



## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Paul Quassa**  
(Aggu)

**Hon. David Akeegok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic  
Development and Transportation; Minister  
of Human Resources*

**Joelie Kaernerik**  
(Amittuq)

**Pauloosie Keyootak**  
(Uqqummiut)

**David Qamaniq**  
(Tununiq)

**Emiliano Qirngnuq**  
(Netsilik)

**Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**  
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Health; Minister  
responsible for Seniors; Minister  
responsible for Suicide Prevention*

**Allan Rumbolt**  
(Hudson Bay)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the  
Committee of the Whole*

**Pat Angnakak**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and  
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of  
Energy; Minister of Environment;  
Minister responsible for Immigration;  
Minister responsible for Indigenous  
Affairs; Minister responsible for the  
Utility Rates Review Council*

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government  
Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq  
Energy Corporation*

**John Main**  
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;  
Minister of Languages; Minister  
responsible for the Nunavut Housing  
Corporation*

**Hon. George Hickey**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial  
Management Board; Minister of Justice;  
Minister responsible for Labour; Minister  
responsible for the Workers' Safety and  
Compensation Commission*

**Patterk Netser**  
(Aivilik)

**Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

*Government House Leader; Minister  
of Family Services; Minister  
responsible for Homelessness; Minister  
responsible for the Status of Women*

**Hon. David Joanasic**  
(South Baffin)

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

**Calvin Pedersen**  
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Thursday, March 4, 2021**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Paul Quassa)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, I will say a prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): We say “good day” to Nunavummiut and those who are following the proceedings. Please feel welcome once again as your Members of the Legislative Assembly will be in session.

Let’s proceed. Ministers’ Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Item 2: Ministers’ Statements**

**Minister’s Statement 572 – 5(2): 2020 Arctic Inspiration Prize**

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say “good day” to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, late last year I had the great privilege of virtually announcing the \$1 million 2020 Arctic Inspiration Prize to “Imaa, Like This”: Children and Youth Expressing Themselves Through Music. All winners were finally made public on February 19 during an online event to celebrate all the winners. It has not been an easy secret to keep.

“Imaa, Like This” is an exciting program that will create culturally relevant music education resources for Nunavut children and build capacity to increase access to music education across the territory. The program also aims to employ and mentor Inuit youth musicians to become community music leaders and to provide professional development opportunities to integrate traditional Inuktut music into their programs.

Mr. Speaker, another Nunavut-based project, Niqihaqut, also received a prize of \$451,000. Niqihaqut aims to address food security through sustainable and innovative

harvesting, all guided by Inuit values and the protection of Aviqtuuq, the Boothia Peninsula.

As my colleagues are aware, the Arctic Inspiration Prize is awarded annually to organizations that benefit the Canadian Arctic and our people. Up to ten prizes totalling up to \$3 million are handed out every year. The Government of Nunavut is a proud prize partner of the Arctic Inspiration Prize and we currently provide \$50,000 in funding every year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow members to please join me in congratulating “Imaa, Like This” and Niqhaqut, as well as all the recipients of the 2020 Arctic Inspiration Prizes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. As Nunavummiut, we are proud of those who are recognized. Ministers’ Statements. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Good day, my colleagues. I also say “good day” to the people of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, today I am calling on Nunavummiut to participate in the Canadian Housing Survey currently being conducted by Statistics Canada.

Can you hear me now?

**Speaker** (interpretation): Wait a moment. I’m sorry. There are technical issues with the audio equipment. Is it fixed now?

I’m sorry. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): I apologize. We are having some technical issues. We will proceed to another minister and then we will try that again with the minister.

Ministers’ Statements. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

### **Minister’s Statement 573 – 5(2): Technical Profession Studies Scholarship**

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon to my colleagues and those in Nunavut, especially to my constituents in Cambridge Bay.

*Uqaqtii*, the Technical Profession Studies Scholarship provides financial support to Nunavut Inuit and northerners to pursue post-secondary technical studies in fields such as engineering, informatics, community planning, business studies, and college programs in firefighting, training and prevention, and land administration.

The Department of Community and Government Services administers the program on an application basis, prioritizing Nunavut Inuit. Two calls for proposals are issued yearly, one in the fall and the second in winter. The program is advertised through a local newspaper, the Government of Nunavut Facebook page, and through public service announcements.

In the fall of 2020-21 a total of 12 students received financial support through the Technical Profession Studies Scholarship, including 10 Nunavut Inuit who received a sum of \$39,500 during the fall semester.

We are confident that the remaining funds of \$40,500 will be fully allocated under this program, thanks to the large number of applications already received for the competition currently underway. We anticipate awarding the remaining scholarships by mid-March 2021. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Joanasie.

#### **Minister's Statement 574 – 5(2): Recognition of Jane Pameolik**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also say “good day” to all Nunavummiut and MLAs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the perseverance and effort of all students at Nunavut Arctic College. I would specifically like to recognize the work of Jane Pameolik.

Jane is from Arviat and is currently enrolled in the pre-health program at Nunatta Campus in Iqaluit. The pre-health program supports students in learning advanced concepts in the sciences and prepares them for a successful transition to post-secondary studies and health care careers. It is Jane's goal to take the Bachelor of Science in Arctic Nursing at Nunatta Campus as she aspires to work as a neonatal nurse, allowing her direct engagement and care with the newest Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I am proud to state that Jane decided to attend Nunavut Arctic College because of her wish to support her community's health centre. We applaud all students who turn their commitment to their community into an educational pursuit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am recognizing Jane specifically, as she has recently been awarded several scholarships from different organizations within and outside Nunavut. Jane's awards total \$10,000. Wow! The awards include:

- CIBC Future Heroes Bursary Scholarship
- Indsipire's Building Brighter Futures; Bursaries, Scholarships and Awards Program
- 2020 Atuqtuarvik Corporation Nunavut Sivuniksavut Alumni Scholarship
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Scholarship Bursary

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, insights about her time as a student, her inspiration and her helpful study tips can be found in a story currently on the college's website. I encourage my fellow members and all Nunavummiut to visit [arcticcollege.ca](http://arcticcollege.ca) to read this very inspiring story.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Jane Pameolik for her efforts and all the students at Nunavut Arctic College for their ongoing commitment to their education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of her. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

### **Minister's Statement 575 – 5(2): Canadian Housing Survey**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, today I am calling on Nunavummiut to participate in the Canadian Housing Survey currently being conducted by Statistics Canada.

As my colleagues in this House know, the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the Government of Nunavut have tirelessly lobbied our federal counterparts to provide the financial assistance we need to find a solution to the housing crisis gripping our territory.

The survey that is currently being conducted will provide the Government of Canada with updated information about the housing needs and experiences of Nunavummiut. Statistics Canada especially wants to hear from northern Canadians to ensure they truly understand our unique housing needs. This is important because we know that many of the housing programs that work in southern Canada do not work in our territories.

Mr. Speaker, the survey is being distributed through Canada Post. I encourage everyone who is selected to participate in this survey complete it by March 31, 2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 576 – 5(2): Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit Language Awards**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that this past Friday, February 26, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit held an Inuktut Language Awards ceremony that celebrated six award winners.

Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit is mandated under the *Inuit Language Protection Act* to administer an award program in recognition of those people who contribute to the development, promotion, or protection of the Inuit language.

(interpretation) The winners of the Inuktut Language Awards were Lorraine Puqiqnak from Gjoa Haven, Susie Evyagotailak from Kugluktuk, Angeline Koomuk from Arviat, Jennifer Kadjuk from Naujaat, Arnarulunnguaq Audlaluk from Grise Fiord, and Ooleepika Ikkidluak from Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, we give great honour to those who maintain and pass on our language and we thank them for contributing to the survival of Inuktut. I am very proud of the award recipients and I ask my colleagues and Nunavummiut to join me in congratulating them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

**Item 3: Members' Statements**

**Member's Statement 820 – 5(2): Update on COVID-19 in Arviat**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues, the people of Arviat and Whale Cove.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic, I still have some comments to voice. First of all, on behalf of my constituents in Arviat and Whale Cove I thank all those who support the people through prayers, and by remembering their relatives and caring about them. So, to those who empathize and support us in this battle against this pandemic in Nunavut, I wanted to thank them all.

Ever since COVID-19 was detected in our communities, we have received a lot of support from various organizations and people, to whom we are exceptionally grateful

towards, nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, due to this pandemic, many residents of Arviat have also seen the dark side, with people playing the blame game and belittling the residents and the community.

We have heard many things about the pandemic since it was diagnosed, both in social media forums, as well as face-to-face accusations. Now, this type of slandering hasn't provided any benefit to the residents, especially demeaning and detrimental allegations against the people of Arviat. Here we are, already under duress with the pandemic challenges, and these keyboard warriors are attempting to saddle us with more stresses.

Mr. Speaker, this type of attacking when one is down is totally useless, as we all know that it is of no use, but then, the global health body or (interpretation ends) the World Health Organization (interpretation) undertook some research into the effects, both real and unseen of COVID-19, and they have stated they found that blaming and shaming of patients suffering from COVID-19 causes more hardship to patients, the health sector and may even contribute to the further spread of the disease.

Mr. Speaker, I ask these people to focus on the fact that we are all Nunavummiut, to be united in our cause, and to stop blaming or shaming anybody who may have contracted the disease in Arviat, and we also ask that residents in Nunavut be patient as we are trying to win this fight against COVID-19. We should not be lumped together with this disease, as we only have one enemy and that's COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize if I'm going over my time limit. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) At this point on this day I am asking for patience and I'm asking for empathy from our fellow Nunavummiut; whether it is online or whether it is person. I do believe that some of the blame for the stigmatization and shaming lies with the social media environment, which is toxic even at the best of times.

Mr. Speaker, I think the World Health Organization had two good slogans that I would like to share with the House in closing my statement; that we need solidarity, not stigma. The other slogan or saying is that viruses don't discriminate and neither should we.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to thank all the many community leaders, cultural leaders, religious leaders, political leaders from across Nunavut who have provided support and we have had much more support than shaming, but this is something that is harming our efforts to fight COVID-19. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Each day we fully support the people of Arviat through prayers and through other means. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Member's Statement 821 – 5(2): Staff Housing Program**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to announce that at the appropriate time, I will be tabling a report on the administration of the Government of Nunavut and the QEC's staff housing programs.

This report is based on the numerous written questions I have submitted on the topic. My analysis has identified that the Government of Nunavut's housing programs have many flaws. I would like to point out that this is not the fault of a particular individual or office, but a systemic issue which I assume dates back to the inception of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the issues that I have identified have been raised in this House on numerous occasions. It has been stated that the staff housing program is available for all employees to apply, but the generous \$1,500 a month subsidy is only available to 1,600 employees; less than half of the government's workforce, and further, the fact that Qulliq Energy Corporation employees are not able to apply to get into staff housing.

In addition, the \$1,500 a month subsidy to those in staff housing far exceeds the \$400 a month household allowance available to the other half of the government's workforce that is not in staff housing.

In addition, the fact that over 70 percent of staff housing is allocated to the government's highest earning employees. Most importantly, the fact that Inuit do make up 50 percent of the workforce, but only one quarter of the employees are benefiting from the staff housing program. In addition, Inuit across all employment categories, from executive down to administration have lower rates in staff housing than their non-Inuit counterparts.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to address the issue in the hopes that cabinet will address the systemic flaws which will require a government-wide approach. I do have high hopes that the situation can and will be corrected.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day that the Government of Nunavut housing programs will be equitable to all government employees both in staff housing and out of staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 822 – 5(2): Model for Elder Housing**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and to the people of Baker Lake.

I rise today to express my admiration and envy for some innovative developments that our western neighbours are bringing forward to provide community housing for elders.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our Health department is working hard to build long-term care facilities to provide beds for elders who need specific levels of care. I recognize that such conditions as dementia require specialized medical services.

However, Mr. Speaker, there are elders who wish to stay in their home communities and simply need some additional supports to enable them to continue living independently.

Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, I have learned of new initiatives in both the Northwest Territories and the Yukon to build senior living centres where elders can continue to have their independence while receiving home care and caretaking support. These units will have no-step entrances, wider doorways and main-floor bathrooms. One of the initiatives will also provide a meal service and recreational activities as well as housekeeping.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage our government to look at these models for planning housing infrastructure in our communities. Many of our elders are not ready for continued care and simply need a little extra support to continue living with dignity in their home communities, near their families and friends.

It would be wonderful if Nunavut could match what our northern counterparts are doing to ensure that more senior living complexes are constructed in our communities. We just need some collaboration and creativity to make this work. I ask our government to reach out to our northern neighbours and explore what options may be available to provide more elders housing in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Member's Statement 823 – 5(2): Love for Grandchild**

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "hello and good day" to my fellow residents of Netsilik.

Sometimes we go through some real deep issues, but we also have to smile once in a while too. This is the reason why I want to relay this story that occurred last week when I was speaking to a constituent from my other community and he was talking about our grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, when a couple first starts courting one another in the Inuit culture, the parents can see the love that is building, although the persons in the relationship feel that only that person is worthy of their love, while in real life, it is after the children have grown up, and they give birth to grandchildren, that is when you find true love as your progeny are visible and seem more precious.

This person was visiting their mother, bringing the children to their grandmother and earlier my fellow MLA from Manirajak stood up to make his statement earlier, and when you looked at the monitor, you can see what is going on.

As my colleague was making his statement, apparently our grandchild walked up to the TV happily as they could see me in the background, and apparently, they took quite a few pictures of me while my colleague was talking.

They asked their mother to come and see, and when the mother came over, after a while, the child was told, (interpretation ends) “Show your mom the pictures in your camera.” The little one (interpretation) said, (interpretation ends) “I don’t have them.” “How come?” “I delete them all because daddy never looks at the camera.”

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Everyone who is watching, please feel welcome. Members’ Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Ehaloak.

### **Member’s Statement 824 – 5(2): Opening of Okalik Centre**

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to congratulate a couple of people in my community, and the first one is the Municipality of Cambridge Bay for opening their Okalik Youth Centre, which will provide a safe environment for our youth for short-term and overnight stays.

I would also like to congratulate, [a person] I consider a dear friend and a long-time constituent who has been working in this House for over 20 years, and for the service that he provides, which I don’t think I can ever do; and that is interpreting and translating. Please help me in congratulating our very own James Panioyak for his service in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. That is exactly right; that is how we are able to proceed very well in the House here, because of the ability of the interpreters. I’m always proud of them. Members’ Statements. Member for South, Mr. Joanasie.

**Member's Statement 825 – 5(2): Recognition of Ooleepika Ikkidluak**

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to rise to recognize and thank an interpreter in the Legislative Assembly. I would like to recognize Ooleepika Ikkidlluak.

Mr. Speaker, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, we wanted to make sure that the people of Nunavut could properly understand the situation; especially the unilingual Inuktitut-speaking Inuit. Ooleepika has interpreted for many presentations about the pandemic because it's so important that people are able to understand everything about the pandemic, including vaccinations. As this has been continuing, the interpreters have done a great deal of work, so I would like to thank them.

Right now I would like to inform the people of Kinngait that they have been doing vaccinations since yesterday and they will be finishing tomorrow. I just wanted to let the people of Kinngait know.

However, Ooleepika has been an interpreter for a very long time, so I wanted to recognize her for her interpreting skills. She is originally from Kimmirut, but she now lives in Iqaluit. I know the residents of Kimmirut are very proud of her too. She has been recognized by Inuit [Uqausinginnik] Taigusiliuqtiit.

Recently, towards the end of 2020, the media talked about Ooleepika and what she does. She does this so that the people of Nunavut can be informed, so I wanted to thank her for doing all of that. We are very proud of Ooleepika, and she is a very good interpreter and will continue to be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, that is absolutely right. Many of us watched and listened to Ooleepika when they were talking about the pandemic. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Sheutiapik.

**Member's Statement 826 – 5(2): Recognition of Alex Flaherty and Polar Outfitting**

**Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I stand with Arviat when we think about Inuit societal values. (interpretation) We should not put down people. That's what my parents used to tell me. (interpretation ends) I stand united with you.

Earlier this week I mentioned that sometimes we're not grateful enough. There are some few people who didn't watch what the wink means. It's because I'm saying thank you, and ironically this morning I was going to say today my wink is for the interpreters. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtitsijii*, I stand today to acknowledge a constituent who, I'm proud to say, was honoured in Yukon. I know he was acknowledged for his business, Polar Outfitting, Alex Flaherty, for the Top Indigenous Business of the Year.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation) How impressive! This is an absolute top honour and obviously, that is due to the fact that this recognition stems not just from Nunavut but throughout the territories, so this is indeed a huge accomplishment. (interpretation ends) Alex, your hard work and dedication has led you to be successful not only in the outfitting trade but in commitment to Inuit cultural values and the mental and physical well-being and benefits of being out on the land. Priceless.

Polar Outfitting offers individuals the chance to experience and be immersed in the beauty of the land, wildlife, and traditions of Nunavut. Your company offers a unique and important opportunity for individuals to connect with the land and feel rejuvenated, at peace, and excited about Nunavut and what we have to offer.

You are an inspiration to others who seek to be successful in a trade that contributes to the mental and physical well-being of individuals and to those who seek guided experiences and connections to our beautiful land. I wish you all the best and continued success with your endeavours. (interpretation) Thank you, Alex and Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Akeeagok.

### **Member's Statement 827 – 5(2): Recognition of Ms. Audlaluk**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I was unable to rise to speak and I would like to apologize for that, as a person passed away in Igloodik, and we too lost a resident in Grise Fiord who worked up there and who was also a leader, at least one of my leaders so that was quite impactful to hear about families losing loved ones.

Today, I rise to speak further to the announcement my ministerial colleague made about Inuit acknowledged as language experts by the Inuit Language Authority, including some in Grise Fiord.

Arnarulunnguaq Audlaluk was mentioned as one of the recipients and I was quite proud, happy and ecstatic to hear, as she is a teacher teaching Inuktitut starting from kindergarten to grade 3. In serving in her role, she has to work really hard to provide lessons for the children. One of her common refrains is "speaking Inuktitut is not in the slightest embarrassing, so please use it well."

With that being the case, I want to voice my extreme pride in her accomplishments, as she is also quite young, at least in my eyes. Arnarulunnguaq to me is young, and she is Larry and Annie's daughter. However, she works to keep Inuktitut alive by teaching Inuktitut, so I wanted to thank her.

Furthermore, the school where she is teaching is also where she finished her high school studies in. So, that is even more amazing as an accomplishment! I wanted to voice my pride by congratulating her as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of people who are recognized like that, especially for languages. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Returns to Oral Questions. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. No. 6. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

### **Item 6: Oral Questions**

#### **Question 1198 – 5(2): Community Morgues**

**Mr. Akoak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to everyone and the community of Gjoa Haven. The community of Gjoa Haven did a church service on behalf of Arviarmiut last night, so I am proud of the community. Thank you.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Before I get into my questions, I would like to read a newspaper report that was done back on October 27, 2020, where it says that "The Department of Community and Government Services has obtained two mobile refrigerated units that can be shipped to communities on an as-needed basis to serve as temporary morgues." It goes on to say that "The topic arose in the legislative assembly on Oct. 23 when Gjoa Haven MLA Tony Akoak requested an update..." on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, my question is this; I am raising an old issue with a new minister. As the minister will recall, the issue of ensuring that communities have adequate morgue facilities has been raised by a number of Members of the Legislative Assembly.

When I last raised this issue during our recent fall sitting, the minister's predecessor indicated that the interdepartmental working group, which had been established to develop a strategy concerning community morgues, had been making progress.

Can the minister update the House today on the status of its work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for his question. Unfortunately, I don't have that status as to what is going on with the morgues in the communities, but I can definitely find out for the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

**Mr. Akoak**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his reply to the correspondence that I wrote on this issue, the minister's predecessor indicated to me that the department is "committed to assisting municipalities with the cost of converting surplus buildings into a morgue and visitation area for the deceased through its small capital fund, with funding packages of up to \$250,000."

Can the minister confirm which Nunavut communities have submitted funding requests to her department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not aware of any applications that came to Community and Government Services for that type of funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

**Mr. Akoak**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will be aware, I have previously written correspondence that describes the situation in Gjoa Haven where an aging and unsuitable storage shed has been in use as a temporary facility. It is not a pretty sight to see if you go into that building.

Will the minister commit to having her department contact the Municipality of Gjoa Haven directly to examine options for addressing the community's need for an adequate morgue facility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for his question. As I stated in previous responses, our department, Community and Government Services is always willing to work with municipalities, and I can commit and say we will try and work with the Municipality of

Gjoa Haven so that they can address the issue of their morgue in their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

**Question 1199 – 5(2): COVID-19 and Stigma**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health. I almost said “I rise.”

As I said in my member’s statement, putting people in an embarrassing situation, I think is of no use and it is a form of hurting people even through it is through words or computers. It is not right when you put people down or embarrass them because of COVID-19.

My first question to the minister is: does he agree with what I am saying? That is my question for the minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not only do I agree with you, I agree with all people of Arviat. We should not be shaming the people of Arviat for this or anywhere in Nunavut. Anyone in Nunavut who gets COVID-19 should not be shamed.

*>>Applause*

I know COVID-19 is present over there but it spreads very quickly. There was one case overseas and it is still spreading across the globe. Whether it be Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, or Pond Inlet, it can arrive anywhere, Mr. Speaker. We don’t want to see it arrive there. To the people of Nunavut, don’t point fingers. You have to help.

I will say I don’t think there are many people who have put the people of Arviat down. We all support the people of Arviat. We don’t want anyone experiencing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*>>Applause*

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

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. When you are supported through words, it is very encouraging. The people of Arviat are experiencing great difficulties right now, and I thank the minister for his response.

For my second question, the test kits for COVID-19 for (interpretation ends) rapid testing (interpretation) in English, were mentioned in the House last Friday. My question for the minister is: when will the new rapid test kits be available for Arviat? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me add this: the staff at the Department of Health are working very hard daily to eliminate COVID-19 in Arviat. They don't ever give up, Mr. Speaker, and for that I thank them.

The test kits we mentioned previously when colleagues were inquiring about this matter, are now being checked out and are now in use in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet. It is slightly different from the previous testing procedures, so sometimes difficulties can occur such as slight delays. However, all tests are double-checked and retested either in Rankin Inlet or Iqaluit, Mr. Speaker.

The previous matter we mentioned last week are still being completed this week, especially when they arrive into Arviat, where these testing kits will be stored, how they will be applied, so questions like these are still being identified and once answers to all of these questions are completed, then we would move to the secondary phase, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you, minister as one can only support this type of initiative, so you have my support. My final question relates to the Department of Health's procedures they follow to send out these testing kits to Manitoba for confirmation and such.

Can the minister provide some clarification and the question I wish to ask relates to how they are treating people coming from Arviat who are travelling to Manitoba? When they arrive into Manitoba, are they immediately placed in the isolation hubs or (interpretation ends) isolation (interpretation) protocols have to be followed?

Can the minister outline what they have to follow when they arrive into Manitoba, and if the minister can clarify that, I would appreciate it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If he is asking about patients travelling down to Manitoba on medical travel purposes, there are different categories. Some patients are treated without ever going outside of the medical centre, and they are able to return faster.

Others have to stay in the boarding home prior to getting medical attention, and therefore have to go through the isolation hubs prior to returning to Nunavut. These are the protocols we are following at this time. The differences in the length of time in the treatment is what forces patients to go through either route, and Arviat residents are just following that same procedure, just like people from Rankin Inlet or other Kivalliq communities.

However, with respect to travellers to Manitoba from Arviat or elsewhere, if they are not there for medical travel, then they have to abide by the rules listed by Manitoba, and this is specific to non-medical travel, and that is how I can respond to my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

### **Question 1200 – 5(2): Sanikiluaq Sewage Lagoon**

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Sanikiluaq and the people of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the issue of the Sanikiluaq sewage lagoon.

As the minister will recall, I have been pushing hard for a long-term wastewater management solution for Sanikiluaq.

In March 2020 the minister's department issued a request for proposals for a sewage lagoon business case study. My understanding is that the contract was awarded to Nunami Stantec in the summer of 2020. The request for proposals indicates that the work was to have been completed by October 2020.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work and will she commit to providing me with a copy of the final report from the sewage lagoon business case study? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The Sanikiluaq wastewater sewage lagoon upgrades, due to the combination of COVID, delays, and weather damage to local lodgings, the consultant was unable to complete field assessments during the summer of 2020 and they're expected to be completed this summer of 2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the update. The request for proposals indicates that the purpose of the business case is to “recommend a preferred option for the municipality of Sanikiluaq wastewater strategy over a 20-year lifetime. The final business case report will be evaluated within the Department of Community and Government Services to determine the financial viability of taking the schematic design strategy into the detailed design stage.”

As the minister will be aware, there is a long history to this project and the original budget for this project, I think, was in the neighbourhood of \$6.4 million and it is my understanding that the department has gone from building a new lagoon to major upgrades to the current one.

Can the minister update us today on the anticipated final cost for the lagoon project in Sanikiluaq? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. So far, the financial cost for this program, which is provided by the Gas Tax Fund, a total of \$778,656 has been spent to date, with an additional \$249,000 allocated to complete the final stage of the project planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for those numbers. That leaves about \$5 million in the fund as of right now. As the minister may be aware, the road from the town to the sewage lagoon is in very rough condition. Considering that this project is going from new construction to renovating the current sewage lagoon, can the minister commit to ensuring that the scope of this project will also include upgrades and repairs to the road? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. I can't commit to whether or not the repairs to the road will be part of the project, but I can have my staff do the research and let me know and I can get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

**Question 1201 – 5(2): Preventing Racism**

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on racism and what it really means to Inuit. We are not too familiar with racism as Inuit because we are the majority in Nunavut, but it has taken place in the workplace.

I'll be speaking English so that I am clearly understood when I'm talking about racism, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I say "good day" to the residents of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Human Resources.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, I recently addressed the issue of racism and nepotism that are faced by some Inuit who are employed by the Government of Nunavut or are seeking employment within the government. I noted that some individuals have come to me to my home to express their concerns. These people feel very intimidated by senior government officials.

In responding to my question, the Minister of Health stated, and I will quote from the *Hansard* of Tuesday, March 2, 2021, "I can refer to the 1010 form for an example, where people can complain anonymously about the situation they're in." That is good news, but for the benefit of my constituents and for anyone else who may be interested, I would like some clarification.

When we look at the complaint form, which is currently on the GN website, Appendix A of the 1010 directive on a harassment free workplace in the *Human Resource Manual*, it is clear that the first line requires the name of the complainant.

At the end of the form, it is also clear; the name and signature of the complainant.

Can the minister confirm that government officials will look into a complaint even if the 1010 form is submitted anonymously, without the complainant's name and signature portions filled in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, as my colleague from Health mentioned, for this particular one, they can fill out that form anonymously and they would submit it to our department and we would look into it. It would be preferable to have a name so that we can report back to the individual of what findings have taken place and corrective actions took place.

The main difference is that when it is anonymous, we don't necessarily report back to the individual. Corrective measures, if needed, would take place, but we would not be able to report back to the individual that launched an anonymous complaint. That is the difference in terms of putting an anonymous form in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his prompt response. In Inuktitut the terminology for the word "racism" is quite difficult, but I do acknowledge or recognize when someone feels intimidated because of their skin colour. It is a very important issue and I'm pleased that our current government has presented a policy toward this.

However, can the minister inform us how often complaints of racism and nepotism have been submitted under the 1010 directive; the government's harassment free workplace policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give an appropriate response or to voice it properly.

At this time, between the period of April 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021 up to this current period, the policy on (interpretation ends) harassment (interpretation) free workplace as well as (interpretation ends) racism (interpretation) that forms part of this review.

This is included in the review and to date, it forms just one of the many issues as we have received over 42 complaints that have to be investigated. Those are the current submissions to our office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your response. Mr. Speaker, I understand these are very sensitive issues and nobody feels comfortable when racism seems to be a factor in people's behaviours or decisions. However, we cannot ignore that racism exists within institutionalized offices or even within this building. I hate to say it and I do not appreciate it, but it could be me. I'm talking maybe I have it; I have to question myself. However, it has impacted on people's lives.

Will the minister commit to increasing his efforts to raise awareness of racism and racist behaviour and prevent it from being a factor in the employment of Inuit or non-Inuit across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for raising this issue. It is an issue that we hope that should not exist in this world, but it does exist. How do we deal with it within our own government, within our own public service? There are practically four ways that an employee can reach out and launch a complaint. The first one is through the Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal, which is a very, under the legislation that is created in this House, a very good legislation that you can do.

If you're an employee, you can raise it to the ethics officer, which is an independent officer that will review and you can raise it to the deputy head of the department that you work in or to another deputy head if you are uncomfortable with the current deputy or if the deputy minister is the one that you're launching the complaints.

There are different avenues and we continue to put campaigns in terms of providing that information out to the public and out to our employees, and above all, every employee, including us, we all have our code of values. When you accept a job in the government, there is a government code of conduct that people should adhere to and which has zero tolerance in racism or any form of harassment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Question 1202 – 5(2): Fiscal Update**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance and the topic is the Government of Nunavut's fiscal situation.

Last week when the minister presented the Budget Address, it included many positive notes which I would like to quote:

“...we expect to end the [2020-21] fiscal year in reasonably good shape”;

There's a “likelihood that departments will have funds left over at year-end due to COVID-related disruptions”;

“...our credit rating remains strong”; and

“...we continue to manage our fiscal purse well.”

Mr. Speaker, these are great to hear and I would like to focus on the government's strong credit rating, which I assume is attributed to three matters: relatively low debt, long

history of surpluses, and a large amount of liquid assets, such as cash and cash equivalents.

Mr. Speaker, the relatively low debt is self-explanatory, so I would like to begin with the Government of Nunavut's long history of surpluses. Last year the Government of Nunavut had a surplus of \$81 million. In fact the average surplus during the tenure of this Fifth Assembly has been roughly \$112 million a year.

For my first question, as the minister had indicated in the Budget Address, you expect to end the current fiscal year in reasonably good shape. I do understand that there are many year-end adjusting entries to come after the March 31 end, and I understand that you won't be able to provide the exact figure, but I assume that you must have a rough estimate. I would like to ask: as the fiscal year-end is days away, do you expect our government to have a surplus near the \$112 million average or within the tens of millions or possibly just a few million dollars? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now I'm anticipating a very small deficit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. As I mentioned, in the Fifth Assembly I have seen the Government of Nunavut present healthy financial statements with an average surplus of \$112 million a year. When you take into account the entire history of lapsed funds since 1999, the annual average has been roughly \$80 million. The year-over-year surpluses have led to today's accumulated surplus of \$2.8 billion. This does not mean that the Government of Nunavut has \$2.8 billion in the bank, as there are many non-cash transactions involved. However, this brings me to my second point: the large amount liquid assets, such as cash and cash equivalents.

The year-over-year surpluses have grown the Government of Nunavut's cash and cash equivalents, which was most recently reported to be \$600 million, \$700 million if you include the territorial corporations. This cash in the bank is well in excess of the working capital requirements of the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, MLAs on a daily basis in this legislature are pleading with the government to do more for our communities; more housing, increased supports for youth, family and violence shelters, just to name a few. Often in the response that we receive is the minister wants to, but we don't have the funds.

I would like to ask: what does the minister plan on doing with the surplus cash? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance and Chair of the Financial Management Board, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member is very well aware, the proceedings in Committee of the Whole that are ongoing right now are to work with our territorial departmental budgets, so when a budget is allocated to a department, as again the member is very well aware, those are the numbers that are allocated to be spent by that department.

Whether we carry cash from different third party agreements, including recent ones with the federal government, has an impact on our cash balance, but at the same time we do generate revenue from that cash. We make short-term investments with monies that were not needed for everyday use, such as payroll, fuel purchasing, or other aspects.

Mr. Speaker, again, as the member is very well aware, we were sitting in a situation where we could run into a surplus situation and we went very aggressively. There's a bill coming forward to this House to not only nullify that surplus but to put it towards something that has been a very serious issue that has been raised continuously in this House and that's more housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Moving on to my final question, in response to my recent written question regarding the Government of Nunavut's budget expenditure and cash flow, the balance of the government's Consolidated Revenue Fund was in excess of \$668 million as of March 31 of last year. I would like to ask the minister: what is the balance of today and to what extent is the government investing these hundreds of millions of dollars? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's question on a couple of different fronts, mainly to highlight the fact that how well our planning is done so we know how much cash we need to have on hand for our day-to-day operations, such as payroll, and depending upon the need of that month or that period, we do short-term investments, obviously very solid investments. You're not going to get a lot of return on it, but at the same time we don't want money languishing in our accounts. It's there to either work for Nunavummiut or work for us to generate revenue.

Mr. Speaker, I can only say that it does change on a month-to-month basis. The current balance, because of some of the recent agreements that we have received through third party funding, some of the cash is just flowing now from agreements that were signed earlier in the year, we have over \$800 million in cash in our accounts at this moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Question 1203 – 5(2): Renovations at Kugaaruk Health Centre**

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Netsilik, as I didn’t do so this morning, as well as my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, during our sitting last fall, I asked for an update on the plans for Kugaaruk’s community health centre. It is now six months later and we have not received any new information. Kugaaruk’s health centre currently does not have enough space for the staff and all the clients they see. A number of repairs are also necessary.

Can the minister elaborate on what stage of the capital process his department has reached in planning for further renovations and repairs at the Kugaaruk Health Centre? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the planning and design of a new facility, I believe that Kugaaruk’s facility planning and design stage is beginning in the year 2023.

As for the question in terms of minor repairs planned for the community, it is planned for this summer, and COVID providing, that things like repairs or changing the air handling unit in the health centre and minor repairs to walls and so forth would happen over the summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for responding to my question. I fully understand that it will begin in 2023 and my fellow citizens will need to understand what will happen next.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that all of the work required at the Kugaaruk Health Centre may not be completed anytime soon. However, when we approved the department’s capital budget last fall, the line item for ongoing lifecycle projects included an upgrade to the air handling system at the Kugaaruk Health Centre as well as the renovation of the front office. Can the minister tell us when these projects will be completed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague could appreciate the answer I just gave him before this one that there are plans, provided that they're able to do them, to deal with the air handling unit in the health centre this summer and the minor repairs that my colleague is referring to, the work should begin this summer, and hopefully they would be done not too long after that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to hear that the work should begin this summer.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we are in the final year of our term of this Assembly and we will have one last opportunity to review the government's capital plan in the fall.

Will the minister commit to providing an update on any further plans for the Kugaaruk Community Health Centre when we meet for the fall sitting in six months' time?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to let my colleague down, but the plan for the planning and design for Kugaaruk is not 'til 2023, Mr. Speaker. I think to begin planning this fall would be a little premature, so unfortunately the planning and design won't begin until 2023, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Ms. Angnakak.

### **Question 1204 – 5(2): Senior Appointments**

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Premier and they concern the issue of senior appointments to the public service.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue during our fall sitting, I noted that there were at least half a dozen vacancies at the most senior executive level of the public service.

If my math is correct, the situation today is not much better: two of our territorial corporations are lacking permanent presidents, the departments of Health and Family Services have a number of senior-level vacancies and the Department of Community and Government Services appears to have lost all of its deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers.

Can the Premier confirm whether or not I have missed anybody? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if she missed anybody, but to the best of my knowledge, we only have one corporation that's missing a deputy head right now, so we could add one number to our side. We are losing a few senior personnel, she is correct, but we're in the process and we have short-term measures and working on long-term measures to fill these positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do believe my math is correct, though.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue, I asked the Premier to confirm how many of the government's current assistant deputy minister positions had been filled by direct appointment, and if he could provide an updated number for us today on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have an exact number. We have some assistant deputy minister positions that have been filled by direct appointments; it's a small number, but we do have some. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I noted in the preamble to my first question, it appears that one department, Community and Government Services, is losing all of its DM and ADM positions, and we know that these types of positions cannot be filled overnight.

Can the Premier confirm whether or not he will be making interim or acting appointments in the near future to provide some stability in the department's leadership, and will he be using open competitions to fill these current and pending executive vacancies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, yes, and yes, and I will elaborate.

>> *Laughter*

There will be an acting ADM for Community and Government Services and the acting deputy... . Sorry. There will be an acting deputy minister and the acting deputy minister will appoint acting assistant deputy ministers. We will be in the process of filling those permanently with competition-based. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

**Question 1205 – 5(2): Building Code Act**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Jennifer Kadjuk of Naujaat. Congratulations.

My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the (interpretation ends) *Building Code Act*. (interpretation) I had previously asked questions with regard to homeowners who wish to change their oil tanks, if a permit was required. The minister indicated that it was not necessary.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, during our review of the 2021-22 Main Estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services, I asked the minister to clarify the question of whether or not Nunavut homeowners require a permit from her department to install a new heating tank. In reviewing information published by her department's Office of the Chief Building Official, it has come to my attention that homeowners are in fact required to apply for a permit and pay a fee.

Can the minister clearly explain why this requirement has been introduced?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for his question. When it comes to homeowners and when they are replacing their fuel tanks, in conjunction with the Department of Environment and the municipality building codes, building applications are done to ensure that the installation of the fuel tank is done properly and safely. The fee for an installation of such a tank is minimal, compared to if it was large construction project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Netser.

**Mr. Netser**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation) I don't fully understand the answer. (interpretation ends) Again, it's my understanding that Nunavut homeowners who want to install a new heating oil tank are now required to obtain an inspection work before work can even start.

Mr. Speaker, it might be easy here in the capital, but it's not so easy in smaller communities where many of us live.

Can the minister clearly explain how and why her department plans to conduct such inspections for basic projects such as installing simple home heating fuel tanks?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I do not have the level of information the member is looking for, but I can definitely find it for the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) These new requirements are clearly unnecessary and very erroneous for homeowners. Will the minister commit to reviewing this issue and getting back to the House before the end of our current winter sitting? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can commit to reviewing, but I cannot commit to let the member know that they will actually be done by the end of this sitting, but I can review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

### **Question 1206 – 5(2): Proof of COVID Vaccination**

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, everybody. I would like to say “congratulations” to Susie Evyagotailak on receiving her award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, as my constituents will be aware, I chose to take the COVID-19 vaccination in order to do my part in keeping my constituency safe and healthy, as well as my family and myself.

Can the minister clarify how his department maintains records to show who across Nunavut has been vaccinated to date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad my colleague was vaccinated and I encourage Nunavummiut to do the same, those who can.

Mr. Speaker, our COVID response team is keeping a very close track of how many vaccinations they have given out and in both the first and second dose, they're keeping a close track of those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have noted that in some jurisdictions there have been discussions about requiring proof of vaccination or a 'vaccination passport,' as they are calling it, before allowing individuals to travel.

Can the minister clarify whether any consideration has been given to providing some sort of 'proof of COVID-19 vaccination' document to Nunavummiut who have received the vaccination? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our COVID team is not at that stage yet. We are still vaccinating Nunavummiut. We have not been able to reach all the communities to date.

As I stated before, until such time that we have been to every community and everybody that wants the vaccination has had the opportunity to get vaccinated, until we have gone to that stage and everybody has had their second vaccination of those who can, at that point our vaccination team will take a look at those information and the ever-evolving information coming out from the vaccination now that it's starting to roll out in the southern part of this country.

Researches and stuff are happening as we speak, as that evolves and as we get more information on that, our COVID team is analyzing it and I'm hoping that sometime in early spring we will be able to come to phase 2 of where do we go from here to be able to answer some of those questions, but we're not there yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. You kind of answered my third question there, so I would just like to congratulate your COVID team on the very good job they're doing across the Nunavut territory. I heard nothing but good news and they're providing very good information for the individuals that have questions about anything that has to do with the COVID-19 vaccination, so congratulations to your team. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

### **Question 1207 – 5(2): Elder Housing**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement I noted that both of our northern neighbours have been developing options for elder-specific housing.

Can the minister inform this House whether the Nunavut Housing Corporation has considered any new options for building elder-specific housing complexes in Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. Based on my knowledge right now, the elders facility in Arviat was supposed to have minor renovations in 2020-21 and (interpretation ends) additional renovations are scheduled once the Department of Health is able to temporarily move residents. (interpretation) That's the situation in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response. Mr. Speaker, some communities, including Iqaluit, Qikiqtarjuaq, and Baker Lake, have housing units specifically designated for elders. Can the minister update us on how many Nunavut communities have elder-designated housing units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) Out of the 25 Nunavut communities, there are 18 communities that have 178 customized elders' units or support aging in place units; 46 in the Kitikmeot, 29 in the Kivalliq, and 103 in Qikiqtaaluk. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response. It sounds very promising and very good that there's a lot of attention being given to elders to help with their housing units.

Mr. Speaker, I very much approve of elder-designated housing. However, some elders may need a little bit more support to continue living safely and comfortably in their own homes with such activities as snow clearing and home care visits to specialized features like ramps and adapted washroom facilities. It seems we could do more.

Will the minister commit to working with her colleagues in health and family services to develop options to build elder housing complexes in Nunavut communities using the models being implemented by our northern neighbours? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. I didn't mention that there are two elder facilities in Iqaluit and one in Arviat. They work with the Department of Health. If the elder homes need to be fixed up, home care workers notify health care staff to see what other help they need. This is always continuing today. We want to make sure that they have a comfortable place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Member Qamaniq.

#### **Motion 108 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period**

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Amittuq, that oral question period be extended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order and it is not debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and question period is extended by an additional 30 minutes.

Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

#### **Question 1208 – 5(2): Baffinland Phase 2 Hearings**

**Mr. Kaernerck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Member Qamaniq. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Mining.

As the minister is aware, Amittuq is also affected by this mining project with Baffinland. For my first question, Mr. Speaker, last month the Nunavut Impact Review Board held a phase 2 project hearing for Baffinland.

My first question would be if the proponents, the interveners, and the communities that are affected by that Nunavut Impact Review Board hearing... I would like to know how the mining division saw the Nunavut Impact Review hearing process last month. Was it equal, was it fair, was it unfair, to all the proponents, interveners, and the affected communities? How did the department see the process of the hearing from the Nunavut Impact Review Board? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nunavut Impact Review Board is a regulatory body that we respect very much, and in fact, we appoint at least two of the members on the board. We ask the board to conduct their review with eyes of all the interveners, proponents, including the land owners when there is development taking place.

The Nunavut Impact Review Board is right in the middle of looking at phase 2 when it comes to Baffinland and we respect that. Our government tasks our senior staff in those hearings through what we call the “Sustainable Development Committee” and every department is involved in preparation for any hearing, including a very complex project like Baffinland. We have provided our input and we see that this hearing is still ongoing.

I respect the board. They do have a very tough task right now, as you have seen by what has transpired during the technical hearings and during the actual hearings themselves. They have a huge task and I applaud them, and I look forward to seeing what results they do, but this review is still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for that information. I’m assuming that the department would state it as a fair process.

Mr. Speaker, like I said, the Amittuq I represent is affected and the people that work up in Baffinland is one of the economic forces that drives the communities and it’s driving the economy in the community.

Mr. Speaker, my next question would be; I have been watching the news and it was postponed, so my next question is just a simple yes or no: does the department support next month’s community roundtable for... ? Like I said, is Economic Development and Transportation in support of this community roundtable that will be held next month? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you. I’ll do what the Premier just did; yes, and I’ll elaborate.

>> *Laughter*

The Nunavut Impact Review Board just put out a press release on March 1 on the seven impacted communities, asking them for five delegates per community, and through that, the community roundtable is done by the Nunavut Impact Review Board and they hear from the communities. This is a wonderful opportunity for all the seven communities in the surrounding area to have their say and I would encourage the hamlets, the HTOs, and the public to start nominating and delegating their representatives to go to the community roundtable. That is not our role as a government. NIRB wants to hear what the community has to say and I applaud them for doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I applaud you on your answer. I hope the pandemic won't have any effect with next month's community roundtable hearing.

Mr. Speaker, my last question would be, like I said before, I have been watching the news and also published through the *Nunatsiaq News* that the Nuluujaat Guardians submitted a letter when they had their process up in the mine site. I would just like to know: where does Economic Development and Transportation stand? Are they standing with the Nuluujaat Guardians or the Qikiqtani Inuit Association or with the other organizations, such as the Nunavut Impact Review Board? How is the department taking this? Who is on his side? Are they being neutral? I would just like to know how the department is handling this ongoing protest or with what the QIA is doing. I would just like to know: where does the department stand? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Based on my understanding, the question is directed to the (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for allowing me to elaborate a little bit on this current situation that is taking place right now. Civil disobedience does not have any role in any of our communities or any of the developed areas where they are permitted and have conditions in place.

However, I do want to restate what our Premier mentioned on the very first day as Minister of Environment. What's transpiring right now is an Inuit matter through the Inuit organizations, through the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and those that are trying to say that they're not being heard. I have full confidence in that association and I have full confidence with our fellow Inuit in terms of resolving these disputes that are currently taking place right now.

It is one that as a government, we would like those resolved by the very organizations or the very beneficiaries that are under this claim. This has been allowed through our

Nunavut land claims and something that I totally respect as we each have our own roles and jurisdictions, and I hope that this gets resolved through that manner as this is very critical in terms of having a healthy place within our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

**Question 1209 – 5(2): COVID-19 Public Awareness**

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues.

I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

When the world first started learning about COVID-19 and measures were introduced in March of last year reaching to just recently, where the Premier and Minister of Health held daily public sessions in the Chamber.

It also gave an opportunity for anyone in the media who had questions, to query the minister or Premier about the pandemic or health measures in place. Now, the executive was shuffled, and the portfolios changed, and this particular forum or public dissemination process for informing the public in Nunavut about COVID-19 stopped.

Will this public information process be reinstated for the upcoming vaccination rounds? It is important to keep Nunavummiut informed about the next round of vaccinations, and it would be convenient to hear about the upcoming dates for each community. Has this daily update process from the Chambers stopped for good? It will not be reinstated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This process hasn't stopped, as when I sat in the Chambers here prior to this session, we have kept everyone informed, but due to this sitting, we are unable to continue that process due to the ongoing operations of our assembly so we haven't been able to do that here.

Nonetheless, there are daily updates and announcements provided regarding this pandemic on the internet, and reporters receive daily public releases on the information relevant to the day, so that process of keeping the public informed is ongoing.

As a matter of fact, I am glad you asked about this matter today, since after our break from session, the department will release their daily information to the media and online, and reporters will also have a chance to query us later. No, this process of dissemination hasn't stopped at all, but due to our session, we can't set aside the time slot we used previously for our televised updates as the cameras are in use currently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, with the vaccination tour dates being finalized, and with many residents already getting their inoculation shots, and today with Arviat being the only community having COVID-19 cases, with that being the case, during this entire pandemic as more residents are receiving their vaccinations, or at least up to the time that everyone undergoes this process, will the government continue to provide radio updates?

That is my last question for the time being, and that should suffice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whenever anything of importance is required to be disseminated publicly related to this COVID-19 pandemic, we will provide daily updates and announcements. As long as the need to keep the public informed remains, and there is important news to share, we will continue to provide and announce any news items require, Mr. Speaker, as long as it is needed.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. I have no more names on my list. Let's proceed to No. 7. Written Questions. Returns to Written Questions. Replies to Opening Address. Petitions. Responses to Petitions. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Lightstone.

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

#### **Tabled Document 360 – 5(2): Staff Housing Distribution Report**

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my member's statement, I am tabling a report based on my written questions regarding the Government of Nunavut and the Qulliq Energy Corporation's staff housing programs.

Mr. Speaker, the report is 19 pages long and is broken down to the department level to allow each minister to review the inequitable distribution of staff housing in their portfolios. I hope that the ministers will utilize this information for the benefit of the disenfranchised Inuit and lower income employees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Tabled Document 361 – 5(2): Photographs of Naujaat Garage**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a set of photographs that were sent to me from the Hamlet of Naujaat to illustrate the need for a new municipal garage, as currently, the existing facility is overcrowded and aging. There are quite a few pieces of heavy equipment sitting outside in the middle of winter.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all members to review these photographs with care and I will be asking questions to the appropriate minister at the appropriate time, perhaps next week, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

**Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills****Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, No. 2 – Notice**

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, March 5, 2021, that Bill 68, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, No. 2*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Motions. (interpretation) First Reading of Bills. Second Reading of Bills. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 58, 59, 60, and 61 with Ms. Angnakak in the Chair.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:29 and Committee resumed at 15:59*

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

**Chairperson** (Ms. Angnakak): Are we on? We are on. Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to call the committee meeting to order, please. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 58, 59, 60, and 61. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and good afternoon. Madam Chairperson, we wish to continue with the review of the 2021-22 Main Estimates for the Department of Education, followed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 59?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 59 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022 – Education – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairperson:** Thank you. Does the committee agree to let officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Sergeant-at-Arms, please... Well they're already there. Look at that. We are really speedy today. I think we might as well go to Minister Joanasie and just introduce your staff again for the record. Thank you, Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With me is my Deputy Minister Kathy Okpik, my Associate Deputy Rebecca Hainnu, and Assistant Deputy Minister, Ms. Abbott, as well as our Direct of Finance, Abraham Suleiman. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): I thank you as well, Minister Joanasie. We are on G-10. K-12 School Operations. Questions. Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) My question is the K-12 School Operations branch is projected to receive a significant increase in funding for the 2021-22. What accounts for the increase in funding? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, also. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for the question. The bulk of it is for the changes to the student-educator ratio formula. It's just over \$4 million. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just have two more questions. The accounting structure chart on G-1 of the 2020-21 main estimates indicates an increase of 71.6 PYs in the K-12 School Operations branch. What new positions will be added and how much does the department propose to fill these positions? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): I thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I again thank you for the question. For the next fiscal year we are aiming to increase the student support assistant positions in the schools by at least 42 positions. In addition to that, the normal annual increase of our student-educator ratio, to be in line with our *Education Act*, we are anticipating additional positions for our schools based on our practices in previous years, and that will be, staff-wise, it's an ongoing thing that we will be recruiting in going forward with our competitions for those positions. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you too, Minister Joanasié. Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister for your response. My final question is the effects of COVID-19; do we know the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Nunavut students? Madam Chairperson, thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have recognized that there is going to be some level of learning loss, so the focus here is to have learning retention for our schools and students to maintain and progress and reach those benchmarks and outcomes that we aim to achieve at their expected grade levels. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Oh, Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good day, minister. (interpretation ends) I wonder if I could follow up on Ms. Towtongie's question about the budget. There is about a \$9 million budget increase for this area. The minister mentioned \$4 million is going to the student-educator ratio. If he could summarize where the rest of the new funds will be allocated. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On top of the new changes to the student-educator ratio formula, I mentioned just over \$4 million. The student-educator ratio formula previously used will account for an additional \$3.7 million. Busing services is close to a \$2 million increase. There are also a few minor increases on adjustments or DEA contributions. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. When it comes to COVID-19 here in Arviat, it's been brought to my attention that there were some issues around teachers not being able to enter the school, and I'm not sure why teachers were not able to enter the school during the past approximately three months.

I wonder if the minister could clarify the situation. What was causing the barrier for teachers not being able to enter the school building to do their work or prepare packages? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It had to do with the Public Health orders and restrictions that we needed to make sure that we were in line with the Public Health Office. We have worked through it though and we have addressed that issue that was encountered in Arviat initially. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, as well. Mr. Main, any more questions?

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I'm trying to understand why this would have been an issue. There were still people going to work if it was considered essential; for example, water delivery, essential services, housing maintenance, and stuff like that. What was the root cause of the teachers not being able to enter the school? Was it that they were not deemed essential or what was the issue specifically? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That is precisely it. The teachers and school staff were not deemed as essential services. I think that's still the case to date. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) So how long did this situation last for? I appreciate that it's been resolved. How long did it last for? When that situation was in place, I believe that the department was expecting regional school operations to do some of the work in terms of learning packages. So if I could get just a bit of an explanation how that worked there. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It's been maybe about a month that the school staff has been back into the schools. The member is correct, that regional operations, as well as headquarters, had been providing support to the schools in Arviat throughout this process. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main, do you have any more questions? Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When it comes to remote learning packages, regional school operations was involved, teachers

are now involved now that they're allowed to go back into the schools. There's a different range of methods. There's Edsby for the senior students who are supposed to be on Edsby and all the other students, it is paper packages.

With regard to the packages, how many of those or what percentage of those packages are actually being taken back by the school and marked or giving feedback to the students who are learning remotely? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Of course we have been stating that the learning packages should be now evaluated whereas before and at the initial stages of the pandemic, they were not in the last school year. That's something that we're still working around and trying to get a good grasp on how we're doing this, but if you will allow, Madam Chairperson, I'll have Deputy Minister Ms. Okpik elaborate a little bit more on this. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When we talk about the Kivalliq School Operations and our staff assisting, we have actually had a significant amount of collaboration between all three regional school operations staff, so there has been sharing of learning packages so not everybody is creating their own. At our level both here at headquarters and also in Baker Lake at the regional school operations level, our staff actually photocopied learning packages and we shipped them to Arviat. Now that teachers are able to go back in, of course they're taking on that role.

We have had some challenges with learning packages being picked up from teachers. However, as of this morning, we're now using the busing company in Arviat to be able to deliver learning packages with the teachers on the bus to ensure that households are receiving their learning packages. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That sounds innovative. I haven't heard of too many school buses filled with teachers. That's definitely a new approach and I hope it goes well.

Just to keep on the COVID topic, what is the department's current policy or approach to mask-wearing in schools? Obviously I'm asking about schools that are actually open, so those that are in communities that are in stage 3, 2, or 1. Who has to wear masks and when? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With the advice and recommendation from the chief public health office regarding masks in schools, it's not mandatory. However, if a student or staff would like to wear one, it's not discouraged. That's the current position. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Just to clarify, that's even if you're at stage 3, correct, that it's not mandatory? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Correct and the first three stages when our students are in schools, that's correct and of course, stage 4, students are not in school, so they're at home. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Masks are not mandatory for anyone. Do schools have supplies of masks on hand? If a student wants to wear a mask, are they available, or do they have to bring one from home? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Each school should have a supply of masks as well as some level of personal protective equipment. There are also kits that have gloves, masks, hand sanitizers and that sort of thing. If a school does not have supplies, either regional school operations or headquarters would no doubt be notified and that would be addressed immediately. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I'm happy to ask questions about something other than COVID-19. I put in a written question back in November about trades and career training in schools. This is an area that I'm interested in. Thank you, minister for the response and I look forward to seeing the breakdown by community of what is actually being delivered in terms of trades and career training programs.

My first question for the minister is when do you think the department will be able to pull that information together in terms of the modules and curriculum, program that has been delivered by community? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Our information system is actually currently down temporarily, so we can't pull that information quite immediately. Once we can, we will notify the committee. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On the last question that in the written question, the department's response in terms of barriers to trades and/or career training in Nunavut, looking at the response from the department, the way I understand it is there are barriers on the O&M side, and there are barriers on the capital side. So you need equipment, facilities, and tools, and you also need instructors. In terms of delivering more training, what is required first? Is there a big investment in capital that will be required, which will allow the career training to proceed, trades training, or is it the other way around; there has to be a big investment in O&M instructor type capacity which will allow it? I'm just trying to see the way forward here. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If you will allow my Deputy Minister to respond to the question. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) There are issues or challenges around being able to offer the programming piece, especially in some of our older schools. Right now when we do community consultations with DEAs on new school builds, they are able to indicate to us their priorities. If they want, let's say, a welding shop or a mechanical shop, then that is something that we can plan for. Some of the older schools don't have the luxury of that, so as we move forward with projects like that we will look at that.

In terms of instructors, one of the challenges that we have is we need someone who is a journey person if we want to offer a full-time program. I remember quite a number of years ago we piloted a program in Kugluktuk through what we called an "alternative grade 12 exit." They took all the prerequisites for carpentry, but on the other hand, they also got their maths and sciences; those key subjects that they needed to get. There were also issues around teacher certification, and that type of thing.

I think our biggest challenge is: if you bring a journey person in, it's taking away resources away from the community. We know that in a lot of our communities, we lack journey persons and they do have ratios for taking on apprenticeships.

If you have a community where you have one carpenter, there is a ratio, and I believe it's three to one; they could take on three apprentices. Typically, adults take on more priority when it comes to an apprenticeship rather than offering at the trades level.

I think that's something we're going to have to work with Family Services, for example, just in terms of how they track journeypersons and their apprentices as well.

It has also lead to what we call the Nunavut Apprenticeship program. For many years, the challenge has been getting a journey person to be able to take on school-aged apprentices in the communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I wasn't sure if I have any more time. I can see you, Madam Chairperson on my screen and I've seen you pointing to a clock repeatedly, so I apologize. I don't know if I have any more time here. Okay. Thank you.

I guess one last question on the trades topic. You mentioned on the very first question that communities have an opportunity to discuss what they want to see taught in their schools.

If there is a community, I will use for example Whale Cove: and they want to start a trades program, what is the very first step that they have to do? Does the DEA have to write a letter? Is there a form they have to fill out? What's the first step in the process to see something along these lines set up? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The deputy minister advises that there is no formal process other than through the career and technology studies, CTS courses. If a school wants to deliver certain courses through that, there is a process there. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Mr. Main, you've got just a little over two minutes left. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under the new *Education Act*, there are provisions for DEAs to request supports for enhancements, I believe is the term.

So when will that money start to flow to DEAs? When are they able to start applying to the department and say "we want this enhancement for our school", whether it is outdoor learning equipment or something related to trades? I'm interested in the money. When will it start to flow? Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This will be a proposal-based process, where a DEA finalizes a proposal of what they want to see within their

community or school, and the department would review and consider how to proceed. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I guess my last questions will be on the food programs. I would just like to reiterate Mr. Lightstone's comments from I believe yesterday or the day before.

I think food programs are really important for our students and I am interested as to whether school staff are being paid for when they come into school, sometimes they are in at seven o'clock in the morning; are they being compensated for the time that they spend on food programs? Or is there a certain portion which is considered volunteer? I think that is a clear question. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think there is only one school where the DEA has acquired third-party funding through Child First Initiative and the DEA has staff that are being paid to deliver food programming in schools. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. Are you done, Mr. Main? Ok. Mr. Netser, you are next.

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon. I've just got a couple of questions that I need to ask the minister.

On page 129, the objectives, second bullet, it says "To support and ensure high-quality instructional, assessment and student support practices are occurring within Nunavut schools."

Now, the Auditor General mentions that when he did the audit of the education system, or rather, I believe it was the college, it goes on to say that "Overall, we found that the Nunavut education systems had a number of gaps and barriers that made it difficult for high school students and adult learners to succeed academically and transition to post-secondary education and employments."

Now, this was the Auditor General's finding in his report. I have been approached by my constituents on numerous times that when they graduate from high school, they apply for college programs and find out that because the college has national codes that they follow, students coming out of our high school system often do not qualify for the programs that they apply for. It was the findings of the Auditor General on that, and I am just wondering what the department is doing about it today. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for his questions. With the Auditor General's report, our department agreed with recommendations on a number of items. We have been working with different partners on trying to make progress on those recommendations. It is going to take some time, but we want to put in place a better system where our high school students are achieving and getting those credits and the skills at a top-notch level and on their ways into meaningful, whether post-secondary programs or into different careers and fields.

One part of what our department has done is a realignment of some of our divisions. The Student Achievement Division has a large role in getting those recommendations and how we respond. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, as well. Mr. Netser.

**Mr. Netser:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In the not-too-distant future, we will be able to see students that have graduated from our high school system go right into adult education programs that the college offers, instead of having to upgrade his or her academic level so that he or she can fit into these programs or qualify for these programs, rather. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are we going to see that in the not-too-distant future? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The goal is to work towards that. I can't specify or say exactly when, or if there is a timeline on achieving those goals. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Netser.

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) My next question will be (interpretation) regarding our students in the communities. They are taught in one community, and then they get moved to a larger community for further education. Their grades seem quite high when they are in a smaller community, but when they go to another community they realize they have a different level of education, and then they have to do upgrading.

For example, they were in grade 9 in their community, but when they go to the other community they end up in grade 6. There ends up being a change in grades. Are there many students that you find are in that situation? Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. From my knowledge, I don't have any exact figures on the numbers of students that experience that. Madam Chairperson, schools and communities are different from each other, but

especially with the higher levels, we try to make sure that they progress at an appropriate level. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, as well. Mr. Netser.

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): I think I understand. I believe that what is being said, Madam Chairperson, is that if I go to school in Coral Harbour as a grade 12 student, that it is the same level of education in Iqaluit as well? Is that what you are saying? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We try to standardize them. So if I am in grade 9 in Coral Harbour, then every attempt is made to ensure that the grade 9 program Iqaluit is the same. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson**: Mr. Netser.

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) My last question is on page 130, in the second bullet, it says “Continue to support attendance and Family Engagement programs, working closely with District Education Authorities.”

The status is “The department is currently finalizing the Apataka Family engagement website...”. Maybe can you elaborate a little more on that? That is my final question. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank the member. I talked about this a little bit. It involves the development of a website, which we want to make available to the parents, our students and our teachers.

Attendance is extremely important, and we try to continue to emphasize that. We know that the better attendance that students have, the more likely they are to progress into the higher grades. It is things like that that we try to consider. It also involves different organizations. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you done, Mr. Netser? Mr. Lightstone, you are next.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good evening. Welcome to round two, day two. Hopefully we will be able to finish today.

I would like to follow up on Mr. Netser’s questions regarding the OAG report on support for high school students and adult learners. During that televised hearing, it came to our attention at the time that one of the issues that the Auditor General addressed or identified

was the lack of guidance counsellors. I believe, at that time in 2019, that there were three guidance counsellors for the 25 high schools.

The minister can correct me if I'm wrong on that, but I was wondering if he would also be able to give me an update as to how many guidance counsellors there are today and if there's an intention to increase them for the next school year. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Yes, we currently have four guidance counsellors within our schools. With the new student-educator ratio formula in year 3, we anticipate, provided things go through budget-wise and approvals, that all schools would have a guidance counsellor at that time.

Just to clarify on, I think, the *ilinniarvimmi inuusiliriji*, the school community counsellor, versus a guidance counsellor, guidance counsellors typically are not considered mental health guidance counsellors and they do require a teaching certificate, a Bachelor of Ed., and some measure or additional qualifications around educational guidance, and they're referred to for students. If a student needs mental health supports, they're not clinically trained in that area. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister, for the response. I'm very glad to hear that this is something that the department is working towards, having guidance in all high schools, and I'll continue to bring that up for the next three years or going on into the future, I should say, in the hopes that the Department of Education will be granted those positions.

I would like to move on to the next topic and it's returning to the CBC articles on violence in our schools. I was curious of the reported incidence of student-on-student violence and how many stem from situations involving bullies or bullying. I know that's probably going to be very hard to answer, but what I'm really trying to figure out is: how many of the student-on-student violent situations or reported instances were mutual violence and how many was it a student preying on a weaker student bullying? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm going to first correct myself on the guidance counsellors. I mentioned that all schools would have a guidance counsellor. The correction is that all high schools would have a guidance counsellor. If a [community] only has the one school, they would have allocated one.

To his question, I really don't have those details with me. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't think we have that kind of information that the member asked for. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I understand that that is a very difficult question to answer, but the topic of bullying in schools has been ongoing for years, throughout the life of this Assembly, and given the department's difficulty and current mechanisms in place to track violence in schools, does the minister and the department intend on incorporating some sort of mechanism within the reporting structure to identify whether or not it is a bully situation? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) If you can give me a second.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just in terms of the new reporting tool that I mentioned in the House and that we're working with the teachers association on, it's set up in a way that it's going to be much more easier to, I think, track in the sense of streamlined and standardized so that it's easier to address, but through that mechanism, the bullying, I think, would be captured and we will be able to count how many incidents are bully-related or what have you. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We all know that bullying can have serious implications on students' social and emotional well-being. My next question is: how is the department dealing with bullying in our schools? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Of course it's not a simple way that it can be addressed. It's both multi-level and multi-layers; many parties are involved. Again, if school staff or teachers don't know if it's happening, then we wouldn't be able to address it. However, with that, we do have different resources, initiatives, and campaigns, such as Pink Shirt Day as the most popular one and most visual one, but there are different resources put in place around how we can counter bullying for those that are experiencing it and what to do in those instances. It's a matter of informing our students and staff on what steps to take if they encounter it and how to address it themselves or with partners. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the minister for bringing up the Pink Shirt Day. I think that's an amazing initiative to raise awareness about bullying and the harmful effects it can have, and I would like to recommend that the minister consider adding a second Pink Shirt Day in our schools so that it's not just once a year in the winter, but it would be ideal to have one in the fall semester as well.

On the topic of bullying, I think this is my last topic of questions. I'm sure that each principal has a handful of students that they're very familiar with that visits the principal's office frequently or regularly throughout the year. Is the Department of Education aware of how many students are in that situation or how many principals see students come in on a regular basis? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Sorry, Madam Chairperson. If the member can restate his question. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We all know that bullying is very hard to pinpoint in school systems and it would be very difficult for the Department of Education to really come up with any figures related to numbers of bullies that are actually in our schools, but the ones that can are the principals and as I'm sure, they have a handful of students in their schools that they see in their offices quite regularly and frequently. My question was whether or not the minister and the department have some sort of dialogue with principals to identify that figure. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, principals do report on a monthly basis to regional school operations and again, there are different resources that are made available to schools, either training, there's a handbook, Safe and Caring Schools, and the Red Cross that we partner with on trying to find ways on addressing bullying at the school level, Inuusivut Anninaqtuq, through that initiative. There are different ways that are resources available and that allows our principals to take it and use it as the case may be. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As I previously indicated, bullying does have social and emotional impacts on the students that are being bullied on, but the bullies themselves most often also have social and emotional issues that are leading towards these behavioural issues.

I know that the minister had made a reference yesterday to working with the Minister of Health on this issue, but I would like to emphasize the importance of getting behavioural

psychologists into our schools and speaking with these students, as they truly need help before they cause themselves or other students further harm. In light of that, has the minister in the past ever had these discussions with the Minister of Health and, if not, what kind of approach will you take with the Minister of Health? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for his question. Just on social and emotional wellness and support, we do have the school counsellor as well that's a huge resource at the school level, providing advice or coping mechanisms and talking with those students.

As for the member's question on behavioural psychologists and working with the Department of Health, I haven't had personal discussions with our health minister on this yet. However, there is also the deputy ministers' committee on Inuusivut that deals with such matters. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you done? Okay. Mr. Qamaniq, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Welcome, minister and your officials.

On page 130, the top bullet, it says that they will "Continue to support, monitor, and advise on effective instructional practices, assessment practices, and student support practices within Nunavut schools." Below that it also indicates that "School visits have been conducted to monitor effective instructional and assessment practices and are ongoing." It goes on to state that "Training is provided through conferences, courses, and workshops provided on the four days set aside in school calendars for in-servicing." Do I understand correctly that four days are set aside during the school calendar year for conferences, courses, and workshops, Madam Chairperson? Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for the question. What it's talking about here is that the teachers are trained within the school calendar year. Our students take a break when the teachers are taking training. That's what they're talking about here, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you. Right below that it states, "Continue to support attendance and Family Engagement programs, working closely with the District Education Authorities." Underneath that the status indicates that "The department is currently finalizing the Apataka Family Engagement website, as part of its Family Engagement campaign. The website will support DEAs and schools in engaging families

to increase student attendance.” Will the website being built be in the capital or in the three regions of Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and Baffin to support the district education authorities? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We will be making the Apataka Family Engagement website available and whether it’s a parent or a teacher or a student, the website will be built for them, and we want the district education authorities to help us keep our students attending school on a regular basis. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to be able to envision it, as I can’t really see what it would look like. I’m assuming that it will be put in the schools. Some homes don’t have computers, although other homes do. Can you clarify whether this will be set up in the higher and lower grades? Is that what this is trying to indicate? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you. In part yes. It’s hard to try to envision it, but it would be a website that would be directed towards younger and older students. However, the resources we are trying to provide on the website will be available to different groups. It’s obvious that the resources would be available in the schools, whether they have Internet access or not. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Indeed, they should be available in English and Inuktitut, or can you indicate if they will be written in English only? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As it is talking about a-pa-ta-ka, it will also be in Inuktitut, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I already knew what a-pa-ta-ka was.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask a question on the next bullet about their continuous efforts on the literacy framework from kindergarten to grade 12 and action

plan. “Additional resources for the Inuktitut Titiqqiriniq literacy program were developed in 2020-21 to align with the Inuktitut language curricula.” I believe they are trying to use two languages in the schools, as well as Inuktitut syllabics and roman orthography, if I’m not mistaken. Is that the goal of this or is it being developed in Inuktitut using syllabics only? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Apataka website we are developing will be available in four languages, including Inuinnaqtun and French.

However, with respect to his question on roman orthography and syllabics, we use both writing systems and we have always used both, and until we get direction from, for instance, the Inuit Language Authority as to which writing system will be used in Nunavut, we will continue to use both writing systems. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I seem to understand that the use of syllabics will be gradually phased out and in the future they will only write in roman orthography. As you mentioned, you will follow the direction of the language authority on which writing system to use. I wonder if they would be required to seek the approval of the Members of the Legislative Assembly if they wanted to start using one writing system exclusively. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Perhaps this can be a directive for the language authority or their members, if the Members of the Legislative Assembly can come to an understanding on how it would be set up, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for the clarification on the initiatives being undertaken by the Department of Education.

When we get to the other items, I will have more questions. The questions I wanted to ask on page G-10 are done. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just to add to the issue of literacy, as we go to higher grades in curriculum development, the

Taiguusiliuqtiit group also has a representative for this initiative. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Okay. We are on G-10. Education. K-12 School Operations. \$186,183,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Okay. We are on to G-11. Education. Educator Development. Any questions? (interpretation) I forgot his name. Simon. Simailak.

>>*Laughter*

Sorry. I had a blur.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you...Madam Chairperson.

>>*Laughter*

It's a late day. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Minister and officials, welcome again.

On the subject of orientation for new employees, if I can get a bit of clarification on that as to what aspect of orientation. Is that to get them used to working in Nunavut or is that to get them used to dealing with Inuit, the way we generally are, kind of thing? There is a big difference comparing Nunavut and southern Canada. That is my first question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Simailak. (interpretation ends) I'm sorry I forgot your name for a while. It's a long day already. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for his question. For teacher orientation, our department is developing materials to support educators and the orientation is to prepare them to undertake their new positions and so what supports they need through that. If they are new, right out of post-secondary education, we try to support them as best as we can. We also try to identify mentorship opportunities too within schools for those situations where, if there are a veteran teacher and a brand-new teacher coming on, the school team works around trying to get those in place. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. Moving on, the department's Educator Development Branch focuses on providing support and training for current employees. The business plan notes on page 133 that an online professional learning platform was launched to support educators in implementing the Inuklut

Titigqiriniq program. How successful has this initiative been to date? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie**: Sorry, Madam Chairperson. If you will give me a minute.

My apologies, Madam Chairperson and members. Yes, with this priority item, we're beginning that work and then for the following year, the evaluation and performance of that work would take place at that time. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you done? (interpretation ends) Okay. Next person on my list: Mr. Qirngnuq. (interpretation) It's now your turn.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 132 of the business plan, it speaks about teachers and the teaching program. There are certain times when they are observed during the course of their training to determine their suitability for becoming a teacher, and based on their level of skills and abilities after training, they can contribute by becoming teachers in our schools.

The teachers then continue with their development plans, and they follow the course requirements with certain guidelines that allow these prospective teachers to polish their teaching skills, and further, there are courses they can apply towards for those who wish to expand their horizons.

I was thinking of Inuit who are planning to, or are in the teaching program. I would like to see Inuit get proper certification that allows them to teach, as obviously, they require recognized certificates to teach. Madame Chairperson, I would like to clearly understand how this process works, and what kind of plans are used? Hence my question to the minister, to elaborate more on this process. I hope you can understand my question, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. The teachers require recognized certification if they are going to teach in Nunavut, and most of the teachers receive their degrees from accredited universities or colleges, and their degrees highlight what kind of education level they have attained, as each level requires an exam to pass, as well as annual teaching exams.

Our teachers as well as our school principals have documentation that is quite transparent and this is a requirement as well. Perhaps to clarify here, if one teacher who is going to be evaluated for three years, this is the procedure and then for the school principals, they do evaluations for five years. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson**: Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In thinking about this process of certifying students in the teaching program, and in looking at the existing pool of teachers already teaching in our communities, there is a pool of instructors who don't teach on a daily basis, but only on certain times of the year where they teach students.

Mainly, it is on survival skills and how to fish or hunt seals, and the students are taught their traditional skills. What type of certification process is used for these instructors that enables them to teach? That is what I would like to understand, hence my question.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. To his question, the DEAs are able to get certification where they can identify elders as Inuktitut instructors or cultural instructors, and they write a letter to me and the names are given and what they do as they teach. We also approve those based on the needs of the DEAs. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I still have a question on the salaries of teachers and those with certificates and no certificates. The salaries seem to be low or obviously are low. The comment I made earlier on instructors who take people out on the land without any certification, I believe their salaries would be much lower as well. If a person gets certification, is the salary going to increase or not? I'm asking that question because the hunters learn their profession by hunting on the land, so my question to that is in this area. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The DEAs and perhaps to correct what I mentioned earlier, you don't necessarily have to be an elder, but an Inuktitut instructor, as we amended the Act, but based on their abilities or skills, the DEAs can request certification.

With respect to the salaries, it's something that I would have to look into further, those who are getting their certification from a college and if they don't have certification in language instruction. The DEAs in their agreement, this is also used for four years. The language instructors' salaries were recently raised, which was very positive too, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Lastly, the Department of Education and since the Act was put in place, because things are going to be clearer as

it develops and it's an exciting thing to see. The Department of Education is continuing to develop in this area, and this is just a comment, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Do you want to respond? That was just a comment. Mr. Main, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. You're going from a person from Arviligjuaq to a person from Arviat, which seems to be fitting.

I don't really have a question, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On page G-15 there are two budget increases, both TakingITGlobal is going from \$660,000 to \$1.3 million, and Teachers' Professional Development is going from \$3.6 million to \$4.1 million. I wonder if the minister can explain what the rationale is for these two budget increases, to TakingITGlobal and teachers' PD. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe this had to do with TakingITGlobal. Our contributions with that were largely, we had increased the number of schools that are using that service to connect more schools as well as the increased bandwidth for those schools. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. For the teachers' professional development, the extra half a million dollars, is that for plane tickets, for conferences, or is it directed for other uses? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie**: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That is with regard to our contractual obligations under the collective agreement that was increased \$385,000 towards the teacher professional development fund. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson**: Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Does the department currently coordinate your teachers' professional development with your early childhood educator development? The reason I ask is when the teachers have PD week, the schools are shut down, and I have noticed that the daycares will be operating as normal, but for many children in the community, it's a week off school, so there seems to be a bit of disconnect in terms of when the training is offered. Is there coordination between early childhood and these teacher professional development weeks? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Not necessarily coordination, but we do try to aim to have the professional development week scheduled for the same time every year. I guess I'll just leave it at that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I guess it's just a comment. I would like to suggest that the department look at coordinating these training periods.

Something I have heard from employees within daycares is that it's very tough for them to take their training because it's offered mostly on evenings or on the weekend, so they spend all day working with children in a daycare, which must be exhausting, and then to get their certificate, they need to go to evening classes for often a week or two weeks at a time. If they had, let's say, a week off, similar to what teachers receive, perhaps that could be beneficial for early childhood educators.

It's just a suggestion to the minister. I have no further comments on this page.  
(interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Would you like to respond, minister? Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm just trying to clarify around what we're talking about here. The teachers association has a professional development fund that they hold annual training on for teachers.

I believe Mr. Main might be talking about something separate, if I'm not mistaken, on early childhood training. Can he clarify, Madam Chairperson? Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main, can you just clarify your...? (interpretation) Please clarify the comment you made. Thank you.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, I'm just trying to compare the fact that teachers get specified times for professional development, but early childhood educators do not. Early childhood educators are not given a time, a week for their professional development, and I know that they're very different areas and there are different facilities.

My comment was that I like the idea of teachers having a week when they don't have to deal with the students and they can focus on professional development. I'm suggesting that the department look at a similar approach for early childhood educators and coordinate it so that it's the same week, whether it's a daycare or whether it's a school, and maybe there would be some training that's of interest to both types of educators. It's

just a suggestion and I can discuss it further with the minister some other time.  
(interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Mr. Qamaniq, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't have many questions, probably only two. Under the priorities listed on page 134, the last bullet for 2021-22 states, "Provide orientation supports to assist newly hired educators with their transition into the Nunavut education system." Is it referring to new teachers coming to Nunavut from southern Canada or graduates from the Nunavut Teacher Education Program? Those are my two questions, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson**: Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe he is referring to page 134, the last bullet under the priorities for 2021-22. It's for both graduates of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program as they begin their careers and it also covers teachers coming in from outside of the territory. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Mr. Qamaniq, do you have any more questions? Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just above that, I believe it indicates ongoing work where it states, (interpretation ends) "Continue the development of a formal mentorship program for teachers." (interpretation) I believe it's a living document and it's going to be updated over the next two years. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have been developing a full mentorship program and we created a working committee in 2021 to focus on the support system either for the recently graduated teachers and peer mentorship. Also, the teachers association sets aside some funds that can be requested by way of proposal for mentorship programs. For example, if there are teachers who would like to move to other communities through a mentorship program, those requests can be reviewed to see if the funds can be provided through that program. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson**: Mr. Qamaniq.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): This will be my last question, Madam Chairperson. Thank you very much for the response.

We are talking about a two-year program and you will very likely have to decide at the end of the two-years whether you are going to continue with that program. Again, under the priorities, it talks about current and aspiring principals to meet the requirements for certification in both English and Inuktitut.

For Inuit who are aspiring to become principals, they would be offered courses, and teachers from outside of the territory, would be using their own language including English or French. That is how I understand this priority; current and aspiring principals will be offered modified courses for them over two years. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, if anyone wishes to be certified to become a principal, they are informed of the available courses so that they can receive the higher level of certification being made available for aspiring principals. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you finished? Okay. I have no more names on my list. Page G-11. (interpretation ends) Educator Development. Education. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$12,162,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Okay. (interpretation) We're on page G-12. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My questions are in relation to the FANS budget, under Advanced Education. I just wanted to thank the minister again for reintroducing the contribution agreement with Nunavut Sivuniksavut. I was extremely grateful when the minister had made that announcement, and as a former grad himself, I'm sure he understands the importance that program plays in the success rate of our post-secondary students. Thank you, minister.

With the FANS budget I recall there were some additional supports available for students with disabilities and learning disabilities or other disabilities. I had asked the minister about it in a letter last summer and he had identified that only one student has ever actually utilized this supplementary grant for students with disabilities.

First, I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to elaborate what exactly this grant is intended for and what you're doing to promote this program and ensuring that all students that need assistance, whether it be tutoring or note-taking or special software, that they may need to succeed in their post-secondary education have access to it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for his comments and question. The parents who have students with permanent disabilities, it's to help with costs of equipment and services associated with a permanent disability. Nunavut residents are eligible. They must supply an assessment form from a qualified professional and what they're eligible for is up to \$8,000 a year for equipment and services related to training, as well as up to \$1,000 a year for each credit correspondence course.

In terms of promotion of this grant, our FANS office in Arviat is in charge of running and administering FANS. They also do outreach for getting the word out on what types of grants or loans are available to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. An issue that I have been raising with Nunavut Arctic College is the fact that across Canada it has become quite common that all the colleges now have special offices to provide assistance for students with disabilities. I think it's something that Arctic College is missing or lacks. I found it very interesting that FANS actually offers funding for this, but the college doesn't have the abilities to provide it. Have you ever had discussions with the college on this specific issue? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. No, not specifically. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe that Nunavut has a significant amount of students with learning disabilities, including those in not just our K to 12 system but to post-secondary as well, and I think this grant is very crucial to the success rate of students in post-secondary institutions. I would highly encourage the minister and the Department of Education to open up dialogue with the college to inform them of this funding and ask them to provide supports that Arctic College students can then dip into this funding to utilize. I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to consider that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, we will consider that and I think this is something that yes, we can easily work and get. If there are students that are in need, then let's get them that path to getting this grant in their pockets. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson (interpretation):** Are you done? Okay. Mr. Main, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you. On page 136, the Pathway to Adult Secondary School program, PASS program, it's not a big amount of money, about \$400,000, into that program. My question is: how many adults receive their Secondary School Diploma from this, from the most recent year available? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm pulling it up.

This current semester, since the fall of 2020, there have been nine communities that had 40 applicants and 25 were accepted and right now there are 23 active learners as of my briefing note. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) This is quite a small program, but I have no doubt that it's an important one. Is this program offered in every community in Nunavut? That's my next question. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It can be available in all communities. Currently we have nine communities enrolled. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The reason I asked this question is I want to talk about Whale Cove just very briefly. There's a certain age of adults in Whale Cove who, when they grew up, grades 11 and 12 were not available in their community, and these were people who, I believe, grew up in the '80s. Many of them did not travel to Rankin Inlet to go and finish their grade 12 diploma.

There might be an opportunity in Whale Cove, for example, or other communities within that certain demographic, people who should be in the workforce or should have their grade 12 diploma don't because of historical issues. I just wanted to bring that to the minister's attention. I don't really require a response on that; that's just a comment.

Just my last questions on this are regarding the Student Loan Revolving Fund, which is detailed on page G-13, and it has presented that loans receivable are \$7.3 million for the last fiscal year and the estimated provision for remission and doubtful accounts is roughly 75 percent of that at \$5.6 million. My question for the minister is: are you planning to write off these doubtful accounts at any point? It looks like most of your loans receivable amount is doubtful or estimated under that line. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Through you, if I can pass this question on to Mr. Suleiman. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Suleiman.

**Mr. Suleiman:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the MLA for his question. There's a significant balance in the loan remission and doubtful accounts. This is a balance that we're looking at different collection possibilities and how we can gather this money, but if those steps don't achieve success, then we will be approaching the Department of Finance to figure out what would be the best steps to move forward. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main, are you done?

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I do have further questions.

**Chairperson:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) How many years back do these loans go? I'm a bit concerned that I might owe you some money because I received student loans way, way, way back years ago. How many years back are we talking about for the \$7.5 million? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We don't have that information with us today, but we can commit to providing that to the member and committee members. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) You have an amount listed in the main estimates and you don't know how far back it goes, but thank you, minister, for offering to get back.

I think my last question on this is: how much of this confusion or mess...? That's my term, obviously, not the department's term. How much of this is attributable to the out-of-date computer system that's in use or the database system that's in use at the FANS office in Arviat? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I wouldn't be able to answer that question as well, Madam Chairperson. Just going back to the amounts, they go quite a ways back; we just don't know how far back right now. Again, we will provide that information sometime after in the very near future. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Okay, Mr. Main, are you done? Okay. Ms. Towtongie, it's now your turn.

**Ms. Towtongie:** *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I just have two questions and the first question is the Pathway Adult Secondary School. I believe that your department is working with Nunavut Arctic College, and the business plan indicates that the department is implementing a strategy to engage Inuit men in this program. Has the strategy proved effective to date? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We're planning the implementation and rollout of the strategy this coming fall, so we have yet to measure and evaluate the outcome. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My final question to the minister...and thank you for your response because I don't often see Inuit men in any program, so I was pleased to see that.

Your department has been working with the Department of Family Services to implement a plan for the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy. What's the current status of this initiative? Madam Chairperson, final question.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I can tell the member that I have noted Inuit men in different courses or we do try to track that. We do want to put those young Inuit men into successful positions, so this is a way we're trying to help reach that.

As for the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy, the work on the draft action plan has been delayed due to COVID-19 and it's expected to be finalized March 2022. Once that is finalized, the department would work with the Department of Family Services to implement that action plan going forward. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Mr. Kaernek, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Kaernek** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good afternoon, minister and your official.

Here (interpretation ends) on G-14, on your summary of grants and contributions, I just want to know, with the Nunavut Community Access Program, how many communities in Nunavut have accessed this program? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Only in Iqaluit. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you done? Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Do other communities can have access to this program too? It's just Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, (interpretation ends) if there are other societies out there that would like to access this fund, it's application based. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for that clarification. This is just a comment. Yes, it's good that Inuit men have been included. I'm just proud of you and it's just a comment.

Where was it? (interpretation ends) On the very last page of the business plan, 138, "Support the testing, implementation, and training for the new FANS database." Does that mean the Department of Education and the Department of Finance will be working together to support the testing or whatever? That would be my final question. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With the assistance of the Department of Community and Government Services, we would try to update the FANS database, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Advanced Education. G-12. \$14,136,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Go to G-3. G-3. Department Summary. Education. \$243,594,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Do members agree that we have concluded the review of the Department of Education?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Does the minister have any closing comments? Minister.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members, for their questions. I'll just restate it. The student-educator ratio, we will have a large increase in the future years and this is good to see. It has been expected by the district education authorities. I'm pleased the members have supported this.

I would like to thank my officials who were present here. School attendance is a big issue and I look forward to an increase in attendance. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort the witnesses out? Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Considering we're not permitted to go to extra hours today, I move to report progress. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Motion carried. Oh, all those opposed. Oh, too bad. Motion is carried and I will now rise to report progress. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Report of the Committee of the Whole. Ms. Angnakak.

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

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 59 and we would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Qamaniq. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**An Hon. Member** (interpretation): Question.

**Speaker** (interpretation): All those in favour. All those opposed. (interpretation ends) The motion is carried. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

**Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 5:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 68
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 58
  - Bill 59
  - Bill 60
  - Bill 61
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) This House stands adjourned until Friday, March 5, at 9 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:53*

