist to organized crime groups. We are also executing plans to remove or reduce those threats.

I'd like to read a letter received, dated October 25, from Chief Superintendent Peter Clarke: "Dear Minister Horne, in reference to the question presented by the Opposition in the Legislature yesterday as to the total value of the illegal drug industry in Yukon: In consultation with the M Division drug section and criminal analysts, the true cost of the illegal drug trade in Yukon cannot be determined without including the cost of treatment, loss of employment, addictions, extended health care and other factors that are direct or indirect consequences

of illegal drug use. The RCMP M Division is working hard with its partners to gather and analyze information, develop intelligence and identify street-level dealers and links that may exist to organized crime groups. We are also executing plans to remove or reduce those threats. Sincerely, Chief Superintendent Peter Clarke," so signed.

I thank the RCMP for their good work they do on the drug front in Yukon.

Mr. Inverarity: I won't be long. I just have a few questions arising out of the last couple days of sitting here discussing the Department of Justice. I will be quick; I will be bouncing around a little bit, so if it seems a little bit distorted, I'm just trying to clean up some extra questions that I have.

I might as well start with the comments that the minister made with regard to my questions on the cost of the industry. I can appreciate that it's a complex issue. I appreciate the letter from the M Division Commanding Officer and I can understand that this is a very serious issue and I would like to extend my gratitude to the RCMP here for taking the fight to the streets on behalf of us all with regard to the illicit drug trade.

I was comforted in hearing the comments with regard to ties to organized crime — that the RCMP doesn't feel that it's a particularly big issue. If I had been able to determine the total cost that I was looking for, my follow-up questions would have been around the issue of organized crime, as to what role they played in the Yukon, so that answered some subsequent questions that I had and I appreciate the minister and the Commanding Officer of M Division in that regard.

Determining the value of drugs and illegal drugs in the Yukon is a complex issue. The minister cited a complex formula with which to try to do that. I would encourage the minister to try and calculate that — I guess would be the best way. I know the Minister of Health and Social Services probably has a lot of those factors. Some of them may not be fully quantifiable, but a best estimate, as that was all I was really expecting.

The reason for that is to try to determine if the monies that we're spending to help people through their difficulties in overcoming this terrible addiction to drugs and the impact that it has on our society — throughout our society — is not an issue of money well-spent, but is it enough money to meet and try to stamp this out?

The minister alluded to the fact that these were primarily small-time drug dealers and, if that's the case, then it should be an issue that we should be able to get a handle on fairly quickly, thereby eliminating illegal drugs in the Yukon.

I don't have any further questions on that issue at this moment, but I thought it was worthy of a comment on my part because it has come up and it is a significant drain on our resources in the Yukon. If we can get a handle on not just that but, as the minister alluded, there's the issue of abuse of alcohol, then we can certainly see how it could affect society as a whole — and I thank the minister for that.

My first question, totally unrelated to this, is regarding a PEP program — I believe it has to do with employee performance within, if not the justice system, certainly the Whitehorse correctional system. I'm wondering how it works, and if there is any background information regarding the EPE program, I

would appreciate it. I understand that there are performance criteria that new staff and old staff have, and just generally any information would be great at this point and we'll go on from there.

Hon. Ms. Horne: The PEP program is a Public Service Commission initiative.

All collective bargaining units are required to have employee evaluations each year, and managers are required to have personal development plans done each year. This is standard practice across all government departments.

As to the dollar value of the drug trade, we do recognize that it is a huge drain to Yukon. As the RCMP said in their letter, any calculation of money is only an estimate. The important thing is that we as a government and the RCMP are acting in unison on this problem we have in the Yukon. As I have said many times before, the biggest driver of crime in the Yukon is substance abuse and alcohol is that substance.

Mr. Inverarity: I appreciate the comments on the PEP program. I wasn't aware that was across all of government, so I understand some of the questions could be put to the Minister of the Public Service Commission. What I'm wondering about with reference to the minister's department, and specifically within corrections — Whitehorse Correctional Centre: are the performance programs or evaluations for the new staff different from the old staff — or, older staff, and what are those criteria?

In other words, if I'm brand new, do I get evaluated every shift, five shifts, or 15 shifts? If I'm an older staff member and have a lot more experience, is it an annual evaluation? The second part of that question is this: is everybody current?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Just a slight correction — it's the EPE — employee performance evaluation. As minister, I am not responsible for EPEs or PDPs. Managers and staff are responsible for this. As minister, this lies outside of my area of responsibility.

Mr. Inverarity: That's interesting. I would have thought that the minister was responsible for everything that went on in her department. Let's move on.

Over the last few days, there has been some discussion or mention of the Northern Institute of Social Justice. I understand that there is some agreement and some things going on between the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, Yukon College and the Northern Institute of Social Justice. Could the minister tell us a little bit about that, comment on what's going on there and what are the expectations at the end, please?

Hon. Ms. Horne: The reason for the hesitation is that the responsibility has been transferred to the Department of Education, but I can give some insight into what the Northern Institute of Social Justice does. And as to the question on the EPEs, ministers do not ever get involved in employee issues, and I'm sure the member opposite is aware of this. It has been an issue that has been brought up many times in the House.

The Northern Institute of Social Justice is something that we are very proud to have initiated at Yukon College, and I'm sure the Minister of Education is also very proud of this endeavour.

The Minister of Education is also very proud of this endeavour. As part of our government's commitment to increase

the safety and security of Yukoners and to diversify the economy and provide training and education for Yukoners, the Department of Justice and its partners are working through steps required to create the Northern Institute of Social Justice, which is based at Yukon College. The institute will coordinate training and education programs currently offered and will develop or purchase new ones as required to fill identified needs. The programs will address training and education needs and jobs with an administrative, law-related component in public governments, First Nation governments, non-government organizations and the private sector. The institute's purpose is to work in partnership with public governments, First Nations and colleges to consolidate, develop and deliver training and education programs for jobs that have an administrative, law-related component and undertake related research. By providing relevant, locally available training and education programs, the institute will contribute to creating a better quality of life for all Yukoners.

The institute will focus on addressing two broad needs: the need for entry level training, generic training, position-specific training and the need to attract, retain and develop a well-qualified workforce. Through the institute, participants would receive training on issues that are Yukon specific, and they would be able to take the training in the Yukon. A Northern Institute of Social Justice would provide even greater opportunities for training and development for workers in many fields whose work includes providing administrative law-related services. Several steps have been taken to enable the opening of the department. The Department of Justice is working with Yukon College to deliver a pilot correctional officer career exploration training program for women with funding provided by Advanced Education through the community training fund. The pilot program, which ended in April of this year, is for women interested in working as correctional officers in Whitehorse. Participants answered three basic questions: What does a career in corrections involve? Is the job right for me? How do I get started?

The program offered an opportunity to learn, discuss and have questions answered about the changing correctional system. It helped participants explore the dynamics of working in a correctional environment, the role of the correctional officer and how the training and skills learned as a correctional officer can be applied in other careers. The program sessions included personal wellness, First Nations cultures and work preparation.

Ensuring that the staff at Whitehorse Correctional Centre is trained and able to address client needs is a priority for the Department of Justice. For example, over the past year training courses have been provided in the following areas: correctional officer basic training; First Nations awareness training; tactical communication and response training; cell extraction; earned remission; training on planning for direct supervision; training with the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon on issues relating to FASD; training on investigative skills and processes; training for supervisors; and how to promote a respectful workplace.

Other training and professional development opportunities are also provided to staff to ensure that they are kept up to date on the latest information and tools available.

Mr. Inverarity: I thank the minister for those comments regarding the Northern Institute of Social Justice and look forward to additional comments from the Minister of Education down the road.

On the EPE issue, I wasn't looking for anything specific in terms of employees, quality of performance or anything along those lines. I was specifically trying to determine a process much like asset-backed commercial paper. I believe it does fall under the minister's purview to make sure that those types of policies are being followed.

Moving along, I don't have much more. Under what act is the Klondike Visitors Association licensed to operate a casino?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I believe it is under the lotteries act that they are able to operate. The crime prevention victim services trust fund is a recipient of KVA funding as part of their licensing. Every year, the KVA is required to turn over a portion of proceeds from Diamond Tooth Gertie's to fund crime prevention incentives.

The crime prevention services trust fund and the victim services board of trustees met on May 26, 2010, to review seven proposals submitted for the spring funding session. The board reviewed all proposals and awarded just over \$71,000 to three proposals. The board is still working with two groups to finalize details regarding their proposals in order to enter into a funding agreement.

Another meeting is being scheduled for fall 2010 to review proposals being received in the fall funding session. The trust fund supports projects that are intended to: reduce the episodes of crime; prevent violence against women and children; address the root causes of criminal behaviour; and provide, publicize and promote information on crime prevention, protection from victimization, the needs of victims and services offered to victims. The trust fund received monies from a variety of sources, including the Klondike Visitors Association lotteries, donations, victim surcharges and fines collected under the *Criminal Code*. Yukon has been advised that the funding arrangements with the federal government regarding the *Criminal Code* fines need to be clarified. This *Criminal Code* money is being held within the trust, pending final resolution of this issue. The trust fund act was passed in 1997 and the first funding session took place in 1998. Over the past 12 years, the fund has distributed just under \$3 million in support of just over 300 individual projects.

Mr. Inverarity: I appreciate that response. I was curious more on process, but maybe two questions as a follow-up. One, how much money is in the trust fund that's being held, if you know that? Two, do they apply for a licence every year, or is it a multi-year licence and is it done through an order-in-council? I am just curious as to how they get their licence.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Currently, there is over \$2 million in the trust fund. KVA does not fall under the Department of Justice. The questions can be better directed to the Consumer and Corporate Affairs branch or the Department of Community Services.

Mr. Inverarity: Thank you very much. I appreciate that reply.

Moving right along then, let's go to something that is. The other day, the minister indicated that the status of the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre — once the new one is open and is fully occupied — is that it will be demolished, but will be left standing. I didn't quite catch everything. I was wondering if the minister could tell us again what the plan is for the old Correctional Centre?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I'll reiterate what I said yesterday — there is money in the original project budget to demolish the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Highways and Public Works will do a feasibility study for repurposing of this building. At this time, the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre is not being demolished and we will see what the plans are for its new configuration. We'll see what other options we have for the use of the old Correctional Centre, but there will be no programming in any case in this building.

Mr. Inverarity: What was the amount budgeted for the demolition of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I believe that the amount that was budgeted for the demolition was approximately \$900,000.

Mr. Inverarity: Can we assume then that the budget for the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre — the \$900,000 will be surplussed back into the mains and that it will come out under-budget by that amount?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I said, we'll see what the plans are for the configuration of Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The \$900,000 is being left, and it depends on the future use of this building. Whether it will be demolished, the funding is there; if we refurbish it, the funding will be there.

Mr. Inverarity: I have to express some real concern here regarding the old building. I've been in it. My understanding was that the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre was built on the field, the playground out front, and that the demolition of the old building would then recover that land for outdoor use. If it's going to be left standing, then I have some real concerns about the overall master plan that was put into effect when the Correctional Centre was going to be built, and whether or not there will be these recreational facilities — the land set aside that will be recovered.

What are the plans to meet that space requirement that was used where the current Whitehorse Correctional Centre — or the new one is being built?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I said, let's let the feasibility study go through the process and see what the future use will be for the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The outdoor use is not an issue. The outside recreation areas in the new units are attached to the living units; therefore, the perimeter around the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre is not a problem.

Mr. Inverarity: I'm a little concerned about that answer, Mr. Chair. I guess the obvious question at this point with regard to the old Correctional Centre, the new one, and the new plan would be this: in what time frame can we expect the minister to come back with some plans developed or no plans developed with the demolition? Can the minister give us a time frame for this to happen?

Hon. Ms. Horne: The officials are now doing their good work on the feasibility study and they will be coming back to me, the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Public Works with their plans.

Mr. Inverarity: I didn't hear a date there.

Hon. Ms. Horne: No, we are not giving a date at this time. Let's let the process follow through and see where that takes us.

Mr. Inverarity: First of all, I'd like to thank the minister for her time this afternoon and I'd like to particularly thank the officials for their patience over the last few days in getting through this vote. I have to say it has been an interesting one, and I'm going to be interested in seeing what comes out of it as we go over the Blues in the next little while. Again, on behalf of the Member for the Third Party and myself, I do appreciate all the efforts that have been put forward.

At this time I would request the unanimous consent of the Committee to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required

Chair: Mr. Inverarity has requested unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried as required.

Do all members agree?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,419,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$131,000 agreed to

Department of Justice agreed to

Chair: We'll now proceed with Vote 3, Department of Education. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

Department of Education

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to speak to the Department of Education's supplementary budget for 2010-11. This budget builds upon and implements our vision for education. Our vision is for all Yukoners to possess a desire for and an appreciation of lifelong learning, a strong commitment to their communities, and the knowledge and skills needed to live meaningful, productive and rewarding lives. This budget continues to implement that; it implements

our strategic plan and it builds upon the successes of the system.

This supplementary budget reflects the successful completion of two collective agreements. This recognizes that department employees provide a very valuable contribution to all learners in Yukon. We are continuing to support Yukon College's new infrastructure, such as the new community campuses in Dawson and Pelly Crossing.

I'm pleased to say that the Department of Education's commitment to create a responsive education system, enhance transitions, develop and maintain partnerships, and our work and labour market development is ongoing. We continue to build on the good work that we have done during this government's mandate. Under the 2010-11 supplementary budget there will be a 2.3-percent increase in O&M expenditures and a 17.7-percent increase in capital expenditures. The total operations and maintenance supplementary budget for 2010-11 is \$2,999,000. Some of the specifics include that under education support services we are requesting \$64,000. This request is to support manager increases and collective agreement increases for Yukon Employees Union members.

Under this year's supplementary budget, the Department of Education is also asking for \$1,926,000 to support O&M activities in public schools. The most significant investment for public schools is to support the collective agreement increases for YTA members, YEU members and managers.

The Department of Education is also requesting a revote of \$30,000 to complete a project approved under the northern strategy trust called "boards and committees leadership training". The boards and committees leadership training project is primarily delivered through the Yukon Volunteer Bureau with regular input, direction and oversight from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. This project supports and develops training opportunities to address such areas as board development, capacity building, volunteer management and organizational management for organizations throughout the Yukon.

Under the 2010-11 supplementary budget, the Department of Education is asking for \$316,000 under O&M for Advanced Education. \$200,000 is being requested as a revote for the labour market framework for Yukon. This funding is from the community development trust. These funds will complete the Work Futures project and labour market framework strategies, including the publication costs. \$220,000 is also being requested as a revote to support community training fund arrangements signed late in the fiscal year. Community training funds provide targeted training opportunities for Yukoners across the territory so they can take advantage of local employment opportunities.

\$46,000 is being requested to support managers' increases and collective agreement increases. \$150,000 is being transferred from Advanced Education operation and maintenance to capital to assist in the additional costs of the Pelly Crossing community campus. This government remains committed to helping Yukon College and its campuses provide more skills and trades training in the communities. The total capital supplementary budget for 2010-11 is \$2.113 million. These capital funds are invested throughout the department.

Under education support services, the renovation project at 1000 Lewes Boulevard to accommodate additional staff transferred under the labour market development agreement has been deferred to 2011-12. The Department of Education is requesting a number of revotes under public schools funding including a \$48,000 revote to continue the review committee work, which will inform the building advisory committee, ultimately reflecting the design component of F.H. Collins' replacement. Revotes of \$511,000 are requested for all schools to complete projects initiated by school councils and staff, as well as purchases of equipment not completed by the government's fiscal year-end. A revote of \$117,000 is requested under school-based information technology to continue the implementation of the YSIS — student information system.

The Department of Education is also requesting supplementary funding to complete a number of projects that were not completed by the last fiscal year-end, including: \$159,000 for various school facility renovations to complete a number of smaller projects that began in 2009-10; \$23,000 under energy management projects to conduct an energy assessment audit that could not be completed before year-end; \$294,000 under capital maintenance to complete a number of projects that began in 2009-10, such as a public address system at Takhini Elementary, replacement of the sprinkler system at Holy Family, and various smaller projects throughout the Yukon; \$163,000 under a site improvement and recreation development to allow for the completion of various projects in schools throughout Yukon; \$46,000 under special needs infrastructure to complete the barrier-free access at Wood Street Centre; and \$67,000 under indoor air quality to address issues at Del Van Gorder School.

Mr. Chair, under Yukon College, we are requesting a total of \$975,000. \$125,000 is being requested as a revote to support the completion of the enhanced security project, and \$99,000 is being requested as a revote to complete the post-secondary education infrastructure initiative for the heating trades lab equipment project. Also included in this request is a revote request of \$112,000 to continue support for the Dawson City community campus project; \$189,000 is also being requested as a revote for the Pelly Crossing community campus project.

This funding is 50-percent recoverable from Canada. \$450,000 is also being requested to address the higher-than-anticipated construction costs for the Pelly Crossing community campus. Yukon College has provided \$300,000 and Advanced Education has also requested a transfer of operation and maintenance funding that I spoke of earlier in the amount of \$150,000. This additional commitment by both Yukon College and Yukon government confirms that education and training are vital to creating and maintaining the kind of economy in communities that we value as Yukoners.

This government's investment in education is proof of our commitment to improve the quality of life for all Yukoners. That concludes my introductory comments about the specifics in the budget. If there are areas regarding the Department of Education, its mandate and its operations, I would be pleased to entertain them today.

Mr. Fairclough: I thank the minister for his opening remarks. I am totally amazed that they were under 20 minutes, and that's good. It was half that time: 10 minutes. I think we're going to make some progress this afternoon. I'm hoping that the answers relate directly to the questions that are provided by me and we can get through this department.

I'd like also to thank the officials for providing their briefing to us on this department. It helps. I do have a couple of questions as a result of that and as a result of the minister's opening comments. I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time in this department. I'm hoping that we could, perhaps, move things along quite quickly on this.

I've raised a number of questions to the minister in this sitting and I think there are still questions out there. I would like to ask the minister if he can provide some clarity to how well the student tracking system that we bought from B.C. is working here. There are issues raised by the Yukon Teachers Association, by teachers in general, that it simply isn't working all that well.

As a matter of fact, as of yesterday, some teachers have tried to get on to the system and they just couldn't; it couldn't be used at all. This was as of yesterday. We had been warned by the teachers in B.C. that there are a lot of problems with this system. So is it worth the money that we put into it? What are the glitches? How are they going to be fixed? How soon are they going to be fixed? Can we even use this system? Is the department looking at perhaps scrapping this system and looking at something else or is it fixable and able to work here in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Chair, I think we can all agree about the importance of tracking the progress of students as they continue their education career through our education system. It's important to track factors such as attendance, participation and grades. I mean, there is a reason why report cards are done on a regular basis.

Not only is it to provide information and feedback to parents about the progress of their child's learning and understanding, their appreciation, and their comprehension of what's going on in school, it's also important to share that information from one teacher to another. It's important that we gather this data, not only from an individual perspective to measure and monitor the growth and development of the student, but also for us to measure and monitor the results of Yukon's education system.

Members opposite will recognize that the Auditor General of Canada, in her critique on the Department of Education in their audit, identified that we did not have many of the indicators to illustrate the performance of Yukon's education system. Many people made a lot of to-do out of those comments, but that was really the crux of it — that we needed to have additional data, additional measurements to show how well the system was or wasn't working.

That's really one of the reasons for putting in the student information system. We've had an information system in place in the past. The previous one was called Win School. It is a computer program that is over 20 years old, and I would expect

that members can appreciate that the computer industry has changed quite a bit over 20 years.

We certainly don't use the version of Microsoft Word that came out 20 years ago. There have been changes in computing power, in networking, in systems and, frankly, using a system that's over 20 years old is a challenge, specifically in this case because it's no longer being supported by the previous vendor. So we really have no choice but to change systems.

We took a big look at the information systems that are available. As I mentioned the other day, this isn't something where one can walk down to Staples and pull this type of program off the shelf. These types of computer programs work very closely with school boards and departments of education across Canada and across North America.

We also appreciate the input we had from many involved, whether they were school administrators, teachers, secretaries in the schools, the people who use the data, or the people who enter the data.

The president of the YTA at the time was invited to participate in discussions about the whole issue regarding the kinds of data that needed to be collected, the process for doing this — all of the front-end work, really — at the beginning stages of looking at the replacement project. We have to work very closely with those people who use the data, whether it's from the entering side of things or the output side of things. We also did a lot of work on a national level through a variety of different Canadian educational organizations, whether it was through the Council of Ministers of Education or the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol working groups, about some of these student information systems — which ones are working, which ones have some challenges in them. After doing an extensive search, and also considering the fact of the strong ties that Yukon's education system has with the British Columbia education system, for example, the shared student numbers, the common curriculum, the common high school graduation requirements, really, it made a lot of sense to take a very serious look at the BCeSIS.

Certainly, we aren't the only jurisdiction doing that. British Columbia, which currently has about 500,000 students in over 140 public schools, uses this system. Other jurisdictions are looking at using parts of eSIS, as it's referred to. This includes Alberta, Ontario, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Like I said before, there aren't a whole lot of off-of-the-shelf types of programs that we can get to replace this.

So, given that this program had the requirements that we were looking for, given that there had been a tremendous amount invested in this type of program already by British Columbia, and given that many of the issues had been addressed previously or that there were solutions found, we felt that this was the best type of system to put into place. I have had numerous discussions with the IT people who are doing the implementation of this program. I have talked to teachers. I have talked to secretaries on this one.

They are certainly not all putting forward the same comments that we're hearing from the Liberal opposition on this. In fact, many of the people have really appreciated the system. I know it has already been of significant use in looking at things

— for example, school bus tracking where we're looking at the identification of the location of specific students.

We have no intention of simply dropping this system. Are we going to continue to work with it to increase the understanding of the program, to work with the technical issues to ensure that it is supported, that we have the right kind of connectivity to it, and that it has the right kind of horsepower driving the servers? You bet, Mr. Chair. To ignore the collection of this kind of information would simply be irresponsible.

We will continue to work with this system, with the vendor of the system and with not only our school-based staff but our departmental staff, in order to address the issues that arise out of this, and work together so we find solutions to overcome any of the technical challenges that we're facing with this.

Mr. Fairclough: What are the issues and what are the glitches, and how are we going about fixing them? What I heard from the minister was not something I feel is working all that well, from his answers. Otherwise, the minister would have said that. Obviously there are problems here. The minister said he's dealing with the issues. I would like to know what the issues are. He said the system is liked by some out there. He also said one thing that was interesting, that the YTA was asked to participate at the beginning of getting the system. Were they consulted before the Yukon government adopted and bought into this system from B.C.? That's the Teachers Association.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I've checked with department staff and they are not aware of any issues that have popped up in the last couple of days on this. As I said, we haven't seen the problems that other jurisdictions have seen — for example, long wait times or the delays between key strokes or entering key strokes and the computer not accepting that. I understand from media reports that those were some of the issues that were identified in southern jurisdictions; however, we have not seen those types of problems here in the territory, that I'm aware of.

We are continuing to provide training to the people who are using this system. I appreciate that a lot of computer programs these days are very intuitive, but spending some additional time training certainly makes the process go a lot easier. Also, an YSIS implementation committee composed of rural and urban teachers, counsellors, administrators, assistants and department staff has guided the process and provided feedback through the implementation of the Yukon student information system.

We've worked very closely, as I've said before, with the people who are entering the data, who were the consumers of the data, through this whole process.

We've worked with teachers and Yukon's education system. We've worked with administrators. We've worked with counsellors. It's important that we have this data. It will also be important for parents to be able to get the data quickly too, so that they know where their sons and daughters are with respect to things like high school graduation requirements. That has been a criticism that I've heard before, that it has been a challenge to find out about where students are in completing their graduation requirements and what are mandatory courses and what else is needed for graduation. Through a program like this, we will have much greater access to the information. I

don't want to give the implication that everyone will have access to this, because we certainly take the security of the information very seriously. It will be an important tool that students and parents will use to chart their process and look at what requirements they have in high school.

I spoke with departmental staff last week who were working on this. I've talked with officials today who aren't aware of hearing problems in the last couple of days.

If the member opposite has some specific issues or examples of problems, perhaps he could make me aware of them so that I can have our technical people step in and provide additional support to this. But I certainly am not aware — and it has not been reported — that we have had widespread problems with this type of program or that we have seen some of the issues that have come up in the southern jurisdictions, where they don't have the connectivity that we have here in the territory.

I did see something last week about high solar activity and how that could influence some of the satellite communications going on and how that would have an impact on some of our Internet work. I don't know if that relates to this or not, but if the member opposite has some specific issues or complaints, I would appreciate hearing them so that we can take additional efforts to address them.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister says that it was a criticism of the system that he's hearing from — I'm sure he heard it from parents. He definitely heard it from the Auditor General, who said the information that was provided on our graduation rates was misleading and that something had to be done to fill in the gaps. This was in answer to the Auditor General.

The minister said he doesn't see and has not heard of any problems with this system he has bought into from B.C. We were told that we have distorted information, lost information, that it's tough to log on and get on to this system, there are delays and — according to the words of some people — it's just jammed or frozen. This is some of what is taking place now.

The minister said we don't have these problems. I'd like to just ask, then: is the minister satisfied with the system? YTA has identified some glitches and so has B.C. Are we satisfied with this system? The minister also said he is aware of some issues around the system he's working to resolve. This is information the minister just gave to us.

The big question is: are the minister and the department satisfied with this system? Can he also tell us the total cost of bringing this system from B.C.? All the time that has been put into putting together this system — because it's not just about buying it off the shelf from B.C. Training and a lot of man-hours were put into this. I see the minister looking through papers. I understand he might have some costs to this that we could relay out there. Is the minister satisfied with this system? How soon will it be before the public is able to use this system? The minister says the parents can access all the information of their children in school — how soon? Does he feel that this is now the system that we're going to be using in the years to come?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: The system itself cost \$62,000. We certainly have an identified need in the Department of Educa-

tion to have a program to track this type of information. I've talked about how the previous program was no longer being supported. I've talked a bit about the training that has gone on with our teachers, administrators and support people. I've talked about the work that was done at the front end on this one, and I've also heard some of the criticisms of this. I'm trying to get beyond some of the hearsay or some of the comments about issues that might have happened in other jurisdictions and trying to find out if there are specific incidents here in the Yukon. Obviously, the member opposite has some reasons for his criticisms of this. If there are some specifics, I'd like to hear about them.

In the conversations I've had with folks about this, they are advising me that the implementation of this, which certainly doesn't happen overnight, is a relatively smooth one. Yes, there are always new challenges with putting in place a new computer and challenges with learning a new program, but that's why we have an implementation team working on this. We will not have all the features available right from day one. We do have to have the data go into the system. The data has to be accumulated for awhile for it to really track, measure and monitor the results and indicate the outcomes that we would be looking to it for.

I did comment that, in the past, parents had questions about the high school graduation requirements. I know the Department of Education has taken some significant steps in the last couple of years, whether it is to provide paper-based information about graduation requirements, or whether it is holding information sessions, or meeting with parents to discuss some of the graduation requirements, but this will be one more tool that students, parents and educators will be able to use in order to track progress through the education system.

We have also had issues raised by the Auditor General about the information that we were tracking; we've made changes to that. The member opposite has heard me in the last couple of years during budget debate talk about the changes to the structure of our annual report — the data that we're reporting. He is well aware of those changes; he's also well aware of how long the Department of Education had been using some of those methodologies. They probably trace back to when the member opposite was a member of Cabinet.

We are going to continue with the implementation of this; we do have a couple of educators that have been seconded to work on this one. Some of the implementation costs in addition to the original \$62,000 purchase price are approximately \$350,000 per year. That includes salaries, training costs, travel to communities, and travel for rural staff to go to Whitehorse to learn about how to best use this system.

We are taking a very responsible approach to this. We certainly squeezed every last drop of life out of the previous system. We all know that changes in computer technology happen on a day-to-day basis, and to have used the same program for 20 years indicates that we've gotten a considerable amount of value from that. It was time to change the system. We did our homework in selecting a system that met our needs. We have also made an investment into working with the users of this system to provide training and support. We're going to con-

tinue to do that; we'll continue to work with YTA and its members; we'll continue to work with the Yukon Association of School Administrators and administrators throughout the territory on this. We'll continue to work with the department staff to provide them with the support they need so we can put in place the appropriate computer tools that we need to not only track the success of individual students, but also the overall success of Yukon's education system.

Mr. Fairclough: I didn't hear the minister say that he was satisfied with this system. He said he wanted to hear first-hand about the issues. I asked the minister whether or not he consulted with YTA before purchasing this system. I didn't hear the minister answer that. He did say he was working with their partners and YTA. Has he met with them to talk about this system to see what issues they have with this system? Is he satisfied with the outcome of this meeting?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I have met with our partners and stakeholders in the education system. I'll meet with anybody, it seems, to discuss education. I've had some very good meetings with officials with the Yukon Teachers Association. I look forward to additional meetings with the Yukon Teachers Association. I've certainly met with school councils and the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees.

Mr. Chair, I am very pleased to see how engaged Yukoners are in our education system. To be perfectly clear, the Department of Education and its staff are satisfied with the system that's being implemented. We'll continue to work with the system. We'll continue to address issues as we're made aware of them. Like any new computer system, there are challenges in learning it or challenges with making best use of it. That's why we're investing in education and the support of the system.

I'm encouraged by the staff and their appreciation and support of this system. I have talked to the people who are heading it up and they're encouraged by the system. I'm not seeing the problems that the member opposite is alluding to. I haven't heard any specific examples. The member opposite hasn't brought any to the floor.

If there are issues, I would encourage him to pass them on to me, to have the people who are identifying the challenges — if there are any — to bring them to the system administrator's attention. It is by finding out if there are problems, or if there are glitches, that we can address them. I'm pleased to see the Government of Yukon is proactively addressing this situation. I'm pleased to see that we made the appropriate decision, and we'll continue to work with this system to provide the data that individuals need to help them along in their school career and to also provide the data that we need to ensure the continued success of Yukon's education system.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, the minister is clearly satisfied with this system and he is the one who raised this and said that there were issues and that they were working with them. I brought up a few and I asked if he would be working with and has worked with YTA. He said yes, so I'm sure that he heard a few from them too, so I'll leave it at that. I'd like to move on.

There are a few areas that I'd like to ask questions on. One that was brought to me recently is about the busing and the

busing contract. Is the minister able to tell us what the total value of this year's busing contract is?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: This supplementary budget does not have a change in the school busing contract. We are on target for the amount that this Assembly approved earlier this year, which I believe was about \$3 million. There is no change in this supplementary budget for that line item.

Mr. Fairclough: I thank the minister for that answer — about \$3 million. If it is any different, I hope the minister can send that information forward to us. He says that there is no change.

I am really trying to explain this one. I probably need the help of the officials and the minister on this. First of all, does the minister feel that our busing here in Whitehorse is fair to all families and students? I'll just ask that simple question first.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I feel a criticism or concern coming on, so I'll give the member opposite his opportunity to raise his issues with me and I'll try to respond to them.

Mr. Fairclough: It has been raised to us in the Official Opposition by parents with students, say, who live in Porter Creek and may have a student who is in, say, Holy Family. If they move elsewhere, they simply would not have their children bused to the school.

A family who already has a child enrolled in this school and who lives right beside it would have that child bused to school. That's why I asked whether or not the minister feels it's fair. They simply cannot have their children bused to school unless they find a different way within that whole process.

It's not really clear to parents how they can access busing for their children in either Christ the King or Holy Family. I'll ask the minister if he has had any issues raised in regard to this and how he and the department are going to work at fixing it.

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

Recess

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

Hon. Mr. Rouble: When we left off prior to the break, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun had asked me a question about school busing and about a specific situation. School busing is one of those issues that we in Yukon deal with on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. I believe that over 50 percent of Yukon school kids get to school and get home via a school bus. Many of those students are spending quite some time on the bus and that's really just due to the nature of where Yukoners live — the spread-out nature of our communities — and we continue to do the best that we can with the school busing contract provider to provide safe, timely, efficient and energy efficient transfer of our kids from their home to school and back.

We also, for the member opposite, have been working very closely with the Association of School Councils, Boards and Committees on the establishment of a busing committee that

we can work with to address some of the broader issues in busing, when we're talking about equity or policy types of issues. The staff of the Department of Education and I really look forward to working with that school busing or transportation committee. Some of the work that the Department of Education has been doing is on energy conservation — looking at our energy footprint, so to speak. The energy that goes into school busing is a large factor, and it's really one that we as a responsible user of energy will be looking at. Also, I understand that there is an additional module for the enterprise student information system that we intend to acquire and utilize that will provide greater strengths and robustness to our school busing routes and plans. We're certainly looking at ways of increasing their efficiency, their effectiveness, and reducing their energy consumption.

In this particular case, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun has brought forward an issue and a specific case, and I'm having some challenges being able to address it here on the floor. A number of different factors could impact on this — whether it's the catchment area that the student moved from, whether they're receiving busing from special programming or for religious purposes — for example, to attend the Catholic school.

There are also issues like the existing school bus or the number of kids on the bus, or even the capacity of the school in the child's home catchment area or the capacity in the school the child would like to go to.

We're going to have a bit of a challenge trying to come to any kind of satisfactory conclusion to this one issue on the floor of the Assembly, so I'm going to ask the member opposite to work with me on a casework basis on this one, so we can have the parent work with the Department of Education — whether it involves the superintendent for the area or our school busing coordinators. In this particular case, I'm going to ask the member opposite to provide me additional information, perhaps to write me a letter on this one, so I can get the department in touch with the parents and we can do our best to address the situation.

Mr. Fairclough: I thank the minister for that commitment, Mr. Chair, but this is not an isolated case. It does happen here in Whitehorse. This family that has moved from Porter Creek has been told they cannot have their child bused to Holy Family School. There is a way around it, but, first of all, I don't think the family knew about it. They were told to wait until the last minute, phone to see if there is a spot open at, say, Christ the King, and if there isn't, you can qualify to be bused to Holy Family School. So it just doesn't make sense and it's not clear. I just bring this up to the minister, and I hope that things could be improved for families that move and desire their children to be in either Holy Family or Christ the King.

I thank the minister for that commitment. I will talk to the person who brought this to my attention. It looks like we can make some improvements, so I thank the minister for that.

I do have a few more questions before I turn it over to the Third Party. One was in regard to the community campus in Pelly Crossing. It has been a long time waiting to have this campus built. The community appreciates having a new facility. They've moved out of their old one. It was definitely not a

building that was good enough to house a college. It was falling apart. It had all kinds of problems with it. They moved into their old community hall, temporarily.

I see construction taking place in Pelly Crossing. They've gone overbudget. Yukon College has put forward some money to address the project being overbudget. The department has found \$150,000 in O&M and moved it over. I raised this issue with the minister not long ago, and we were told the money was earmarked for youth employment and adult employment — the monies that would have gone to Skookum Jim — and that money is no longer because the \$150,000 has been moved out of O&M and into this project.

Can the minister confirm that? Has the youth employment and adult employment through Skookum Jim ever received the \$150,000 earmarked for it, or was it just left there and not accessed?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I want to continue with this positive debate here. I'll try to explain this a bit more to correct any misunderstandings or misperceptions that the people might have out there because some of the information that the member just shared with us misses the mark a bit. We'll go back to the launch of the federal knowledge infrastructure program.

In some of their efforts to create some stimulus and, at the same time, address the needs Canadians have, the federal government identified a fund of, I believe, it was, \$2 billion, entitled the "knowledge infrastructure program." This was designed for shovel-ready education projects. The federal government wanted to make contributions to colleges, universities and other post-secondary institutions in Canada.

Here in Yukon, we had been working extensively with Yukon College, as we've demonstrated by progressively increasing budget amounts by putting in things like school residences, by the establishment of the research centre or the Northern Institute of Social Justice. We also recognized there were issues with some of the community campuses throughout the territory.

The college had recognized that their highest priority was replacing the Pelly campus. I had been in the previous Pelly campus and I share the member opposite's frustration with that facility.

Prior to the release of the knowledge infrastructure program, I had asked the college to engage with the First Nation to see if the First Nation was interested in doing renovations to any buildings that they knew or were interested in providing as additional rental space for the college. I was informed by the college, who would have been the renter in that case, that there was not an interest or an uptake on that kind of idea at the time from the First Nation. Then when the knowledge infrastructure program was announced by the federal government, the college put together an application for that. That was on March 26, 2009, when Yukon College submitted an application, or a request, to Industry Canada through the knowledge infrastructure program for \$1.4 million for the construction of a new facility in Pelly Crossing that would enable the college to continue to serve the 300 residents.

They noted that the previous facility had been vacated due to health and safety concerns and that a mobile trailer was be-

ing used on a temporary basis. The college applied to the federal government for these funds. The fund that the federal government created also required an investment of cash from the other local jurisdictions — in this case, the Government of Yukon. Indeed, in other instances, the institutions put up the matching amount or a portion thereof. In this case, the Government of Yukon responded to the application from Yukon College and provided \$700,000 to this project. The college identified that they required \$1.4 million in order to build this. They were approved the funding from the Government of Canada and then also from the Government of Yukon.

We then moved forward to some of the next steps on this one, which then goes into October 8, 2009, when the Government of Yukon signed a contract with Yukon College to build a community campus in Pelly Crossing. This was a government contract — in fact, a sole-source contract to the college to provide them with the resources they had requested.

I hope members — if they do criticize the volume of sole-source contracts or look at the amount in there — recognize that a large portion of this will be \$1.4 million in funds that have gone to Yukon College.

Yukon College was awarded this contract. It includes the project's scope. It includes the terms and conditions that Yukon College will undertake to plan, design and construct the campus as approved in appendix 1 by no later than March 31, 2011, and for a cost not to exceed \$1,400,000. The Yukon College shall be responsible for any and all costs incurred that exceed the approved funding, and Yukon College shall be responsible for any and all costs incurred that are deemed to be ineligible for the funding under the knowledge infrastructure program agreement.

This closely models the arrangement that was put forward with the federal government and the conditions on the contract. There is a requirement that this project be completed within the timelines established by the federal government. That's where we're at.

The college has been working with Highways and Public Works, the Property Management division, on the project management side of things, on the tendering side of things. When the tender bids came in, we and the college realized this was in excess of the amount they had budgeted for this project.

Government of Yukon appreciates the tremendous work that Yukon College does in our community, the impact they have, and the importance of the work they do, and we certainly wanted to support them on this. Our Finance people had numerous meetings on this one. We recognized that the college had a bank account in excess of a million dollars in cash reserves, and their board recognized that this was a worthwhile project. I did have a meeting with the college and their board, and we all recognized the importance of this and committed to seeing it continue. That resulted in the college identifying additional resources to put forward for the project and the Government of Yukon putting forward additional resources as well. We are all committed to seeing this project succeed and seeing a new campus in Pelly, and I appreciate hearing the support coming from the member opposite. This will have a long leg-

acy in Pelly Crossing and will certainly have an impact on the youth who are there today.

It certainly demonstrates to everyone in Pelly the importance of continuing education and it will continue to provide opportunities for all the residents in that community for many, many years to come.

We also recognize that we have the responsibility to manage our finances diligently, appropriately. We took a careful look at the department's Advanced Education budget and where we were expecting to see some lapses in program dollars. We've certainly seen our commitment to a variety of different programs throughout the territory. We also realized that this was going to have a large impact on the youth in Pelly and made a decision to use some of the resources that we had within the O&M budget that could be utilized for capital without impacting programming for the current fiscal year and made the decision, a wise decision, to reallocate them to the capital budget in order to fund this project.

I believe this is a good use of Advanced Education resources. I believe in investing in Yukon College and I believe in investing in Pelly Crossing. We have a number of other initiatives through Advanced Education. We will continue to work with a wide-ranging number of organizations throughout Yukon — whether it's the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre or Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, whether it's Skills Canada Yukon or additional Yukon College programming. We'll also look at the other resources that we have — whether they're community training funds or the labour market programs.

I have to add that it has been a very good move for the Government of Yukon, following the devolution of the LMA and LMDA — that's the labour market agreement and the labour market development agreement — to provide those types of programming and services here in the Yukon rather than having the LMA and LMDA administered by the federal government. We will continue to work with Advanced Education on a wide number of programming needs and we will also continue to work with Yukon College to ensure that we have appropriate facilities throughout the territory.

Mr. Fairclough: I think the minister can agree with me: that was the long answer. I would like to go back to the student tracking system because I forgot to ask a question about this. I did say to the minister that the Yukon Teachers Association filed a grievance with the department on the system. The minister said he is satisfied and happy with it and has not identified any glitches with it. They said it crashed without warning and it ran so slowly that it couldn't be used; information got lost and distorted. But the minister says, "All is well." So did the Yukon Teachers Association drop their grievance or is it still active?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: The referenced grievance has nothing to do with the performance issues regarding the Yukon student information system. The Yukon Teachers Association has filed a grievance regarding the introduction of this technology and, as it's at that type of grievance stage, I really cannot comment on the grievance. We do have a process that the government will go through, involving the Public Service Com-

mission, on addressing the grievance in an appropriate manner and, as such, it would be inappropriate for me to discuss that particular issue in any more detail.

Mr. Fairclough: Interesting, Mr. Chair. Let's move on; I do have a few more questions. I have one of the favourite ones that the minister likes, which I ask all the time. Can he update us on the francophone court case?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I am sure the member opposite is aware that this is a matter that is before the courts right now and, as such, it would be entirely inappropriate for me to comment on it on the floor of the Assembly.

Mr. Fairclough: Then I'll ask for another update, if the minister can provide one, in regard to New Horizons. Can he give us an update on the progress of that?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I appreciate that the member opposite has encouraged me to be a bit timelier or to answer quicker or to provide shorter answers, but on this topic it would certainly be a challenge to do that and to do appropriate justice to the topic of New Horizons. When we concluded the education reform project, we realized that we had some very good direction. We had some very good ideas. We had some issues to discuss. We had done a really good job of fleshing out some of the thoughts and concerns of Yukoners regarding Yukon's education system. We had the challenge, then, of making the changes to our education system — both from a public school side of things and also from a First Nation side of things — because, really, there were recommendations from the co-chairs on this project for both entities — for both First Nation changes and also for changes to Yukon's public school system. Since then, we've worked very closely with the Council of Yukon First Nations on broad initiatives. We've worked closely with the First Nation Education Advisory Committee, which was formed to address this. We made changes with how we work with Yukon school councils and I've discussed the school growth plans a number of times as to how we can address many of the community-based issues in the school.

We've made changes in our curriculum. We've made changes in teacher education, whether it was through the leadership program or working with Yukon College and the University of Northern British Columbia on putting in place a Master of Education program. We've also seen some changes with how we work with other parents, stakeholders and partners in education to get their input on things like the secondary program review.

We've changed our annual report to be more reflective of the information that is coming from the Department of Education and the results of our students and the accomplishments that they have in our school system.

Another culmination or next step of New Horizons is the draft of the Department of Education's strategic plan. This is titled *Our Commitment to New Horizons*. I've provided copies to members of this Assembly in the past. If others would like more copies, I would be happy to provide them to them.

This is a draft of the plan we've been using as a discussion tool with many Yukoners about education.

It starts from the vision I shared with members opposite earlier — the mandate of the department — and looking at a

scan of many of the issues that we're facing in our ever-changing world, whether it's working toward helping our students to achieve some of the characteristics of what is commonly referred to as a 21st century learner, where students learn to know how, where and when to locate information, how to use a variety of different mediums, and possess the skills to access, evaluate, synthesize, create, and present new knowledge. This is a change and a growth and an evolution, or a reformation, of education systems around the world.

We're recognizing that we are in a changing world, that the Socratic method that one learned by some 2,000 years ago, where you learned at the foot of the master, is changing; that the systematic education regimes brought into place in World War II, where systematic ways of processing learners were put into place is changing. Now we're becoming much more learner-focused and helping the individual to become everything he or she can be.

The draft strategic plan also includes the summary of the educational evolution in Yukon and shows how the different tools we have used over the years, whether it's the *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, the Kwiya report, the *Education Act* review, or the education project, or the secondary schools programming review, or even the Auditor General's report of a couple of years ago, are influencing the direction of education in the territory.

We go on there to look at the impacts of lifelong learning and the different transitions that our students and our learners are making today, whether it's from preschool and kindergarten and the early years, where students are learning to read, or into the more immediate stages where they're transitioning to reading to learn; then to grades 7 and 8 when they're exploring the learning; then to grades 10 to 12 where they're preparing to be contributing citizens — all the way along, they are learning about their history, their culture and who they are. They are learning about the important issues and the important history or the important legislative tools that we have in Yukon, whether it's traditional Canadian pieces of history like the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* or looking at regulations like Yukon's *Human Rights Act*.

Working in other jurisdictions — thinking of Carcross-Tagish specifically — students there are learning about the Carcross-Tagish First Nation self-government agreement and the legislation that's being passed there. All of this is transitioning then into secondary schools. We've talked a lot about the secondary school review. We're certainly using that data in how we're going about designing the new F.H. Collins Secondary School. That's a big step in New Horizons. Then we go into the secondary school type of things. In New Horizons, we're looking at increasing post-secondary education opportunities here for Yukoners. We're seeing opportunities and education options for preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. We're expanding the role of Yukon College. We did that by changing the *Yukon College Act* to allow that institution to become a degree-granting institution. We're continuing to support additional programming at Yukon College — a wide range of programs, from survey technician to a home-heating maintainer

to licensed practical nursing to Master of Science and Master of Education.

We're continuing to build the relationships and support the relationships between Yukon College and other institutions so that we can increase the level of university programming that Yukoners have access to here at home.

We're continuing to work with our northern education partners on increasing post-secondary education opportunities for people in the north. We're continuing to work with Yukon College on initiatives like the University of the Arctic so that we can expand our influence in the circumpolar world. We're continuing to build a wide range of Yukon College facilities, whether it's the School of Visual Arts in Dawson, or the new campus in Pelly, or the new campus in Dawson, or other impacts in post-secondary education — things like the cold climate innovation cluster and the Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence. These are two great tools at Yukon College to increase capacity, to increase lifelong learning, and to increase research here in the north.

Also, we also heard a bit earlier today about the Northern Institute of Social Justice. This is another really interesting project that's bringing together people across the north. Prior to the launch of this, we worked with other territories, and that's why it's called the Northern Institute of Social Justice and not just the Yukon institute of social justice. We're expanding the reach with our sister territories. These are just some of the other issues that were related to post-secondary education and lifelong learning.

The strategic plan also goes on to look at the different goals, objectives and strategies that we have in the Department of Education. It looks at the holistic nature between the individual and creating the student-focused education system and the impacts that family, community, school, school council, advisory committees, our teachers, our professional development organizations and our school growth plans have on that. It looks at how we have to look at all the other tools at our disposal, whether it's curriculum or technology or how the school we use influences the educational outcomes.

I know that I've talked for some time now, but really, I can go on talking for hours about how New Horizons is shaping the growth and direction of the Department of Education and the decisions we make. I'm proud of the work that the department is doing with the strategic plan. I certainly recognize that it is my role as Minister of Education not to dictate what the vision of education should be, but to ensure that Yukon has the best vision for it that it should have — to work to involve Yukoners in the strategic direction and the goals and objectives of the education system; to build upon what we learned through education reform, and through the *Education Act*, and to ensure that that's making meaningful changes in our classrooms. When it comes right down to it, it really has to make a difference in the student for it to be a meaningful change. We're seeing that. We're seeing those changes in our school system, whether it's the introduction of full-day kindergarten or whether it's additional support for additional curriculum. I can go on for quite some time on this one. If the member opposite

doesn't have a copy of the Department of Education's strategic plan, I will certainly ensure that he gets one.

I would encourage him to take some time to take a look at that. Also, we're continuing to be involved with the community. New Horizons has had two annual summits so far, one focusing on literacy, and we'll continue to engage on a regular basis in meaningful ways so that we can share additional information about how the Department of Education is becoming more responsive to the needs in our community and making the changes to better prepare all of our students to lead happy, healthy and productive lives here in the territory.

Mr. Fairclough: Riveting, Mr. Chair. It keeps everybody awake, doesn't it?

Let's turn the page and continue with some questioning here. Staffing at Whitehorse Elementary — I realize that the department is using the student/teacher ratio. The school council wrote a letter to the minister — to the department — identifying that they were, I believe, nine teachers short and they were fighting for the one position that hasn't been filled. How is the department taking care of Whitehorse Elementary and their issue?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: As Minister of Education, there's a significant responsibility entrusted in this position. One of the issues is not only to ensure that we're having appropriate budget allocations, that I'm working with my Cabinet colleagues to go through items like the budget documents that we're debating before us here today and the expenditures in education. But another responsibility is to ensure that we have appropriate policies and practices throughout government, because it shouldn't be the role of the minister to pick and choose what teacher goes where or to be involved in these types of decisions, but it should be my responsibility to ensure that we have a fair and appropriate policy to follow when looking at the allocation of our staff and our teachers and other education resources to our schools.

I became aware of concerns with our previous formulas for allocating teachers — from teachers, from school councils, from parents, from departmental officials. We needed to ensure that we had an appropriate policy that could address the staffing needs in a fair manner across the territory. We recognize that we do have challenges in Yukon's education system. I touched on a couple of them earlier. Some of them are as follows: the distances between communities or the distances between students' homes and schools; the size of our communities; the facilities we have that have existed for a number of years and those types of resources; but we really needed to come up with a new way of ensuring that we were providing equitable, predictable and sustainable staffing for all Yukon schools, to find a way to take the politics out of this. I think all members would agree with me that they don't want the politicians of the day to pick and choose which school gets which resources.

As I have done on a number of other occasions, we put together a multi-party advisory committee — because I certainly appreciate that, while I have a lot of good ideas, I don't have all the good ideas and, collectively, we make better decisions. So we brought together a multi-party advisory committee. This

included Yukon teachers, the Yukon Teachers Association, school administrators, area superintendents, members from school councils, parents — it was a pretty good working group that was put together. We tasked them with taking a look at what some of the things to consider were and to come up with a policy for our staffing system. We put some criteria on them. We said we needed to have one that was based on equity, transparency, predictability, sustainability and accountability. I think all members would agree with me that those are a pretty important set of criteria for success and important tools to use in the establishment of this type of policy.

We certainly can't make one-off decisions on this. That's not our job as policy-makers. Our job as policy-makers is to work to ensure that we have the best possible policies to meet the situations we have here in the territory. The committee certainly put forward the best interest of the students. They put that at the forefront, and they work diligently on this and will continue to monitor the process to determine whether adjustments were needed. During the meeting I had with people in this group, they really encouraged me to put it in place and to give the system a try. I was told point-blank not to fiddle with it. They also wanted an opportunity to be involved on an ongoing basis to see where it needed to be tweaked.

In that meeting I also talked to individuals who, at the beginning, thought that this would be a great way to go out and to see a way for more resources to come their way. Then, when all was said and done and the formula and process they established had gone through, they were actually seeing a change and, in a couple of instances, a shift in staff from their school to other schools where it was recognized that resources were more needed in other places. Even though people were negatively impacted by that, they felt that it was important to continue with this process.

When I heard that, I really had to put a lot of faith into the work that these people had done. Here were people who weren't seeing immediate benefits to the system, but were convinced that by putting in place this transparent, equitable, predictable, sustainable, and accountable process, the overall education system in the Yukon would be better off and that it would be more fair for all.

Now, I have to add that we certainly have not seen any reduction or any cuts in the number of teachers in Yukon's education system. We just have to look at the statistics that we have discussed here in the Assembly before to see the number of teachers that we had over the years, to see that we have more teachers now than we had in 2002 or 2001 or earlier years and that, despite lowering enrolments, there has actually been an increase in the number of teachers throughout Yukon's education system.

But what we needed was to ensure that the politics were taken out of this process, to ensure that we had a strong and robust method of allocating the Yukon's educational resources — its teachers — to our schools, to really take a look at where the teachers should go, where our population was growing; and then also — in conjunction with the school councils, the school growth plans and the school administrators — to take a look at the best way of allocating those resources.

I have to respect and honour many of the decisions and recommendations coming forward from these people. They don't have easy decisions to make, but I do have to honour them and respect them. We've seen where schools have made a decision to put in a split-grade class and then allocate an FTE, whether it was for a learning assistant or for a music teacher, or gym teacher. We have to allow our schools, our school councils and our principals, to provide that management and direction to their schools. Those are important things. It wouldn't be the best education system if it was up to the minister to identify what teacher should teach what grade and who should be in what class. We have to allow the principals and others involved to do their good work and to make their decisions based on what they know about their school, their needs and the direction that community members want that school to go in.

That's why we've seen several of our schools make the choices and the decisions that they have. We've come up with a good process for allocating the staffing levels throughout Yukon schools in a fair and transparent manner. We've seen the number of teachers increase since previous governments, so there can be really no talk about cuts to the number of teachers in our system. I hope that all members appreciate that. We just have to look at the actual numbers to see that they've increased. It's pretty straightforward. We've put together a good group of people to provide us with advice on this. We've listened to their advice and we're going to continue on to work through this process in order that we can fairly meet the needs that Yukon schools have and provide them with appropriate resources.

Mr. Fairclough: I don't think that the Whitehorse Elementary School Council would be too happy with the minister's answers on that question, Mr. Chair, but I will forward the minister's response to them. He says that there are no cuts in the number of teachers in the system, but there certainly has been to the school, and that's the issue that's been raised to the minister.

I have a few more questions for the member opposite. One I've been bringing up for years and years — and years and years — is with regard to the Tantalus school in Carmacks. It's been very slow for this government to build and complete this school. It's a great school. People, students and parents love this school. It's new; it's clean; it's mould-free, but it's not complete. We have gone through the stages of construction where the old school gets torn down a year after, and nothing's done to landscape it. I brought forward the issue to the minister in the spring of rebar sticking out of the ground and we have monies identified to complete the landscaping of the Tantalus school, but it's slow and it's still not complete.

From what I hear, because of the cold weather, there is some equipment that is broken or destroyed or damaged. This seems like this is going to continue and to be completed next year. Now we've gone on and on about this school. When are we going to have this completed? Yes, we cut the ribbon, but when we cut the ribbon for the school, the old school was still standing; it wasn't demolished and the grounds were not complete. It seemed like there was equipment in the schoolyard

forever. The community, the students and the teachers want this completed. It seems to be taking forever.

So I will ask the minister this: is this the final year? Is the school now completed with the grounds and the landscaping? Are we not revisiting this issue? It's something that is big on people's minds in the community. They wanted to see how the department and the school could expand upon what they had — putting in a running track, for example. That didn't take place.

But there are some other issues that have come forward again to me and I'll relay them to the minister, but I want to know whether or not the landscaping for this school is complete.

What has it been, about five years of asking questions since the design was completed with the community with the previous minister? It just can't keep going on and on, so I did ask the minister if he would show some priority to ensuring that this landscaping take place and it is still not completed. I'm just wondering what the minister's answer is.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I appreciate the member's comments about the staffing advisory formula. Just some specifics on the Whitehorse Elementary School — this year there will be 32 teachers at this school and that's based on 424 students. The staffing plan has been designed to allow for 10 non-enrolling teaching positions to support specific learning priorities with team-teaching and individual instruction as required.

These non-enrolling teachers are not assigned to a particular classroom and instead they will be going into classrooms to team-teach for specific learning profiles. The classroom can be divided into even smaller groups of students. The design also means that there can be increased individual support for students who need extra help. This way, the staff expects all students to get more individual attention as required.

Also, there will be an additional counselling position provided to the school. This is a neat approach. I certainly applaud the administrator of the school who put forward the recommendations to have it structured in this manner. It was a decision that I believe they certainly took in the best interests of their unique school. There could have been other changes made or other decisions taken.

In this case we're seeing additional support for learning assistants too. I understand that there was also interest expressed in seeing more literacy work on the English language put in place, which is a bit unique for French immersion, but that's how the school council has been involved in some of the direction and that's how the school has decided to best address their situation.

On the issue of the other new school — I am pleased to be part of a government that has built schools and has certainly plans on the books for other schools. In addition to the Carmacks school, there was also the School of Visual Arts that was constructed, the additional support work at Yukon College, and the member opposite knows very well about the plans for F.H. Collins and the replacement project there.

The member opposite has brought up some criticisms, and I'm hearing today that there was a criticism about the schools not being demolished on time.

I would remind the member opposite that it was he who stood on this floor and asked me to take a look at whether or not we could utilize the gymnasium for other purposes. He stood up and asked us to take a look at whether or not there were portions that were salvageable.

I took the advice of the member opposite, and now I'm being criticized for that because it involved taking a look at whether or not the school gymnasium could be utilized and could be saved.

We've taken to heart his concerns. He brought forward the issue of rebar at the school. Again, I'll remind him and others that, if people find rebar on the school playground, don't wait to discuss it with me in budget debate. Those kinds of issues need to be brought to the immediate attention of the school staff. They're in the best position to ensure we don't have a dangerous situation like that.

This year we've also responded to the issues about playground equipment. I believe if the member takes a look on-site, he'll see that the playground equipment was delivered there.

The pieces that were ordered are now actually there. The equipment has arrived on-site. Everything was laid out properly, but due to some inclement weather, this has caused some delays with having the contractor put together all of the pieces.

Mr. Chair, the Department of Highways and Public Works will certainly be working with this contractor to ensure that the playground pieces are put together. It will continue to add additional polish or changes to the school, whether it's the installation of a sports field or a track or some other idea. I'm not sure what. I have heard some ideas coming from the member opposite, but I want to assure him that we have listened to his criticisms or his concerns — sorry, I will rephrase that. We have acted on it. It has changed how we have done business. We've responded to the needs. The equipment has been ordered. It's on-site and it will be installed as soon as possible.

Mr. Fairclough: As soon as possible — I have heard those words from the minister before.

Let's move on. Let's talk about F.H. Collins for a minute. The minister has some additional dollars in his budget — \$48,000 for a design of F.H. Collins. There was an estimate for a replacement of that school. Can the minister confirm that that number has not changed and that it is \$44 million for replacement of F.H. Collins? Is that number still the same or is it growing? Can the minister tell us whether or not F.H. Collins is going to be built in phases, rather than how it was first designed — to be built on the field close to the school itself? Is this a money saving process? Will the total amount of \$44 million not be spent in the first year and how is this not going to disrupt students in school in F.H. Collins?

If the minister can answer that shortly — I do have a few more questions on F.H. Collins, but I would like to wrap it up. I know we are getting close to the end of the day, so I'm hoping that we can at least deal with this issue and then be done with the department.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: The Government of Yukon has put a very high priority on ensuring that we have appropriate learning facilities — whether it is in the member's riding or here in Whitehorse, or whether it is putting appropriate college facili-

ties in Dawson. We're working to ensure that we have some very good facilities. We've recognized that F.H. Collins was nearing or at the end of its useful economic life. We approached this in a responsible manner. We built upon what we have learned in the *Education Act* review, in the New Horizons project and the work that we did with the community on the secondary programming study.

That was taking a look at what programming needs we have for our high schools here in Whitehorse and use that to help drive and influence the design of a new high school. That's why this government has put \$2.7 million into this year's budget for the planning and design of the F.H. Collins school replacement.

When you talk about putting your money where your mouth is, that's where it is. We're not talking about wild election promises here. This is actually money that is in the budget and being expended and that we're working with the architects on. We're at the stage now of schematic designs.

I expect that as we go through that process there will be some tweaks to the design, and there could be some changes. That's par for the course in going through a construction project of this size because it is a large construction project of tens of millions of dollars. This is a project that will have a legacy for decades to come and will have a huge impact on the educational careers of many students.

Now, the member opposite has asked if it's going to have an impact on the school during construction, and I would suggest that, yes, it will have a significant impact. Having a major construction project outside of the current school, as the member knows from his experience in his community where the Yukon Party built another school, he knows first-hand that if you build a new school next to the old school it will have an impact. We'll have to do our best to mitigate the impacts that these will have on the staff and the students in the school.

As we get closer through the design and architectural processes, we will have much greater accuracy about the estimates and the budgetary requirements for a project of this nature. As well, we will have a much greater understanding about the construction capacity that we have here in the territory, because we certainly have a large number of projects underway, whether it's the correctional facility and its associated buildings, the Mayo B construction project, the numerous condominium developments that are underway and some of the other large construction projects, such as the cultural centre in Haines Junction, or the cultural centre and library here on the Whitehorse waterfront.

Mr. Chair, I have some additional information to share with members opposite about F.H. Collins but, given the time, I would move that we report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

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

Chair's report

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

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

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.