



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

## **Hansard Verbatim Report**

**No. 21 – May 6, 2013**



**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

**Twenty-Seventh Legislature**

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Mr. Delbert Kirsch, Chair  
Batoche

Mr. David Forbes, Deputy Chair  
Saskatoon Centre

Mr. Mark Docherty  
Regina Coronation Park

Mr. Greg Lawrence  
Moose Jaw Wakamow

Mr. Paul Merriman  
Saskatoon Sutherland

Ms. Laura Ross  
Regina Qu'Appelle Valley

Ms. Nadine Wilson  
Saskatchewan Rivers

[The committee met at 18:59.]

**The Chair:** — Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Standing Committee on Human Services. The time now being 6:59, we will start our meeting. And my name is Delbert Kirsch and I'm Chair of the committee. With us tonight we have Mr. Mark Docherty, Mr. Greg Lawrence, Mr. Paul Merriman, Ms. Laura Ross, and Ms. Nadine Wilson, and Deputy Chair is Mr. David Forbes. And I understand Ms. Chartier will be asking questions tonight also.

This evening, we will be resuming our consideration of estimates and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Education. Minister Marchuk, please introduce your officials and proceed with some opening comments.

**General Revenue Fund  
Education  
Vote 5**

**Subvote (ED01)**

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me tonight are my ministry officials. To my immediate right is Cheryl Senecal, deputy minister. To her right, Donna Johnson, assistant deputy minister. To my left, Mr. Greg Miller, assistant deputy minister. And in behind me — they can just wave — Lynn Allan, executive director of the early years; Tim Caleval, executive director, student achievement and supports; Jennifer Colin, executive director, information management and support; Rosanne Glass, executive director, strategic policy; Valerie Lusk, acting executive director, education funding; Lori Mann, executive director, corporate services; Sheldon Ramstead, acting executive director of infrastructure; Doug Volk, executive director, Teachers' Superannuation Commission; Brett Waytuck, executive director, provincial library and literacy; and Angela Chobanik, director of education financial policy and education funding.

And with that, Mr. Chair, I'd like to say thanks to my committee colleagues and to Mr. Forbes and Ms. Chartier for the questions that they will bring forward tonight. And we'll certainly have a fulsome discussion around the Education estimates and I certainly look forward to that. So with that, Mr. Chair, I'll turn it back to you and we can begin.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much. I think we have someone wanting a motion. Ms. Ross.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much. Do I have to turn this on? No. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Because the room is quite warm this evening, I would make a motion that in fact we be allowed to remove our suit jackets.

**The Chair:** — We have a motion to remove suit jackets. Is there any objections? All in favour?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Be it so moved. Thank you. So now we're starting questions. Ms. Chartier, you have the floor.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you very much to the minister and to all of the officials here tonight. I know that there's many more things that you probably would rather be doing tonight than sitting in this room, so we appreciate your time. And just, I'm going . . . I'll be talking, asking about early learning and care but I will be all over the map. I've got some very specific questions and some very general questions. As you've probably noted from my written questions, I'm still trying very hard to get a handle on this critic portfolio.

So starting with a specific question: there's an order in council from the 12th of March, 2013 regarding Great Kids around KidsFirst, and I'm just wondering if you can tell me a little bit about what Great Kids from Kentucky will be doing for your ministry.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks, Ms. Chartier. I think I'll let Ms. Allan answer that question specifically.

**Ms. Allan:** — Good evening. I'm Lynn Allan. I'm the executive director of the early years branch. Growing Great Kids is out of the States and it's a training curriculum for KidsFirst program which is a home visiting program for vulnerable families with young children. And so the curriculum is what we use to train all of the home visitors.

**Ms. Chartier:** — How did we come to contract with this particular company? Was there an RFP [request for proposal] or how did you learn about this organization?

**Ms. Allan:** — I've been in my position for a year, so they were working with Growing Great Kids at that time. So I don't know when it originally started or how it was put in place, but we could get that information for you.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So there was an OC [order in council] for last year or . . . So we had contracted with them previously or when you had started?

**Ms. Allan:** — Yes they had been working for a number of years with them.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Actually if you could at some point get the details around that, that would be great.

Well as we're talking about KidsFirst and ECIP [early childhood intervention program] programs right now, are you getting every ECIP and KidsFirst staff member trained or what exactly does this involve?

**Ms. Allan:** — The training is for the KidsFirst home visitors and it's an extensive program for them as home visitors.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So it's not, as you've said, it's not something new or at least it was in place last year. So the OC says again that this company will be working with ECIP and KidsFirst. And the increase . . . So it's about a \$60,000 contract or up to \$60,000? So I'm just wondering, is that reflected . . . Both the ECIP and KidsFirst budgets combined are up by about \$52,000. So is this money meant to cover Great Kids, Inc. from Kentucky or . . .

**Ms. Allan:** — So that's money that we have in our budget for the training. Their individual budgets, they would've gotten the CBO [community-based organization] increase. And there's curriculum training and also the part that the ECIP workers are involved with is called TAQI [technical assistance quality improvement], technical assistance quality assurance. There's also been more extensive work in terms of continuous improvement in the home visiting programs. So the ECIP and KidsFirst have been involved in that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. Do you know many . . . I know just looking at their website that they do other work in Canada, but do you have a sense of what other jurisdictions are using the same company?

**Ms. Allan:** — My understanding is that they've also been involved in Manitoba. I'm not aware of any others though.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. In terms of KidsFirst, just getting a sense of what is currently offered here in Saskatchewan. How many KidsFirst provincially run programs are there?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you. Thanks, Ms. Chartier. Approximately 1,700 families are being affected by the KidsFirst program across our province, and they're in eight targeted communities — The Battlefords, Meadow Lake, Moose Jaw, Nipawin, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, and Yorkton areas. A very extensive high-impact program. The workers that attend to these vulnerable children have a significant impact on their learning.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And has that number . . . Have you increased or has that number stayed the same over recent years? Has it been eight targeted communities, provincially funded KidsFirst programs for some time?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — It's been for some time. I don't know the exact origin. Well actually I think about 2000, 2001 was the first and so we've expanded steadily since then. I think that was the original.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. In terms of ECIP programming, I know . . . Can you tell me a little bit about where ECIP is offered? The numbers of communities and how many families tap into the ECIP programming?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The number of ECIP families?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks. Thanks for the question. There are currently 14 ECIPs across the province to support children who are experiencing these developmental delays, and help for their families. I can elaborate a little bit on the goals of the ECIP program. Children experience an enhanced quality of life is one of the goals, that families will learn to parent and impact their children, and communities will become more inclusive with the ECIP program. So it's really all about facilitating vulnerable families.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Do you have any sense of how many kids are on the waiting list for ECIP programs?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — We currently have 736 families enrolled. In terms of on the waiting list, we don't have a number on it for a waiting list.

**Ms. Chartier:** — You don't know a number or there is no . . .

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — We don't have a number.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. I think one of the reasons I ask is this is . . .

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Okay. Mr. Miller just informed me they're run by the CBOs, so we would have to canvass the CBOs in order to gather that data.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Have the 14 ECIPs, aside from the CBO lift, have we increased the number of ECIPs? Or how long have 14 ECIPs been in place?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — 1980 was the start of the ECIP programming.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just looking at over the last five to eight years, have we consistently offered 14 ECIPs, or has that number changed at all? Have there been more added or have they stayed the same? So let's go back to 2006 and onward. Have we had 14 ECIPs since then?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The program transferred over from Social Services, and to the best of our knowledge, the number has remained pretty constant.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Have you heard any concerns around wait-lists for families? I know you said you don't have the numbers and we'd have to canvas CBOs. But one of the things that I was very aware of several years ago is that one of the frustrations is you might have a child waiting for the services, and the child would reach the age of five before they've even received any of these early intervention services. So ECIP is all about early childhood intervention. And so you'd have kids who would be waiting for services, and you'd get past that sort of zero to six early intervention period. So I'm wondering if you've heard anecdotally any challenges around waiting for services.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — So your question is around a sense of access?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Is there a sense of access?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes

[19:15]

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Certainly there would be areas of the province where there would be some need to expand ECIP programming. Certainly with our focus on the early years, the pre-kindergarten programming, certainly the issues around child care and targeting the vulnerable three- and four-year-olds, it's an area that we believe that we need to continue to pursue. And that's what we intend to do. Early years is really a critical area

for moving our province forward. The more ready our children can be when they come to school, it'll pay dividends in the long term.

So early childhood assistance, early childhood help, anything we can do to enhance the opportunities for the most vulnerable is a direction that we definitely want to pursue. The ECIP program is a solid program, and I would anticipate that there would be enhanced need for that kind of programming.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So you had mentioned that there's areas of the province where you're seeing challenges or the need. Can you identify for me where your ministry has noted that there needs to be greater ECIP services?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Many of the referrals that come to us are the result of cross-jurisdictional or inter-ministerial kinds of referrals, and they can really come from anywhere in the province or any community. To specifically say that there's one geographic region would not be fair. But certainly we can look to places where we know there are some vulnerability, for example the North may be an area.

But I think it's important to keep in mind that these are, most of these . . . Well all of the referrals, I would say, are cross-ministry. We find out. Interventions are made. CBOs refer. School divisions refer. We use things like the early development instrument that helps to target vulnerable children and families. So those are the kinds of things that come. So to specifically say one geographic region may not be accurate.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just to clarify though, a couple answers back you did say that there were probably some areas where you were noticing that the services were in greater demand than was being supplied.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Yes, I made a general statement in terms of there are . . . We know that there is . . . Vulnerability exists in the North for example, and access to services is not the same as in more concentrated areas.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I know you'd mentioned ECIP as being solid programming, and this is very much something that your ministry supports. Do you see this . . . Obviously we've gone through a budget year, and both KidsFirst and ECIP have had small increases, marginal increases. Is this something, are these areas that you're looking at down the road then for improving?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I think I have to come back to the notion that early childhood development, child care, early learning is a priority for our government. It's an area that we know will help grow this province. We want as many of our young people to be able to participate in the successes that this province is having, and the key to that is a solid early foundation. We know that by age of eight if students don't make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn, then engagement begins to fall off and then you start to make up for it at the back end. So early learning is a focus. Child care is focus. And we will continue to invest in the early years to make sure that we maximize learning opportunities and learning advantages for as many of our early learners as possible.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. I think we'll move off of ECIP

and KidsFirst. But if you could get, I would be very appreciative of some of those details around Great Kids and how the contract came into being and what exactly they're doing for us, at some point in the near future. I would very much appreciate that.

In terms of child care, I know, as you've just said, that child care is a focus. This year you're adding 500 spaces. Last year you added 500 spaces. I'm wondering what analysis has been done to come up with that particular number. How have you determined that you're going to add X number of spaces this year, X number of spaces next year, and so on? Like what kind of analysis you do to come up with those numbers.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — When we established the growth plan, we set a target of 2,000 spaces. And so in terms of the early learning and child care, our government is planning beyond just the space development, although space development is a key component. But we need to also consider other factors such as the quality and the human resources and the stakeholder engagement and readiness as we plan to go forward. So yes, our government is focusing on child care development and space development and, as we've stated, 2,000 is the goal. And over the course of the four-year term that's 500 a year, and that's the direction that we'd like to go.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I know that and I appreciate that. But I'm wondering how you came up with 2,000 spaces in terms of matching spending with need or demand. So I'm wondering how that 2,000 spaces . . . how the government arrived at that number.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you. I guess the thing that we need to consider is where we were at when we came into government in 2007. We were deficit compared to the rest of the country and essentially we still are. And so it was a case of analyzing where we were and taking an aggressive approach to mitigating some of that shortfall and see how aggressively we can move forward. And so basically in each of the years we targeted roughly 500 spaces — except in 2009-10, we had a total of 1,500 spaces — 2007-08, 500; 2008-09, 700; and then in '09-10, 1,500. And we kept that aggressive approach until we reached the 4,435 that we are today.

We also needed to take into account the capacity, to be able to establish that number on an annual basis. So that was part of the rationale that helped to determine those numbers. So it was a case of capacity and what was sustainable in the long run.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I think it would be . . . Obviously there is a shortfall here in Saskatchewan and continues to be a shortfall. And there's been good progress made, but what I'm wondering . . . I have a question, written question that I had asked about how many families in Saskatchewan are currently looking for licensed child care spaces? And the response was, the ministry has no way of determining the number of families in Saskatchewan looking for licensed child care spaces.

So again, it would be good as government to know what the shortfall is or what your end goal is in trying . . . We're considerably behind other jurisdictions and you've acknowledged why that is, and fair enough. But in order to mitigate a shortfall, you need to know what the shortfall is. So

I'm wondering, so you've targeted 2,000 spaces this year, but it would be good to know what the actual demand is for child care. Are we 6,000 off? Are we 20,000 off?

[19:30]

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks. You raise a very good point obviously, in that the ability to be able to get an accurate picture of demand is complex, I think you can appreciate. And so part of our goal going forward will be to develop the kind of infrastructure that's necessary to be able to track that demand and create an analysis of that demand. At the present time, we don't have a way of doing that exactly. And so that's part of the plan going forward.

The other point that we need to make is that we're also very concerned that we provide a range of options for child care. So in terms of answering your question, that range of options needs to be considered, and certainly the infrastructure that would allow us to track, to register, to be able to create that picture of that demand.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I hate to sound like a broken record here, but we had talked about this — not you, the previous minister in committee last year — and Manitoba has . . . I'll pass this on, but they've got an online child care registry, which is good for parents. And you have a good sense of where you're registering; you can register in multiple communities. But most importantly, talking to people in Manitoba, one of the prime purposes of it is tracking demand of child care. And from a policy perspective, that would come in incredibly handy to know where you are, where you need to be, and how you're going to get there. So I would encourage you to look to Manitoba. And I believe the Ottawa capital commission or Ottawa capital region has a similar online tracking system as well.

So I still don't think I understand where you came up with the 2,000 over this particular term. I know, in estimates last year, the previous minister said you look at the number of licensed spaces. There's a number of factors, but she said you look at the number of licensed spaces relative to the child population per community. So I'm wondering, if you're looking at those and other factors, what would be the ideal number of licensed child care spaces relative to child population? Do you have a figure that you use to help come up with what you need?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'll let my officials answer that one. Lynn?

**Ms. Allan:** — I'm wondering if perhaps you're talking about how we allocate our spaces. So the government announced 500 spaces and then, in the ministry, we allocate to the communities with the greatest need for child care.

So on an annual basis, we may receive requests from community groups, etc., that are interested in opening a child care centre. And we have a number of indicators that we will look at to determine whether we will allocate spaces there. So we look at the availability of licensed child care for children age 0 to 9 in the community, and we would look at the total community population. We would look at population growth in the area. We would look at the proportion of individuals aged

15 to 39 . We would look at the employment rate and we would look at the proximity to central economic areas, sort of in terms of distance to major centres. So we look at a number of things.

We also will look at community readiness and is the organization incorporated. Do they have a building or a facility that they are going to be developing? Do they have their partners? Do they have their board? So we will look at those sorts of things on an annual basis. We send out letters to the people that we have on our waiting list to determine where they're at and get updates.

**Ms. Chartier:** — My apologies. I was mixing two questions there. I'm looking at my notes a little more closely here. So I guess that goes back to that first question is, how did you come up with 2,000, that it's just a number. You know, that there's a need and the 2,000 is simply a number at this point in time.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — It's a target. It's a goal that we've committed to strive towards, to achieve. As I've stated, we came into government with a significant deficit. We needed to take an aggressive approach. Without the infrastructure in place to determine the demand exactly, we determined that 2,000 spaces over the course of the term is an aggressive approach to creating spaces for child care. That's what it's about. We have concentrated on creating spaces, and we've set 2,000 as that target.

**Ms. Chartier:** — But if you don't know what the demand is, how do you know that 2,000 is aggressive? And I'm not being snarky here. And I know that there's been 4,000-plus spaces added, but I just really want to drive home the point that you need to know what the demand is to be able to create spaces so you can talk about it being aggressive. But perhaps the demand is 30,000 more spaces — and I don't know that — but 2,000 might not be aggressive at all.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I would look at . . . I think we're at almost 50 per cent, 48 per cent since we came to office. That is a significant increase in the number of child care spaces. And so I would define that as being aggressive, and we'll continue to head down that path.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just looking at live births in 2009, '10, '11, and '12, we had a total of about 60,000, a little shy of 60,000 live births in those four years alone. So 2,000 spaces additional to 60,000 live births is 2,000 is more than what was previously there, but again, 2,000 or 60,000 live births and that's only a four-year period. I mean, people need child care usually up until about the age of 12, so that just covers a small portion.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you. I think the point that I really need to bring home here is the fact that we need to be able to deliver in terms of capacity. The sector has to have capacity to be able to receive those spaces. And so given the fact that we analyze availability of space and sector readiness to bring those spaces on board, we believe that that number is an aggressive number.

Again I can't emphasize enough that we are about creating those spaces. We know that the need for those spaces is there. We have a lot of work to do in that regard and we understand that. But rather than charge after the infrastructure, we really wanted

to concentrate on creating those spaces to relieve some pressure.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. And around capacity, and that's one of the things that I hear from people in early learning and care, is around the education and training and recruitment and retention of staff. Constantly hearing from folks that recruitment and retention of staff is a huge problem.

So when we talk about . . . We talked a little bit last year with the former minister about some of the things that you were doing cross-ministry. The unfortunate thing about child care is it falls under three different ministries basically: Social Services, Advanced Ed on the training piece, and then you.

But when you look at capacity in . . . I had asked a written question of the Minister of Advanced Education, and in the latest numbers, 2011-12, fewer than half of the level three early learning and care educators were trained. So I'm wondering, do you have any concerns around the numbers of child care workers that you're training to fill and support these spaces?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'll refer to the ministry.

**Ms. Allan:** — I will acknowledge that, you know, we are aware there are recruitment and retention concerns in the child care sector. There have been wage increases, you know, since 2007. The ministry internally has established a child care human resources working group that internally is working to identify and address some of the human resource issues that are specific to the licensed child care sector. So we are working on that.

One of the other things that we have started this year is engaging with the sector. We're meeting with the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association, SECA, and SACCHI [Saskatchewan Association of Child Care Homes Inc.], the Saskatchewan child care home association. And so we've begun to work with those two associations and find out from them what's happening in the sector as well as being solution-focused with them.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. How long has the working group been in place?

**Ms. Allan:** — Our internal working group? It was in place . . . It had just started I think before I came to the ministry, and that was a year ago. So they've been doing a lot of sort of gathering research. They've been gathering a lot of data from across Canada.

There was a national report that was actually just released, *You Bet We Still Care!*, that actually did a survey across Canada of child care centres, and they asked people about job satisfaction. They looked at wages and a number of things. So we're looking at that data as well.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And in your conversations with SECA and the home association, the child care home providers, what are you hearing? What are they telling you?

**Ms. Allan:** — One of the biggest things is awareness. And clearly there's a need, you know, for public awareness about the role that they provide and the quality service that's provided to young children, and so we've talked to them about that. And

May is Early Childhood Education Month, and so that's one area we have talked to them about, you know, the role of the consultants and how they can be supportive to them. We've talked to them about a lot of quality things that we do and how we can be more supportive for them.

We do provide a training manual to the directors on the administrative component of running a child care. So we're trying to respond to them and work with them in terms of being solution focused.

[19:45]

**Ms. Chartier:** — What are they telling you about the recruitment and retention issue? And obviously you've talked a little bit about money, but what kind of . . . Have they provided some, what they see some of the solutions are around recruitment and retention?

**Ms. Allan:** — We had one meeting in the winter and we actually have another one coming up this month, and so it will be a facilitated session to, you know, go into more detail on those issues that they've raised.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Has your internal working group . . . Again just looking at numbers of graduates and increasing child care spaces, obviously you need the right complement of staff. Do you have some concern around the numbers that are graduating? And has this internal working group come up with any thoughts or ideas on how to increase that number? Obviously you're doing some work with stakeholders, which is absolutely imperative. But this is, this is quite a pressing issue, being able to properly staff, with ratios, your child cares.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Perhaps while Lynn's getting her information, there are some things that I might be able to add, Ms. Chartier. The government has invested in a number of initiatives to help train and recruit child care workers. For example the tuition reimbursement grant currently provides \$500 for tuition fees and books. The professional development grant assists child care directors and educators and home care providers with professional learning opportunities. As well we've invested in other initiatives to enhance the child care for families: financial support for staff education and training grants; resources to enhance the learning environment, nutrition, and physical activity. In total in the '13-14 budget, around \$2 million that will help to train, train and retain child care workers in the field.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I appreciate and I know people appreciate those grants, but the one thing that I've heard from both the directors and front-line staff is that the staffing crunch is so huge that they don't have an opportunity to take their one day of professional development. So the grants might be there, but the capacity to take that day of training and improve your skills, that isn't there. So I'm sure when you're talking to SECA and the home child care providers, they'll continue to tell you that. But the grants are great, but if you can't be off the floor where the kids are to take a day away, that's a problem.

**Ms. Allan:** — I was going to talk a little bit about the quality, high-quality programs that we recognize are so important. The research shows that the positive early experiences for a child

will contribute to later successes. And the early years branch has a range of resources and supports to assist the child care sector to implement Play and Exploration, which is a play-based program guide that is in the child care centres. As well it's in our pre-kindergarten. And so we do workshops across the province, and this past year over 400 people attended. We did 10 host sites to demonstrate the potential of implementing Play and Exploration, and again over 350 visitors attended that. We do matching child care sites and family child care homes with a mentor to enhance their program, and somebody that will actually go in and work with them in terms of implementing Play and Exploration. And we do enhancing children's interactions, which is an intensive training and video feedback on interactions with children. And as I mentioned before, we have the child care centre director basic training, which we developed a manual. And we've offered sort of two-day workshops on that, as well as board training sessions are also provided by the consultants.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you for that. I know just a few minutes ago you mentioned the national report card, and I actually haven't seen the latest one. I'm curious. I know the last time *You Bet We Still Care!* came out, we were at the bottom of the pack. I'm wondering if there's been . . . And after estimates I'll go and take a peek myself, but where are we measuring in the report card these days?

**Mr. Miller:** — Greg Miller, assistant deputy minister. In terms of the most recent report card, we don't have that analysis with us here today. We will be delving into that again. And we want to ensure that, because jurisdictions license differently because what's recognized across those jurisdictions varies, we have to be sure we do a thorough analysis so that we have as much as we can an apples to apples comparison across the sector.

**Ms. Chartier:** — You haven't taken a thorough analysis. But just on most measures, have we improved at all?

**Mr. Miller:** — So in terms of . . . Given the increase, the 48 per cent increase over time, one would assume that the numbers, that the representation of that would be positively displayed in an interjurisdictional report. So again we'll have to do that analysis and look at the specifics of how that falls out in the most recent report.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. Like I said, I'm looking forward to seeing it too. I didn't realize it had recently come out again.

You'd mentioned the role of consultants a few minutes ago, and we had a brief conversation last year about consultants. And the number over your government's time has increased from 17 to 22, so an increase of five consultants. And I know, I think you referenced that number here tonight, or someone did. Can you tell me a little bit about the work that the consultants do to give me a good, better picture of what the role of the consultant is?

**Ms. Allan:** — So the primary responsibility of the consultant is to enforce *The Child Care Act* and *The Child Care Regulations* and to support child care facilities to provide high-quality care for children. And you're correct. There's 22 early learning child care consultants throughout the province, and caseloads are a mix of homes and centres. So on average, caseloads are likely about 26 to 28 facilities per worker.

There are a minimum of standards in terms of visits that they need to do. For homes, it's two unscheduled visits per year and an annual review at each home. For centres, it's two unscheduled visits per year and an annual review at each facility. And they attend a minimum of two board meetings or parent advisory meetings and the annual meeting. Consultants are available to support the centres and homes and address quality, the Play and Exploration, address issues, provide guidance about policy and procedures and regulatory requirements, or respond to any complaints or issues.

I think it's important though to understand that their role used to be the primary one with respect to quality. And as I said previously, we're doing quite a bit in terms of workshops for quality now, so it's not all on the shoulders of the consultants. So it's not delivered by them. There's mentorship initiatives, like I said, the site visits, and enhancing interactions. So it's not just them.

We also did a lean event this past year, and looking at the initial family child care home licensing event. And as you're probably aware, lean's a practice where, you know, the clients, employees, and managers sort of take a step back, examine how things work to make improvements and be more efficient. We included a family child care home provider in the lean event, and to that process we were able to identify a number of improvements and streamline the process to make the initial family child home licensing more efficient for both family, child care home applicants, and staff.

And so some of it is just getting into place now. We did that in the winter. And clearly that will have an impact on the workers in terms of their work with child care family homes and the initial part.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Has their caseload . . . You said that there are 26 to 28 facilities per worker. Has that changed over the last five years or six years? Has that been the average number?

**Ms. Allan:** — I don't have the numbers other than sort of what I've given you tonight, but we could look into that for you. I think it's important to know that homes . . . As of March 31st this year, we have 239 homes. Homes tend to go up and down because they, you know, they close and we open new ones. The centres is definitely what's been increasing, and when you look at the allocation of spaces, it's for centres. So that is increasing. But centres can have, you know, anywhere from 35 spaces up.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Is 22 enough to do the work that they need to do? Obviously you've added a considerable number of spaces and will add, after this year, another 1,000 in the next two years. Is 22 consultants enough to do that work?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks. Certainly we want to maintain the integrity of the entire program, and certainly we would like to be able to grow the program. And so we will continue to work with the sector to make sure that we cover off those bases and make sure that we have the people in place to get the job done. So we will continue to monitor that and to consult with and work with our sector partners in that regard to ensure that. As the program grows, obviously we'll need to look at those numbers.



**Ms. Chartier:** — Have you had any complaints? I know last year we talked about some of what I had been hearing, child cares saying that it can be difficult to get in touch with their consultant. So I'm just wondering if your ministry has had any complaints or feedback from child cares around struggle or some strain on that relationship at all?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Sure. I've just been informed that we had one complaint, concern. And it was regarding a job-share situation, and they weren't quite sure of who to get a hold of. That's what I've been informed.

[20:00]

**Ms. Chartier:** — So over the year since our last discussion there's only been one. It's only been flagged on one occasion that there's any issue.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — That's correct.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Fair enough. The consultants obviously work with licensed child care providers, but are they the ones, if there's been an unlicensed home and there's a complaint about an unlicensed home, are the consultants also the ones to go out and do the investigation or check into what's going on?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The answer to that question is if the ministry receives a complaint, then we will, regarding an unlicensed child care facility, then we would investigate.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Did the ministry receive any complaints this year around unlicensed child care facilities?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Ms. Chartier, we'd have to get back to you with the exact number, but there are some.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. And I think that that's one of my issues or concerns. We look at headlines, and obviously we know that child care is a huge issue. You've got more people working. Child care is an economic development strategy. You've got headlines. "Growing population places pressure on Saskatchewan child care providers." "Nanny shortage in Saskatchewan." "Need for nannies surging in Saskatoon." "Saskatchewan government doesn't inspect day care centres." And that's a bit of an inflammatory headline because it's around unlicensed child care centres.

But I would say that more and more people are relying on unlicensed care, and perhaps increasing the number of consultants might be a way . . . Obviously you have to know about these issues, but I know in child care circles people are always talking about the unlicensed centres where they — or unlicensed places — where they know that there's 15 kids or problems. So I'd argue that hiring more consultants might help address some of the issues that crop up with unlicensed centres as well.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I would agree with you that that's logical. A couple of other points however. Number one, I don't think there's anyone in this room, in this building, who doesn't want to do the best they can for every single child that we have in our province. Child care, child safety, child welfare is paramount for all of us, and I think that goes without saying.

The other part of that — well there's two parts — the other part is of course that when we do receive information, we will act on it like any . . . which is our mandate. That's what we are intended to do. The other piece of that of course are the parents themselves. There is a responsibility that parents have to ensure the safety of their children, and they need to do their due diligence in terms of child care.

**Ms. Chartier:** — My experience, being in that range with a five-year-old daughter and many people in my life who have young children as well, as much as you'd like to, the due diligence goes out the door when you have to be at work and your child care arrangements have fallen through. And it is up to us as parents to be able to ensure our kids are in good care. But the reality is the system is so strapped that people settle for okay care or my kid is still alive at the end of the day care. Unfortunately that is a sad reality of so many people who have to go to work or go to school every day. And I hear that.

I've mentioned my Yahoo mom group that I belong to, and there's always feedback on that. But I think part of the problem is people are . . . As much as parents want the best care, I hear horror stories every month of people who settle for less than high-quality care because they have no other choice.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — And then our responsibility, as we've already talked about, is to make sure that we act upon any complaints that we get. And we will do that, as would anyone.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just in terms of finding out how many complaints have come into the ministry, I know you said you don't have it here. And the Economy committee I don't think is meeting . . . Oh it's meeting again tomorrow. But what could I count on as a report-back mechanism? Or should I throw in a written question tomorrow on this to make it easier?

**Ms. Senecal:** — No, we can just respond to that. We can ensure that that information is provided back through the committee to you, through the Chair to you.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. That would be great, thank you. In terms of looking at some of the numbers, one of my written questions was around the '12-'13 spots and how many had been allocated and operational. So as of March 1st, 2013, 185 of the 500 spaces were operational. So that's not even half of last year's spaces being up and running yet. I'm wondering what the expectation is or when you anticipate the other 315 spaces to be up and running.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'll defer that. So in '12-13, we had a total of 497 spaces and we'll be announcing another 500 soon.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So 500 total but just . . . So 185 were operational as of March 1st. So I'm just wondering when you anticipate the rest of them to be up and running from that, from the last budget year?

**Ms. Allan:** — Could I please have clarification about your number? I'm sorry.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I asked a written question to the Minister of Education: of the 500 licensed child care spaces the government is budgeted to add in 2012-13, how many have been built or

created and are currently in operation as of March 1st, 2013. And the answer: 185 of the 500 new child care spaces allocated in '12-13 were operational as of March 1st, 2013.

**Ms. Allan:** — Basically there was 497 net new spaces. Now some of those would include child care home spaces because we compile all of our spaces together. So I will go back and confirm the number, but a lot of spaces do open up at the end of the year. We had 13 new centres that opened up this past year.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So 13 new centres, and how many spaces did the 13 new centres represent?

**Mr. Miller:** — We'll have to get that response. We have a chart here with some numbers on it that goes by category of space — toddler, infant, etc. — so we'll have to tally those and get you that tally. We can do that for tomorrow.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Just to confirm then. So was there perhaps a misunderstanding with my question, my written question that I had asked then? Because I asked, of the last year's new spaces that were added, how many were allocated to child care. Like how many were up and running, not how many were filled. I guess that's the same question. But I'm wondering if there was a misunderstanding with my written question then perhaps.

**Ms. Senecal:** — Yes. I was just going to say that it sounds as though maybe there was perhaps a misinterpretation of maybe what you asked in the written question or what have you. So we will look at the written question, confirm that, and confirm that we are giving you the accurate information and that we're also providing you the information that's based on the 13 new centres that opened last year because it does sound as though perhaps there's been, you know, some misinterpretation of either the question or our response.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Well just to confirm here, I've got a chart here that outlines the agency, the location, and the space. So I don't think it was . . . I'm trying to think of how that could have been . . .

**Ms. Senecal:** — Misinterpreted.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes.

**Ms. Senecal:** — I understand.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So those 497 total net new spaces last year, I know that they're not all up and running. There's the Mackenzie child care centre who didn't get . . . This is some of my . . . another question here. So last spring there's people apply or organizations apply, and they get spaces or they don't. And I know the Mackenzie child care centre had been turned down last spring, last May, and then in December that they'd heard that they'd gotten 12 new spaces, which was great. But I'm wondering how that happens, if you could explain that to me.

**Ms. Allan:** — So you're absolutely right. So last year we actually allocated 530 spaces. And that's just the way, because of the requests that come in, you know, in terms of it doesn't always equal outright to 500. And sometimes people ask for

more spaces, and then when they start to develop, they can't operate that many. So they sometimes return spaces to us, and we have to reallocate. So you're correct in terms of the actual number that were operational — it was 206 — and that there's 324 that are in development. And at the end of the year, the spaces that were actually operational was 12,772.

**Ms. Chartier:** — 12,772 at the end of '12-13?

**Ms. Allan:** — That's right.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Sorry. My years, they all kind of blend together here. So '12-13 operational, 12,772. Of last year's child care spaces, 206 were already operational from last year's budget and 324 are in development. And when do you anticipate those that are in development to be up and running?

**Ms. Allan:** — It'll vary during the course of this year.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Sorry, those ones that are in development are the ones from last budget year? Okay. So do you have . . .

**Ms. Allan:** — When they're in development, that basically means that they have been allocated to the centre. And the centre may be doing renovations. They may be getting their staff together. Some of those would be for an expansion.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. In terms of this year's process then, when do you anticipate . . . So how many spaces do you have that you will be allocating in 2013-14?

[20:15]

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — We will be announcing that we would like to allocate all 500 spaces, but based on the information we just gave you, that may in fact not be the exact number.

**Ms. Chartier:** — When do you anticipate . . . I think estimates were earlier last year than they are this year so I'm wondering when you anticipate making the decision on those who get spaces this year.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — We anticipate later this month.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So late May is when the facilities would get notification. Have you received all applications or will you continue to get them this month or are you in the process of evaluation at the moment?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — My officials tell me we're near ready to announce, so we would have them in.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just going back here . . . Sorry to jump around here, but the question as to when they'll be operational — and it varies — but is there a set expectation that you need to have these spaces up and running by the end of this fiscal year or what? Obviously that wasn't the case last year. But do you have parameters that, if it's going to take them three years to develop, it's a no go? What are the expectations around timelines for capacity and readiness?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Again the desire is to work as closely with the sector as possible, and the broad parameter would be

. . . The expectation is to open them within the year that they've been granted.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. Last year we had a discussion around waiting lists and it got a little confusing. Everybody wasn't sure if I was asking about waiting lists for children, which we know that you don't have a sense of how to do that. But I found out that there is a waiting list kept for child care centres. If you don't get your spaces this year, obviously you're waiting for perhaps next year if there's more spaces allocated. Do you have any sense of how many centres or organizations are on a wait-list or looking for spaces?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Ms. Chartier, we don't have the exact list, but Ms. Allan would be prepared to talk about the process for the development of that.

**Ms. Allan:** — As I mentioned earlier, a lot of times we'll get community groups that will write in and indicate that they're interested in establishing a child care centre. We will work with them to complete the application, and on an annual basis we will send them a form to determine their readiness to move forward. And we look at, you know, are they incorporated? Have they got community engagement? Do they have partners and do they have a facility? So all of that is taken into account in terms of readiness. And we look at that on an annual basis.

So sometimes a centre, you know, a group may write in and say they're interested in starting a child care centre, but they don't move forward in terms of becoming incorporated or looking at a facility. We will continue to write them an annual letter. And as long as they reply that they're still interested, we'll keep them on our list and work with them. So when we allocate, there is a portion that's based on the readiness.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just going back here. And so do these spaces include, I think you mentioned this, but day homes or not? Or this is all . . . these 500 spaces are centre care or do they include child day homes?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — These are for licensed centres.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Licensed centres, okay. Thank you. I don't know if . . . I know this is something that I've heard and I've heard it in three communities, but one of the things that's been raised to me is that we've got child care organizations or existing centres who could use more spaces. There's a demand. But they're not asking for spaces because, again, the staffing issue. I know in Meadow Lake I heard that last year. I've heard it at two different centres in Saskatoon.

So I don't know if that's been flagged for you, that there are facilities and centres that have been doing child care for a very long time and would love to add more spaces, but the hassle of trying to staff them is too difficult. So I'm wondering if that's been raised at all, if you've heard that in your travels.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I think generally, I think generally that is the reality. There is a demand. We are a growing province. The demands on child care are increasing and so we will, again, we will continue to work with the industry, with the sector to make sure that we facilitate child care as best we can. And that includes the creation of spaces and the facilitating of the human

resources that are necessary to staff those centres.

If I can come back to one thing, we were talking about, you know, the duty report and, you know, I think it goes without saying that any of us that know of a place where it's not according to the regulations, that we have that duty to report. And I believe that that takes place.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Thank you. Again just to clarify though, I'm wondering if you have heard, if it's just me being in opposition and people like to tell the opposition what . . . I don't know if they . . . if you have heard or not that there are child care centres who would like to add spaces but haven't requested them, despite the fact that they have the capacity and the ability and many years of experience but don't do it because they know it'll be too difficult to staff. So as I said, I've had that mentioned in three different locations. So I'm wondering if that's been raised for you.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Not with me. Not with me specifically. I can say that I have visited a number of child care centres since becoming the minister, and I have to say that what I witnessed was first class, first quality care for our little ones. And it was a real joy for me to be able to attend at those facilities. Very thankful for that. So full kudos to everybody that does work in child care, and we need to appreciate the work that they do. So that's . . .

**Ms. Chartier:** — Has anyone . . . You haven't heard it directly, but I'm wondering if it's been raised with any of your officials at all.

**Mr. Miller:** — So certainly issues related to recruitment and retention have been raised, but as far as the specific question around this specific question, I'm not aware of that specifically.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Thank you. And just again to agree with the minister — which we probably don't agree very often — but I would certainly reflect that the care in our child care licensed child care facilities is second to none, but under very difficult circumstances at times when it comes to recruiting and retaining staff for sure.

One more . . . A specific question here. I understand that there's been some changes to the child care regulations about two months ago, and one of the things that's been flagged for me, a concern in Saskatoon in particular, is around part III, division 4, section 39, the confidentiality piece. So there's been some changes made which are . . . Obviously privacy of families is of utmost importance, but it's been in Saskatoon what directors — I'm sure you are aware — but directors, when they'd carry bad debt or had families who had racked up a great deal of debt, would share that information director to director. It wasn't a broad, sweeping share that they would do, but director to director to ensure that their fellow child cares were aware of families that had run up a bad debt. I know of one child care that had up to \$20,000 in bad debt they were carrying. And these are not-for-profit organizations or co-operatives in many cases.

So under these changes with section 39, that can't . . . from my understanding they can't share director to director that information any more. And what they had done, these child

cares had a waiver that they would sign or get families to sign at the very beginning, if you want this service you should be aware that if you rack up debt and don't pay it, that we may share it with other directors. There's a list.

So I know that the one child care centre was not particularly happy with the response from the ministry or felt a little unsupported in the response that said, oh maybe you should talk to a lawyer about the waiver form.

I'm not being incredibly articulate here. I probably should have just read the letter.

So the bottom line is the information used to be shared director to director, and these changes have come, and they can't do it anymore or they do it at their peril, they understand, and have been told by the ministry, well talk to a lawyer to make sure that your waiver is appropriate. But I think they had hoped for a little bit more support from the ministry on that front. Are you aware or do you know what I'm talking about?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'm recalling it but I don't have all the details at hand, so I'd rather not comment on that, quite frankly. Ms. Chartier, again without all the details, I can say that it's been brought to our attention and we are prepared to work with the agencies to deal with that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. And I know they flag . . . I'll just maybe read a part of the letter and you've — I won't mention names — you've got the letter in your possession. But it says:

The changes to section 39 purports to disallow this practice so that information as to debts cannot be shared with anyone other than a credit bureau. This offers no protection to child care centres when accepting new clients, and there are few reasonable alternatives. A new centre is unable to contact the credit bureau to examine a potential client's history and performing credit checks on each potential client would be a much larger intrusion of privacy than the existing practice, not to mention it would be prohibitively expensive for non-profit centres.

And then they argue that their two options are to raise fees to cover bad debts or require two months pre-payment for child care, which in the case of an infant space at one child care which isn't even the most expensive is \$1,710. So for someone to have to pay that two months of child care upfront is very difficult. So they want to support their families, but they also want to ensure that they keep their organization operating to provide the services. So again this was made without any consultation with child care centres — this change to the regulations — or the consideration of financial impact. So you're saying here that you are willing to work with the directors to try to resolve this?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Yes. We need to be very mindful of being able to balance the confidentiality piece with the risk. And so again I'll defer to Greg to . . .

**Mr. Miller:** — So certainly the ministry has heard from the sector that this is an issue. And our staff will continue to work with the sector to, as the minister said, to balance the interests of the individuals, whose information is confidential, and the

centres that provide the service.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Can you tell me a little bit about what continuing to work with the sector would look like. I know they weren't very pleased with the response to the letter, so I think that they are looking for what that might look like.

**Mr. Miller:** — So as indicated earlier, we will be meeting with SACCHI and SECA, and this will be one of the topics of discussion for that meeting.

[20:30]

**Ms. Chartier:** — And just to clarify again, it's the end of May that you're meeting with the organizations?

**Mr. Miller:** — Next week.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Next week. Okay. Has the issue of bad debt . . . Obviously the subsidy side of things falls to Social Services. But have you heard the issue of bad debt outside of this context? I've heard it quite frequently, but I'm wondering if it's been raised with you as an issue or concern.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — It has been, it has been raised. I don't know in terms of the number of actual cases. I don't have a number. But there is an issue where people start and, you know, the facility acts in good faith, and then at the end the client isn't there. And so those kinds of issues have surfaced, but I don't have a record of that or numbers, Ms. Chartier.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Any thoughts on how . . . You don't have a number on it, but have there been thoughts on how to address some of those concerns? I know it's multi-layered. It's around the length of time it takes to process. Sometimes the subsidy is sometimes the issue. Like it's multi-faceted. So in that internal working group, has this been a topic of discussion?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'll defer to officials, but generally I think that would . . . You've alluded to some of the dynamics that take place there. So it's all of that. I think it's a combination of working with the sector. I think it's a combination of understanding what the situation is at the time. I think it's a matter of understanding the mechanisms that are in place and working from there. But I'll let Greg or Lynn expand on that.

**Ms. Allan:** — So as we indicated, SACCHI and SECA had raised that issue, and we will be following up with them on that. And as you indicated with the Ministry of Social Services, as you said, they manage the child care subsidy, but we did participate with them in their lean event that they had. And currently we're participating on a joint Social Services-Education committee called the child care steering committee, so we're looking at some of the issues in terms of subsidy, etc., and the licensing, etc. So this will likely come up in that context.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So the child care steering committee is different than the internal working group.

**Ms. Allan:** — Our HR, yes, our human resources. That's our internal, in the Ministry of Education, where we're looking at

the human resource issues. This is the committee that's between the two ministries.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Is there a written mandate for the steering committee or can you tell me a little bit more about it?

**Ms. Allan:** — They do have terms of reference.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Can you tell me a little bit about the terms of reference?

**Ms. Allan:** — I didn't bring them with me. I could get some information on it. I'm sorry, I don't have them with me.

**Ms. Chartier:** — That would be great. I would love to see that. You don't have the terms of reference in front of you, but how long has the committee been in place?

**Ms. Allan:** — I think it was as a result of the lean event that took place when they were reviewing the subsidy, and that was one of the outcomes. And so we now participate jointly with them. So that was earlier this year.

**Ms. Chartier:** — How often do you connect? And is it a monthly, does this steering committee meeting happen monthly, or how often is this work happening?

**Ms. Allan:** — I can get that for you when we look at the terms of reference.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Do you know what sort of the end goal of the steering committee is, or should I wait for the terms of reference perhaps?

**Ms. Allan:** — I think that would be good, yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Fair enough. I'm going back here a little bit. I realize just looking at my notes here, that around . . . Sorry, to go right back to the beginning when we were talking about KidsFirst and ECIP and Great Kids, Inc., you had said that the contract was in place last year as well. Was it \$60,000 or up to \$60,000 last year as well?

**Mr. Miller:** — So in terms of the amount of the contract for last year, we'll have to get that amount. The contract varies with the work and the support that's provided to the sector each year. So we'll have to look that up.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. And do you anticipate . . . So you knew it was in place last year — and I know most of the folks around this table were brand new to this portfolio last year — so we know that it existed last year and exists this year, is it something that is ongoing? Do we see it carrying forward to future years? Does it have a limited lifespan basically?

**Mr. Miller:** — So this resource is a curriculum that we train the home visitors on. So it was done in the past. It's being done again next year. As far as future years, that would have to be determined along the way.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And just to double-check then, so you will also get me how far back this contract went?

**Mr. Miller:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Have we used other organizations to provide a similar curriculum? Obviously KidsFirst has been in place, and ECIP have been in place for quite some time. So was there another organization that we used to provide this curriculum?

**Mr. Miller:** — Not that we're aware of at this time, but we'll certainly check on that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And you'll report back through the Chair?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Correct.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Just in terms of . . . This is more of a general question. And I know last year I had a conversation with the minister here who had . . . and I'm pleased to hear that we haven't just talked about spaces, and in fact I think you had said that it isn't just about spaces. You'd said almost exactly that, which was quite contrary to what the minister said last year, that it is about spaces.

But adding spaces clearly isn't just about adding spaces. There's the HR component. There's many parts and pieces to it. There's recruitment and drawing people back who used to work in child care. There's making sure the child care that you're offering meets people's needs. It is a big, broad piece of work.

But I'm curious. It seemed very much the mandate last year, child care was seen as something very targeted and more along the lines of just supporting vulnerable people. And that was my overall impression around the approach to child care. And I'm wondering if that's changed at all. Or how do you see child care in the context of Saskatchewan today?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I see child care as a comprehensive program from zero till we graduate from high school. These are our children. These are Saskatchewan's children, and we want to provide them with the maximum opportunities to be successful. So it's a comprehensive program. It's a holistic approach to the well-being . . . It's a comprehensive strategy that involves the early years, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, all the way through. And so it's comprehensive and, again, a holistic program that I think spans many ministries. And we certainly look forward to working with an inter-ministerial approach to the child and family agenda that we've initiated.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Has child care . . . Obviously the child and youth agenda is very much about vulnerable children. And vulnerable can look different. Obviously we have certain areas that we think about as vulnerable, but vulnerability can be found in the most affluent areas as well. But is child care and the early learning and care part of the child and youth agenda conversations?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Again, and that I see as something very targeted. Do you see child care as not just something targeted where we need to provide subsidies and child care for more vulnerable individuals? Do you see it as an economic development strategy? Do you ensure that women have the opportunity to be in paid labour? I'm curious about the broader

philosophical context because last year I really got the impression that the approach was very targeted.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'd have to say that our approach is a broader approach. It is more encompassing. We want to be able to provide as many options to families as possible. We understand that the needs vary across the spectrum, and we want to be able to work with all ministries to that end. And so the simple answer to your question is it will be a broader approach to child care.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I was happy to hear today about the disability strategy. I think that that's great. And I'd encourage you . . . I know we talked about this last year too, with the previous minister, that having a broad child care strategy with consultation, finding out what families need, what families are looking for in child care, how we get there, would be a really great thing to do. So I don't know if your ministry has or if you have any appetite to embark upon that kind of process as well around child care.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Again, we have been working with the other ministries in the development of the child and family agenda. There are many components to that. There are many facets to that. And I think that's testament to the scope that we're prepared to go down.

**Ms. Chartier:** — But there's no . . . I think about the disability strategy, and then I think about Manitoba who is in the process, or it's in about year 3 of its second five-year plan. Like they have a plan on paper that outlines everything that they intend to do, how they're going to get there. So it's good to see, well the whole consultation process, something hard and fast. You know where you're going and how you're going to get there. So I'm wondering if there is any appetite to do anything like that.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The child and family agenda is in the developmental stages and those are the kinds of discussions that we will have going forward to make sure that we engage the various sectors in the decision-making and planning process.

[20:45]

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you for that. I think one last question is around full-day kindergarten and where you are. Obviously you've identified child care, or early learning and care is the broad spectrum. And full-day kindergarten I know is something that many families are interested in. And I know specific to Saskatoon, some of the school boards were offering full-day kindergarten and when they had to cut this year, it was a huge blow to a couple of the schools who just got their full-day kindergarten program up and running. And we're dealing with families who, refugee children who've never held a pencil, for example. And all the evidence, in the short time that they had it up and running, it was a really great thing to do. So I'm wondering where you are with respect to ever funding full-day kindergarten here in Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Right now, as you know and you've heard me state it, our focus is on the comprehensive pre-kindergarten program. We are targeting vulnerable three- and four-year-olds in the pre-kindergarten program. I need to assure you that the ministry is monitoring and aware of research

on full-day kindergarten. We need to be able to balance all of that with all the pressures that we have. We want to be sure that when children come to school, they're ready. And so our emphasis, our focus now is on pre-kindergarten programming.

**Ms. Chartier:** — What does your research show you on full-day kindergarten? What is your understanding of it?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — There are benefits to full-day kindergarten, obviously. However again our focus is on a fulsome pre-kindergarten program, and that's the direction that we're headed.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Do you see that sort of from a common sense approach that there might be a bit of a gap where you've got . . . So you've got the support for early learning and care — the zero to three. Then you've got pre-K [pre-kindergarten] — three to four. And then you've got kindergarten which, as you said, the evidence illustrates for families who want full-day kindergarten it's been a very beneficial thing. For me that sort of leaves a hole. You're doing some good work here, some good work here, and then there's a bit of a gap before grade 1.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'm not sure that I would agree that there's a gap. I think that the progression is solid. And I think we need to be able to balance all of the factors that go into those decisions. That's not to say that full-day kindergarten doesn't work for some children. However as I said, our focus is on the pre-K.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Talking to educators that I talk to, I think that they would argue that there is a bit of a falling off with that, not funding full-day kindergarten. But I'll leave it at that. With that I'll hand it off to my colleague here. But thank you so much for your time and to all your officials. And I look forward to the other answers through the committee Chair. So thank you so much. I appreciate that.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Forbes, you wish to ask questions?

**Mr. Forbes:** — Yes I do.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Forbes has the floor.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much. Just a real quick one, and then I have many more. But I do want to refer to a letter that I wrote to yourself just not quite a year ago about the superannuation commission and the STSP [Saskatchewan Teachers Superannuation Plan]. And the letter is June 27th, 2012. I don't know if you happen to carry the letters or you can pull it up. But what it's about was an interesting little dilemma that one of my constituents found themselves in because they hadn't taught for 20 days, and therefore their contribution to the superannuation plan was locked in, and it could not be withdrawn while they were still alive because the regulation is that you cannot collect a pension that's locked in, but your estate can receive that money. So it's still a liability.

And you were quite right in your response that this is something that has to be bargained, amended through collective bargaining with the Saskatchewan teachers. And so I'm just wondering, of

course it takes two to bargain — one person makes the offer and the other person either agrees or disagrees — and so I'm curious where, what your position is on this. Have you thought more since this was pointed out to you?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I'll defer.

**Mr. Volk:** — Doug Volk, executive director with Teachers' Superannuation Commission. As you state, Mr. Forbes, it's quite clear in the Act that if they've taught less than 20 days, that there is no refund available. I have not been approached by any parties with respect to changing that provision or not. So at this point there is no discussion, but that would have to happen through collective bargaining, which my understanding is that the collective bargaining agreement ends as of August 31st of this year.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So I'm anticipating that they may . . . I would be surprised if they actually approached you about collective bargaining items before collective bargaining started. So has it started? No. And so if they do, I don't know if they will or not, and I think in the grand scheme of things, this kind of thing is relatively minor, but for the person, you know, that brought it to me, and through the written answer that I got back, it involves almost 1,500 people — 1,491 people are in that case where they have funds locked up or locked in I guess is the term and they can't . . . Their estate can get it, but they can't get it.

And so my question though was to the minister, since I've written him. And maybe you'll take this back for thinking. I just want to flag this for you and see if you could consider this. It's one of those things, in bargaining, I don't think will be a deal breaker if it comes up, but it's nice to see if these small things can be dealt with.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks for the information, Mr. Forbes, and we'll take that.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So but I'm just . . . You'll take it, but are you at all sympathetic to this case? You know, these folks are seniors and this is interesting that they find that . . . Any more thoughts on that?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Without looking at it in some more detail, Mr. Forbes, I'd need to take it under advisement for sure.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. So maybe next year we'll talk about this as it has been . . . I think this was raised to me in 2011. But the person knows it's a long, it's a long battle, this kind of stuff.

The other . . . I want to go back to standardized testing, the assessments, because there was some parts that were . . . Well this is going to be a major, major topic I think for this year and years to come. We had a question about the six teachers that were seconded from the six different school divisions. And at that point last week you couldn't provide the information about who they were or their backgrounds in terms of whether elementary, high school. I'm wondering if you could do that tonight.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Forbes. I'll defer to my officials on that.

**Mr. Miller:** — Thank you. So I guess I'll just ask a question of clarity. The question is regarding secondments to the ministry?

**Mr. Forbes:** — The six teachers that were involved in the standardized testing, piloting, developing of different stems. These are the six who are part of the 5.9 million that, yes . . .

**Mr. Miller:** — Thank you. Sorry. So the six school divisions are Chinook School Division; Regina School Division; Prairie South School Division; the CEF, Conseil des écoles francophones; Good Spirit School Division; and Prairie Valley School Divisions.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Can you talk a little bit about who these teachers are, in terms of what they're bringing? Are they all senior English teachers?

**Mr. Caleval:** — Tim Caleval, executive director, student achievement and supports branch. These folks have a set of skills to support the work that we're doing, undertaking, with regard to the student achievement initiative. So they've been brought on to help support the work that we're doing within the initiative itself.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. So can you please describe the set of skills?

**Mr. Caleval:** — So, Mr. Forbes, we're speaking of the item bank, is that it?

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well this is, I'll quote that there was a *Leader-Post* article last Monday. The assistant deputy minister, Greg Miller, was quoted as saying, we've already been contracted from across the province to begin a new set of provincial tests spanning pre-K to grade . . . He's talking about hiring six teachers, pre-K to grade 12. I mean are there more than six teachers working on this project at this point?

**Mr. Caleval:** — I think the question is, we have people that we've contracted to work on item development, and we have secondments that work within the ministry as well that support the student achievement initiative. So the contracted item developers, the folks that are teachers that are hired to develop test items for our student achievement initiative are working in two areas, as I indicated last week. Number one, they're working in developing items for the treaty understandings and language arts assessments. So they are developing items that are specific to the language arts curriculum at grade 4 and grade 7. And they are also working with the outcomes from treaty education in grade 4 and grade 7 as well.

So those teachers are teaching at that grade level, so they have experience in teaching at that grade level. And in fact all of them are either grade 4 or grade 7 teachers, and they have that sort of background. So they have a wide range of experience at that level, and they also have experience in terms of teaching language arts and teaching treaty education. So that's their background. They're specific to that, and that's the items that they're developing.

For departmental exams, again they would be senior science teachers that have experience teaching the subject areas, the departmentals that we're currently developing test items for as

well.

[21:00]

**Mr. Forbes:** — So I think the first group would be the group that was referred to in the news article last Monday when Mr. Miller referred to six teachers being hired. Would that be a correct assumption, the six grade 4 and 7 teachers? Or what group was Mr. Miller referring to in the news article?

**Mr. Caleval:** — What we'd be referring to, there would be the six, the six folks that would be supporting, the six teachers that would be supporting the treaty understandings and language arts assessment.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And are they working full-time on that? Or are they still in their classrooms, doing this as an additional task?

**Mr. Caleval:** — They are working full-time on that work.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. So they've been seconded to come into Regina I assume.

**Mr. Caleval:** — So those folks aren't seconded. They're under contract with the school division. So we've entered into a contract with the school division, and they are working back in their home communities to develop those test items. So we've entered into a contract with the school division to deliver that, and those teachers themselves are working and working full-time to develop test items. And that would include not only the development of the items themselves. That would include professional development that our staff at the ministry is providing to them as well. They meet on a regular basis with our staff.

And they also have the opportunity, because of the nature of the fact that they're back in their classrooms, they also have the opportunity to field test items. So they can go into classrooms and they can actually sit down with a group of students at grade 4, at grade 7, and run the set of test items to determine whether or not they can be accessed by students at that grade.

**Mr. Forbes:** — How long is this contract for?

**Mr. Caleval:** — They are for half a year.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So from . . . When does this start and when does it end?

**Mr. Caleval:** — I believe they started in February, if I'm correct. They would have started sometime February, January, end of January, February, and they run to the end of the school year.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Will they be doing professional development or leading professional development for other teachers?

**Mr. Caleval:** — At this time, no. They're developing items for us right now. The value of the work as well is the simple fact that they not only get a sense of the work and the task in and of itself and the complexity of developing test items for a large-scale assessment like the treaty understandings and language arts assessment, but they also over the long run get a

sense of the work that we're doing as a ministry in terms of development. And the value in the long run is that they get a sense of the inner workings of how to go about doing that, and they are able to share that with their colleagues so that the work we're doing is not something that's a mystery. It's in fact very transparent and open.

This whole process is one where we really want to remain open and transparent so that people really understand that what we're doing is assessing students based on an assessment that's built on our curriculum. And the whole process is one in which teachers are engaged in that process. They're involved in the test item development. They're involved in field testing. They are involved in the actual, what we call building and vetting the table of specifications and the conceptual framework, which are in essence the framework upon which we build our assessments. So all of this work is very transparent and very open and accessible to the general teaching public.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And will it be open to the public? When you say open to the teaching, is it going to be in a type of, I don't know, on the Internet on a certain portal that you need a password to get into? Or is this going to be added onto the website of the ministry?

**Mr. Caleval:** — The table of specifications and the conceptual framework, so the two pieces of documentation that guide our work, they basically indicate exactly what we will be assessing. That's the conceptual framework. And the tables of specification will not only outline the number of test items and the type of test item and the level of difficulty and the outcomes that are being assessed. All that is public, and that's accessible to anybody. In the past when we did this work with the assessment for learning unit, it was all publicly accessible, and the plan is to make this publicly accessible as well.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So when you, in the next few years as this is ramped up and it's fully operational, how many more FTEs [full-time equivalent] will there be within the ministry in this area of assessment that's related to this particular initiative around standardized testing?

**Mr. Caleval:** — Maybe some more specificity about your question would be very helpful to me in terms of what you're expecting from the question. So are you talking about item development, or are you talking about other aspects of what we're doing? Because this is a very broad-based initiative, and item development's only one small portion of it.

What I would say as an example for instance, curriculum and curriculum development is a key fundamental piece of work that we do in order to support teachers and support instruction in Saskatchewan. So the work that we do around curriculum development is an aspect of the student achievement initiative. So as we renew curriculum and we update those curricula, that work gives teachers the framework upon which they guide . . . It guides their instruction and their instructional practices and is part of the work that we're doing within this student achievement initiative. So my own staff are supporting that work.

**Mr. Forbes:** — I think my question is clear. So if you would answer it, please.



**Mr. Caleval:** — So are you speaking about item development then?

**Mr. Forbes:** — No.

**Ms. Senecal:** — I'll respond. Our sense is that at this point, you know, we're going to have to look at how we go through the implementation of the standards-based assessment. And when that's implemented I think, you know, we will be looking at where are the resources required. I mean clearly as we go forward, and we recognize this now, that there needs to be a strong connection between the assessment and the infrastructure . . . sorry, not infrastructure, instructional piece. And conceivably I mean we are going to have to look at how we maintain that strong connection between what are the assessments telling us and then how does that translate into supporting teachers in the classroom, and what's the role of the ministry in that regard? And what's the role of school divisions who are really — let's be honest — the experts in terms of understanding best instructional practice.

So I think that over time, when we move beyond the developmental phase and the implementation phase and we're then looking at, okay, what's now the ongoing role of the ministry, it's difficult for me to say at this point. Would we see our resources increasing? I don't know. But I strongly suspect that we're going to see some shifting in where we want to have a greater emphasis versus perhaps in the development stage that we're in right now.

So you know, honestly from a ministry perspective, I am not absolute on whether we'll see additional resources. I strongly suspect though that we are going to be realigning resources to make sure that we are optimizing what we can learn from the assessments to ensure that we're supporting teachers in the classroom and that the ministry is doing what it needs to do to make sure that that in fact happens. So I'm not sure if you feel satisfied with that answer.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well I thought the question was relatively straightforward, and I'll ask it again. But I do appreciate that answer because my flags went up about downloading. If you're starting an initiative, you need to be prepared to provide resources to make sure it happens, that the two goals the minister has talked about in terms of engagement and transitions actually occur.

We could be doing this as a grand exercise. And it has been tried before, and I'm sure it will be tried again in terms of an idea that people think will really work. But if you don't have the resources, and that's a number one . . . I mean well there's many concerns. I won't say it's the number one concern that people have, but it's a major concern that there just won't be the resources, the horses to make sure this thing runs. And it's one thing to get it up, get the test items and do all of that, but to actually get resources in the classroom to support teachers so they can actually deliver upon their learning, upon the data, then this whole thing falls apart.

**Ms. Senecal:** — And I would totally agree. And I think that in essence that's what I was trying to say as well, that what becomes most critical is that we are understanding what those assessments are telling us and then what are we doing to ensure

that we're supporting teachers in the classroom. And that's going to mean some different things for the ministry going forward into that phase of work.

And absolutely we have to look at how resources are being allocated within school divisions. And some of that is about decisions that school divisions make, and some of that is about the funding allocation for school divisions. So we know that that is a critical hinge between what the assessments tell us and how we make use of that in the classroom. And yes, that also translates into us looking at how we are using our resources most wisely.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And so my original question was just about FTEs and whether we see the line item in the one area that deals with assessment and curriculum, will we see more? Will we see basically a flatline of FTEs, or will we see some investment, more investment in this area? Now there's many initiatives. This is maybe one, but we know this is a major one. And so the question is, will we start to see a few more FTEs to support this? And what is the long-term thinking of that?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I think as we move forward and we get better at using the data to both inform and validate, I would agree with my deputy that we would see first a realignment of resources as we develop the program.

**Mr. Forbes:** — You see, this a concern because you said, Mr. Minister, that this is not a high-stakes thing. But when you use the word realignment, then this is where the concern starts to come because you say . . . You know, for example, there's a school in Regina that celebrates the fact when they have a full house — all the students show up; everybody's there — it's a big deal. It's really important that students are there to learn. That doesn't necessarily translate into this kind of assessment that we're going down. But it's a very good thing that students are at school, are at school ready to learn.

And so this is where we start to say, so now we need to see a realignment, and that causes teachers to be concerned. Are there winners or losers? Are there going to be some things that are going to be important? Because we know fundamentally it's important for kids to be in their classroom. We see food programs in schools. Now it may be that we can't make a direct correlation between that and test scores. Are we going to see that be examined? So this is why I'm concerned about the term realignment.

[21:15]

**Ms. Senecal:** — I just want to clarify, Mr. Forbes. When I referred to realignment I was talking about my staff within the Ministry of Education in terms of moving from the development phase into an implementation phase and beyond. I'm going to have to look at where we need . . . perhaps I need to have more of my FTEs put in the instructional unit versus the assessment unit going forward.

That's what I was talking about in terms of realignment. I was talking about realignment of resources within the ministry in response to your question about will there be more FTEs in the ministry. So just to make that clear, I wasn't talking about the . . .

**Mr. Forbes:** — But I did hear, I did hear a discussion about the school divisions. Do you want to elaborate more, further about what the role will be of school divisions? Will there be an expectation of realignment of priorities within school divisions based on what we see from this?

**Ms. Senecal:** — I think it's reasonable to say that certainly in the conversations that we've had with leadership, with directors of education to this point in time, they have said that themselves in terms of saying, if we're going to support a levelled reading program, I'm realigning my resources so that I can make sure that I'm providing mentoring for my teachers and what have you. So certainly they're talking about this themselves.

Going forward, absolutely. Those are very serious conversations around how we adequately support the operations of the work of school divisions. And I certainly am not suggesting that I'm talking or making decisions on their behalf, but it's certainly been some of the conversations we've had to date with directors of education who are talking to us about the achievement initiative and, you know, talking about the fact that they are looking at how their resources can support achievement in the classroom. And they really make this a conversation about how they're supporting their teachers and how those teachers are supporting students. So I have to be honest that that's really the focus that the conversations I've had with directors is about.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you. And I appreciated the list of resources or academic resources that the Ministry of Education is using for this initiative. Has it been summarized or has this list been put together into a position paper or any kind of document that can inform anyone about the academic basis for this testing?

**Mr. Miller:** — The list that was given has not been developed into a position paper per se at this point.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Will it be done? When people ask, so what is your academic basis, you know, it's . . . I appreciate the list here. It's an interesting list, but it'd be interesting to know in what ways it been used by the ministry.

**Mr. Miller:** — Certainly the ministry is interested in communicating the scope of the research that underpins the work, so that's something that could be considered, hasn't been done to this point.

**Mr. Forbes:** — There are two, four, six, eight, nine references. Who has read these references? Who's actually has . . . Mr. Minister, have you read the nine . . .

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Not all nine, but I'm familiar with . . .

**Mr. Forbes:** — Is there one that stands out for you?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The Phelps.

**Mr. Forbes:** — The Phelps is one. Okay. And why is that?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Well I think the meta-analysis that it provides lends some foundation to the whole notion of formative assessments. We know that formative assessments

provide the kind of results that, and the kind of feedback that allows students and teachers to be able to work constructively against a set of criteria. And that kind of information and feedback, when done in a timely manner, has demonstrated positive results. I've experienced it personally. In fact part of the old assessment for learning program that we had in the ministry was an example of just that kind of assessment.

The professional development that was incorporated with that was some of the best professional development that the teachers I was working with out on on-reserve found. And quite frankly some of the results, the improvement in the writing skills and the understanding of the writing assignment that resulted from that assessment and from that feedback, was absolutely enriching. The smiles on those children's faces was amazing. And that's the kind of, that's the kind of assessment and that's the kind of feedback that this whole program really is based on. And so there is plenty of research that supports that kind of assessment.

Again the fact that it's interactive, that children themselves are engaged in assessment, either in the pre-assessment or the post-assessment stage, where they can actually look at the set of criteria, that they can actually look at the rubrics and decide in consultation with their teachers how they can improve their writing . . . In fact the parents themselves can get involved in assessment with their children because they too will have access to the rubrics and the methodology that's contained in that process, and thereby sit down with their child at any given time and say, okay, here's what we need to do to move forward. I believe that formative assessment done, and with feedback in a timely manner, provides a great deal of enrichment for students.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And does Phelps speak to large-scale assessment, wide-scale assessment, the kind of project that you're undertaking?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Yes.

**Mr. Forbes:** — It does? Okay, good. Thanks. Any other references that stand out to you?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — I haven't read them all. No.

**Mr. Forbes:** — I don't know if the ministry staff want to speak to any that stand out for them.

**Mr. Miller:** — I can certainly begin with John Hattie's work on visible learning was one of the references cited. And we see John Hattie's work emerging and being integrated into other educational researchers' both research and practice. I had an occasion yesterday to discuss it with some colleagues from New Zealand who were here in town and are using some of John Hattie's work in their work, in their Maori context with Maori learners in New Zealand.

The salient points of Hattie's work for this work really are about providing students feedback around their success, their areas of challenge, and then trying to make sure that that's as quick as possible to get that feedback in good time.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Now I know you haven't quoted or cited Pasi Sahlberg. Is that intentional or is that an omission?

**Mr. Miller:** — It certainly was not an omission. I've also had occasion to speak with Mr. Sahlberg recently in the province.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And how did that go?

**Mr. Miller:** — I enjoyed the conversation.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So did you say that it was an omission or not an omission?

**Mr. Miller:** — I said it was not an omission.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So you don't agree with his position? The ministry doesn't agree with his position then and what he was talking about, some of his writing? Is that fair to say?

**Mr. Miller:** — No. I wouldn't say that.

**Mr. Forbes:** — We're sort of using a double negative. Not an omission to me means that you intentionally left it out because of some reason.

**Mr. Miller:** — We did not intentionally leave it out. What we provided was a summary of some of the research that had been accumulated to date and provided in response to the question.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So will, or has any of the staff that's involved in this, any of the ministry staff attended conferences leading up to some of this work?

**Mr. Caleval:** — Certainly. Our staff have attended a number of professional development opportunities. I wouldn't be able to cite them for you at this point in time. But I certainly can provide you with some of the professional development opportunities my staff has had in terms of supporting the work that they do in the assessment unit in particular.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Can you give me just a few of them? We're not meeting again this year, so I would be very interested on maybe three or four of the most critical or important ones that you think underpin the work that your staff is doing.

**Mr. Caleval:** — So a good example of that would be our psychometrician, who is our statistician, has just attended, recently attended an international conference that deals with the psychometric value of testing and how to go about insuring tests are valid, reliable, and fair. We've had staff that have attended several professional development exercises around the early years evaluation and the use of the early years evaluation. So they've attended sessions, professional development sessions, around the early years evaluation and around Tell Them from Me. We've had staff that have attended national measurement conferences that support the work that we're undertaking as well.

So there's been, what I would say, a number of our staff that support this work that have had professional development, not only by travelling, but also by working with some of the folks that are helping to support our work as well.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So have these all been in Canada or have they travelled into other . . . the United States, United Kingdom?

**Mr. Caleval:** — Again, I believe that one of our staff has travelled into the United States. The rest of the work has been in Canada.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And as part of these conferences — and I would add, if there's other sorts of short-term PD [professional development], you know the kind that maybe you won't get a class from, but you might get a certificate or be certified by — is there any organizations involved in that type of thing where some of your staff is being certified or in some recognized short learning program, short PD thing? You know, for example, I'm thinking we have a short course principals' thing. You know, you attend certain modules and the end of six modules . . . It doesn't affect your pay scale necessarily.

**Mr. Caleval:** — I would say that perhaps they don't attend them but they do lead those, many of those short courses, in the summer. So when it comes to providing professional development to teachers, our staff are actually the ones that are actually providing the professional development to teachers around the work we're doing. And what I would say is the staff that we have that are supporting this work, many of them have their master's degrees and are very highly educated staff, and they've had . . . Not only are they highly educated, but they have years and years of experience in terms of assessment development. And many of them have not only worked in our province, but they've worked nationally and in some cases internationally with large-scale assessment.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. So is there a professional organization or . . . When I was teaching, I think I belonged to the, you know, there's a provincial organization for language arts teachers, and there was a national one. You could even belong to the International Reading Association type of thing.

But is there something similar to that when it comes to testing or assessment that your staff . . . or you may be encouraging your staff to belong to, which I think is a good thing. I think that you're right about professional development, both in terms of taking and leading it. I think it's good and it's always a positive thing the field of education. So is there any organizations, professional organizations they might belong to?

[21:30]

**Mr. Caleval:** — I do know that several of my staff belong to professional organizations because we pay their membership fees. So I could get back to you on that information. I don't have it off the top of my head. But they do belong to professional organizations, and they have for several years. But the specifics around that, I don't have at this point in time.

**Mr. Forbes:** — If you could, that would be great, and through the Chair. That would be helpful. Then we'd all have that information. I think it's an important thing. Are you expecting or have you invited the university or the Faculty of Education, the College of Education to participate in this initiative at all?

**Mr. Miller:** — I've had conversations with both colleges here in Saskatchewan around the initiative and open it up, an opportunity to have a discussion. As we move forward, that we're looking forward to opportunities to sit down and to have those dialogues more fully.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And what would you see their role being?

**Mr. Miller:** — So certainly the initiative involves stakeholders across the sector, and universities being an important stakeholder both in terms of faculties of education and other faculties that are certainly interested in overall student achievement in the province.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And would you see . . . I mean the obvious as well is how they teach teachers to be part of, you know, the future workforce. I assume that would be part of it.

**Mr. Miller:** — Sorry. Can you repeat the question in terms of . . .

**Mr. Forbes:** — The question, and maybe you had said this and I missed it, but I assume part of the interests, I mean, there would be a couple of interests that the universities would have. And one would be to make sure their programs of teacher education would be relevant to what's happening in the workplace, the schools that they hope to be working in, but also from a larger academic research basis, that this would be what many of them would be writing papers on and doing more research on. And particularly as teachers come back to do their master's or their doctorate, their post-graduate work, it would only make sense that they're familiar with what's happening in the ministry. So there was no question, really a comment. And just saying I hope that that happens, and I think that this would be a good thing.

**Mr. Caleval:** — I could add that we are undertaking conversations with the universities, not just about our assessment in particular but about supports for teachers in terms of professional development and other work that would support the student achievement initiative. So it's not just about assessment per se. It's broader discussions about other supports that we can put in place in order to support teachers and in-school administrators in the work that we have to do.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Now one of the questions that was raised was around publishing the results, and the minister has somewhat alluded but maybe wants to qualify this, but I think in his comments has said that, you know, the results may not be published. But maybe we need to have that . . . Will the results be published, or what form will the public see the results of these tests?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Generally we will be able to report at all levels, and each level of course will have a particular form. So within the continuous improvement and accountability framework reports that all school divisions will be participating in, there would be a school division report. And within the school division reports, of course the school division would provide individual schools with their results, and then individual schools would provide the results to individual classroom teachers who would then have the ability to share individual student results with parents. So it's a multi-tiered approach, and depending upon the level of public, I guess, would be the level of detail that would be provided.

**Mr. Forbes:** — The concern the person had was that, as you may be aware, there is some public information about schools in Saskatchewan. I think that some foundations are already

releasing, you know, school performance information. And this may be a new opportunity for them to get information and share it in ways that may not be the intended way that the ministry wanted them to share that result. So are you aware of that, Minister, what I'm speaking of?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The bottom line is that the Ministry of Education will not rank order schools in any way. That's not what our student achievement initiative is about.

**Mr. Forbes:** — And I appreciate that, and I think that that's very important to do, but I am concerned. I'm thinking that there is . . . Is it the Frontier foundation that does this? And I'm going to just ask this question because I think maybe Mr. Miller would know this. I just want to make sure I'm . . . Is this correct?

**Mr. Miller:** — I believe what you're referring to is the Frontier Centre for policy and the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies reports that have been accumulated in the Western provinces, based on provincial assessment data for the various jurisdictions.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you for that, and that is what I'm thinking of. And so they gather their information, and then they can do what they feel that they want to do for their publication. Is there a way or will you or will the ministry in some way block or stop what may happen in terms of ranking schools based on these results?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Again, Mr. Forbes, it's not our intention to rank order schools. However the information that we will gather, as we've stated, will be contained in the individual school division's continuous and accountability framework reports, and they will then provide the information to individual schools and individual classrooms as the process allows.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So where does it stop being public and start being internal information? Will it be at the classroom? Will it be at the school level? I hope it's going to be private at the student level, that no one will be able to see that.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Right.

**Mr. Forbes:** — So I'm concerned about where does this break down so that organizations like the Frontier Centre can say, I have a right to know that. I've got to share that. I understand that. But where's that line?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — At the school level, I think is the level.

**Mr. Forbes:** — The school will be public knowledge or will be private school board knowledge?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — The school board would have that information and provide it to the individual schools, and they would share that information then with the school community councils.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. Thank you. I did have . . . And I see the clock is running out, so I don't know which questions to ask. But I do want to let you know that I did get several emails from

our last estimates that people are watching and have some concerns. And so the first one . . . I won't read them all. Maybe I'll write you a letter and just make sure we get these on record. But this person writes about, mentioning technology and websites:

Does he [and he's referring to the minister] realize that schools operate on a restricted, narrow bandwidth because schools are only allowed so much? This narrow bandwidth really restricts how teachers use technology. For example, it's very difficult to play even YouTube videos sometimes. Will they increase funding to solve this growing issue?

So in terms of, I think . . . Because some of this testing will be online, so there will be an issue about equity among technology. Will that be addressed? All systems will be brought up so that they can all handle what needs to be done?

[21:45]

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Absolutely. That's part of the infrastructure piece that we're working on to go forward. The technology is critical to the success of an initiative such as this. And we need to remember again, Mr. Forbes, that this is not just about assessment. It's a comprehensive program that spans the early years, that then spans the ages from, you know, 9, 10, right through high school, especially as it pertains to student engagement. Because as you've heard me state, engagement is critical to academic success. And so we need to do everything that we can to make sure that we are providing the resources and the environment that will keep students engaged. And technology plays a large role in that.

So as you articulate that question, we are committed to making sure that our infrastructure is in place to meet that pressure.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Another question or comment was, how about providing resources for teaching the outcomes and indicators which the ministry sets out instead of data? Teachers don't need more data to establish focus; they need more resources and time.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Sure. No. We have seen and the research that we've quoted supports the notion of data to inform instruction. In fact the Maori experience that Greg just talked about refers to that, that in fact in Canada we are getting better at using data to inform instruction and validate curriculum. And so you know, there's a saying that no data is bad data if you use it correctly. And it's our intent to make sure that we use the data that we gain for the purposes that it will both inform instruction and validate the curriculum and provide the resources that is necessary to support students and parents as they help their children succeed.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. I just want to switch for a second. We'll leave this area. I want to talk a little bit about the 950 hours per school year. And again this generated a lot of feedback. And we did talk a bit about this during Bill 70, but I just do want to clarify and go back to this, that . . . So the question that many teachers are having is, now that we see that we have a mandated minimum 950 hours of instruction, and I think it was that there was a list that somebody referred to that the range was around 950, and I forget what the top number was. I don't have that

*Hansard* with me. 984?

**Ms. Senecal:** — 984.5.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Okay. So how will you . . . Will there be compensation when these extra hours — some thirty-four and a half more hours than what the minimum . . . It's going to be quite a range, and so there is going to be a bit of inequity between school divisions. And now that we've gone down this road, will there be any compensation for those teachers who are doing more hours in one school division than another?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thanks, Mr. Forbes. Mr. Miller can provide you with a copy of the school calendars that we have received. Essentially however let me state that teachers are professionals. And we recognize the contributions that teachers make by engaging in the collective bargaining process, and a contract is arrived at. And I, coming from the field, and you as well, understand that my salary is an annual salary and that there's a difference between the school day and the teachers' workday. And my salary is based on what I need, my credentials, obviously, and then the work that I put in to make sure that I'm ready to meet my students the next day.

**Mr. Forbes:** — But we know, and we know that pension, there's a day issue. You have to teach so many days to have a full year. So there are some of these factors that do evolve. And many of them, they agree completely with your premise that they are professionals. It's been a long, hard struggle in Saskatchewan to professionalize the profession of teaching.

And now that we've gone down to the number of hours in the school year, many resent that because that is seen as a step backwards in terms of professional respect and autonomy. The question is, we were doing the job, we understood the unique characteristics of our schools, our school divisions, that type of thing, but now with this new regulation of how many hours in a year, there's been some real concerns raised about that. But I just wanted to raise that.

But I did want to go to another issue, and that is the joint task force, *Voice, Vision and Leadership*, the final report. And I just have just a couple of questions on that. And that is recommendation no. 25. And obviously our time is running out quickly, and so we don't have enough time to go through and the respect and the time that it should have because it's a very important report. But they are really anxious that this report does not gather dust on a shelf but that in fact that there is some action, there's some accountability, and that there be further action. And I'm curious. What will be your response to recommendation number 25?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Is that specifically sitting on the shelf?

**Mr. Forbes:** — No. But potentially it might be.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Sorry about that, Mr. Forbes. Yes. The answer to the question is that we are, you know, right now engaged in the analysis of all of the recommendations, and we are having those discussions. I've got the recommendation. Okay. Thank you. Sure. And it is our full intention to engage fully with First Nations and Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to make sure indeed that this report and its recommendations has

that analysis, has that discussion, and bears fruit.

And as you know, we've already begun that process with the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] driver's licence initiative. As well I will be in Ottawa next week — on the 22nd I believe of May, sorry, not next week — to have discussions, along with my colleague, with Minister Valcourt. And to be sure, one of the items of discussion will be on funding. As well we will be continuing, as I said, to work with actually the new chief, Vice-chief Bob Cameron with the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] who's just assumed the portfolio to address the recommendations of the task force.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well I would see this one as being one of the priority items because it is the one that hinges or creates or it shows the commitment from the government. And so will this be acted on, this specific one? Or what's your intention to do . . . Have you established a multi-ministerial approach to this? And I guess because I think this may be my last question, will you be inviting the federal government to join you in some of these discussions in Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Again, Mr. Forbes, we're in the midst of digesting and analyzing these recommendations. Every single one of these recommendations is a recommendation that we will take action on, and we will map that out with our partners as we go forward to ensure that we give them due consideration as we go forward.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Just checking my list, Mr. Chair, and I think at this point, while I have many more questions, I think that I've covered the most important ones. And I do want to thank the officials for their time, providing the answers, and I know there's a few answers that we're looking forward to. But I want to thank the minister for his frank answers and straightforward discussion. I appreciate that very much so thank you.

With that, I am finished with my questions on estimates for the Ministry of Education. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. And before we let the minister and his staff go, we've got some voting to do here. So we'll be voting off the Education estimates. And we start with vote 5, Education, page 55, central management and services, subvote (ED01) in the amount of 15,617,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — K-12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education, subvote (ED03) in the amount of 1,324,137,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Early years, subvote (ED08) in the amount of 63,391,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Literacy, subvote (ED17) in the amount of 2,757,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Provincial Library, subvote (ED15) in the amount of 12,653,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Teachers' pensions and benefits, subvote (ED04) in the amount of 31,818,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of 1,300,000, this is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

Education, vote 5, 1,450,373,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sum for Education in the amount of 1,450,373,000.

Mr. Lawrence. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Now we have the supplementary estimates.

[22:00]

### General Revenue Fund Supplementary Estimates — March Education Vote 5

**The Chair:** — Vote 5, Education, page 3, K-12 education, subvote (ED03) in the amount of 7,894,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Teachers' pensions and benefits, subvote (ED04) in the amount of 50,277,000. There is no vote as this is statutory.

Education, vote 5, 7,894,000.

I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2013, the following sum for Education in the amount of 7,894,000.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Merriman. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Now, Mr. Minister, if you have any

closing remarks.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just as Mr. Forbes, I'd like to acknowledge the staff that supported this going forward. The endless hours that it took to get me ready for this is greatly appreciated, and thank you for a job well done. Everyone, thank you very much. And to you, Mr. Forbes, and my colleagues on the committee, thank you for your due diligence. And to you, Mr. Chair, and staff from the Legislative Building, thank you for all the work that we've completed.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. Mr. Minister, you and your staff are dismissed at this time, and our committee will be doing some voting.

**General Revenue Fund  
Advanced Education  
Vote 37**

**The Chair:** — All right. If we will continue, vote 37, Advanced Education, central management and services, subvote (AE01) in the amount of 13,779,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

**The Chair:** — Post-secondary education, subvote (AE02) in the amount of 695,634,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Student support, subvote (AE03) in the amount of 77,482,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of 774,000. This is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

Advanced Education, vote 37, 786,895,000. I will ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sum for Advanced Education in the amount of 786,895,000.

**Ms. Ross:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Ross. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Health  
Vote 32**

**The Chair:** — Vote 32, Health, central management and service, subvote (HE01) in the amount of 13,149,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Provincial health services, subvote (HE04) in the amount of 224,605,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Regional health services, subvote (HE03) in the amount of 3,357,009,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Early childhood development, subvote (HE10) in the amount of 10,992,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Medical services and medical education programs, subvote (HE06) in the amount of 857,877,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Provincial infrastructure projects, subvote (HE05) in the amount of 120,615,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Drug plan and extended benefits, subvote (HE08) in the amount of 374,803,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of 3,535,000. This is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

Health, vote 32, is 4,959,050,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sums for Health in the amount of 4,959,050,000.

I'd ask a member to move that.

**Mr. Docherty:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Docherty. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Vote 20**

**The Chair:** — We next move to vote 20, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, central management and services, subvote (LR01) in the amount of 4,701,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Occupational health and safety, subvote (LR02) in the amount of 8,545,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Labour standards, subvote (LR03) in the amount of 2,781,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Labour relations board, subvote (LR04) in the amount of 1,017,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Labour relations and mediation, subvote (LR05) in the amount of 830,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Workers' advocate, subvote (LR06) in the amount of 719,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of 97,000, this is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, vote 20, 18,593,000. I'll now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sum for Labour Relations and Workplace Safety in the amount of 18,593,000.

Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — So moved. Mr. Lawrence.

**General Revenue Fund  
Social Services  
Vote 36**

**The Chair:** — Vote 36, Social Services, central management and services, subvote (SS01) in the amount of 48,360,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Child and family services, subvote (SS04) in the amount of 209,911,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Income assistance and disability services, subvote (SS03) in the amount of 607,087,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Client support, subvote (SS05) in the amount of 24,201,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Housing, subvote (SS12) in the amount of 14,672,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of 3,656,000. This is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

So Social Services, vote 36 was 904,231,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sum for Social Services in the amount of 904,231,000.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Merriman. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

[22:15]

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Advanced Education  
Vote 169**

**The Chair:** — Advanced Education, loans to Student Aid Fund, subvote (AE01) in the amount of \$56,000,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Advanced Education, vote 169, \$56,000,000.

I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sum for Advanced Education in the amount of 56,000,000.

**Ms. Ross:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Ross. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Supplementary Estimates — March**



**Advanced Education  
Vote 37**

**The Chair:** — Vote 37, Advanced Education, student supports, subvote (AE03) in the amount of 4,090,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Advanced Education, vote 37, 4,090,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2013, the following sum for Advanced Education in the amount of 4,090,000.

**Mr. Docherty:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Docherty. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Committee members, you have before you a draft of the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services. We require a member to move the following motion:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

**The Chair:** — Thank you, Ms. Wilson. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. I'll now ask a member to move a motion of adjournment.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Merriman. All agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Thank you one and all. Thank you one and all for your hard work, and you spent a lot of money tonight. Thank you one and all and good night.

[The committee adjourned at 22:18.]