

**NUNAVUT HANSARD**

**UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025**

**IQALUIT, NUNAVUT**

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

***Corrections:***

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**Legislative Assembly of Nunavut**

**Speaker**

**Hon. Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeeagok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Justice; Minister for Labour; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade; Minister responsible for Mines*

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister of Languages*

**Bobby Anavilok**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister of Human Resources; Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**George Hikes**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

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

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

**Joelie Kaernerik**  
(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**  
(Uqqummiut)

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

*Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Board*

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

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

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation*

**Solomon Malliki**  
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister Responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Karen Nutarak**  
(Tununiq)

**Daniel Qavvik**  
(Hudson Bay)

**Joanna Quassa**  
(Aggu)

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**  
(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**  
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

**Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

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(Baker Lake)

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## Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1
Ministers' Statements .....	1
Members' Statements .....	6
Oral Questions.....	12
Report of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters.....	44
Tabling of Documents .....	44
Report of the Committee of the Whole .....	71
Orders of the Day .....	71

**A.**

**Daily References**

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 ..... 1

**B.**

**Ministers' Statements**

548 – 6(2): Government of Nunavut Response to U.S. Tariffs (Akeegok, P) ..... 1  
549 – 6(2): Emergency Management Exemplary Services (Joanasie) ..... 2  
550 – 6(2): Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee Visits (Akeegok, D)..... 4  
551 – 6(2): Investing in Energy Reliability and Infrastructure Modernization (Main) ..... 5  
552 – 6(2): Remember, Educate Dedicate (Nakashuk) ..... 5

**C.**

**Members' Statements**

753 – 6 (2): Happy Anniversary (Malliki)..... 6  
754 – 6(2): Caribou Harvesting Survey (Anavilok) ..... 6  
755 – 6(2): Power Outage in Grise Fiord – Thank QEC (Akeegok, D) ..... 7  
756 – 6(2): Kimmirut New Airport Terminal (Joanasie) ..... 8  
757 – 6(2): Showcasing Art in the Legislative Assembly (Gross)..... 8  
758 – 6(2): Police Oversight and Resources (Lightstone)..... 9  
759 – 6(2): Office of the Public Guardian (Killiktee) ..... 11  
760 – 6(2): Recognition of Women (Kusugak) ..... 11  
761 – 6(2): New Community Learning Centre for Sanirajak (Kaernerker) ..... 12

**D.**

**Oral Questions**

1144 – 6(2): QEC Infrastructure Projects (Hickes) ..... 12

1145 – 6(2): Contaminated Sites (Killiktee)..... 14

1146 – 6(2): Recreation Infrastructure (Quassa) ..... 16

1147 – 6(2): Police Oversight and Resources (Lightstone)..... 18

1148 – 6(2): Income Assistance in Chesterfield Inlet (Sammurtok) ..... 20

1149 – 6(2): New Community Learning Centre for Sanirajak (Kaernek)..... 22

1150 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure (Nutarak)..... 24

1151 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan (Quqqiaq) ..... 25

1152 – 6(2): School Meal Programs (Malliki) ..... 27

1153 – 6(2): Megaprojects (Simailak)..... 29

1154 – 6(2): Contracts and Projects (Savikataaq) ..... 31

1155 – 6(2): Legal Aid in the Kitikmeot Region (Anavilok) ..... 34

1156 – 6(2): Anti-Tariff Retaliation (Brewster)..... 36

1157 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity (Hickes)..... 38

1158 – 6(2): Inuit Child First Initiative Projects (Malliki) ..... 39

1159 – 6(2): Progress of Subsidy Programs (Lightstone) ..... 41

1160 – 6(2): Update on RCMP Detachment at Baker Lake (Simailak)..... 42

**E.**

**Tabling of Documents**

366 – 6(2): Correspondence from Koomiut Co-operative Association (Quqqiaq)..... 44

367 – 6(2): Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Lightstone) ..... 44

368 – 6(2): Government Response to the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Lightstone) ..... 45

369 – 6(2): Nunatsiaq News Article: Iqaluit RCMP “Specifically Targetting Suspects in Drug, Firearm Crimes” (Lightstone)..... 45

370 – 6(2): 2023-2024 Cannabis Licensing Annual Report (Kusugak) ..... 45

**F.**

**Bills**

Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Report  
Back ..... 44

Bill 70 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 –  
Consideration in Committee ..... 46

**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Tuesday, March 4, 2025**

**Members Present:**

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

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Good afternoon. Ms. Killiktee, can you please lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker's Statement**

**Speaker:** Good afternoon, colleagues. (no interpretation)

Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 548 – 6(2): Government of Nunavut Response to U.S. Tariffs**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to all my colleagues here and everyone in Nunavut that are watching.

Mr. Speaker, The Government of Nunavut remains committed to protecting Nunavut's economy and ensuring supply chain stability in response to the newly imposed 25% U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods.

While Nunavut does not directly export to the U.S., the territory relies heavily on imports for essential goods, infrastructure, and services, making it vulnerable to rising costs and supply chain disruptions.

This is a time to be united. Our government stands with other territories and provinces in opposing unnecessary trade barriers between Canada and its largest trading partner, the United States.

I encourage all Nunavummiut to support Canadian businesses and products in response to these tariffs.

Mr. Speaker, in response to these tariffs the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission will no longer purchase or sell alcohol products made in the United States.

The Government of Nunavut is taking measured steps to support Canadian suppliers and safeguard the affordability and availability of goods for Nunavummiut.

The GN is also taking steps to mitigate potential cost impacts on procurement and infrastructure projects. Given Nunavut's reliance on imported goods, the Department of Community and Government Services is actively monitoring supply chain disruptions and working with contractors and suppliers to ensure continued project viability.

The Government of Nunavut is also reviewing its Party-Specific Exceptions under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Our government is undertaking this review to ensure alignment with other jurisdictions and Canada's broader internal trade objectives.

Mr. Speaker, our government will remain actively involved in discussions with the federal government and other jurisdictions as Canada's trade response develops. Ensuring Nunavut's economic interests are represented, and supply chains remain strong will continue to be key priorities in the weeks ahead.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's statement, Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

### **Minister's Statement 549 – 6(2): Emergency Management Exemplary Services**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and all my colleagues and everyone in Nunavut.

I give you a smile. I am delighted to rise today to share that on February 26, 2025 in the nations capital two Nunavummiut were named as recipients of the Emergency Management Exemplary Service award; Jamie Evic and Kaviq Kaluraq.

Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Management Exemplary Services award is a prestigious recognition for exceptional service and achievement in emergency management. The



award recognizes individuals who have achieved excellence in their respective fields across the country.

Jamie Evic of Pangnirtung was awarded for his outstanding contribution to Emergency Management. Jamie's leadership was pivotal during a December 2023 severe weather event, where winds exceeding 130 kilometers per hour, led to a prolonged power outage in sub-zero temperatures. Jamie supported coordination with local and territorial partners to guide Pangnirtung through the crisis, including the declaration of a Local State of Emergency. His quick actions contributed to the timely restoration of power and the protection of vital resources, demonstrating leadership, communication and collaboration.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, Kaviq Kaluraq was recognized in the category of Search and Rescue Volunteers. In August of 2024, Kaviq led the Baker Lake team during a gruelling eight (8) day search for a missing hunter, which required local, private industry, territorial and federal coordination. Kaviq's advocacy and leadership was integral in the success of this operation which brought the hunter home.

Mr. Speaker, Kaviq became a search and rescue volunteer in Baker Lake in 2019 and has been an exemplary leader as the community coordinator by prioritizing essential training, operational readiness and reliable response for her community ever since. She consistently integrates traditional knowledge and the latest available technology in training and live operations. Forming vital partnerships with other organizations and working tirelessly to fill critical gaps in the community's marine search and rescue services, her capabilities have directly strengthened the communication used by the local search and rescue team.

To this end, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the phenomenal work done by both Ms. Kaluraq and Mr. Evic and the teams they work with throughout this territory to provide protection and safety in our communities. It is through the hard work and dedication of Nunavummiut that we will continue to build stronger and more resilient communities which will continue to be recognized and applauded at all levels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*>>Applause*

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Let's give them a great round of applause and thank them, Mr. Speaker.

*>>Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Minister's Statement 550 – 6(2): Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee Visits**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share important updates about the work of the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, which plays a critical role in assisting vulnerable Nunavummiut with estate administration, guardianship, and trustee services. This Office helps individuals who have been found by the Court to lack the capacity to make their own decisions about their personal or financial affairs.

In these situations, the Court may appoint the Public Guardian and Trustee under the *Guardianship and Trusteeship Act* to help protect the person's rights and interests on their behalf.

Since an order for guardianship or trusteeship significantly restricts a person's individual rights, the Act has safeguards to ensure it is only used when there is no other less restrictive option available.

I am pleased to advise the Legislative Assembly and all Nunavummiut that the services of the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee are now available in Inuktitut, English and French. This ensures more Nunavummiut can access the support they need in the language they are most comfortable with.

Furthermore, to increase awareness of the Office's services and to provide public legal information, its staff are visiting communities across our territory. In October 2024, the Office held community engagement sessions in Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay. These sessions included recorded panel discussions for elders focusing on estate administration, traditional approaches to property, and the importance of making a Will.

In partnership with the Law Society of Nunavut, key information on wills and estates was also broadcast on local radio in both English and Inuktitut, ensuring that this critical knowledge reached a wider audience.

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee will continue this critical outreach as more community visits are planned for 2025. Our commitment is to ensure that all Nunavummiut are aware of and can access these vital services, regardless of where they live.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Minister's Statement 551 – 6(2): Investing in Energy Reliability and Infrastructure Modernization**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my colleagues. Mr. Speaker, we all know electricity is essential to daily life and we all know that.

It allows us to live in warmth and comfort while enabling communication across vast distances. It powers homes, businesses, schools, airports, and our healthcare facilities. Electricity is fundamental to asserting Arctic sovereignty, supporting economic growth, and the well-being of Nunavummiut. In recognition of the important role electricity plays, Qulliq Energy Corporation (QEC) is working to ensure Nunavut's energy supply remains safe, reliable, and affordable through infrastructure upgrades and modernization.

QEC continues to advance our priority major capital projects. In October 2024, QEC submitted a Major Project Permit Application for generator set replacement projects in Baker Lake, Rankin Inlet, and Iqaluit. The application is currently under review with the Utility Rates Review Council, and we expect their recommendations in early March 2025. These projects are essential to maintaining a stable energy supply in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, QEC is also moving forward with its commitment to modernize energy infrastructure across the territory. Construction contracts for new power plants have been awarded to ADCO Power for Cambridge Bay and to Pilitak Enterprises for Gjoa Haven and Igloolik. The project execution of these power plants is expected to begin in the 2025-26 fiscal year. These plants will incorporate advanced technologies that enhance safety, improve efficiency, and support the future integration of renewable energy sources. To help finance these essential projects, QEC has secured funding from the federal government through the Arctic Energy Fund. This Federal support ensures that the corporation can continue to develop cost-effective, reliable, and sustainable energy solutions for Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, QEC delivers an essential service in one of the most challenging environments found anywhere in the world. By strengthening and investing in our energy systems, QEC is empowering Nunavut communities and creating a foundation for long-term sustainability. Through both our generator set replacement and new power plant projects, we remain dedicated to building an energy network that supports Nunavummiut today and into the future.

Matna.

**Minister's Statement 552 – 6(2): Remember, Educate Dedicate**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council's artistic installment called RED – Remember,

Educate, Dedicate. The installation, created by Nunavut's talented artists, is an online and in-person memorial project developed to help heal and empower Nunavummiut affected by Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.

Mr. Speaker, after its original unveiling last year, RED was showcased at the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit museum in Iqaluit in September and October, as well as at the Aqsarniit Conference and Tradeshow in Ottawa just a few weeks ago. I'm excited to announce that RED was unveiled right here in this building yesterday. I encourage all members to view the pieces and learn more about RED at [www.redNU.ca](http://www.redNU.ca).

The plan now is to have the exhibit travel around Nunavut to different communities. I encourage any interested hamlets or community organizations to reach out to Qullit to learn more about showcasing this incredible collection.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Chairman:** Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

### **Item 3: Members' Statements**

#### **Member's Statement 753 – 6 (2): Happy Anniversary**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues. Today is an important day, my wife and my anniversary and she is watching this sitting. Good afternoon, and I'm thinking of you as we sit.

**Speaker:** Happy anniversary. Member's Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

#### **Member's Statement 754 – 6(2): Caribou Harvesting Survey**

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good afternoon, Kugluktummiut.

(interpretation ends) I rise today to talk on tuktu, all the caribou in Nunavut, like right from South Baffin, Kugluktuk, Grise Fiord, to Arviat. And I want to bring up on how the surveys are done when they do surveys on the caribou. And the way the surveys are done, they end up coming up with estimates and they are not real numbers, but they go by estimates and that affects the TAH and it affects the concerns of some of the hunters.

The enforcing of harvesting, there's Inuit that rely on caribou, and enforcing I think the most basis would be the three regional hubs and saying that, there's a more southern people that are in the regional hubs, and there need to be more enforcing on how harvesting is done in all the regions. I hope to have questions on that on further dates of this sitting or in September – not September, spring.

I also want to touch on Kitikmeot herds, Bluenose herd, Bathurst herd, and Dolphin Union. Same thing with those, it's the way the surveys are done. They are estimated. And we deal with NWT in the Kitikmeot and we collaborate with them and when our HTO, when they go to meetings with the southern parts Slave Lake area, other HTOs there, when HTOs go to meetings there, sometimes there's no government representative that might have accurate information or even to help support the HTOs that go to meetings on their behalf. I also may have questions on that on further days, maybe spring.

That's that I wanted to bring up, the way the surveys are done. They are all rely on estimates and these estimates come from biologists.

I just want to share one part where there was a survey done on the Dolphin Union. Mr. Speaker, I would like some more time for my member's statement.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I was talking about the survey that was being done. They were doing surveys through on the air plane, with aircraft, and flying over areas. One spotter mentioned to me that the biologist told them not to count that section, and I thought that was inappropriate, but that's one thing that might be happening on surveys, and that's why I think that the way the surveys are done, they're not accurate.

They need accurate numbers, and the best way to get accurate numbers I think is through the best biologists, best researchers, and those are the hunters in all the communities. All the communities have good hunters, expert hunters, and they all know where the caribou migrate at certain times of the year. I think those are the best biologists that the government should rely on so. That's what I wanted to say. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeegok.

### **Member's Statement 755 – 6(2): Power Outage in Grise Fiord – Thank QEC**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past month Grise Fiord is one of the coldest communities in Nunavut. Yesterday at nine in the morning we had a power outage and half of the community had its power on, but it was going on and off. Only at late night, at 1 o'clock, did we get full power on. And because

of the hard work of Qulliq Energy Corporation's crew and the person who was responsible worked very hard, I'm very grateful for Nanasee Noah (ph), who worked non-stop. They were able to substitute the worker there and they had to work at the problem in the community. Hopefully they have full power on.

The community of Grise Fiord helped each other, as they all do, when crisis come. And we will remember that this is one of the coldest months, and the essential services are very much needed.

I would like to say thank you to Qulliq crew for their hard work in such cases. I would like to encourage the community to be patient, and that everything will come back to normal upon completion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasié.

### **Member's Statement 756 – 6(2): Kimmirut New Airport Terminal**

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to Kimmirummiut. Mr. Speaker, if you have been visiting Kimmirut there is a new airport terminal that was just recently completed. I believe it has been worked on for the past two years. It's now completed, which I would like to celebrate with the community of Kimmirut, and it will benefit the visitors of the community and those travelling abroad. I would like to thank the transportation department and thank Minister Akeagok for the work and also his staff.

Mr. Speaker, the opening will be conducted next week, if everything goes through, on March 13, which is Thursday. And we have set that date along with my minister.

The terminal has more room. It's more spacious and it's more convenient to the community. The previous old terminal was very small, with lack of space, but now we have a really nice-looking terminal and no doubt the community will appreciate the terminal. I hope I will be participating in the opening of the terminal, and I thank the Kimmirummiut who will also be participating and were employed in the project. And no doubt people will be filled with pride. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member statement. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

### **Member's Statement 757 – 6(2): Showcasing Art in the Legislative Assembly**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Quana, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon, Nunavummiut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy 31st anniversary to my parents, Suzy and Rodney Fletcher, and also happy anniversary to our colleague and his wife, Mr. Speaker.

Today, as our colleague Minister Nakashuk mentioned, the exhibit that is outside in our foyer in the Legislative Assembly is titled “Red: Remember, Educate, Dedicate”.

I just want say a special thank you to constituents who have been involved by submitting pieces to that exhibit and thank you for showcasing your art work through what is a really beautiful exhibit. I hope that many community members from Iqaluit and those visiting town will come and see it as well as what our colleagues said, that those that are able to request contact the Qullit Status of Women to have the exhibit showcased in your community.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to recognize Jacqueline La France (ph), for creating a beautiful necklace; Shelley O’Gorman (ph), for creating a beautiful alicok (ph); and the Red Fish Art Studio who all created a beautiful sculpture, and those that are in the program and their instructors include Josh Akohaktok (ph), Ryan Anahiktok (ph), Josh Ivitaluiak (ph), Dean Ivitaluiak (ph), Ronny Lyell (ph), Faith Lyell (ph), Teana Makalak (ph), and Darrell Taptuna-Haines (ph), as well as Mark Slatter (ph). So thank you once again, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member’s Statement. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Member’s Statement 758 – 6(2): Police Oversight and Resources**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would again like to highlight and express my concern over the situation on public safety in Iqaluit and Nunavut as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, it’s clear that there’s a rising trend in summer rates of violence and crime. Although the warmer weather is always welcome, it’s unfortunate that this is clearly accompanied by a visible increase in such behaviour as public intoxication and violence.

Mr. Speaker, I do recognize that the RCMP are doing their very best to provide policing services in keeping residents safe; however, I would like to repeat the fact that I strongly believe that the Iqaluit detachment is under-resourced and understaffed. Right now they are doing their best to meet the needs of Iqalumiut, but again, they take a more reactionary approach where what we really need is precautionary measures.

Mr. Speaker, my assumptions have been confirmed at the recent RCMP update at city council where the detachment commander confirmed my assumptions when he was asked how the RCMP are enforcing the *Traffic Safety Act*, and the response was there’s simply not enough officers. The detachment is running short pretty much all the time. The watches are short and stretched thin with the call volume they’re getting. Depending on the day or night shift there’s only four or five members available to respond it these calls. It’s true that there’s 26 constables on staff at our detachment, but they are understaffed, under-resourced and overworked.

Mr. Speaker, the Civilian Complaints Review Commission also further supported my assumptions that the situation is so alarming that there was a specific section titled “Gross Under-resourcing and Possible Discrimination” in their recent report into the Kinngait incident in 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. In the Kinngait report, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission of the RCMP reached the inescapable conclusion that:

“The level of service being provided in Kinngait and other communities is grossly inadequate. And they also indicated that this shocking level of under-resourcing observed in this case raises concerns of the possible systemic discrimination, as residents of Canada are entitled to a reasonable level of service regardless of where they reside.”

Mr. Speaker, they have also indicated that although it is the RCMP who conducted these policing and staffing of our detachments, the resourcing is largely dependent on the territorial partners as the Government of Nunavut contributes 75 percent of the policing cost in territory, and that the final decision does in fact rest with the territorial government on resourcing our detachments.

The commission also indicated that although there have been several instances where funding has been requested over the last ten years, on several of these occasions over the last ten years there have been no positions allocated or approved; on other instances fewer positions than requested were approved, and in other instances although funding was granted, these funds had to be reallocated for other public safety measures.

Mr. Speaker, I’ve been saying this for years. The public safety issues are growing in all of our communities, especially during this spring and summer seasons, and I have been saying repeatedly the RCMP are doing their best, but I assume they are understaffed. And now I strongly believe that they are understaffed and under-resourced.

I would like to give the minister notice that I will be raising these specific concerns at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member statement. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.



**Member's Statement 759 – 6(2): Office of the Public Guardian**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to thank the Minister of Justice in regards to the member's statement he just stated, that his office is open. We have been wanting to hear about the justice department in regards to the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustees. I urge the Nunavummiut, I urge you to look into it to make sure that you go see who's visiting you and also go talk to your elders, especially when these people come into your communities. So go see these people who are visiting to talk to you because this is very important, that the Inuit have their private businesses. There's quite a few private businesses in Nunavut now, so we need to be planning for the future so that we can have appropriate resources.

Let's pay attention and urge the members of the community to visit, to go see the visitors in your community. I know that this is some issues, the issues that we were facing are resolved now. I would like to thank the minister for his minister's statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Kusugak.

**Member's Statement 760 – 6(2): Recognition of Women**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this day is a huge day. We need to acknowledge and recognize the women of Nunavut's strength, that they are our strength. Today we remember them and learn and educate us. And let's not forget about how women who have been experiencing violence and also who have been murdered.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who have daughters, we don't get babies, we don't have babies so that they could be abused or hurt. We do not make daughters so that they could be hurt. We love them to our hearts, especially the girls, all the women, all the females. When they have daughters, they don't have daughters to be abused, Mr. Speaker.

For those who are daughters, sisters, older sisters and younger sisters, mothers, aunts, all of these women, we need to pray and acknowledge them, not just today but every day, Mr. Speaker. Every day I think of my late sister who was murdered by a man's hands. I think of her today and I want you to learn from this.

Let's be gentle to our women because they are our strength. My sister was killed in 2003, and it hurts me every day, Mr. Speaker.

I just didn't want to just let this day go where we have to remember the women. We need to end the violence against women. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerk.

**Member's Statement 761 – 6(2): New Community Learning Centre for Sanirajak**

**Mr. Kaernerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have compassion for women.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in our community Sanirajak Arctic college. In regards to Sanirajak Arctic College the government is aware the other building that was built in 1988 and 1991. On the Fifth Assembly the previous minister of the day had tabled an information or report that the Nunavut Arctic College, do they look at Nunavut Arctic College. This was done in 2003 and the report stated at the time that the Arctic College, that it's satisfactory in the community back in 2022. We had agreed and approved capital budgets to renovate the floor for the Arctic College, for the door and also the window for the Arctic College in Sanirajak.

Renovation is very good idea, but my constituents would like to see when, since education is very important and since the population of Sanirajak is increasing, we need to look into these institutions to make sure that they are improved.

Mr. Speaker, in Sanirajak if you look at Sanirajak, I'm sure there's going to be more interest to further their education if these are amended. Those are my examples, for mining. If we look at Nunavut, there is quite a huge mining done in Nunavut, and that they could train for heavy equipment.

During the appropriate time I will be asking questions to the member for Nunavut Arctic College. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

**Item 6: Oral Questions**

**Oral Question 1144 – 6(2): QEC Infrastructure Projects**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my first question to the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation. Mr. Speaker, I was listening carefully to the minister's responses to the questions asked yesterday by my

colleague representing Kugluktuk, and now I have some of my own. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the minister made a minister's statement on infrastructure for Qulliq Energy Corporation. It triggered my Curious George factor.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I was as surprised as my colleague to hear that the Qulliq Energy Corporation had apparently decided to suddenly terminate negotiations with the Kitikmeot corporation regarding the construction of Kugluktuk's new power plant.

Mr. Speaker, I went back to Hansard to double-check for myself. Mr. Speaker, a little over a week ago, on February 21, the minister told the House that the Qulliq Energy Corporation wanted its negotiations with the Kitikmeot corporation to succeed, and that work was continuing. Mr. Speaker, just six days later the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a request for proposal for the design and construction of the power plant.

This request for proposals is over a thousand pages in length, so I promise I won't be tabling it.

Mr. Speaker, my first question to the minister is this: Who made the decision to terminate the negotiations and when was the decision made? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. In terms of the negotiations with Kitikmeot corporation, the previous responses that I provided to the Member for Kugluktuk were accurate at the time. It's the nature of the business we do that sometimes things can change during a sitting of the House, and as I had previously mentioned, we were hopeful that the negotiations with Kitikmeot corporation would be successful. Unfortunately, they were not, and so the decision around ending the negotiations with the Kitikmeot corporation were made at the senior management level at Qulliq Energy Corporation and it's a decision that as minister I'm in support of. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that response. Mr. Speaker, we know that the current government has embraced negotiations and contracting with respect to housing through the Nunavut 3000 agreement with NCC. Is the Qulliq Energy Corporation currently involved in any other direct negotiations regarding major construction projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) No. Mut'na.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that response as well, as succinct as it was. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, also in a previous response earlier this sitting, the minister made reference to “keeping a very close eye on the potential impact of retaliatory tariffs on imports.”

In light of the Trump tariffs that were imposed earlier today, can the minister give an indication as to the immediate impact on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's current capital plan and procurement activities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the minister for the question. It's very timely. Qulliq Energy Corporation is concerned about these tariffs and the retaliatory tariffs. We are reliant on some specialized supplies and equipment that do come across the border, in terms of our major capital projects as well as operations side.

As of yet, in terms of putting a number or being able to quantify the impacts to our operations, we're not quite there yet, but when we look at the need for new power plants in communities like Kugluktuk, we are concerned by anything that would be driving up the cost of business. We're already a very high cost jurisdiction to operate, as the member knows, and these tariffs from the U.S. administration are concerning and it's very difficult to see how they would be of any help, in terms of looking for ways to do business cheaper or as cheap as possible on behalf of Nunavummiut.

So we are looking into it, in terms of piecing out the different components and the different reliances that we do have, but at this point it's difficult to quantify what the effects are going to be. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### **Oral Question 1145 – 6(2): Contaminated Sites**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment. I would like to (indiscernible) of issue of contaminated sites in my constituency of Uqqummiut. As the minister will recall, I last raised this issue in the Legislative Assembly at its sitting of November 2, 2023.

(interpretation ends) At that time I noted that the Department of Environment is responsible for administering the government's contaminated sites policy, and is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Contaminated Sites Liability Working Group. Can the minister provide an update today on the working group's current priorities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't recall that question, because I wasn't the current minister at that time.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment has been implementing the contaminated sites policy and re-designing a database to better manage and distribute information. Right now the prioritization is around resource spending for this working group. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Cape Christian contaminated site remediation project is located in my constituency, near the community of Clyde River. The site was abandoned by the American military and handed over to the Government of Canada in the year 1975, half a century ago.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that the cleanup of this site is the responsibility of the Government of Canada, but my constituents are frustrated at the slow pace of work by this government. (interpretation ends) Can the minister indicate how his department is working with the federal government in prioritizing the cleanup of the Cape Christian site. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if my notes are correct, the old town site near Clyde River – I think is the same site, the Cape Christian that my colleague references. According to my notes, the department has conducted a field work this past summer in 2024 towards the human health environmental risk assessment. A draft consultant's report is expected, but so far I'm aware that as far as I know it has not yet been determined which department is responsible for remediating the site. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is of a major concern to us because it has an impact on the community, and there's machinery and other debris that have been dumped into the ocean. We would appreciate if this work was initiated as soon as possible.

Can the minister confirm how many other contaminated sites are located in the vicinity of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, and can he indicate the approximate cost of fully remediating these sites. That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during that site visit, and as I indicated earlier, we're waiting for the report, and we will have to review it first of all. I will make sure that I keep you informed of any activities or updates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

#### **Oral Question 1146 – 6(2): Recreation Infrastructure**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. As the minister is aware, the community of Igloolik suffered a devastating loss last month when the Kipsigak arena was destroyed by fire. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to advocate for a new arena to be constructed as soon as possible. However, I also recognize that this process might take years.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the community of Igloolik's work to develop an outdoor rink, which is an interim solution allowing for hockey and other ice sports to be played by our youth.

Can the minister confirm what assistance is available from his department to enable the municipality to equip the arena with floodlights, for example, next a small shelter, and other essential items. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for that question. With the devastating fire of the Igloolik arena, it was devastating to see. But then again, the people of Igloolik came together and built an outdoor arena on the ice. I would also like to say thank you to the hamlet of Igloolik for taking this initiative.

With your question, Community and Government Services and the municipality can get together and see what they can do to provide essential equipment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If they can get together as soon as possible, that would be better.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as I noted earlier in our sitting Igloolik's world famous Artcirc Circus Black Box studio was located in the arena, and the group needs a permanent new home and performing arts space.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the distinction between recreation, infrastructure, and cultural infrastructure can be artificial. Can the Minister of Community and Government Services indicate how he is working with the Minister of Culture and Heritage to address Igloolik's immediate needs in this area. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our Department of Community and Government Services works with all other departments on what their capital priorities are, and for the Department of Culture and Heritage I believe they do have some projects on the go. However, if there are proposals that meet the funding or grants and contributions towards capital that the municipality of Igloolik would like to access through Culture and Heritage, I encourage and would assure the member that Community and Government Services would support those proposals and make sure they have all the requirements to submit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Big buildings where many people can congregate, it's really not good when they lose it and then they have to try and request for a replacement. Maybe there is some way that the department can set something up for emergencies like that. (interpretation ends) When I first raised this issue at the beginning of our winter sitting, the minister indicated that his department is working with the municipality of Igloolik and the Nunavut Association of Municipalities Insurance Exchange, which is commonly known as NAMIX.

Can the minister clarify the extent to which the municipality of Igloolik will have the flexibility to utilize any insurance proceeds it receives to begin the process of designing a new multi-purpose recreational and cultural facility for the community. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the Igloolik arena being a municipal asset, that's a loss of such a nature that I know adds pressure to the Nunavut Association of Municipalities Insurance Program. At this time I think that if it's covered through that insurance program or not is one thing; but also I know when there's a devastating loss of this nature, it has a detrimental or a ripple effect on not just municipal assets, but our government's priorities, how we try to shift to ensure that we try to meet the needs of all communities across our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Mr. Lightstone.

### **Oral Question 1147 – 6(2): Police Oversight and Resources**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my member's statement, my questions are to the Minister of Justice and are regarding the severe under-resourcing of the RCMP.

Mr. Speaker, during my member's statement I made reference to the RCMP Civilian Review and Complaints Commission report on the incident that occurred in Kinngait in 2019. The report had indicated that the commission had found gross under-resourcing was the main factor explaining how this serious offence had occurred, and also indicated that Kinngait is not alone and it is a widespread issue across Nunavut.

I also referenced a media article in Nunatsiaq News posted last week, where the Iqaluit detachment commander had described how our detachment is running short of officers almost constantly.

For my first question to the Minister of Justice, can he indicate how his department is currently working with the RCMP to address the chronic under-staffing and under-funding of the RCMP in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in terms of the RCMP budgets, we have been working very diligently and since 2013 we have doubled their budgets from 30 million to 67 million dollars to date, and we continue to get support from this House. When we ask for our 75 percent increase, our government has been very aware of the need to invest to the RCMP, and we'll continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.



**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's clear that the Government of Nunavut holds the purse strings when it comes to allocating funding to public safety and the RCMP, and the report also indicated that on multiple occasions over the last ten years that the RCMP had submitted numerous business cases requesting funding for additional RCMP members and on several occasions, no positions were approved at all; and on other occasions fewer positions were approved than requested.

Looking at the Department of Justice's official response to this specific report on the Kinngait incident, it states that the Government of Nunavut demonstrates its commitment through its consistent approval of RCMP business cases and significant approval of funding. The Department of Justice's response that over the last ten years the GN has approved funding for 33 additional RCMP members over that ten-year period.

So for my next question I would like to ask: Over that ten-year period where the RCMP were approved 33 positions, how many positions did they actually request for? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will not get into that level of detail in terms of what we requested for and what was approved. What was approved is to have those 33 positions, and we work very closely with the RCMP in terms of making sure that they have the right resources and will continue to do that.

We have a very good working relationship with Public Service Canada and also with the RCMP, who are our other funders when it comes to resourcing the RCMP, and for example, our current agreement in terms of the contracts for building buildings is coming up, and we're working very closely to ensure that they do have the adequate infrastructure in place.

One of the key things that I think that we have not been able to celebrate is that we do have the First Nations and Inuit funding agreement now, which is significant in terms of getting more resources to the RCMP. And so those are the very things that we continue to look for, and we'll continue to find additional resources for our Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's unfortunate that the minister is not interested in debating this topic and informing the House on the actual positions requested by the RCMP necessary for meeting public safety, which is again the minister's responsibility. However, I would like to move on to my next topic, Mr. Speaker.

The report also indicates that the impact of under-staffing of the RCMP and having these officers work overtime and in insufficient numbers to address the large number of incidents involving volatile situations has led to very high-stress situations, which includes a lot of RCMP members leaving on stress leave, mental-health leave, and in very unfortunate situations, potentially using the use of excessive force.

Mr. Speaker, in the previous Assembly we passed Bill 53, *An Act to Amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Agreement Act*. One of the key provisions was allowing for the independent civilian oversight into serious incidents involving police in Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, it has been four years since we've passed this legislation. I would like to ask can the minister provide a clear answer today as to when this important legislation will be brought into force. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we go into this House and what resources we need and what resources we got, this is the reason why we have this budget.

Our budget will be presented in here and I'll ask for support for something that I'm very proud that for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that they are resourced to do the job that they can do. I don't want to be in a debate of what would they need and where would they need, and if we do that to every department, how many teachers we need, how many more social workers we need, we'll be here all day. It's something through these budget processes that we decide how much resources are acceptable, and we vote on it and we move forward. This is the reason why we have these budgets, to go through.

I wanted to address that, because I don't want it to be seen that I don't want to debate about how much more resources are needed. Those are very lively debates that we have, even in cabinet, and I encourage my member colleagues to come and share me some of those resources if we need it. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1148 – 6(2): Income Assistance in Chesterfield Inlet**

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services. Mr. Speaker, a number of my constituents have raised concerns with respect to income assistance services in the community of Chesterfield Inlet. They have informed me that the communications with the senior staff are difficult, at times, because they do not seem well-informed about Inuit culture, family structure, and lifestyles.

I really appreciate the minister writing to me directly on this issue last December, to inform me that all income assistance workers, including the regional directors, managers, and territorial directors are Inuit.

For the benefit of the listening public, can the minister confirm that this continues to be the case, that all income assistance workers and senior staff in the Income Assistance Division are Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking that question. The income support assistance workers are all Inuit in Nunavut. I am thankful that we have been approved in the House here in our efforts to add more staff. Some of them only work part of the day. The casuals are all Inuit, too, and the senior staff are all Inuit as well, except for Iqaluit. Some of the workers in Iqaluit are not Inuit. However, in the other communities they are all Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is very important that our front line workers can understand their clients on a personal level. I congratulate the Department of Family Services on their successful efforts to ensure that Inuit are in a position to support and assist their fellow Inuit in this critical area.

Mr. Speaker, I have been given to understand that an income assistance position in Chesterfield Inlet has been vacant for some time. The government staff dictionary currently indicates that there's no Government of Nunavut employee in the position of income support worker in the community of Chesterfield Inlet. Can the minister provide an update on the staffing situation of the income assistance worker position in Chesterfield Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking those questions. It's not only Chesterfield Inlet where they suddenly have no staff for a while. Sometimes some of the staff go for training or they have to go to the hospital or if they resign. And when it's that case, they are handled from the regional office in Rankin Inlet, all the income support clients. If they are not going to have staff for a while, we open it for competition for people in the community to apply for them. And I'm really glad that they're always able to hire Inuit workers in the communities, because they know their fellow Inuits' needs and culture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that Family Services faces many challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining full-time staff for its front line positions. I also recognize that many staff go above and beyond, often doing the work of more than one position to provide support and assistance to the community residents. On behalf of my constituents, I thank these workers for their efforts.

However, when there is no front line workers in the community, residents face difficulties in getting support. Again, for the listening public, can the minister clarify what steps residents should take when there are no income assistance workers in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question. To add, Grise Fiord, some communities also receive income assistance from our regional offices when they have no local income assistant, and that is the fact in communities in Keewatin. Rankin Inlet office and also here, in Qikiqtaaluk we have Pangnirtung office and in Kitikmeot, Cambridge Bay. When communities don't have an income assistant, community members are able to find out from our regional offices. And as well if they have an assistant in the same office, they are able to direct where residents may call for assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerik.

#### **Oral Question 1149 – 6(2): New Community Learning Centre for Sanirajak**

**Mr. Kaernerik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my member statement I did mention that I will be asking questions to the Minister responsible for Arctic College.

Mr. Speaker, my first question, when was the community of Sanirajak visited to conduct assessment on the age of the adult learning centre. If you can clarify that, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question. With respect to capital planner for Arctic College visited communities and they look at which community needs capital planning. For the community of Sanirajak, Hall Beach, I cannot say when the community was visited by a capital planner, but I can return to the question by member, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Kaernerik.

**Mr. Kaernek** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, in 2017 in the reports, I think that was one of the last times an assessment was made on the condition of the building. Perhaps the minister can clarify when the capital planners make decisions on assessing buildings, you have 1998, 1999 buildings that were erected then. So then can the minister start planning to perhaps to build a new building? If the minister can perhaps respond to this, if she has any staff member involved when capital planning takes place. What do you look at first, old buildings or buildings that need renovations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question.

(interpretation ends) I do recognize the issues that a lot of the communities have in terms of Nunavut Arctic community learning centres that need more support in rebuilding, or getting a new one, just like any department. Like I had mentioned, our finance team as well as some staff do travel to the communities to look at the conditions of the CLCs in the communities, and then from that, they put together business cases to bring forward to Finance.

Unfortunately, when we're talking about what are the priorities of this government, we also have to think about other departments that are prioritized depending on the mandate, but also depending what the conditions are in, and unfortunately a lot of times Nunavut Arctic College learning centres are kind of low in the chain, unfortunately.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

**Mr. Kaernek:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. Yes, I think when it comes to these building assessments, when it comes to these as poor conditions, such as flooring, roofing I do believe it's a much-needed project to replace the community learning centre. Because, Mr. Speaker, learning opportunities for adults in the community of Sanirajak are limited, due to the conditions and size of the current community learning centre.

Will the minister commit to submitting a project request for a new community learning centre for the community of Sanirajak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) Like I had mentioned, I'm not too clear what the status is on the visit to Sanirajak. In terms of the report that we might have had most recently, I'm not sure but I will certainly follow up. I can't promise that capital requests

will come through for Sanirajak to get a new CLC, but I will certainly look into what our plans are. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

**Oral Question 1150 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. Mr. Speaker, I want to revisit the issue of water infrastructure.

As the minister is aware, Pond Inlet has experienced a number of boil-water advisories in recent years. This continues to be a concern to the community.

Mr. Speaker, I was very happy that the department issued a request for proposals in November of 2023 to provide architectural and engineering services for the design of a new water treatment facility in Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay. The department awarded a contract for this work in January 2024. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as stated, my department is working with a number of communities in upgrading or providing new water treatment plants, and for Pond Inlet specifically, I believe that's advancing as planned. We are preparing for moving each project to the next stage as and when, as you go through the channels. I'll commit to bring further details to my colleague on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. I look forward to that.

Mr. Speaker, the request for proposals indicate that the department was scheduled to issue a tender for the construction of the new facility in December 2024. Can the minister provide an update on the construction schedule and cost of Pond Inlet's new water treatment facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As for the timeline of construction, I have to look. I'm looking back at my notes from when we presented our capital budgets for the next. We're preparing for 2029-2030 to be when Pond Inlet's project to be

completed by. Again I will commit to bringing further details to my colleague on her question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. That's a long ways to go. I look forward to that.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support my colleagues representing Aggu, Uqqummiut, Iqaluit and other constituencies who have spoken about the need for modern water treatment infrastructure in all 25 Nunavut communities. As the minister will recall, he recently tabled the Government of Nunavut's new Drinking Water Strategic Framework. This strategy estimates that it will cost over \$600 million to rectify the infrastructure deficit in respect to providing safe and clean drinking water to our residents. That's almost twice as much as our entire capital budget for the next fiscal year.

Can the minister provide an update today on how the government is working to secure this funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through that Strategic Drinking Water Framework, those preliminary estimates we do know that there's great needs to our capital, our water capital water infrastructure needs, either to upgrade or replace them. And with that, we are advancing several of communities, either in planning and/or design construction. Right now Pond Inlet, among others, are more in the advanced stages of the work.

For securing the over \$600 million, Mr. Speaker, my department will try to access as many funding programs that suits our needs, and again we do have a Federal Relations Division that is tasked with not just for Community and Government Services, but other departmental needs to see if there's capital programs that we can access and address our infrastructure needs across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Oral Question 1151 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Environment and they concern the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time to pass the plan now.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Joe Ashevak, the chairperson of the Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization, as well as many other residents in my constituency who work hard in developing the plan.

Mr. Speaker, the draft plan was submitted to the federal Minister of Northern Affairs, the territorial Minister of Environment, and the president of Nunavut Tunngavik back in June 2023, almost two years ago. Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues have asked many questions since this time about the status of the plan.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly explain what specific issues are preventing the plan from being approved in its current form. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question in that there's people that are awaiting this recommended Draft Land Use Plan to go in effect.

Mr. Speaker, to be fair, my department, we are going through an extensive review process to ensure that due diligence occurs, and that we move to a place where it aligns with all three parties.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to go into the specifics of this at this time, as we're still undergoing that review, but I would note that the three parties are scheduled to meet later this month to go over such details, and hope that will move forward from that meeting onward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on many occasions in this House about the importance of food security and protecting our wildlife and natural environment. Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify what specific concerns have been raised by environmental groups in Nunavut about the Draft Land Use Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for this recommended land use plan, I know there are many different stakeholders at play on both sides, whether to protect our environment or for economic development reasons. Again, we are trying to strike a fair balance between all parties involved.



With that, Mr. Speaker, I know there are groups that have their priorities that we want to set for other parties, but we're trying to land on the same common ground with all the signatories that will be involved to move this plan forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have also spoken on many occasions in this House about the importance of economic development and resource development. Mr. Speaker, I fully recognize and support the objective of seeking balance in our land use planning. Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify what specific concerns have been raised by the mining industry about the Draft Land Use Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Mr. Speaker, thanks for the follow-up question. My department and the Government of Nunavut has been meeting regularly with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik to discuss the potential issues and also to collaborate on finding developing solutions to these issues.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I mentioned there's different stakeholders, parties that have interest, either to protect and/or for economic development reasons. I do believe they have been going through the Nunavut Planning Commission to advocate for their interests.

Mr. Speaker, again, we're trying to find a right balance in this case right now. I understand it has taken a long time to get here, but we do expect the tri-party meeting later this month and again hopefully from there we'll have a better indication on where we will be heading towards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Oral Question 1152 – 6(2): School Meal Programs**

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, a number of my colleagues have raised concerns about future of programming and services that are currently being provided with funding from the Inuit Child First Initiative. If it's not continued after the end of March, can the minister provide an overview of how many schools across Nunavut are currently delivering programs and services with the Inuit Child First Initiative funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Our department is concerned over the loss of the Inuit Child First Initiative funding. We do have schools that access school food program funding from Inuit Child First Initiative, and we also have extra supports in our schools like student support assistants that are hired through the district education authorities to fund student support assistants in the schools through that funding as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and also I would like to thank the minister for the answer. (interpretation ends) I recognize that the Department of Health provides funding for meal programs to all schools across Nunavut, but it is also my understanding that schools in my constituency are supplementing their school meal program with funding from Inuit Child First Initiative, making sure that the children and youth do not go hungry during school days, going a long ways to supporting their attendance in school and success with their studies.

Can the minister indicate whether her department will provide additional funding for school meal programs if the Inuit Child First Initiative funds are no longer available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. For the school food program money, we know how important it is to have a nutritious meal and to start your day off right. We do have 20 schools across the territory that are accessing the Inuit Child First Initiative to support school food programming. I understand that that funding will go until the end of the school year, into June, so the support will be there for this year.

The department is working with our other stakeholders, colleagues at the committee level to discuss this important funding with other departments and with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and we do hope that the federal government does hear us. We have had meetings and through letters as well, and will continue to advocate for this funding. Particularly with school food program funding we are thankful that we signed up to the National School Food Program last week, but we know that's not enough. So we hope that we can still advocate and that the funding will continue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for briefly touching on my next question. Last year the federal government announced that it would invest 1 billion over five years to implement a national school food program with provinces, territories,

and Indigenous partners and stakeholders. Can the minister provide an update what funds Nunavut will be receiving under the National School Food Program and how it will be allocated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. We did sign a bilateral agreement with the federal government for the National School Food Program. We are going to use these funds to support school food programs for the next three years. This year we're going to be hiring a nutritionist to support what we need to do for creating a national territorial school food guide, as well as food meal programs. We'll also be using the funds for country food and to have country food distributed to support the programs that are already there and enhance them with country food. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

### **Oral Question 1153 – 6(2): Megaprojects**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, all. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. As the minister is aware, I have been a strong and consistent supporter of the proposed Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project, which has significant strategic implications for the communities of the region. The Legislative Assembly approved \$1.06 million in capital carry-over funding for the Kivalliq Trade Corridor Study during its winter 2024 sitting.

Last year the Department of Economic Development and Transportation held community consultations concerning the proposed new Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project. Information published by the government indicates that the Kivalliq intercommunity road study is complete; next steps are being considered, and it will be communicated to stakeholders in the public in 2025.

My first question for the minister is what were the main conclusions of the study and when will its results be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too am eagerly awaiting that report. I don't have that in front of me, so I'm not able to talk about the specifics yet. But I really am eager. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully the report will be done soon and can be tabled very soon, hopefully before the end of this winter sitting.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue during our recent Fall Sitting, I noted that one of the department's recent updates on the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project indicated that the initial route corridor was determined by considered a number of factors, including the Nunavut Planning Commission's Nunavut Land Use Plan. At that time I asked the minister to provide a clear update on what position his department had taken regarding the impact of the Draft Land Use Plan on the proposed Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project.

We have heard a few times now that we need to find a balance, a balance for economic development and balance for protecting wildlife, but we do need to find a balance. Mr. Speaker, when I asked those questions back in the Fall Sitting, I did not receive a clear answer, so I'll ask again the minister to provide a clear update on this issue. What is the position of the department on this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague was just asked about the Draft Land Use Plan and what status it is at. It is under review and that's all part of the reviews. The work that we're doing on the Kivalliq road will have some impact in terms of what we would like to see built in Kivalliq for the intercommunity road. The consultations have been very positive coming from the communities, but like I said, I eagerly await for that report to read. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am a strong supporter of the proposed Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Economic Development has been responsible for the Government of Nunavut's role in respect of the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project and the Grays Bay Road and Port Project. However, when I asked questions about the Government of Nunavut's role in respect to the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project, I was told that the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs had taken over the file.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Economic Development and Transportation will soon cease to exist and a new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure will come into being. Given how things can change rapidly around here, can the minister confirm which department or departments will be responsible for the Government of Nunavut's role in respect to the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project, the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project, and the Grays Bay Road and Port Project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road, that would be the new department of transportation initiative – Transportation Infrastructure Nunavut. That’s going to be handed over, in terms of the work.

For the Grays Bay, that is going to still be an Inuit-led project. That’s going to still be an Inuit-led. As a government we’ve been supporting as a whole, whether it’s myself as the Minister for Economic Development and Transportation and that work will still continue. Our government will still continue to support any initiatives that are coming forward, whether it’s Inuit-led or our own government’s, all those. I want to assure the members that there’s still going to be a very strong cabinet support throughout this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1154 – 6(2): Contracts and Projects**

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and pertain to market assessment and tariffs and things related to that.

Mr. Speaker, a few months ago an ad was put out by Community and Government Services construction market assessments in Nunavut. For the benefit of the minister, I’ll read what the core of the announcement was or the information.

“The Department of Community and Government Services Infrastructure Division is assessing the construction market in Nunavut to better understand the costs environment and the factors contributing to high inflation and volatility in construction costs. If you are a contractor bidding in projects over \$5 million or a construction consultant, architect, engineering, cost estimating, et cetera, Community and Government Services would like to meet with you.”

Mr. Speaker, I fully support this process, because one prime example of costs inflating could be the Qikiqtarjuaq Deep Port project. It was estimated at 50 million, and now it’s in the neighbourhood of \$300 million, plus.

My first question, Mr. Speaker, is what response has been given to Community and Government Services after this announcement was put out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member. I appreciate his question.

Mr. Speaker, my department did this market study to better understand the construction industry and when we're proceeding with projects. This is also to better understand what factors go into play when companies bid for our tenders.

Mr. Speaker, it's a way to educate each other around how the world works now, and just to point out that we did this prior to the tariffs being announced, and without that lens put in yet. But the interest was high and we had multiple vendors that engaged in this process. I don't have specific numbers of people that were involved, but there was a questionnaire put out and there was a high level of interest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to that information being given to all us regular members here, once the report has been completed and the results of the consultation process.

Mr. Speaker, my next question is, a few months ago we had a letter from the minister that said – sorry a few weeks ago, and one of the bullets in the letter said:

“Allowing for cost adjustments in contracts where tariffs-related increase can be demonstrated.”

I just want to get a clarification on whether, if a contract has been issued or will be issued and can be proven that tariffs are the reason for the increase in costs, that the amount for the contract, the total amount will be increased by this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, my department, we are closely monitoring the tariffs as they go into effect and what impact they will have on our critical infrastructure projects as well as our critical services.

Mr. Speaker, this has involved looking at our existing project tender schedules and the existing project contracts that if there's any new increases as a result of the tariffs, what budgets with we might have to adjust.

With that, I'm willing to share details as I did before with my colleagues through correspondence. But we're in the early stages of this, and just the level or the magnitude of the impacts, that is yet to be seen yet. I will keep my colleagues apprised. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just before I go on to my third question, I would like to give a shout out to Premier Doug Ford, who has been mainly the face of Team Canada in times of counter tariffs and fighting these tariffs and getting the Canadian message out to the Americans that these are no good, and to congratulate him on his election win.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

>> *Applause*

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Mr. Speaker, on the premier's minister's statement, one of the lines was "I encourage all Nunavummiut to support all Canadian businesses and products in support to these tariffs."

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, currently the government has lots of contracts for software, internet software and programming that a lot of them might be or probably are U.S.-based, and they have contractual obligations.

My question is, now that the tariffs are here and we've been asked to support Canadian products and businesses will this government stop any new purchase for my computer programming or software programming that are from the U.S.? I fully understand what your contractual obligations are right now, but are there any plans to ask for more funding to enhance more programming, buy more program that go come from the U.S. businesses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department's procurement division has been looking at around again what projects that are out for tender, current contracts that we have awarded, things like multi-year projects and multi-year contracts that are awarded and in progress.

But Mr. Speaker, again, we'll be treading these new waters that we're in given that we are facing these, some might say unnecessarily, but regarding the Team Canada approach, we are in contact with other jurisdictions around they are doing around this area. I'll keep my

colleagues and all Nunavummiut informed on what we're doing as a result of these going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**Oral Question 1155 – 6(2): Legal Aid in the Kitikmeot Region**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of legal aid in the Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that the Legal Services Board operates at arm's length with the department and is responsible for providing eligible Nunavummiut with legal aid and other related services. Mr. Speaker, the department's current business plan indicates that "that Access to Justice Agreement which governs federal and territorial funding requires the board to provide legal aid services, public legal education, and Inuit court worker program services."

Can the minister clarify what specific actions the Legal Services Board undertakes in efforts to raise awareness of public legal education in the Kitikmeot communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question related to our legal work. We work very closely with the Legal Services Board and our own is to try and communicate as much as possible. In my minister's statement I stated that the law society is assisting on going on the radio, helping in terms of filling out wills and that. A lot of good work does take place and a number of initiatives that are taken, both from the Department of Justice and the Legal Services Board in every of our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 2021-2022 Legal Services Board of Nunavut's annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 5, 2024. Mr. Speaker, the report highlights the board's successful delivery of the Inuit court worker program. These positions help provide many services, including client intake, assisting preparation for court appearances, translations, community outreach, and more.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Legal Services Board for their continued efforts to hire, train, and support Inuit front line



workers. Can the minister clarify how many Inuit court workers are employed in each community in the Kitikmeot region. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Oh, this gives me a shock. Make sure everybody knows I get a shock when I touch this. My apologies. If I look surprised, it's not because of the question, it's from electrocution.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, four part-time court workers in Kitikmeot region, and I don't have the specifics of exactly where communities are at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Send and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, 2021-2022 Legal Services Board's Nunavut annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly November 5. Mr. Speaker, the report addresses the fire in Gjoa Haven that burned down the government building that housed the Legal Services Board headquarters in 2022. The report indicated that:

“The fire was a significant blow. Given that this is where Legal Services Board staff received and processed legal applications, almost all physical and electronic records were lost. These staff were displaced entirely and most could not do their work from home. Legal Services Board could not accept and process legal aid applications for the remainder of the year.”

Can the minister provide a substantive today to the status of the Legal Services Board's head office. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the office for the Legal Services Board in Gjoa Haven, we have been able to secure – I don't know, it's an acronym. It's at the CAP building that we're able to provide some office space there. We've been working closely with the Legal Services Board to try and get that staffed again.

During my briefings I was really happy to hear that Legal Services Board was able to secure staff housing as one of our positions. And so hopefully that will be attract active to the fine community of Gjoa Haven, of getting a position staffed in the Legal Services Board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members, be aware time allotted for question period is now over. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to extend the period of time allotted for Oral Questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question. Are there any nays? There are none. Question period is extended for another 30 minutes. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

### **Oral Question 1156 – 6(2): Anti-Tariff Retaliation**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, members. Good afternoon, everyone. My questions today are to the Minister of Finance and chair person of the Financial Management Board.

Mr. Speaker, when we first took office four years ago, I never imagined that I would be rising in the House to pay tribute to the leadership of Ontario Premier Doug Ford, but that's where we are today.

Mr. Speaker, the Trump tariffs are now in place, and I join with every Canadian from coast to coast to coast in condemning them as irrational and indefensible.

Mr. Speaker, within the last few hours, the Premier Ford ordered the provincially owned Liquor Control Board of Ontario to pull American products off the shelves, and I join with my colleagues in applauding the premier's announcement that we will do the same, because it's the right thing to do.

Can the minister indicate the approximate value of annual purchases of U.S. products by the Liquor and Cannabis Commission. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we currently have about 650 to 700,000 dollars of inventory that is made in U.S. product as of now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 600,000 dollars' worth of products might not seem like a lot in the big picture; however, every drop in the bucket counts, and it takes millions of drops to fill a bucket, so thank you for that response.

Mr. Speaker, I won't claim to possess any inside knowledge on the workings of the current U.S. administration, but what we do know is the influence of multi-billionaires like Elon Musk is plain to see.

Mr. Speaker, the premier of Ontario announced last month that he was prepared to rip up the province's \$100 million contract with Elon Musk's Starlink Corporation, in the face of the threat of Trump tariffs.

Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Finance is the chair of the Financial Management Board, a position which gives him great authority over all departments and agencies in the territorial government. I wonder, will the minister assure this House today that nothing is off the table in respect to potential retaliatory measures, including the cancellation of any and all Starlink contracts that the Government of Nunavut has with Starlink? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our first action we took this morning was to stop the sale of any alcohol made or purchased from the United States, and that will continue, Mr. Speaker.

But in terms of the other retaliatory measures, if it's to do with Starlink or any other, I heard a colleague mention about some of the contracts that are in place regarding some of the computer software, and so on. We're taking a very close look at that, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that there is no detrimental impact in the care of Nunavummiut in bringing that, Mr. Speaker.

Unlike the southern provinces, Starlink might be only Internet way to get hold, and communicate for the betterment of Nunavummiut in health care, and so on, so we have to be careful in terms of a full stop de-Americanization of Nunavut.

We will be going over it, I believe, with my colleagues to ensure that we have to take care of Nunavummiut's health and also we have to stick-handle through this tariff war that is happening. I just hope it doesn't last as long as it might. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to delve a little bit more deeply into that discussion. As part of its suite of potential retaliatory measures, the Ontario

government announced that it would be prepared to ban American companies from bidding on government contracts, and it is my understanding that other Canadian jurisdictions may take similar action.

As the minister is aware, his department has been in the process of acquiring a new enterprise resource planning system, this was mentioned earlier, from the Oracle Corporation, which is headquartered in Texas and the founder is one of the largest – he's the founder and one of the largest shareholders of this company is a multi-billion-dollar billionaire supporter of the U.S. president.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Legislative Assembly approved capital funding for this project prior to the recent U.S. election. What I am wondering, is the minister considering or prepared to ban American companies from bidding on Government of Nunavut contracts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's a very tough question to answer in light of the fact that we're on day one of this. It takes a lot more work and thought from cabinet and other officials to see what we can and cannot do. But we definitely are debating that issue within cabinet, and different departments, and as much professional expertise as we can in terms of what we can and cannot do, and if we do something how will it affect Nunavummiut, both in a positive sense or a negative sense. So there is a lot to it more than just making a quick decision.

I will ensure that anything that my department does in light of that, I will keep my colleagues and Nunavummiut informed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1157 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health on the topic of the Canadian Institute for Health Information, recent changes in the middle of November of last year on new aging with dignity indicators and shared health priorities.

Mr. Speaker, the new set of common indicators to pressure progress in aging with dignity shared health priority area sets a common foundation for monitoring and keeping Canadians up to date on the care that older people need, where they face gaps in services, and what needs to change to better support them as they age.

Mr. Speaker, what changes can we expect in existing facilities, and did this have any impact on expected operations of the new facility to be opened in Rankin Inlet, such as who will be offered rooms or beds?

**Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of that question and trying to unpack the different pieces and connect it to our long-term care services, I will take that question as notice and get back to the member with a response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Taken as notice. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

### **Oral Question 1158 – 6(2): Inuit Child First Initiative Projects**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to do a follow-up on school funding with Child First Initiative. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on the line of questioning that my colleague posed respecting school positions that are currently funded through the Child First Initiative. Last week the minister confirmed that three student support assistants in Baker Lake are hired with this federal funding. Can the minister inform this House how many positions across all of Nunavut schools are currently funded through Inuit Child First Initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for that question. During the 2024-2025 school year district of education authorities added 107.5 student support positions through funds acquired in the Inuit Child First Initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for answering that question.

Mr. Speaker, recently we saw a story about our western neighbours who state that over 60 percent of the school support assistants in Northwest Territories are hired with Jordan's Principle funding, the federal program that supports First Nation children. If the Inuit Child First Initiative funding is no longer available to fund student support positions in Nunavut, this could have a big impact on our education program.

Can the minister provide any further details on what options she is considering and which partners she will be working with to ensure that student support assistants in our schools will continue to be employed, if the Inuit Child First Initiative funding stops. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for that question. Yes, the schools across Nunavut have tapped into the resource of the Inuit Child First Initiative, supporting the schools in various ways. The schools vary, depending on a project proposal basis. Some schools have applied for funding for school food meal programs. As I indicated earlier today, we have 20 communities accessing funds through the Inuit Child First Initiative for school food meal programs. We have across the territory the 107.5 student support assistants funded through that, as well as other areas of support that schools might have access. I know of some including runners for the school to access physical activity, as well as skidoos and qamutiqs that were made to do on-the-land programming to support traditional food in the school. And those examples come from the member's constituencies of Coral Harbour, when we visited the community there.

We also know that the funding loss will impact our school community in a negative way, and we're working with our partners to discuss options and identify funding required to maintain essential services.

We also have a meeting scheduled. We meet with our partner, Nunavut Tunngavik, every two weeks to discuss a way forward, and in addition we have requested criteria on how they have hired student support assistants with the Inuit Child First Initiative funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for elaborating on the projects that have happened with the Inuit Child First Initiative.

Mr. Speaker, given the high vacancy rate in the Department of Education, as we are already half-way through the school year, it seems likely that vacant positions will be filled before the school year ends. Will the minister commit to look into the process to employ those educators who are currently hired through the Child First Initiative into the departmentally funded positions, even if it's only a term basis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The student support assistants may not have the same credentials as an educator; however, they do work to support the students, to work in the school. They are hired through the district education authority and we will work to see what and if we can support any of those hired through the Inuit Child First Initiative going forward. However, I can't say for certain what we can fund and can't fund, as we're still exploring this topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Oral Question 1159 – 6(2): Progress of Subsidy Programs**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance. I would like to follow up on questions that I asked in October 2023 regarding programs provided by the Department of Finance to address the cost of living in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, a year and a half ago I raised concerns over three programs, Nunavut Household Allowance available for GN employees; the Nunavut Energy Subsidy Program, for small businesses; and the Nunavut Child Tax Benefits provided to low-income parents. I would like to thank the minister again for increasing that household allowance.

I would like to focus my next question on asking for an update on the Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last year, only a handful of companies actually utilize this program, 15 on average over the last few years, and those companies have received less than \$150,000 in total energy subsidies. I would like to ask what programs has the department made in looking at revamping this Nunavut Energy Subsidy Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our department is still taking a look at how we can make the cost of living in Nunavut more manageable, especially by the homeowners in our territory. We're still taking a look at some of the programs we do have, like the Nunavut Energy Subsidy Program. In fiscal year 2024-2025 we expect it will cost about \$8.3 million to \$8.8 million for 2025-2026 at the current rate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that response, although I was focussing on the Nunavut Energy Subsidy that is provided to small

businesses, as those cost savings are then passed on all Nunavummiut that utilize their business.

For the record, I strongly believe that the program is under-utilized because it's poorly advertised and because the income-revenue threshold is far too low, disqualifying the majority of our small businesses and entrepreneurs from qualifying for that energy subsidy.

Mr. Speaker, the next topic was the Nunavut Child Tax Benefit, the amount that is provided to low-income families. Mr. Speaker, last year I indicated that our \$300 a year provided to Nunavut's low-income parents is eleventh, second-last in comparison to all the other provinces and territories that provide a child tax benefit.

I also indicated that the income threshold is below \$21,000, below the average income in Nunavut, meaning majority of Nunavummiut do not receive this Nunavut Child Tax Benefit.

I would like to ask the minister if he can provide an update today on when the department will increase the Nunavut Child Tax Benefit and the associated income threshold. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for asking that question. We are currently taking a look at that and I sincerely hope that we are able to come up with something in the new fiscal year to see if we can't make some adjustments to make it better for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. I have no more names. Oral questions. Member for Baker Lake. Mr. Simailak.

#### **Oral Question 1160 – 6(2): Update on RCMP Detachment at Baker Lake**

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me again. My question to the Minister of Justice regarding the RCMP office is getting small in our community. Last year I spoke with the minister and the planning taken to build a new RCMP station. I would like to ask what the progress or what status is at this stage, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.



**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the plan has been going ahead with our design being placed. The design will start in the year 2026, and also with the planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for his response. During your plan for the RCMP station, how many officers will be stationed in the new RCMP station and whether or not if you have Inuktitut speakers at the station, because many individuals who speak Inuktitut have to call the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the details are being reviewed and adjustments made. When the RCMP is building a new building, they look at the new staff they will need and how many cells will be required, and also they look at how many receptionists will they require who speak Inuktitut, and what the size the building will be. All these are being considered, with Qamaniqtuaq and Rankin Inlet included in the process. At this time the station for Kinngait is being built. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask who will be making the decision with respect to Baker Lake. Will the residents of Baker Lake be included? For example, the local hamlet, the education department, and looking at where the new station will be located in the community. Will the residents of Qamaniqtuaq be included in the process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking these questions. With regards to RCMP buildings and its planning stages, those involved in the process, the planning stages community's involvement, I have no knowledge but it's something that I will raise with the RCMP. I know that you're concerned and your community is concerned. I believe also that the communities should be involved, and I will ask the question to those involved in the process, and in particular involve our elders. I will want to get full knowledge what the process will be, because we have slightly different planning stages with respect to the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. I have no more names. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Returns to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Replies to Budget Address. Item 11, Petitions. Item 12, Responses to Petitions. Item 13, Report of

Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the chair for the Standing Committee on Legislation, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Item 13: Report of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters**

**Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Report Back**

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 69, *An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025* has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Do members agree that Bill 69 is reported back to the House?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** Disagreed? Tabling of Documents. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Item 14: Tabling of Documents**

**Tabled Document 366 – 6(2): Correspondence from Koomiut Co-operative Association**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a copy of correspondence that I recently received from the Koomiut Cooperative Association Limited. I encourage all members to review the document with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Chairman:** Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Tabled Document 367 – 6(2): Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three documents which I would like to table today, all of which I referenced during question period. Mr. Speaker, the first document I would like to table is the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police final report on the incident that occurred in Kinngait on June 1, 2020. It's a very insightful document and I encourage all Nunavummiut to review there with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Tabled Document 368 – 6(2): Government Response to the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The second document which I would like to table today is the Government of Nunavut's response to the investigation into the incident which occurred in Kinngait in 2020. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Tabled Document 369 – 6(2): Nunatsiaq News Article: Iqaluit RCMP “Specifically Targetting Suspects in Drug, Firearm Crimes”**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The final document which I would like to table today is the Nunatsiaq News article published February 24, 2025 which highlights the under-resourcing of the local detachment here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 14, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Tabled Document 370 – 6(2): 2023-2024 Cannabis Licensing Annual Report**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 2023-2024 Cannabis Licensing annual report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Item 15, Notices of Motion. Item 16, Notices of Motion For First Reading of Bills. Item 17, Motions. Item 18, First Reading of Bills. Item 19, Second Reading of Bills. Item 20, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 43, 64, 70, 71, 72 with Mr. Hickes in the chair.

Before we go to Committee of the Whole we'll take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 16:04 and Committee commenced at 16:33*

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

**Chairman** (Mr. Joe Savikataaq): Good afternoon. I would like to call our Committee of the Whole meeting back to order. Today in Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 43, 64, 70, 71, and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue to review Bill 70, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026*, the supporting documents

of the Department of Education, and if time permits the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Are we in agreement to continue with the main estimates for Education?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Minister, do you have any officials you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Quana, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do, Quana.

**Chairman:** Mut'na. Does the committee agreed to have the minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Sergeant-at-Arms please escort the witnesses in, and Minister if you can re-introduce your officials, for the record. Minister Gross.

### **Bill 70 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 – Consideration in Committee**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Quana, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, everybody. To my left, to your right, we have our Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu and to my right, to your left, we have Matthew Loosemore. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. We'll continue where we left off yesterday, under directorate G4. The next person on my list is Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister, and to your officials. Just a couple quick clarification questions. On the minister's opening comments on page 2 at the bottom there, it talks about salary increase. It says:

“The salary increase is critical to ensuring we remain a competitive employer and will be valuable in reducing overall vacancies:

I'm wondering if this is working? The increase, is it working? And if not, what are why is there such a high vacancy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. So we're working on the negotiations at the moment, so as those are in active negotiation I can't comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. Moving along regarding school food meal programs, I'm looking for clarification as to how this program will be budgeted. Is it per school or per capita of each school? If I can get some more clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. We're looking into that right now as we just signed the agreement last week. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. The next person on my list, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start off with, I know there was some discussions and I made a comment yesterday on the school counsellors. I have a couple follow-up questions. My first question is, and I did ask how many counsellors are in place, but how many of the counsellors that are school counsellors in place are qualified counsellors? Or how many are teachers filling in for the role. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the member can please clarify, is that guidance counsellors or Ilinniarvimmi Inuusilirijiit? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes, please clarify. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you. Yesterday I made a comment on how important it is for students, especially entering the high school years, on having access to the school counsellor to determine what courses they want to take to meet their academic needs, or their career paths. Too often parents don't always know what courses are available, and kind of the analogy I used yesterday was if you offer the easy math or hard math if it's up to the student, oftentimes they will pick the easy math because they don't understand the benefit down the road, where a student counsellor plays an integral role in making sure that the students are getting into the same courses that they need to achieve their goals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the clarification. We believe that all of the guidance counsellors in all of our high schools that are there are certified teachers. However, that may not be the case. We will check on that, and if there are any changes it will come back through the letter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the minister. The reason I keep bringing this up is, like Mr. Malliki had mentioned yesterday, there are students in his community that he's aware of that aren't enrolled in the courses that they could or should be. I know there's oftentimes there's a challenge in providing classes if there's not enough students applying for a program. I'll take biology as an example; not every school has biology lab or a chemistry lab, where you can take a 30-1 chemistry course. Unless enough students apply to attend that program, the one or two students that may want to go that route get basically offered correspondence courses or distance learning courses, which as I'm sure we can all appreciate through our own school experience, especially chemistry and biology are very difficult to do remotely.

So I think it's very important that students know what their options are and what the programming is available within their school, within their community.

I would just like to obviously encourage all students to really take a look at what their career goals are, their academic goals, and don't take the easy route; challenge themselves. I won't belabour that point right now.

I would like to go back to some of the discussion on the Child First Initiative and Jordan's Principle. A number of schools currently hire staff under that program to assist students and to make sure that there's different funding options that are available to support the schools. If these programs aren't renewed basically at the end of the month, is there any plan within the Department of Education to offer additional funds to continue the services that are provided to these students? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. I would like to ask our Director of Corporate Services, Matthew Loosemore, to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Loosemore.

**Mr. Loosemore:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the member for the question. Our department will be looking at this funding and possibly submitting a business case concerning this item. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate that response. I think it's very important to recognize that a lot of these supports that have been provided to students has raised the awareness of the needs for student supports and additional resources, including the one-on-one support that some students get. So I think it's very important to take a look at, on the short term.

Is there a long term plan to provide schools with more supports as more and more students get identified to need additional resources? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Within the department if the school does need extra supports for a student support assistant, we can work within the department with the student achievement division to see what kind of funding we do have available and put forward that proposal within the department to secure additional student support assistant for the school if there's extra need needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is that anticipated to be in addition to, and I'm being very optimistic here that the Child First Initiative and Jordan's Principle does get continued, is that going to be brought forward to support classes and schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. So we've asked the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated for what they require because we have to do a needs assessment based on the funding that they received for that.

And going from there, I know that to meet with the Nunavut Tunngavik very shortly. They meet every couple of weeks. Going forward, we hope to have some answers soon to these questions that are raised here along with others. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And just I'm not sure if the work is being done the minister mentioned they are putting together a business case. Has there been an amount identified that the department feels adequate to provide supports across the territory and how many positions are they anticipated to apply for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and, thank you to the member for that question. We know the number of positions, however we don't know the cost at this point, but we are working to get that information.

So through staff funded through the Inuit Child First Initiative for school food coordinators there are 32.5, for the hamlet voucher coordinators there are 30, and for school positions such as student support assistant and classroom support, there are 107.5. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also in the decisions yesterday there was a question on Letters of Authority for teachers, and it was mentioned there's 79 teachers operating under a letter of authority. And it was mentioned that there's 115, and I had to clarify that a few times so I appreciate the minister's indulgence. I kept hearing 150.

So in total that's 194 teaching positions that are either vacant or filled with an unqualified teacher. Teachers like in a lot of similarities with health care workers across the country right now, there's quite a shortage.

And I realize it is a challenge recruiting in the North that money isn't always the only thing. I know there's been numerous studies and not just with teachers, but with other professions, but money is an entry point for some people to explore moving away from their own home, whether it be to Nunavut or another jurisdiction, and some jurisdictions are getting quite competitive like within the health professions of bonuses and different signing salaries, and increases and things like that.

Has the department considered doing what is similar in the health field of doing like retention bonuses, to keep people here longer. It's the revolving door.

The consistency of a teacher can be instrumental in the child's success. In school, I remember there's teachers we all didn't like, but there's teachers that I have in my life that I still think back and I wonder where I would be, if they hadn't kept me in line, I guess we'll say. I wasn't the worst student, but I wasn't the best student either.



So I guess that's my first question, is the department considering or have they looked into what opportunities are available to do like market adjustments or retention bonuses for existing staff. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the department has, and I can't comment as we are in negotiations at the moment. But we do want to recruit and retain teachers and look forward to hopefully having those negotiations come forward to completion to ensure that we can recruit and retain our teachers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** I'm going to delve into the curriculum side of things. I do have a point that I believe is under this line under this page. When you look at the different types of curriculum that are being developed, one thing that we continuously struggle with are suicidal ideations and bullying and things like that, where coping skills seems to be a root of a lot of challenges that our youth goes through that they just aren't prepared to deal with some of the stuff, especially in today's world of online presence and social media and how fast people can gang up on somebody.

My question specifically, Mr. Chairman, is there a plan to work through a health curriculum to be able to offer students some facts and some coping skills and to be able to find alternative I guess methods of dealing with negative bully or family issues, like the list can go on and on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. I know that this topic is a topic that we do want to support through our health curriculum and work with the Department of Health on improving the curriculum that is very outdated and working to support mental health and teaching different response mechanisms and various other mental health related practices.

But as far as the curriculum being developed, it's not being developed at this time. But we do anticipate that it will happen soon, and I know that there are a number of services that we do have through our mental health student support division with extra money that was injected to support our mental health professionals that come into the schools, and on school onsite mental health services as well as online.

And creating the curriculum is one area that we do know that is needed, and we look forward to it being taught in the school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate there's some complexity to this when you're having a specific mental health curriculum, but I think it's very important, and I do understand there are resources that are available to students out there in their communities, and I know here in Iqaluit there are some exemplary examples of especially the high school working with mental health workers and offering supports.

But when you look at smaller communities, and there's not that same level of resources that are available and the same level of staffing available to have an established mental health style curriculum to give our students even just the knowledge of when and where and how to ask for support, we can put all the best program in the world together, but if our residents don't ask for help at a critical time in whatever they're dealing with, it leads to the very devastating outcomes, and we all understand that.

So I just would like to encourage and maybe ask the minister on a timeline to when and how they're going to be working with the Department of Health to develop some mental health specific curriculum, whether it be accompanied to another course or program or a standalone. That's something that I just think is very important to give our kids as many opportunities to deal with negative circumstances in their life through positive measures. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So we have right now our curriculum from the Northwest Territories from kindergarten to grade 9, which is on health and in high school healthy sexual and positive relationships are part of the Aulajaaqtut, which is a made in Nunavut health and wellness curriculum.

And I know that we are looking to have reviewing and updating the health curriculum to ensure that it's culturally and linguistically relevant to our youth.

But I would like to ask our deputy minister to further elaborate on anything that I might have missed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for the question. Curriculum development in Nunavut is very time consuming I would say. We work slowly. We do have a plan for curriculum, and we have completed the K to 6 curriculum renewed Nunavut-made and we are very mindful of mental health issues and the issues that our children face. And the Nunavut made curriculum as it pertains to all subjects, but mainly

in health we do think about the wraparound supports and the mental well-being of a child and services that are provided in Nunavut. So I think there is some effort in that.

But in addition to additional \$5 million in budget has been obtained through the House for mental health efforts in our school. So I hope that is sufficient. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Following the list of names, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Madam Minister and your officials, my first question (interpretation ends) Page 8-V-8 that funding for stakeholders engagement division page business plan page 75 of the directorate division will decrease somewhat in 2025-2026.

What key issues are currently being addressed to collaborate with interagency group, including Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the coalition of district education authorities and Representative for Children and Youth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. If he can please re-ask the question. The decrease in funding from which portion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na, Mr. Malliki, can you re-ask the question. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The draft main estimates indicate on page A-V-8 the funding for stakeholders engagement division business plan page 75 of the directorate division will decrease somewhat in 2025-2026.

What key issues are currently being addressed in collaborating with interagency groups, including Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated the coalition of Nunavut district education authorities and Representative for Children and Youth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you to the member for the clarification so the decrease is in professional development of an internal fund relocation of \$24,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does that mean the funding is over the budget, or can the minister elaborate on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That fund is reallocated within the department. It's going to the human resources branch. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So there's enough funding for the Nunavut teachers development? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Or are they?

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Malliki. The minister says that there's enough funding for it, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for clarifying that. According to the department grant and contribution information in the main estimates, Education provide over 4 million in contribution funding to the coalition of Nunavut district education authority.

The department's 2022-2023 Annual Report stated on page 11 that the coalition partner with the department to visit seven communities in 2023 as part of the review of language of instruction regulations.

The department's progress report on language of instruction regulation states on page 3 that an additional 18 communities were visited in 2023-2024. What other activities, roles and responses does the coalition currently undertake to support Nunavut teachers education system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. We value the relationship that we have with the coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities, so the Department of Education does meet monthly with the coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities. As well as the district, they oversee the District Education Authorities in each community and help support them through staffing that they have with the coalition. And they also are responsible for district education authority training. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you minister for clarifying that or answering that. The director grants include information system program, business plan page 77. How many does the database department currently maintain, and how is the information used to track student progress towards graduation and accessing post-secondary education trade training and employment opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. So we have our couple databases within the department, sorry, we have our student information system database which recognizes the importance of quality data and providing reports and raw data on enrolment, attendance and achievement.

Also, this database is used to capture the student enrolment attendance and achievement in all of our schools and the student information system hosted and supported by Spark Rock.

So our current contract with Spark Rock ends at the end of the month. However, we renewed it to allow any interrupted operation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you. And as I was asking yesterday, I would like to go back to it about the dropout rates in the schools, as the minister just said that they have a database about attendance. Can the minister tell us how many students quit school. Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** I thank the member for that. Yeah, we do have that database. However, it would be difficult to capture, as students do come back. But we are going to be looking at that, as I indicated yesterday, and come back to the Committee through letter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Before I go back to Mr. Malliki, the letter, will it be coming during the Sitting, or after the Sitting. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It will be coming after. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Thanks for the clarification. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be good if we could see it during our session, so that the people of Nunavut can get the answer. (interpretation)

ends) The department has been working on a number of legislative initiatives, including introducing the new Early Learning and Child Care Act and new Post-Secondary Student Support Act. What is the current status of developing regulations to guide the implementation of the education, which was last in 2020. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for that question. So we are working on supporting, bringing into force of the Post-Secondary Student Support Act as well as *Education Act* regulations update.

So the work that the department is doing is first with the *Post-Secondary Student Support Act* is to repeal and replace that act. The Department of Education is continuing to work on updating the language of instruction regulations to develop other outstanding regulations, including planning and reporting, educator certification, home schooling, student record, and private school regulations.

So there are currently 15 regulations legislated by the *Education Act*, and ten of these regulations have been developed. And the remaining five regulations, which I mentioned earlier, the student record regulations, educator certification regulations, planning and reporting regulations, home schooling regulations, and the private schools regulations have been transitioned from the Northwest Territories as transition regulations.

So we have work that we're continually working on throughout the department on the different acts, and we look forward to bringing them to the House. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When can we expect that being tabled. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The next one will be July 1 for the language of instruction regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't understand that. I don't think we're having a session in July, and I was asking if it can be tabled during this session. When will the minister actually table that. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross. If you can clarify. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The expected completion date is before July 2025, and we'll see if we can get it for the Spring Sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'm a bit confused myself now. So the regulations will than be done in July, and you said you will have them before July the Spring Sitting will be over before July. If we can get an explanation, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I can have our deputy respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for the question. On the regulation title and expected completion dates, language of instruction regulation, which is first up to be renewed, or next one to be renewed is set to be finished – we're supposed to complete it before July 2025. It's going to take effect in schools and into practice by the district education authorities will be able to select a new model by July.

It needs to be completed by July in order for it to be implemented in the August and September reopening of schools. So we are aiming to have it before the last sitting of the Sixth Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for clarifying that. And I would like to ask next so the high school students, as the minister indicated, they're academically kind of behind. So when can we expect the Made in Nunavut for higher grades. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. Our curriculum development division is actively working with the curriculum developers on our curriculum, and we have our kindergarten to grade 6 curriculum implementation timelines, and for the high school timelines, sorry, we're just pulling that up.

So our upcoming curriculum we have the approval of our kindergarten to grade 6 curriculum, and we're working on grade 7 to 9 first draft in Inuktitut first language, and first draft of Inuktitut second language.

And for grades 10 to 12, we're doing an assessment for grades 10 to 12 at the moment. And we will get back through letter with the full timeline for the students, as it's very detailed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. I'll be expecting that correspondence. Can the minister indicate to us about the high school curriculum, what exactly will they look like.

And the reason I'm asking is within Nunavut the students who graduate and want to go to higher education, they have to go back to adult education centres.

So for the smaller communities, students who live in the smaller communities, they always have to get an upgrade before they can go to college.

Can the minister tell us if the new curriculum has been upgraded so that the students can go to college after they graduate from high school. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to ask our deputy minister to articulate that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for the question. These are very important questions. Our students in the Nunavut schools go to Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit schools.

The curriculum that our students go through include going out on the land, including language of instruction models that have Inuktitut.

So some of our students go to school K to 6 in Inuktitut and then 7 to 12 in English, then do the departmentals and pass anyway.

So our students are so capable. And I want to say that. And I celebrate their achievement every day. That being said, the Nunavut made curriculum, the intention is that it's going to be highly academic, also culturally relevant and include Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun languages.

Right now we're comparing to our Canadian counterparts. Our Canadian counterparts are farmers and in industries.



Your young men and women in Nunavut schools, they are hunters, and so we have part of that in our curriculum, and they need to be also globally informed. So the Nunavut made curriculum will be culturally relevant in putting into consideration arithmetic, because they need to be able to do academics and have high literacy.

And the intention of the language of construction consultation is with our communities is to revise the language of instruction model so that we can mark where our school is so that we can tailor better services for students so that when they graduate, they are highly bilingual. I hope that answers the question, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Just before I go back to Mr. Malliki there, I think the question was misunderstood or maybe I misunderstood. But I heard Mr. Malliki stating that currently right now a lot of the graduates in smaller communities are not academically capable of going straight to university down south or to college.

And Ms. Hainnu, you just stated now that we are hunters, and to be culturally relevant, will these hunters with their education be able to go straight into university when they graduate grade 12. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Thank you, Chair. Yes. This is the intent. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister if she can elaborate on our schools in Nunavut across the board. Are they equal, or are there higher level of academic and lower academic in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you for that question. We don't make that comparison, however, we are working at our regional school operations level to work with our school leaders to ensure that all of the information that may be needed on credits that students need and looking at the school calendar of course selection, and of course offerings that students, their timetable will reflect the courses that they need to better support them and equip them. And maybe I'll ask our deputy minister to further elaborate on some of that work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Where we are trying revitalize a whole other language that Canadian students don't preoccupied with when they go to school. They go directly into the

academics and studies, whereas we switch multiple languages. And so our situation is unique.

So I want to say that I have experienced students have applied to universities, like Trent University, and have been accepted without a foundation. So I think with your help and community's help, we can increase the academic excellence that is attained by our students. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. There was a misunderstanding again. The member was asking comparisons between schools within Nunavut. He was not asking about comparing to the south. And what the member said was, are all the schools within Nunavut at the same academic levels. For example, is the academic level here in Iqaluit higher standards, than say a small town like Whale Cove. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the member for that question. We're teaching the same curriculum across the territory, and it just depends on the courses that are planned to be taught by the school based on what credentials the students need to graduate.

So if students need more academic courses or different levels of courses like the level of math might be different in one community based on the interest of the students than another one. It all depends. But we're really trying to fine tune that with our school leaders, to ensure that the students have access to the courses that they need and they require.

It is hiring season for us, and sometimes we do need specialized teachers in some of our smaller communities to meet the needs of certain academic levels for teaching for different cohorts of students.

And if a student may be in grade 12, sometimes they might take a class that's still a grade 11 level, because they need those credits or that course is available in their school. So I know this is an area that the department is really trying to work closely with our regional school operations on, and our school leaders on to ensure that we have the best program planning for our students. I hope that helps.

And if there are any parents out there, and you would like to see specific courses for your children, please feel free to talk to the school leader or the district education authority on some of those issues and/or bring them forward to me and our department. You know, we always want to see our students attaining courses that we want.

And there are so many courses out there, whether they are in class, and they can also be available online for the students. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. The individuals pursuing Nunavut, they looked at Education. I remember many of the thoughts then, but I particularly remember those who pursued Nunavut, whether you're from a smaller community or a larger centre, that student should be able to learn what students are learning in bigger centres. This is something I heard a lot. But obviously this has not been realized. As you see, in bigger centres, they are getting higher academic schooling.

So I think the Department of Education, I would urge the Department of Education to work with Arctic College to look at the graduate, not to take academic course again, but be able to start taking courses immediately in higher academic field.

And when you graduate, a person should be able to pursue post academics in the course they want to pursue. And I would urge the department to pursue that, because too often too many students are being denied in universities, (interpretation ends) like who are graduating.

(interpretation ends) So I would urge the department to take seriously the words I just made. Have you looked at that. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for that. Yes, we can definitely look into that. And thank you for his input. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank you, that you intend to pursue that.

My other question, on the higher academic schooling, there are many social issues that are hampering, and many of the schooling I think should be developed, because many of the curriculum are not developed in the North. And most of curriculum has been developed in Alberta.

So the courses you want to see on daily basis on, for example, learning to conserve whatever they need to conserve and so forth.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. Yeah, we do agree with the member and we are working towards that. We really do look forward to having our Made in Nunavut curriculum be taught in our schools.

We do have the Alaittuq program, which is made in Nunavut curriculum which is being taught in our schools right now. And we look forward to the further implementation of our curriculum, which is going to be starting this fall with kindergarten and grade 1. And every year going forward we will keep introducing higher grade levels each year.

So slowly we are going to be meeting our goals, and we look forward to using the Made in Nunavut curriculum within our schools for our students. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. I have no more names on our list for this category. I'll just have one. What is the department's policy on social passing. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. I would like to ask our deputy minister to elaborate. We don't have social passing. However, we do have ways to support students in different ways of their needing special support as a student throughout their academic journey. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Social passing is something that when brought up at the Legislative Assembly, we've been paying very close attention to it.

Of the graduating students this year we've identified how many of those were on modified curriculum. So social passing, the term when we have individualized education programming for someone who have cognitive issues, that's an individual who's not going to be learning the curriculum per se. But in that class, they will have individualized educational program plan. But social passing, there is no policy on social passing. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. And I just saw Mr. Malliki put his hand up. Just two more questions for Mr. Malliki, and then we'll move on. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I know it's in the *Education Act* that there is a social passing in the department. Can the minister elaborate. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. As far as the *Education Act* and the area of social passing, I don't believe I have that information in front of me, but I can commit to getting back to the member, as the Act is detailed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. We're on Education branch summary directorate, total operation and maintenance, \$20,516,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Members go to G-5, 'School Operations'. I'll give members a few minutes to get together. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The kindergarten to grade 12 school operations branch is project to do receive an increase in funding for 2025-2026. What specific initiatives account for the proposed increase in the branch's budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the member for that question. So our purchase services, we have \$516,000 of departmental fund from within teacher relocation in cost. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. The student educator ratio directly impacts the number of educators allocated to Nunavut schools. What challenges has the department faced in filling the number of educator positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. So our student educator ratio is the best in the country. Our educator ratio is 13.8 to one, and we are going to be looking at that ratio.

And with that ratio being very good for the national average, there is discussion that we are having to see if we can look at that formula and we are going to be reviewing that within the next government, the department is aiming to look at reviewing this school staff funding at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can dive into the Baker Lake schools. I checked with the district education authority chairperson, and the chairperson advised me that the outreach in the Arngnamaktiq Elementary School student to teacher ratio is 15 to 1, and the Jonah Amitnaaq is 15.4 to 1 ratios.

I'm wondering is that adequate to provide the proper education to the students, or is the department going to be looking at hiring one or two more staff members to get that ratio lower, down to 13 to 1 that the minister just mentioned a minute ago. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So our principals and vice principals are counted towards that. So at this time, it is adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a little further clarification. Are there principals and vice principals also educating the students in the classrooms, or are they just doing administrative work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So our student ratio includes principals, vice principals, student support teachers and guidance counsellors and teachers. So all of those positions are included. And right now, as I mentioned, it's adequate for Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on the student educator ratio, how often does the department review the schools to see if a student requires an individualized education plan, and would that require a new teaching position or statements or student support to be added during the school year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. So if there is anything like that, it's based on a referral through the school team. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So does the school team begin at an overview at the start of the school year, or during the school year, or how does the department determine if a student needs more assistance, how often is it looked into. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the member for that question. They are looked at once a year, however, they can be added during the year.

Our individual student support plans are developed by the main teacher in conjunction with the school team and the parents and guardians to address issues of behaviour that might be impacting student learning. But I can ask our Deputy Minister to further elaborate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu:** Thank you, Chair. As it pertains to individual student planning, where a student requires additional supports, every reporting period a teacher is required to provide a report to the parents. But if there is any hint or information about student requiring additional supports that can be triggered at any time through a referral by the classroom teacher.

And to update their education programming or supports, that would have to occur every reporting period, four times a year.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the responses. Next question, one of the departmental priorities listed in the business plan, page 82 notes ongoing collaboration with the Nunavut Teacher Education Program. In the hiring of its graduates, what are the challenges and successes of this approach. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. So our department does continue to work with the Nunavut Arctic College through supporting the next generation of Nunavut teachers, and we are excited every year when the NTEP program students complete their training.

I think that every year having more home grown teachers being injected into our schools across the territory is a great success for Nunavummiut, and for the overall education of our students to be taught by Inuit or Nunavummiut.

And I think some of the challenges I guess are that we need more teachers than are enrolled in the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on the Nunavut Teacher Education Program and how it's being rolled out, are there any other challenges with the actual programming that the schooling of these students, future teachers?

I would imagine some of it is on line or through Zoom or whatever. Is that working, or it's all hunky-dory and fine? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the member for that. I think that's better suited for the Nunavut Arctic College. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the Department of Education check in with the Nunavut Arctic College to see if there's any challenges with running the Nunavut Teacher Education Program. Because it's most likely the Department of Education funding that training program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So the department does meet with the Nunavut Arctic College. We are part of the Path Finder Program, supporting a contribution agreement for that Nunavut Teacher Education Program.

And we are not aware of any issues, but we have had issues. For example, at the moment we have had issues with our FANS application, and we've worked with Nunavut Arctic College to support the registrar's office to do the student enrolment forms and support the students through a normal process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. Is the department satisfied with the capabilities of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.



**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are. It's a great program, and we look forward to the graduates of the program coming and teaching in our schools. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, the implementing the made in Nunavut curriculum and language of instruction requirements are ongoing priorities of the department.

What specific initiatives are included in the component of the curriculum to provide pre-employment work experience and training in pre-trades programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. We are starting that grade 7 to 9 curriculum, and that's where the majority of that career program planning will be taught, in that part of the student's career. But we do have Ilayatut career planning and preparation for the journey. And I know that our department is working to set up dual credits.

And we still have work to do with the dual credit program, but we hope that we can pilot that through Rankin Inlet through the trade school in Rankin Inlet, and I'll look forward to an update through letter on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since they are starting from grade 7 to 9, is the department or school staff tracking to see if the student is staying on the same path from that decision to graduation. Or along the way do they realize that they need to amend the education for the student, each student? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So that's local level work from the principal working with the guidance counsellor and the students on the career paths and helping them choose the right courses.

So we do look forward to having the students go forward throughout high school and apply to either university or college or the trades and have them be supported on their applications and get into post-secondary after completion of high school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na (interpretation) Following my list of names, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The business plan indicates on page 82 that school staff and community members volunteer to support school meal programs.

On page 82 of the business plan, it states that an interagency group is exploring the development of a universal school food program across the territory. What specific aspects of the territory's school meal programs are being considered. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. So key aspects of the funding for this coming year are for hiring of a school food coordinator.

Also, contracting nutritionists, food services specialist through the Department of Health, begin assessment of Nunavut school kitchen facilities, and directly support our schools to enhance the current school food programs with an emphasis to utilizing and purchasing country food. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Minister. (interpretation ends) You mentioned that country food is purchased as well. Would this country food be purchased from directly from hunters, or hunters and trappers associations that every community has? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. It would be a combination of both. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Madam Minister. (interpretation ends) Earlier you have said that for the high school students there's an on the land program. Is that part of this as well? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it can be, and we can work with our district education authorities and the schools to see what we can do as part of programming for on the land programming. So thank you for that raising that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you're going to have cultural programs, might as well start benefitting from it, other than just teaching for the children.

What are the main challenges faced by the Department of Education in ensuring school meal programs meet the needs of students across Nunavut schools? (interpretation)  
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. So some of the challenges are some of our schools don't have kitchens to adequately school food programs.

We also have human resource capacity, as each school would need to hire people to run the program, and also resources.

I know this is \$7.8 million that we have received, however, we do know that is not enough to meet the needs for the territory for three years.

And we do look forward to further conversations with our colleagues with Nunavut Tunngavik and the federal colleagues to further continue the conversation about school food programming. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Minister, for that information.

(interpretation ends) One of the department's ongoing priorities is to support, monitor, and advise on effective school leadership practices and standards within Nunavut schools.

What specific challenges do principals, teachers, and support staff face in these areas?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. I think one of the main challenges is maybe being new to Nunavut.

We are working to support onboarding of our teachers and have more courses available and teach information about what to expect when you come to Nunavut and cultural sensitivity training and so forth.

I think also one of the areas as well is when we have new principals, they do need to learn a lot of new things maybe for their role. But we have brought back our principal training. We have a conference yearly, and that had stopped for some time. But we do have that support through conference again to support our principals as the school leaders to directly support the school environment in ways that might be brought up in this House, or have been brought up to us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that information. (interpretation ends) You mentioned one of the challenges being teachers new to Nunavut. Can you tell us a little bit more about when or if communities have orientations for the new teachers. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. We do have mandated orientation for to support our newly hired educators.

The three main components of these materials include orientation, which is resources to support educators as they prepare to undertake their new positions.

We also have mentorship resources and programs to develop a shared commitment to excellence and understanding of effective teaching among our educators.

And we also have professional development opportunities that are aligned with professional standards for each role group. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Just before I go back to the member, the member did ask if there was any community orientation. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, two days are designated in the calendar year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Minister.

(interpretation ends) You briefly said, well you told us that there are resources that they go through. Can you tell us if these resources that you have are effective when they're being used by the new teachers to get oriented into Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. Yes, they are helpful, but we do need our district education authorities to help us at the local level.

With orientation and going forward, we know that we want our teachers to feel included and part of the community. And hosting school events and having welcome barbecues or lunches really does help support that environment for families to meet the teachers as well as feel comfortable for the teachers to feel welcomed into the school environment.

And we encourage the schools to do that when the start of the school year happens. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mat'na. At this moment I will recognize the clock and I will rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

>>*Committee adjourned and House resumed at 17:56*

**Speaker:** Item 21, Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 70 and would like to report progress.

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

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Hickes. The motion is carried.

Item 22, Third Reading of Bills. Item 23, *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 23: Orders of the Day**

**Mr. Clerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Oversight and Government Operations and Public Accounts at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning. *Orders of the Day*:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 43,
  - Bill 64
  - Bill 70
  - Bill 71
  - Bill 72
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 5, at 1:30 p.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:58*

Appendix – March 4, 2025



