



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

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## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

Mr. Larry Doke, Chair  
Cut Knife-Turtleford

Ms. Danielle Chartier, Deputy Chair  
Saskatoon Riversdale

Mr. Herb Cox  
The Battlefords

Mr. Muhammad Fiaz  
Regina Pasqua

Hon. Todd Goudy  
Melfort

Ms. Nicole Rancourt  
Prince Albert Northcote

Ms. Nadine Wilson  
Saskatchewan Rivers

[The committee met at 15:00.]

**The Chair:** — Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Human Services. My name is Larry Doke. I'm your committee Chair. And we're joined today by MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Nadine Wilson, the Hon. Todd Goudy, MLA Muhammad Fiaz, MLA Herb Cox, and MLA Carla Beck.

**General Revenue Fund  
Education  
Vote 5**

**Subvote (ED01)**

**The Chair:** — Today we'll be considering the estimates and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Education, vote 5, Education, central management and services in subvote (ED01). Minister Wyant is here with his officials. I don't think we need to have introductions again. We can just carry on. So, Ms. Beck, you're up.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the minister and the deputy minister and the officials with us again this afternoon. It is a beautiful day outside, so I appreciate all the time that it takes to prepare to come into committee and the self-discipline to come inside when it's such a nice, nice day outside.

Minister, I wanted to start by just noting Manitoba came out today with their plan for reopening which, in addition to the other provinces that I noted last night, has provided three scenarios and three options, including one with reduced class size for the fall. I'm just wondering if you could provide any additional information about the reasons why we don't see an option for reduced class sizes in the fall.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well thank you for the question. I really don't have anything to add to the answers that I provided yesterday. Once we were into the pandemic and the decision was made to close schools, the decision was made in consultation with our education partners to form the response planning team to deal with the challenges that came as a result of closing the schools. And I must say they did a remarkable job and I want to thank them and the leadership of the ministry in that effort.

Once the decision was made that schools will be opening, that we announced a few weeks ago, the response planning team of course started doing their work on what that would look like. And certainly the guidelines that had been provided to us by the chief medical health officer are assisting them in providing for that work. So from our perspective that work . . . And I think it was pretty clear last night and I'll ask my deputy minister to again confirm the conversations that have been had at that table, that school will resume in the fall and it will resume in as normal a situation as possible having regard to the fact that if things change there may well have to be some modifications as to how children return to school. And that's precisely the reason why the response planning team has been working on those various scenarios.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, I have a follow-up question. When this

House was suspended in February of this year and the estimates were made public at that time, and then the subsequent estimates that were tabled in this year's budget, there was no additional increase for operations for the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system. What would have been the cost to reduce, I guess, is the question I want to ask. Why was there no additional funding, and what would be the cost to the K to 12 system if we were to reduce class sizes, say to 15, as other jurisdictions have done?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well that's certainly not a scenario that we were planning for in any event, so certainly no estimate of what the cost would be to the system if that was the case. But again the chief medical health officer has indicated that he sees no reason why school can't resume in the fall with full classes, as it has in the past, having regard to the safety measures that have been set out in his guidelines.

**Ms. Beck:** — Fifteen does seem to be the number that other provinces are contemplating with regard to decreased class sizes. I'm just wondering, is there something particular about the Saskatchewan situation that would lead us to not look at that 15 number?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well again the plan to return to school in the fall is based on the guidelines that are provided to us by the chief medical health officer who has indicated, I think, that the number of children in a classroom is not a health issue for him given a decision that we have taken to return to school. And so as a scenario of reducing the number of children in classes, that isn't something that we're contemplating.

Again the response planning team continues to do their work. And as I mentioned yesterday, representatives from the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] and the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] and the ministry and LEADS [League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents] is doing that work. And so the scenario that we expect to be following when the school returns in the fall was a full return to school with classrooms the way they were, having regard to the safety measures that have been indicated and set out by the chief medical health officer.

**Ms. Beck:** — I guess it's curious. I know that Dr. Shahab has opportunity to meet with Dr. Tam and Dr. Henry and the other chief medical health officers. I'm just struggling with why, given essentially the same situation with different provinces, we have such a drastically different plan and guidelines in place in Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well we have a tremendous amount of confidence, and I think you do too, in the advice the chief medical health officer has provided the province of Saskatchewan since the beginning of the pandemic, and I have no reason to question the advice that he is giving us now. And that advice is that he expects school to return to full capacity in the fall, having regard to the safety measures that need to be in place in order to ensure that children return to school safely. That's not a scenario we're considering, although as I've said, I've asked Deputy Minister Currie to comment on a little bit of some of the conversations that have been happening with the RPT [response planning team].

**Mr. Currie:** — Thanks, Minister. So with regards to the

responsibility and the response within Saskatchewan, we've looked at it and approached it taking the guidance from the chief medical health officer, and then developed an education learning plan, in terms of students returning to school in the fall accordingly and following those guidelines. So in that way we have structured this return-to-school plan with the understanding that all students are returning to school. And adjustments will be made, as has been referenced, based on local or individual needs accordingly.

And so with that planning that all students would be returning to school, I think I also referenced that there is a need for contingency planning for those situations that present themselves differently than all students remaining in the classroom. And as a provincial education sector, we continue to take our cues when developing these plans based on what's posted in Re-Open Saskatchewan documentation where it talks about the primary and the secondary educational institution guidelines.

We understand and appreciate that from the work that the response planning team has realized is that school divisions, staff members, senior admin leadership, as well as our business officials, are working together to address the local contexts which they face and to ensure that the learning opportunities are equitable moving forward, as well as effective for the children that they serve.

**Ms. Beck:** — So one of the outstanding concerns that I continue to hear, I'll use a real-time example. You have Campbell Collegiate and LeBoldus that will be returning to full-time classes in the fall, in-person classes. And both of those large and rather crowded high schools are located in the south end of the city, so the same context. At the same time you have a decision made where those students who would normally be returning to the University of Regina are not going to be returning in person due to health concerns. And I'm just struggling to understand why there's such a vast difference between those two decisions.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well I'm not prepared, nor am I in a position to be able to comment on the decisions that have been made by those post-secondary institutions in terms of how they want to deliver their educational opportunities to students at university. Certainly I think online learning and alternate delivery of certain classes at the university level may well be easier. I don't know that. I suspect that that's the case having some experience with that with children in university today.

But again the guidelines that have been presented to us by the chief medical health officer . . . and that's what they are; they are guidelines, which will help the response planning team and school divisions properly plan for children to return to school in the fall. I am not in a position nor am I inclined to second-guess the advice that's been provided to us by the chief medical health officer. You may be inclined to do that; I am not.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, I understand these are guidelines. And you know, this is a question that has been asked. I assume that you're getting the same emails that I am. Again a renewed concern today with Manitoba again following suit with the other provinces and offering a third option of reduced class sizes for the fall. These are not questions that I have, you know, conjured out of the air. These are questions that are real and persistent for those who will be returning to the classrooms in the fall, both as

staff and also some significant concern from parents. This cannot be a surprise that these questions exist.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well it's certainly not a surprise. But again the chief medical health officer of the province of Saskatchewan has provided the people of this province with excellent guidance over the last number of months since the beginning of the pandemic. And again I am not inclined to second-guess the advice that he has given us. That said, these are guidelines and we are looking to the response planning team which has been providing and doing some excellent work, not just within the period of time since school has closed, but as we move forward to ensure that there is a safe reopening of schools.

The guidelines are just that. And even since these guidelines were issued there's been a number of things that have changed in terms of what's reopened. We now have sports returning. We have children in playgrounds, in splash parks. We have children competing in sports. And so these things are all changing. And so to the extent that we want to ensure that children return safely, relying on the advice of the chief medical health officer and the professionals within the educational partners that make up the response planning team, we have great confidence that children will be returning to school in a safe way.

**Ms. Beck:** — So what is the trigger point for reducing class sizes or changing the plan come the fall? If there is widespread community transmission? Is there a set trigger point for each school division, or is that provincially decided at the ministry? What level of community transmission or number of illnesses or outbreaks in schools are we looking to reach before we look at a different plan?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well we will rely on the ongoing advice from the chief medical health officer. I've made that very clear. Not just with respect to the return to school but with respect to the reopening plan. We have done that from the beginning. So as we move forward we will continue to seek out the advice of the chief medical health officer in terms of whether or not any of these guidelines need to be changed, whether there's any further recommendations that he may make depending on what the circumstances are in September or October or November.

But certainly we continue to rely on that guidance. We continue to rely on that guidance and, as I've said before, he has provided excellent guidance to the province of Saskatchewan through this whole thing. And I have no reason to expect that that's going to change.

**Ms. Beck:** — So school divisions, have they been directed only to prepare for an opening with some, you know, extra distancing perhaps where it's possible and some extra hand sanitizer? Or do they also have to have a plan in place for, you know, reduced class sizes or have a plan in place in the event of a local breakout at a school or high rates of community transmission?

[15:15]

**Mr. Currie:** — To understand where we're going in the future, it helps to look at where we've been in the past. And I know that our journey over the last three months with our school divisions, in collaboration with our response planning team, under the direction of the chief medical health officer, have looked at an

evolving situation that has been non-static, so to speak.

So when we have been preparing for the fall, given what the chief medical health officer has endorsed and supported, and these are guidelines for the primary and secondary educational institution, we have this, which is part of the Re-Open Saskatchewan platform. We've taken that information, working with the response planning team, and shared that with the school divisions, and again had them work on planning for resuming school in the fall for all students — that's the number one criteria and the concept that everybody is returning — but when they are returning, to ensure that there are safety guidelines and practices and structures in place to address whatever is referenced in the guidelines as endorsed by the chief medical health officer.

So as we have read through this, as we're looking at whether it be hygiene or the sanitization practices or the groupings of students, it's guidelines that have kind of driven our respective planning. And we fully appreciate and anticipate that there may be more evolving that takes place over the summer months, much like we've experienced for the last three months. But that ongoing conversation, awareness, and connection to the chief medical health officer, as well as his medical health officials, will enable our school divisions to open with safety in mind and acceptance of the students — in terms of the last three months, where they've been journeying in terms of this pandemic — and help them to feel comfortable in the setting, given the guidelines that have been espoused here.

If there are changes, we continue to connect over the summer months, where we will be looking to evolve. And that's where the school divisions in planning for all students to return have also developed contingency plans and looked at contingency plans, should there be changes that are presented to us over the summer months.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, you noted that teachers wouldn't be expected to provide both in-class instruction and online instruction, short of perhaps, you know, linking up to a student at home. Do we have an indication of how many students won't be able to return in the fall, and when do you expect to have that information? Either due to the fact that they're medically fragile or immunocompromised or have family members that are? Is there a number that you're working with in terms of your assumptions of how many students won't be in the classroom?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Of course I have the projections of the number of children that will be returning this fall, but I can't tell you with any certainty how many children won't be returning as a result of perhaps being immune compromised or otherwise. We would expect that parents that have children that are immune compromised or aren't going to be returning to school in the fall . . . communicating that information to their schools and then that information would be wrapped up and then come back up to the Ministry of Education. So we don't have a number.

**Ms. Beck:** — Do you know when you would expect that? Is there a timeline that you're asking parents to make that decision or is this . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well that's information that the response planning team will be trying to secure from the school divisions.

**Ms. Beck:** — So plans for those students . . . Say there's a number of students who by the end of June or at some point before September 1st indicate that they will not be able to attend school in person. What is the plan for those students?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Again that will be work that's being done by the response planning team. I think it should be noted for the committee that school divisions aren't . . . They've certainly experienced these things before, and not in the context of COVID-19 obviously but in the context of having to provide educational opportunities to students who aren't in school. And so it's not that school divisions don't have the capacity or at least have some experience in doing that. But again the response planning team will be working on those scenarios to make sure that school divisions are in a position to be able to provide those educational opportunities.

**Ms. Beck:** — Will those students who are opting for online learning or from-home learning in some capacity, will they be registering with their home division or will they be registering with another division? Have you sorted out how that's going to work?

**Mr. Currie:** — At this time of year approaching the end of June, we have . . . All school divisions are working under the understanding that students will be returning unless otherwise notified, or that there will be some changes that happen over the summer months. They're also working under the operational structure of our pre-kindergarten and our kindergarten enrolments taking place at this time.

So there will be changes and there will be adjustments over the summer months based on changes within families or movement and transitions that will adjust those respective numbers. For those students who are accessing online learning, we presently have 13 entities within the province that offer online learning. And with that, some of them are positioned to offer online classes for students outside of their respective borders, and that might be another school division who's not offering online classes.

So those options still remain where students do have access to online learning options, whether it be offered by their school division or structures within their school division that enable them to access those online learning opportunities from other school divisions who are structured in such a way that they have the capacity and they have the resources to offer online learning for students across the province.

**Ms. Beck:** — Will there be adjustments after the September 30th? If there are a number of students who are opting for online classes outside of their home division, does that create a lot of shift in terms of funding for those students? I mean, you know, the presumption that everyone is going to be in class . . . and allocations, grants for school divisions are based on those numbers. Will there be an adjustment after the September 30th to deal with perhaps if we have a high number of students online?

**Mr. Currie:** — Our ministry is working with our school divisions and our education sector partners to develop and construct a distance learning, an online learning policy that will be of interest to families throughout the province. Right now what we have is that the students who take online courses are either taking that from within their own school division's course

offerings, or they are made available, they're made known to other school divisions that offer the online courses.

And there are mechanisms in place between school divisions to address and assist the resource allocation for students taking online classes. What is exciting to see is that a student anywhere in the province is able to pursue their educational interests given the resources that are shared collaboratively throughout the province by a number of school divisions who do, in fact, offer online learning. And then those other school divisions who don't offer that online learning enable students to access it and fulfill their educational journey.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you.

**Mr. Currie:** — Maybe if I could, just one more component on that one as part of your inquiry there. We do as a ministry, each year in September, look at the actual enrolments. And then that's part of our ongoing work in that we take the actual student numbers that have been realized and we work with those in alignment with the projections that have been realized. So that is taken into account. So we look at actual numbers and we compare those to the projections that were presented by school divisions in advance of the school year.

**Ms. Beck:** — Yes. Yes, my question just was specifically about subsequent adjustments to funding based on changes in those numbers. Move on to a couple of other pieces here. I asked yesterday about planning for students with intensive needs and sort of the concerns within the guidelines about whether they would be able to be supported in an in-class environment.

Another question that I realized I forgot to ask about that was the possibility — and I believe the Premier has spoken to this as well — about hosting classes off-site for schools, or seconding or renting other sites to manage physical distancing. Have there been any allocations in this budget to deal with that sort of increased cost that school divisions might have to incur to rent other buildings or find other sites?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well there's no allocation, as I mentioned yesterday. There's no allocation in this budget to accommodate that particular thing. But again I'll refer you to the savings that the school divisions have had and the contingency fund that's in this budget. At the present time, and I'll let Deputy Minister Currie comment on this, there's been no consideration at the RPT with respect to renting additional space for the provision of classes. Certainly if that was something that was to happen, that would be an additional cost. And as I've said before, there's been significant savings among school divisions, as well as a significant contingency fund in the budget.

**Mr. Currie:** — We continue to have an education sector that is striving to meet the needs of all students. So with the response planning team, when we've been discussing options approaching the resumption of school in the fall, it was based on the guidelines that have been given to us, and those guidelines have been just realized as of last week. So the planning that's implemented right now is addressing the known resources, addressing the known facilities, and addressing the known opportunities to see how we can provide for those students come fall. We have continued conversations based on contingency plans. If those structures and situations were to change, then we would have adaptations that

would be realized.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. The reason, of course, you know, I'm expressing concern and concern has been directed to me is because, you know, the very issue of funding that's not meeting enrolment or inflationary growth. I just wanted to note that, you know, looking at audited financial data between 2017 when taxes, EPTs [education property tax] started going directly to the General Revenue Fund, the majority of divisions have experienced significant decline in property tax revenue. And there has been some corresponding increasing grants on the other side but not enough to cover school divisions expenses.

Since 2017 the audited financial data I have in front of me shows that 78 per cent of school divisions have experienced deficits since 2017-18. That's the reason that, you know, school divisions are concerned. Those who work in those school divisions are concerned because the funding hasn't met growth. And as I noted earlier, the operational numbers in this budget from February to the most recent have not increased at all.

[15:30]

So I guess I add that to the urgency. When we're looking through the guidelines in an ordinary year or in an ordinary context, and you're seeing what may be small increases to duties and expenses, there is already a feeling that schools are overburdened and certainly that the ability of school boards to meet demand based on funding is taxed. So the question I guess I have: was there consideration for increasing — outside of the contingency, which we don't know how much will be allocated to education — increasing funding to school divisions to meet that demand?

The other thing is that that budget in February was put forth before the teachers' contract was signed. You know, that's a lot of things that have changed between now and then. Why aren't we seeing any increased allocation for school divisions?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well there's a \$42 million increase in the operating budget for school divisions this year, which includes fully covering the teachers' contract, which is obviously a significant factor in terms of the increased costs that school divisions will have to bear. As I've said on a number of occasions, there is a contingency in the budget.

We appreciate the fact that there may well be some additional costs which need to be borne by school divisions as a result of returning to school this fall under these very special circumstances. There has been savings in school divisions, in a number of school divisions, numbers approaching \$2 million, which is not an insignificant amount of money when you consider at least one school division has estimated the additional costs associated with returning to school under these conditions to be approximately \$500,000.

That said, the contingency fund is not insignificant; \$200 million is not a small amount of money. And to the extent that we have said, and I have said publicly, that we do not want to see any impairment to the delivery of education in the classroom, to the educational opportunities of children in the schools and in our school divisions, that will be something that we would be very respectful of.

And as I've said before, not sure how you predict and how you budget for something that you don't know anything about. The best way to do that is to ensure that there is a contingency fund to cover off those additional costs. We don't know what those costs are going to be, and at the time, we certainly didn't know what the savings of the school divisions are. And I only have savings of seven school divisions in front of me; another 20 school divisions to report. So the significant amounts of money that are reflected in these numbers which we are providing to you certainly will underwrite some of the additional costs that those school divisions will have.

**Ms. Beck:** — I guess the concern . . . including the school division that you reference did not receive funding that met the challenges of growth and inflation and the teachers' contract. So that is certainly the concern.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — But the budget did fully cover the increase in the teachers' contract, which was a commitment that the Premier of Saskatchewan has made, and that money is in the budget.

**Ms. Beck:** — Well, Minister, I would hope that it would fully cover the teachers' contract because that is, I mean that's negotiated and your signature is on that contract. You know, it has to be fully funded. I know that was tried once, that it wasn't fully funded, but I don't know that there's much appetite for that.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — But to the extent that that's a significant contributing factor to the increased costs of school divisions, the fact that that amount of money is in the budget underscores, I think, the government's commitment in terms of addressing the needs of school divisions. Because if one of the significant inflationary factors with school divisions is the teachers' contract, which it is — the CBA [collective bargaining agreement] accounted for \$20 million — fully covering that goes a long way, I think, to addressing the issues that school divisions are facing in terms of their inflationary pressures.

And again I will point out, there have been significant savings in school divisions over the last number of months since in-class instruction hasn't been provided.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, I believe yesterday there were a number of items that you had endeavoured to table. I'm just wondering . . . including I believe, you just reminded me, the document that you're working from in terms of the savings by school division. I'm just wondering if you're able to table those or at least if not today, then by the end of session if that's possible.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We'll have someone get those to you. We were working on them. They were kind of . . . marked them all up.

**Ms. Beck:** — No, I know. I know you're busy, but by the end of session would be appreciated though. What was the amount assessed in EPT this year that you're working from in this budget or these estimates?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — The number is \$760.7 million.

**Ms. Beck:** — Do you have the breakdown by school division of how much was collected? I guess I asked assessed, assessed

and/or collected.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Just hang on a second.

That would be by municipality. We don't have the breakdown, but we'll certainly undertake to get that information to you.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. The question I was . . . I'm going to look at the auditor's chapter here for a minute, and specifically I started into students requiring intensive supports or children with IPPs [individualized program planning] or PPPs [personal program plan], IIPs [inclusion and intervention plan] . . . it keeps changing. I'm just wondering, the provincial average of the number of students in Saskatchewan that are requiring intensive supports, what that number is.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — You want the provincial average of kids?

**Ms. Beck:** — The provincial average and also then by school division.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Okay, who've had an IPP by school division?

I can't give you a provincial average, but I can tell you that the total number of kids' IPP is 9,670, and that's over all the school divisions. I do have a breakdown of school divisions, and we could certainly undertake to get you that information.

**Ms. Beck:** — That would be great. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — But I don't have a provincial average. We could work that out though.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Thank you. And how much was allocated in this budget for supports for learning?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — \$289.1 million.

**Ms. Beck:** — Is that an increase this year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, do you have a number of the number of students attending provincial schools that are receiving, or have received, Jordan's-principle funding last year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I'll just read this little note into the record, if you don't mind. There was an inter-ministerial working group met with ISC [Indigenous Services Canada] on May 11th, 2020. The Government of Saskatchewan continues to request more details from ISC on the data for programs and service implemented in this province, including the breakdown of numbers for health, education, or the social sectors. And they indicated that they will send the information sector data to the ministry in June, this month.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. I'm not familiar with ISC, or that's not readily familiar.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Indigenous Services Canada.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. The other thing that I would be interested

in is the total dollar amount, if we have that, in terms of that support that was provided, both number of students and the total dollar amount. The reason I'm asking, in part . . . I actually had it written down as a question already, but I understand at least in one school division there's going to be some changes to receiving of that funding. Is that just division by division, or is that an overall change for the province?

**Mr. Currie:** — That's a division-by-division situation and so we respond and account for it in that manner.

**Ms. Beck:** — So could you just give us an indication of some of the things that that federal money is supplying in provincial schools for those students who qualify or access Jordan's-principle funding?

**Mr. Currie:** — By all means. Jordan's-principle funding has supported educational assistants in some schools, within some school divisions as well. I happen to know that in the North, in the Northern Lights School Division, there's also been Jordan's-principle money that's been allocated to a high school in La Loche for some programming there, as well as in Creighton has used some monies as well for the support staff that are utilized within the education structure and the program there as well.

There have been applications for other resources, and school divisions will receive indications of support or lack thereof based on those respective applications. But specifically come to mind, Northern Lights and Creighton school divisions have received resources from Jordan's principle based on applications.

[15:45]

**Ms. Beck:** — I guess the theme I'm going with is some of the federal supports that are being utilized in the school system. And . . . [inaudible] . . . last year or two years ago, we talked about mental health pilot programs supported by the federal mental health dollars. I'm wondering if you could provide an update with regard to those programs.

**Ms. Nedelcov-Anderson:** — Susan Nedelcov-Anderson, assistant deputy minister. I believe you've been referencing the mental health capacity-building model that we've been piloting over the course of this school year. So we have the pilot occurring in five schools across the province: two schools in North Battleford, one school here in Regina, one school in Sandy Bay, and one school in Balgonie. Currently the five schools are still part of a pilot process, and there is a steering committee that is looking at how the process is going as a pilot. And we'll be receiving a final report in the near future, and we'll base future developments on that final report.

The mental health capacity-building model, of course, is modelled after Alberta's successful program that they've had in place now for over 10 years. And we've had lots of really good news coming out of the five schools that have been implementing so far, so really pleased with how it's been working. Each school receives a coordinator that would work with staff and students.

And of course the intent is not like a counselling approach. The intent is to build capacity in the schools among the staff, the students, and the community so that there is a positive approach

to understanding mental health, to the prevention of issues that might arise — building that capacity within all. So a very comprehensive approach — not just within the classroom, so integrating within curriculum, but also within the context or the environment of the school as a whole.

**Ms. Beck:** — I'm glad to hear the results have been positive. I guess what I'm looking for, if you know indeed the report, as I would expect, is positive, is there a plan to scale up this program for schools around the province? I know it's a pilot right now. And my other question about this is, is how much of that, what was the dollar amount that was funded by the federal government?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It was \$600,000. That was flow-through money from the federal government through the Ministry of Health. And so it was the Ministry of Health that supports the project. Certainly we're seeing some very positive responses. And as we get through to the end of the pilot, we will certainly be having some ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Health about providing further support to expand the program. I think I mentioned that last year. But as I say, as long as we're in the pilot and we're continuing to analyze the results, but certainly the intention of the government is to expand the program.

**Ms. Beck:** — So it would be Health dollars flowing into provincial schools?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Currently it's Health dollars that are flowing into provincial schools. How the program is funded in the future, I can't make any . . . I'm not sure I can comment on that. But I can tell you that the work that's been done between the ministry and the Ministry of Health, and particularly the Minister of Health who has been very, very supportive of ensuring that we continue to enhance and improve the delivery of mental health services in this province. And I think you've seen that in the budget as well. And so we'll continue to work with the Minister of Health on that because I think the minister fully recognizes the importance of this program. So that will be an ongoing discussion that we have.

**Ms. Beck:** — Certainly, unfortunately a lot of concern about mental health, suicide rates amongst youth in the province, so it's heartening to hear that there's been some positive impact.

Have there been other discussions about other ministries providing support for the K to 12 system? I know we've talked about collaborative tables before, but actual dollars to follow through and support student wellness as a base for, you know, both their personal wellness and also their academic achievement.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Deputy Minister Currie chairs an inter-ministerial committee of deputies, and I think he's well placed to be able to make a few comments on the work that's being done by that committee.

**Mr. Currie:** — There's a collaborative approach being taken with regards to a number of human services ministries. The human services deputy ministers' committee looks at ways to align our resources, support, and complement each other in our programming and support of our students or our respective communities in ways that will be considered supportive and



enabling for children and students to receive the supports that they need when they need them. And those have been happening within our respective communities.

We have human services ministries like Social Services. And Social Services is the Chair of this committee. As well as we have ourselves. We also have at times Advanced Education comes in, because we talk about education through to post-secondary. We have Immigration and Career Training. We have, at times we have had Finance sitting with us too, the Ministry of Finance to help us understand in terms of dollar flows how we can complement and align our structures and our resource allocations.

And we also have these . . . Health is a key component of that. And we are looking at ways of existing structures and programs that we have and supports that we have, and looking at, are they meeting the needs? Are they meeting the intended outcomes? Are there other ways that we can look at other jurisdictions in the ways that they have addressed supports within their respective communities, and what can we learn from them?

So we've had this ongoing conversation at least going on a couple of years now, and looking at ways to address and support in a very effective, nimble way, I'll call it, students who are in a school or students who are in the community, and children in the community. And it's been a benefit to have this taking place.

One outcome I would speak to it right now is that there has been family resource centres that have come out of this joint collaboration. And this is a ministry initiative that's taken place in collaboration with other ministries, but given renewed focus and interest on that initiative, as it was successful in three locations in the province. There were seven more expanded family resource centres throughout the province. So this is one example of the ongoing connection, focus, and strategic approach to wrap-around supports for children, communities, and families.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Deputy Minister. So the funding for those family resource centres flows through which ministry?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Through the Ministry of Education.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. And services provided at those family resource centres would include . . .

**Mr. Currie:** — At our family resource centres, we have a number of supports that are provided to preschool-age children, school-age children, parents, as well as helping them develop skills — I'll call them supporting the development of ongoing parenting skills, supporting ongoing development of their career aspiration skills — as well as providing a safe learning environment for our young people. And as a result of their connection and those resources that are readily available at a centre that are co-sponsored by a number of these ministries, it's been a wonderful realization of community involvement and initiatives where the supports are evident, available, and absolutely wanted by those respective communities.

**Ms. Beck:** — So when you say co-sponsored, Deputy Minister, but not funded by other ministries, but there's some collaboration . . .

**Mr. Currie:** — There is constant collaboration — constant collaboration.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — As Deputy Minister Currie has mentioned, we've seen some great opportunities. I had the opportunity to be in Sandy Bay, and as a result of the great work that they're doing, we provided some additional capital to them to expand their family resource centre. Some very excellent work that's being done in the community to support those programs.

**Ms. Beck:** — It certainly sounds promising, but allocation of speech and language services or immunization services or some of those pieces that would normally be funded by Health, so far that's not something that's happening. I guess what I'm asking is, is there capacity to include other ministries and other services within those and have the dollars flow out of those ministries?

Part of the reason I'm asking is I'm looking at the auditor's chapter in terms of the most recent auditor's . . . or no, this is out of PAC [Public Accounts Committee] from September, looking at ed psych and SLP [speech-language pathologist] caseloads within school divisions from 2018. So I will be asking for an update in terms of what the most recent numbers are there for their caseload, but also I like the idea of bringing those services together. I'm just wondering if there's any opportunity or any plans to do that with funds flowing from other ministries to sort of help align those services.

**Mr. Currie:** — There is obviously the potential and there are the opportunities. And that's part of the human services deputy ministers' group, the committee that meets in terms of how can we collaborate and co-construct the resource opportunities for our families and for our young children as well as our parents.

So is there the potential? Yes, there is. This was borne out of the support of that human services deputy ministers' council that saw the evidence as already referenced by the minister up in Sandy Bay, and in Yorkton where there's another family resource centre, and one here in Regina. That those successes that were evidence of the benefits of these ministries and these ministry entities working together that enabled these additional seven to become practical in those respective centres.

And so we look to continue to provide families in ways that ministries can contribute to provide the positive early learning experiences and opportunities to grow parenting knowledge, early years understanding, and contribute to the building blocks that are necessary for the children. But the additional benefit is not only just for the children but also for the families and for the parents.

I know that others have toured. I know the minister has toured the Yorkton, the family resource centre there. And this is an absolutely instrumental project that is fully endorsed and appreciated by the community but more so by the individuals who are a part of it.

**Ms. Beck:** — And clarifying, funded through the ministry.

I guess I told you I deleted my notes but I do remember one of the letters. A presentation from a school board that we had received, I believe, last year had a very good paragraph or I thought a very concise paragraph just noting the overall feeling

that education was being asked to do more and more. You know, be it sort of pseudo-health functions or running lunch programs or, you know, mental health programs. I mean of course all of these are the core business of the wellness of children. But that both on the dollar side and on the sides of just, you know, the ability to manage all of these things, school boards were feeling stretched on both accounts.

I'm just, I guess, the line of questioning is around exploring plans for, you know, helping share that work with other ministries in support of, you know, child wellness, family wellness.

[16:00]

I think that the COVID experience has shown all of us how much students rely on schools, I mean be it for internet and safety issues and food security and mental wellness and exercise and all of those things. So I mean there are a lot of things I think that . . . we will be learning lessons about COVID for years. One of them is just how fundamental our schools are to children being well, beyond their academic achievements.

I guess I should have a question here. I mean my question is, what are the lessons that we've learned and, you know, some opportunities perhaps where we could be investing or recognizing all of those things that schools mean to our children? And I guess highlighting the importance of ensuring that those projects are funded and they don't just get piled higher and higher on the plates of boards and teachers.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well you know, this is a very important piece. And certainly you're correct that since COVID-19 we've always recognized the importance of schools in terms of child's well-being. I can tell you that, as I mentioned before, developing relationships and working closer together with our other human services ministries is key to that. Throughout the course of this COVID-19, I can tell you that I've been having a number of very good conversations with Minister Merriman at Social Services with respect to nutrition programs and how they would be delivered. And that's going to I think lead to further discussions, but inter-ministerial conversations about how we can better do that and how we can better work together on programs like that. So it's a very good point.

Certainly having the inter-ministerial conversations that Deputy Minister Currie has been having, I think there will be some significant lessons that have been learned. And I think yesterday he mentioned that we were going to be working on putting that together. And I think from that work we will certainly be directed into seeing how we can closer align the interests of the Ministry of Education and Social Services and in particular Health. And so I think you'll see some good work coming out of that.

**Ms. Beck:** — I mean, I guess the historical caution as I understand it is, you know, that it's great to have those conversations and it makes sense, you know, that a lot of this work is concentrated in schools. But ensuring that the funding is there and, you know, that the role in health and social services that is played in schools is recognized. But I will . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I know Deputy Minister Currie would like to make a little bit of a comment about this. But just to say this: that we have recognized I think that there are certainly some

overlaps. And perhaps Deputy Minister Currie will comment on this at all, but I have asked him to look at where those overlaps are and, you know, how we can better align the interests of the human services ministries with the work that's being done in the Ministry of Education. But I'll let Deputy Minister Currie just comment further on that.

**Mr. Currie:** — Thanks, Minister. So just before I move on to that, the family resource centre is a project and initiative that's vital to a number of communities. And the family resource centres also have access and facilities to services from other ministries. So while the centre is established, the presence of these other ministries is vital to enable families to navigate the services that those ministries offer, as well as make referrals.

And the growth of our family resource centres here just recently . . . La Ronge had its grand opening in December where the Lieutenant Governor, Russ Mirasty, was in attendance and the community proudly opened this family resource centre. And the remaining centres, which will be realized in the Battlefords, Meadow Lake, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Nipawin, and Saskatoon, will host their grand openings when it is safe to do so. Those are the family resource centres.

We also have ongoing conversation with the Ministry of Health, and you've heard earlier the mental health capacity-building initiative. As well we also look at access of resources through Health that would be evidenced or available within school settings. And so there is ongoing conversations there of how do we have these examples where the community services are available for families and students in the school setting?

We have the wonderful example in Saskatoon that hosts St. Mary's School that has a pediatrics clinic with it. And so we have the example there where we have other ministries evidenced and involved with education and helping that become real. And so those are just a couple of examples where we do have ministries working together, resourcing together, for the benefit of the communities they serve.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Minister, also on the most recent auditor's report — I'm looking at page 41 of that report, chapter 5, school divisions — released recently. I'm wondering if you could walk me through this. There's a table, figure 1 on that page, that notes the combined audited financial reports of all the school divisions in the province. We see there certainly is an increase in grants from the ministry between 2017 and 2018, so that was that partial backfilling of that \$54 million cut.

I note though under that, the corresponding property tax revenue dropped by \$200 million. And own-source revenue for those school divisions dropped to leave them essentially in the same position with a hundred million dollar deficit for each of those school divisions. Can you explain both the drop in property taxes and the drop in the own-source revenue for school divisions?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — There's no decrease in the amount of EPT, but there was a number of Catholic school divisions who, as you know, under the constitution, have the right to collect their own tax. So those monies wouldn't have flowed through the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. They would've collected their taxes themselves, and I believe that that accounts for the difference.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay, so through their audited financial statements they wouldn't have included their own tax revenue?

**Mr. Jensen:** — Rory Jensen, assistant deputy minister. So the audited financial statements would have changed with the change in how property tax was being collected. With property tax going to the GRF, the school divisions now receive all of their revenue — outside of the Catholic divisions and the Lloydminster divisions — through the general operating grant. So the only divisions that would actually show property tax on their financial statements anymore are those eight divisions.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. I understand that in that piece. I guess what I'm also drawn to is the fact that the overall revenue for school divisions, net of those changes, was completely flat from 2017 to 2018 and their expenses were the same. I guess my point is that \$30 million lift that was provided to school divisions, they came out in the same position they were in the year before. Am I reading that correctly? I'm willing to be wrong on this, but it does appear that the revenue was exactly the same.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — You're looking at figure 1?

**Ms. Beck:** — Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So that's expressed in billions of dollars. I think the number was \$2.1 billion, and that's how that's expressed. And so \$30 million wouldn't be reflected in that number simply because of the fact that it's been expressed in billions of dollars, so it doesn't get down to that decimal point, right. And so if they would have expressed the number in millions of dollars, you would have seen the additional amount of money in there.

**Ms. Beck:** — So it's lost in the rounding, that's what you're saying?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes. Quite a rounding number, yes.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Good to know. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We can certainly give you those numbers though. I would be happy to get the number to you so that you know exactly what it is.

**Ms. Beck:** — Yes. No, that would be good. Okay, thank you. Thank you for explaining that because certainly on the surface . . . Again I did note the billions, but with the rounding errors, it looks like exactly the same amount year over year. So thank you.

I think I'm going to move into the capital line. And I wonder, Minister, if you could endeavour to have tabled a full list of all of the projects that have been announced that are represented in the budget allocation for this year, as well as an amount for each of those projects, and a timeline for, you know, which phase they're at and when we're expecting opening for those projects.

Last night there was mention of the new school openings and the impact that there will be on class size, presumably, when those buildings open. I'm wondering is there a commitment for fully staffing those buildings and for providing funding for the full staffing allocation for those buildings when they do open?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes, there is a commitment to fully staff those facilities once they're open. Are you asking us to table a list of all the capital projects? Just so I'm clear, table a list of all the capital projects that have been announced this year?

**Ms. Beck:** — That are in that line, yes, in the subvote.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — All right. Including the estimated cost plus the estimated opening date?

**Ms. Beck:** — Yes, please.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — All right.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We can go through that now, but it would take us a little bit of time.

**Ms. Beck:** — No, I understand that. And again, recognizing that Human Services Committee is . . . I don't know that there are a lot of additional dates scheduled. By the end of session would be fine.

[16:15]

So can we break out the amount that's allocated to PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal] in this budget and compare that to the amount allocated last year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — PMR funding this year is flat. You'll note a difference though in the report or the numbers that you have because we had advanced some of that PMR funding in the third quarter last year so as to — and we talked about this yesterday — so as to ensure that school divisions had the capital to be able to order the portables that they'll need for this fall.

**Ms. Beck:** — Does that show up in last year's vote? Or where does that show up in the financials?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That advance would show up in last year's budget because that was when it was advanced. So you'll see \$45.5 million in this year's budget. But again what we wanted to do was to advance some of that funding so that those portables would be ready for this fall. But you will see that \$5 million in last year's budget.

**Ms. Beck:** — School divisions are reporting it as 10 per cent reduction, so where is the disconnect?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So just to clarify, there was an advance of \$5 million under the PMR program last year which will show up in last year's budget. That was an advance. So you'll see a reduction in the PMR budget this year, given that advance which is different than the relocatables.

**Ms. Beck:** — Right. Okay, right. So there's no corresponding increase this . . . So they are in \$5 million deficit in terms of the amount allocated to PMR going forward to next year.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes, I guess it'll show up in the financials that way. But we advanced that money in advance so that they could start planning on getting a lot of that PMR work done.

**Ms. Beck:** — But you're not advancing it for next year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We advanced it in the fourth quarter last year.

**Ms. Beck:** — Right. But for this year, are you advancing any amount for next year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — No decisions have been made about that yet.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Of course the concern, again with the auditor's report, most recent in front of us noting that 80 per cent of the school stock is . . . Well this is speaking specifically about Horizon, but more broadly, 80 per cent of schools are more than 50 years old and on average in poor condition similar to the provincial average.

I noticed when I was looking online that Alberta and a number of the other provinces provide a listing of the FCI index [facility condition index] for the school stock in the province. Do we have such a document?

**Mr. Pearson:** — Phil Pearson, executive director, infrastructure branch with the Ministry of Education. We do not have a publicly posted list of a school-by-school facility condition index. We utilize school division facility condition indices over the division itself and are currently looking at the province-wide facility condition index as well.

**Ms. Beck:** — Would it be possible to get even a report — and I can understand why, you know, you might not want to go from school-by-school — an overall proportion of facilities within each school division, within that good, fair, and poor FCI index?

**Mr. Pearson:** — So the work we're doing currently . . . So the facility condition index that was provided in the Horizon auditor's report was based on audits that were conducted several years ago. These reports don't take into consideration the addition of projects that would reduce the facility condition index, such as PMR projects and others that the school division's undertaken.

What we are working on right now is getting new facility condition indices that's consistent across government. And that's in our plan this year with the funding that's provided. And so we don't have facility condition indices that would be reflective of the current state of the school.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. So when will those audits or the results of that be made available?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We're just tendering those contracts now through SaskBuilds, so we haven't got the contracts done yet, but we will be moving forward to getting some contracts in place.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Okay, thank you. Do we have an indication or a number for the amount of deferred maintenance that exists throughout the building stock within school divisions?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We don't have an accurate number, given the reasoning that Mr. Pearson has just stated. So we don't have an accurate number as to what that deferred maintenance number

would be, but certainly once the facility audits are done, we will have a better idea of that number.

**Ms. Beck:** — Because the last audits were done a number of years ago? That's why?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes, there's been a lot of work done on a number of schools over the capital commitment that the province has made, not just with the PMR but with the construction of new schools, and major renovations will have a significant effect on that number.

**Ms. Beck:** — Would it be possible to table a list of the top three capital requests that all of the school divisions . . . the most recent submissions?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We don't have a complete list. A number of school divisions don't provide us with the top three. Some only provide us with their number one capital priority. But the top 10 capital projects, I think, are on our website from across government.

**Ms. Beck:** — No, I know that those are there. I'm interested in the requests that have been made for capital projects, and by category, if you have that.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — If that's all right, we'll take that under advisement and see what we can provide.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Is there a reason that's not publicly available?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well typically those come to us and we use those for capital planning and for budget purposes.

**Ms. Beck:** — I will once again bemoan the loss of the online indexing of all of the . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — And they do change every year as well. So a particular school division will change their priorities based on a number of factors, including their utilization of PMR, those kinds of things.

**Ms. Beck:** — Right. Any plans for multi-year allocation or funding for school divisions, either on the operations or the capital side?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Sorry?

**Ms. Beck:** — Some predictability on the capital side, has there been any . . . I mean if school divisions are meant to resubmit every year, any thought given to allowing them to know what their PMR is going to be for a number of years into the future so they can manage their projects? Has there been any consideration given to that?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well the PMR funding has been increasing year over year since the government introduced the program. Certainly the intention of the government, appreciating the fact that PMR has become a very important tool for school divisions to address maintenance challenges within their school divisions, it's become a very important tool, and we certainly want to see that program.

We have a goal of getting to 1 per cent. When we get there, that will depend on future allocations from future budgets. So I'm not really in a position to be able to comment on what the allocations in future budgets are. But having said that, certainly the goal is to get to 1 per cent of the replacement value of school division stock across the province.

**Ms. Beck:** — What are we currently at?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — A 1 per cent goal would be about \$80 million, and so we're currently at \$54 million. So it kind of gives you . . . I can't do the math in my head.

[16:30]

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, can you describe the Green Initiatives Fund and how much is flowing to school divisions for capital? Is that recognized in this budget? It was made mention of, I believe, in the budget document and budget documents of school divisions.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Can I just get a bit of clarification? We don't have a Green Initiatives Fund. We do have the CAIF [Climate Action Incentive Fund] funding that comes from the federal government as a result of . . . the funds that flow back to school divisions from the carbon tax.

**Ms. Beck:** — What was the name of the fund you were . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It's called CAIF.

**Ms. Beck:** — CAIF. Let me see if I can find it here, Minister. I believe it's Green Initiatives Fund, but I could be mistaken.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I believe that stands for Canadian action incentive fund.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. You're right. Why am I using the term . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Was I right?

**Ms. Beck:** — Yes, CCAP or the federal funding under the climate change action plan. Twelve million dollars in federal funding. So that is flowing to how many school divisions in the province?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That flows to all the school divisions.

**Ms. Beck:** — Directly to school divisions? It doesn't flow through the ministry?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So it's application-based funding. The school divisions would make application for the money, and if the project meets the criteria of the federal government, then those funds would flow through the ministry up to the school division for that particular project.

**Ms. Beck:** — Is there any accounting for those potential dollars in vote 5?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That \$12 million of CAIF funding is reflected in the budget under the PMR line.

**Ms. Beck:** — Under school capital?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That's correct.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. But those funds have not actually . . . The school divisions will have to make application for those funds, and then if they are accepted then that money will be there.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That's right.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Thank you. I'm going to move into early years. Minister, as you know, at the start of the pandemic, a lot of the calls that I was receiving — I expect you as well — were with regard to our child care centres in the province.

And I do note — I know the numbers but I can't find the page in front of me — that there has not been any change in the amount allocated to child care centres in the province between the February estimates and the most recent estimates.

I guess the first question I have for you is, do you have an indication of the number of child care centres or providers in the province that have either closed or are indicating they're in danger of closing due to the impact of COVID-19?

**Mr. Craswell:** — Gerry Craswell, assistant deputy minister. There are 124 school-based child care centres in the province. Forty-seven of those were repurposed to provide access for people who were workers in the pandemic response; 77 of those temporarily closed. In those 47 centres that were repurposed, there were about 2,170 spaces that were available to be utilized.

There are 217 non-school-based centres; 61 of those chose to temporarily close. And there are 242 family child care homes, and 46 of those that we know of chose to temporarily close.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. So the number of spaces that were available in the 47 repurposed school-based sites, I believe you said 2,170. How many of those were utilized?

**Mr. Craswell:** — At the last count that we have there were about 1,100 of those that had been requested.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. And I know that the grants to centres remained stable through the pandemic, and I know that that was appreciated by those centres and those providers. I've heard a great deal of concern from providers though about the loss of revenue because parents opted to stay home for either financial reasons or because of health reasons or, you know, a multitude of reasons that we've heard. You know, when even the repurposed centre was about half full . . .

In addition we know that a lot of centres rely on sort of non-standard sources of income to make their budgets align at the end of the year, like bingo revenue and things like that. What are you hearing, Minister, from providers about their viability going forward, you know, into either the fall or into long term because of the monetary impact of the pandemic on their business model and their centres?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I'm advised that we haven't had any indication of any impending closures of any child care centres. I just want to remind the committee, a number of them took

advantage of the federal program and then there was the wage top-up from the province as well. And so we're not hearing anything, at least as yet.

**Ms. Beck:** — The wage top-up. Remind me of the particulars of the wage top-up, Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It was \$400 per person per month up to four months.

**Ms. Beck:** — Do you have a number for the average wage for those who work within the ECE [early childhood education] sector?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — As of March 5th, 2020, those without an ECE were at 13.83; ECE 1 was 15.59; ECE 2 was at 18.51; ECE 3 was at 22.11. And that's the mean hourly wages for full-time positions in child care centres.

**Ms. Beck:** — Do you know how many of those employed would have other jobs to augment their income? I know a lot of centre employees noted that they, you know, had to give up additional employment to provide care in the way that they felt was safe.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I don't have that information.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. I note that the Canadian Child Care Federation just put out some numbers, and I think that it's about 12 per cent of those who work in ECE have at least one other job to supplement income.

Minister, I'm looking at the number, the flat number, a relatively flat number here for child care, and the flat number pre- and post-pandemic. And you know, noting the important role that child care played for many families in being able to return to work, especially when we saw schools were still closed, and you know, the situation that many of these child care centres and providers find themselves in, I'm wondering why there wasn't an increased allocation to support those providers between the February budget and the June budget.

[16:45]

**Ms. Taylor:** — Hi. Kim Taylor, executive director of the early years branch. So to answer your question, there was a CBO [community-based organization] lift applied this year that went to all of our licensed child care centres. That was approximately 3 per cent. And that goes directly to their early childhood services grant, which is their main operating grant. We do know that that covers approximately 35 to 40 per cent of their overall operating costs. So as you had indicated, that grant has continued throughout the pandemic, whether or not they were operating or not.

So we do know that even in the centres that remained open, a lot of their staffing costs had decreased because they had made staffing decisions or their staff chose to go to the federal program or do something else. So we do know most, if not all, child care centres had a decrease in their operating costs over that period. So in continuing that grant, we do believe that we probably supported more than their regular costs may have been, which would have helped with some of those reduced revenues coming in from parent fees.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Kim.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Also if I can just kind of comment a little bit about this. You're aware of the three-year funding agreement that we have with the federal government. It was \$41 million that we get from the federal government to support our early learning and child care sector through licensed child care spaces, space development. We are currently in the process of renewing that three-year agreement with the federal government.

And you'll know that part of the Liberal government platform was to continue to work with provinces to further enhance federal support for early learning and early child care centres. I can tell you that we're very close to renewing that multi-year agreement again, and the conversations that I've had with Minister Hussen most recently indicated his continued desire to ensure that the federal government fulfills its campaign promise to enhance funding to this sector.

So we're pretty excited about the work that we're doing with the federal government, because I think the federal government appreciates the importance of ensuring that we continue to support this, not just with the existing agreement but with respect to enhancing supports from the federal government in this area. So I think we're pretty excited about the prospects of increased support from the federal government — nothing I can announce or talk about today, but certainly very promising conversations.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister — and I was going to bring that up but we'll go there now — to what extent was the sector consulted both, you know, in the previous bilateral agreement and then looking at how that worked over the last number of years, and then in negotiating the new agreement? Was there consultation with the sector to see, you know, how that worked or what had been implemented in other provinces? It was a concern that I had heard with the first agreement, that there wasn't a lot of consultation with the sector, so I'm just wondering if that was done this time around.

**Ms. Taylor:** — Hi. Kim Taylor, executive director of early years. So in regards to the original agreement, we didn't do a specific consultation on that because we actually had a lot of information from other consultations that had happened quite recently, so for instance, the disability strategy, the poverty reduction strategy. And also we had just recently released the early years plan which was related to all the investments that we would do to support that sector.

So through all of those consultations, that's how we came up with the investments that we had introduced through the original agreement. With the extension agreement . . . So just of note, that is only a one-year extension because we are looking to do some further negotiations with all of the federal-provincial-territorial jurisdictions to kind of see what a longer term agreement might look like. So as it is just a one-year extension, the majority of the investments are a continuation.

So you would note a lot of what we invested in had an ongoing cost because there were 1,295 new child care spaces. We introduced the early learning intensive support pilot program across the province. The family resource centres exist in that as well. So there are a lot of ongoing costs. So the amount of money that we're investing in is mainly similar to what it would have

been, at least for this one-year extension.

**Ms. Beck:** — [Inaudible] . . . in my notes, but I remember seeing the agreement. And thank you for that answer. There were a number of expectations that came along with that agreement and requirements that the province was to fulfill. With the extension, those continue over as well, those expectations and the reportables, the deliverables, I guess?

**Ms. Taylor:** — Yes, the targets do still exist. So for some things there were targets that were as of March 31st, 2020, but of course with the pandemic there are some things that will move into this '20-21 year, as well as the responsibility to do the reporting, the accountability on the funds, what was spent, and the outcomes that we achieved.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Is that reporting, is that publicly available?

**Ms. Taylor:** — Yes. So the reports, we would have released the '17-18 and the '18-19, which is available on our website. And our '19-20 report is due in October.

**Ms. Beck:** — October? Okay. Thank you. That was another thing that's on that list. The early years plan was another document that expired this year as well. Are there plans to work on another early years plan for the province?

**Mr. Currie:** — We're in the process right now of determining what that would be. You've heard from our executive director, Kim Taylor, with regards to our ongoing engagement with the federal government and the funding and supports and the programming that's going there.

We have a review of our ongoing early years plan that will take place too. And as it's ready to sunset, we're looking for opportunities to expand, extend, and create anew as moving forward not only with the federal opportunities that will be presented as well as our ongoing support from our own provincial jurisdiction responsibilities.

**Ms. Beck:** — Will there be funds directed towards that plan? And will there be goals set out similar to the ed sector plan goals?

**Mr. Currie:** — The provincial education plan right now is in review, which is the next step from the education sector strategic plan. So we do see the benefit and the value in the transition bridging from our existing ESSP [education sector strategic plan] to the provincial education plan of the future of which early years has a significant part of that. And so that would be taken into account, yes.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Minister, do you think that child care centres and providers will be financially in a better or worse position post-COVID? And the reason I ask that is the lack of change in funding from the February budget to the most recent budget. And if I may — I'm looking at the time here and the reason I ask . . . and sometimes I stumble with my words, Minister — I really do want to read something into the record. And this is a letter that I received from a provider. I won't give a whole lot of information about them. But it is:

During the past few months child care centres have

experienced a huge loss in revenue as so many of our families are not utilizing centres and are working from home or have lost jobs. We also have restrictions placed upon us for the amount of children that we can care for.

Our cleaning and disinfecting costs have skyrocketed. And we have found ourselves having to purchase items such as non-touch thermometers and double, if not triple, the amount of cleaning supplies. Not to mention the inability to procure such equipment.

During the time in which the government was telling me to stay home and not go out unless it was crucial, I was running to six different centres a day trying to find these items for my centre. Child care centres did not receive any additional funding to purchase these items nor did we receive any assistance procuring these items for our centres.

Child care centres have received no extra support or funding. It has been proven [as we all know here] birth to five years are the most formative time in a child's life. Early childhood services funding was frozen for several years, and in the past couple of years tiny increases that we've received have not been adequate.

The ministry has changed regulations which costs us money, but there's no increased funding to offset those changes. Centres have been forced to put any small increases into grants. The 8 to 15 cents per hour this means for my staff is very timely but it also leaves my staff feeling undervalued and underappreciated.

Minister, I have no doubt that we all here understand the importance of early learning and child care. My concern is that we are not backing that up with funding for the sector and that we have, unfortunately, those working in the sector, those with post-secondary education making on average 13.83 an hour. A director, often with master's degrees, is making, you know, 20-some dollars an hour.

I guess what I'm looking for is — I don't see it reflected in this budget — some acknowledgement of the importance of early years and what is the plan to adequately fund the sector. I mean there's two pieces. There are the centres themselves and the number of spaces which, of course, are important but there's also those who work in the sector who are toiling, you know, in a pandemic, in a literal pandemic putting themselves at risk and are feeling very unappreciated.

So I'm looking for assurance or some indication — because I don't see it in the budget numbers — that there is a plan to help this sector. We all know, and it's been said many times post-pandemic and during, we don't get back to work without child care centres. What plan or assurances can you provide to the sector that we're going to be making those investments?

In case it was lost, the question really boils down to this: do you think that centres are better off or worse off than they were pre-pandemic?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well I agree with you that we certainly value the contributions that child care centres make. I think it's fair to say that there's been certainly some stress across the entire

economy with respect to what's happened over the last little while.

[17:00]

What I can do is I can assure you that we will work with the child care centres to ensure that we're providing the best possible support for children. It's certainly something that we need to be thinking about and to see whether or not we are in a position to be able to, as we go forward and not in this budget, but have further conversations about how we can further support this sector.

Whether or not their child care centres are in a better or worse position, I'm not in a position to be able to say that today. But certainly we value the contribution and value the work that the child care centres do for some of our most vulnerable children in the community. What I can assure you of is we will continue to work with the sector.

**Ms. Beck:** — Minister, I note the time, but I will mention that, you know, there've been lots of words — and I'm sure they've been sincere — about the value of those workers. But the reality remains that they are underpaid to the extent that we have seen centres completely turning over their staff, or 60 per cent of their staff, in a year because they cannot retain those workers at those wages. So we really do need to, you know, acknowledge that these folks are terribly underpaid.

**The Chair:** — It now being 5 o'clock, we will recess until 6, one hour. Thank you.

[The committee recessed from 17:01 until 18:00.]

**The Chair:** — Welcome back. We'll now resume consideration of estimates and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Education. Ms. Beck, if you would like to continue on.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to try to tie up a number of questions that I have neglected to ask. With regard to the capital line and the announcement of new builds, Minister, is the P3 model under consideration for those builds?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — No.

**Ms. Beck:** — And with regard to class size in the building of new schools — perhaps a small point — but in Moose Jaw the new school is a consolidation of four schools. Would there be an expectation that class size would reduce in that situation or would we be looking at increasing class size in Moose Jaw?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I hope this answers your question but the number of children in a class doesn't factor into . . . We don't think about how many children are going to typically be in a classroom in terms of the size. I mean, we know what size the school is. We know what the demographics are of a particular area. And the school is built to that demographic.

**Ms. Beck:** — I guess I'm asking if there would be the same . . . The FTEs [full-time equivalent] that are presently in those four schools, the same number would transfer across to the new school or would there be a reduction?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So we would build the school based on the demographics in the neighbourhood, having some regard for any potential growth in that neighbourhood. So we know generally what the demographics are with respect to the schools and the number of children that are in those four schools. Does that answer your question?

**Ms. Beck:** — Sort of, but I think I'm going to move on. Minister, there have been a couple of projects that Mr. Dennis has undertaken for the ministry, the most recent being the SCC [school community council]. . . I'm not sure the name of the project, but the review where he was going around to SCCs in the province. I'm wondering if there's any indication of cost of that project that was undertaken and any deliverables that came out of that process.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I remember that conversation. So it was approximately \$11,250 that was spent. There was \$8,000 on travel for the parent and the support staff; \$3,000 on locations; and there was a small amount, \$250, for food and . . . well \$3,000 on locations and catering, so that would be the locations and whatever snacks and stuff that were provided at those; and \$250 for translating the final document.

There were a number of key themes. I can certainly provide those to you, but key themes involved the effectiveness of school community councils, and the conseil roles and responsibilities, parent engagement, communication, and understanding community, and providing advice. So there was a number of key themes that came out of those consultations that we did with the parent community councils.

**Ms. Beck:** — Are you intending any actions based on the key findings of that report?

**Mr. Currie:** — Saskatchewan School Boards Association continues to work on the role of parent councils, school community councils. And so this information that's been taken as a result of the initiative that you referenced, as well as the ongoing work that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association is doing, it continues to come together to redefine or reinforce what the engagement opportunities of our school community councils can be. There was a recent thesis done by the Saskatchewan school boards' Dr. Ted Amendt, who reviewed and looked at that one.

And so that as well as creating an awareness, I believe, is the role and the function of the school community councils. These two align and correlate to one another.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Is there any support in this budget for any of those initiatives or any initiatives related to that work?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — As you know, there is some funding in the budget for support of community councils. But as far as the work that's going to be done or anything that comes out of the work that was done by Mr. Dennis, any of those costs will be just absorbed by the ministry.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Minister, it's been a few years now since the Perrins report and the subsequent new funding model. I believe when that report came out, it was described that there were still some areas that might need amendment or further work



in terms of the funding model. And one of the areas that I hear concerns about is support for students with intensive needs and that SFL [supports for learning] piece. Can you describe work that's being done around inclusive education in the province?

**Mr. Currie:** — With regards to the ongoing . . . I'll call it the ongoing review of the funding model, there is an operating grant advisory committee that has representation from our education sector partners, which includes the STF, LEADS, SASBO [Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials], obviously the ministry, and SSBA, that come together to review specifics that are surfaced and questioned as well. And so they take some time to look at that. And that's ongoing. So supports for learning, to get back to your question, supports for learning is one that is reviewed by this committee to see if in fact the funding formula is still relevant, applicable, and supportive of the supports for learning within our province.

**Ms. Beck:** — Are any changes anticipated? I guess one of the concerns that I hear is that, you know, the assumption of a uniform level of need across the province doesn't match the reality of how those needs are, you know, higher or lower in some school divisions as opposed to others.

**Mr. Currie:** — That's one of the ongoing conversations to see . . . again review of the data, the information, and the resources and to see how it continues to support. And if there are ongoing considerations for change, they will be brought to this committee and then surfaced from there.

**Ms. Beck:** — A few questions, and sorry if they seem not connected to each other, but I'm just cognizant of the time here. One question I do have and has been raised is the possibility of ASL [American Sign Language] as a language of instruction. Is there consideration for that?

**Ms. Nedelcov-Anderson:** — Susan Nedelcov-Anderson, assistant deputy minister. So in terms of American Sign Language, there have been some conversations about the creation of a provincial course in American Sign Language, both at the ministry and also with the curriculum advisory committee. Currently there is already a locally developed American Sign Language course that's available to school divisions should they choose to use it. But as I mentioned, there are conversations about moving that to provincial status.

Some reasons for the conversation would be, of course, to support students who do need to use American Sign Language as their form of communication, deaf and hard of hearing students that are non-verbal. Also it's another language for any student to use, which is always a good thing when you can learn an additional language. It's a chance to learn about Deaf culture which, you know, is also widening the understandings of students in the province.

And you know, if students are watching the Premier during his daily briefings, they're able to see an interpreter standing next to the Premier, and so it might be an opportunity for students to think about a career as an interpreter as well.

**Ms. Beck:** — Glad to hear that's under consideration.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Further on that, we certainly had many

overtures from members of that community about how important it is to advance this. So I think I can say that we're certainly prepared to advance it as quickly as we can. But there is work being done, and so we're pretty pleased with where we're going to be going with this.

**Ms. Beck:** — Glad to hear that. Would that be something that would commence at the kindergarten level, or is there exploration of supports for children in earlier years for that ability to start learning language earlier in life?

**Ms. Nedelcov-Anderson:** — So right now the conversations are around the secondary level.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. With regard to dyslexia, I've been recently made aware that there has been a letter that has been presented to the Human Rights Commission in Saskatchewan following a decision out of British Columbia and following the Ontario Human Rights Commission, their inquiry into Right to Read.

Some of the concerns that have been expressed to me are around the appropriateness or the efficacy of students who are diagnosed with dyslexia, particularly around whole language or levelled reading in terms of its appropriateness for those students. I'm just wondering if there have been any discussions about that.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — You had asked a question on whether or not I was aware of any, you know, complaints or any things that had been presented to the Human Rights Commission. And I said at the time that I wasn't, and I'm still not. So I'm not aware that there's been a complaint made to the commission. But I'm certainly prepared, we have very regular conversations with the Chief Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission. and I'm certainly willing to open up a conversation with him about this, if it is an issue which he is inclined to explore.

[18:15]

I'll ask Deputy Minister Currie to comment on the issue generally, but to the extent that there's been a concern raised with the Human Rights Commission, I'm certainly prepared to explore that with them. As a matter of fact, I think I have a meeting with them early next week.

**Mr. Currie:** — I agree with what the minister is saying here in terms of ongoing conversations with the Human Rights, and to ensure that we utilize and provide for our students, any one of our students in the province, through our resources, through our supports for learning resources, to provide an education opportunity for them as well.

**Ms. Beck:** — It's been raised a number of times by parents. And of course many of these parents come with . . . I don't have that background, but it's been a concern that has been raised a number of times.

On the theme of reports, it just occurred to me to ask, a number of times we've talked about curriculum renewal in the province and often the work of Member Lambert is noted. I'm wondering, is there a document that came out of her work when she went around the province talking about curriculum renewal? I've not been able to get my hands on that document.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So there was no formal report that was done. There was just the establishment of some principles and guidelines with respect to curriculum development that would move forward. And on the basis of that work, the freeze that was imposed on further curriculum development was lifted, and that's what gave the impetus to the now ongoing work that's being done by the ministry through the curriculum advisory committee.

**Ms. Beck:** — Are those guidelines and principles available?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Happy to talk about them or we can provide them to you.

**Ms. Beck:** — If you can provide them, that would be great. Thank you.

Something that I wanted to ask about, Minister. I've been approached at two different times in my role as a critic from two young people here in Regina. Both have taken to online petitions, both requesting similar actions. One is Tobi Omeyefa, who has collected more than 28,000 signatures, and Latoya Reid with over 700 signatures on a petition that has been recently launched, both of those referring in part to anti-racism or anti-oppressive curriculum or training in schools, given, I suppose, recent events but events that have their roots further back. I'm just wondering if there's been any consideration to broadening or increasing the anti-racism curriculum or supports that are available to schools.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well the quick answer to that is yes. I've spoken to Tobi. We had a conversation on the telephone earlier this week and encouraged him to continue his work. And I've also asked the ministry to reach out to him because he's certainly indicated a desire to help participate in the development, potential development of new curriculum around black history, which is the part of his petition.

So we're certainly anxious to have him participate in any further development, and I indicated I was pleased to put his name forward to the ministry. He's taken quite an initiative with respect in preparing that petition. And I can't remember how many names he had on at the time we talked but there was more than in the email he had sent me a couple days earlier. So we have reached out and had that personal conversation. It was a very interesting conversation. So that's where we're at with that particular position.

I can tell you that the work that's being done by the ministry, between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Justice, in conjunction with the Chief Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission, to advance the issues of racism within schools, to talk about, you know, not just rights but talk about responsibility, some of the consensus work that's being done through the Human Rights Commission. We continue to have those conversations, continue to encourage the Human Rights Commission to participate in that in the school division. School divisions around the province have been very receptive to the work that's been done because we think that that's a key in terms of reducing racism.

Certainly education's a key to that. I think we all agree to that part of the work. And you know, I very much like to talk about this and the province's commitment to treaty education in the classroom. We renewed that work last year. The ministry is doing

some work now with respect to Métis, Inuit work so that we can incorporate that into that very good work that the ministry has done. And so this is very top of mind for us now.

And I think you've heard the Premier make some comments about where the province stands on racism and how we need to continue to do and be more vigilant with respect to it. And the education system, I think, is a key to getting that done. So we're very pleased with the work that's being done in conjunction with the Human Rights Commission and the work that's being done in the classroom.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Minister. I'm pleased to hear that. My next question was around specifically the recommendations that were contained in both the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] report but also most recently the missing and murdered Indigenous women's report, both of which do note a significant role that our K to 12 system can and should play in reducing racism, and you know, reducing negative outcomes, I guess to put it one way, for Indigenous people in the province. So I'm pleased to hear that work is under way, and you know, look forward to hearing reports about those initiatives.

Along with a bit of a theme in terms of reports of provincial secretaries, Member Dennis was also tasked with a library review in recent years. Will that report . . . And I have seen that report; it seems that there hasn't at least publicly been a lot of changes or initiatives that have come out of that report. I'm just wondering if you could provide an update about the work of that report, and any work towards changes within the library system. I believe what was promised in 2017 was, after the proposal to cut half the funding for the provincial library system and the reversal of that decision, there was a promise to undertake a review of modernizing libraries and funding and the role of libraries in modern Saskatchewan. So I'm just wondering if you could provide an update there.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It's kind of a timely question because I met with representatives of the provincial Library Association this morning, by telephone of course. They're still working on their sector plan. There was to have been a meeting in late February which was cancelled. So I asked that question this morning on the phone and they said they're going to now continue or at least restart the work on their sector plan.

But certainly understanding the importance and the role of libraries in our communities is certainly a focus of what they want to do and making sure that they have the supports necessary to provide those services. So we await the finalization of their sector plan, and from there we'll be able to make some decisions in terms of further support.

**Ms. Beck:** — Can you provide a little bit of information about the scope of the work of that sector plan? Does that involve the funding model?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So a number of things that they're considering as part of the development of their sector plan. There was a number of themes that came out of the work that Member Dennis had done, but some of the work that's being done with respect to the sector plan, talking about funding structure and predictability. Part of the provincial public library strategic plan, communication with Provincial Library governance,

indigenization, value, and legislation — there's a number of things that they're going to be addressing in their sector plan. So it's going to be a kind of holistic plan addressing a number of different areas of concern to the sector.

**Ms. Beck:** — When is that sector plan expected to be finalized?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It should be by the end of the year. As I've said, it's been kind of delayed with recent events.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. And including, I heard you say, an update potentially of the funding model. When was the last time the funding model for libraries was substantially updated?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We're not quite sure when the funding model was last reviewed, but we'll endeavour to get that information from the Provincial Librarian.

**Ms. Beck:** — It's one of the concerns that has been brought up, that some of the assumptions made in the funding model don't meet the reality of how libraries function today or could function.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Certainly. Yes, one of the themes that we talked about today.

**Ms. Beck:** — I note that the increase in funding for libraries is less than \$100,000. What percentage increase does that represent? I could probably pull out my calculator, but maybe . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — 1 per cent.

**Ms. Beck:** — 1 per cent, okay. That doesn't meet the CPI [consumer price index]. Are there concerns that have been expressed within the sector about the impact of that budget with regard to layoffs or reduction in services?

[18:30]

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That wasn't a topic that came up in conversation; but certainly is part of the strategic plan that will be, in terms of the funding's efficiency, part of the review with respect to the strategic plan. So any consideration of further increases for the library sector, I think, are going to have to be based on the strategic plan. So in order to ensure that we're properly supporting them, I think what we need to do is wait for that strategic plan to be completed.

**Ms. Beck:** — I note also under the subvote (ED15), the amount for literacy in this budget is flat year over year. Can you remind us of some of the programs and initiatives that that budget line supports, and why we're seeing no growth in that budget line this year?

**Mr. Currie:** — So you may have noticed, as it was referenced, the amount or purpose of the literacy budget does not change. There is no reason to maintain separate literacy and literacy subvotes. The '20-21 Provincial Library and literacy budget of \$14.4 million now combines both the literacy and the family literacy budgets. What does it support? It supports the family literacy hubs as well as the literacy camps. They are presently under review, that we have an ongoing to see are they meeting the intended targets to which they've been established. So we continue to see that this, the family literacy hubs as well as the

literacy camps, do in fact meet the intended targets to which they were established.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Given the concerns about, you know, the summer slide and now we have sort of that times 2.5, has there been consideration about putting additional supports into some of those community-based literacy programs over the summer to help augment student learning or get them ready for school in the fall?

**Mr. Currie:** — Thank you. There is consideration given, yes. Part of this review is to look at . . . A number of these literacy camps were established a number of years ago, and they do good work. What we are looking at is we see that there are needs elsewhere. And so the review is looking at the existing literacy camps that are taking place, the impact that they're having, while keeping an eye on the needs that are surfacing or may be surfacing elsewhere in the province.

So with our responsibility of doing assessments — of ongoing assessments, facilitating those — we look to see, okay is it meeting the impact as was aspired in the beginning? And if so we look for the resources to be continued or established there. But we also see that there are needs elsewhere in the province, and so with our resource allocations, look to see where their needs are greatest and where there are other needs that can be addressed, given the literacy components of which you're speaking.

We also see that there are a number of partnerships that have been realized here over the last number of years, significantly like the Regina United Way and Saskatoon United Way where we do have literacy camps that are combined, in terms of support, through the Ministry of Education as well as through the United Way. The United Ways as well have been significant and instrumental in helping students, as you referenced, prevent or at the very least minimize the summer slide. And I do believe that there was one that was just started in Moose Jaw too here this last summer that was kind of an enhancement of the literacy camps that have had significant impact in Regina and Saskatoon.

**Ms. Beck:** — The literacy camps are conducted exclusively in Regina and Saskatoon. Is that correct?

**Mr. Currie:** — No, no, those are a part of the . . .

**Ms. Beck:** — Oh, you talked about the United Way program.

**Mr. Currie:** — Yes.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. So with regard to the literacy camps, where are those offered?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — There is a family literacy camp that's put on through the Creighton School Division, one through the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division, Light of Christ Roman Catholic School Division, Living Skies School Division, Northern Lights — that's 12 literacy camps. Prairie Valley has two literacy camps. Prince Albert Roman Catholic Division has one literacy camp. There's one literacy camp that's put on through Saskatchewan Rivers. There's one through the northern library system for books and resources. There's also a summer literacy camp model that's put on through Frontier College.

**Ms. Beck:** — And do those funds flow through this summer? Like the money introduced in this budget will go to those literacy camps for this year?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Yes, that's right.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. Thank you. KidsFirst. Moving on to subvote 8, KidsFirst, I note there is a small increase here to their funding. How many families or how many children are accessing KidsFirst programming this year and the most recent years? Also curious about how many families were screened, whether there's a wait-list, how many you were able to provide services to of those families that screened positive.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So the targeted program, the KidsFirst targeted program serves approximately 1,700 vulnerable families annually, resulting in almost 74,000 services that are provided. The regional KidsFirst program in '19-20 served just over 15,000 children and 13,000 adults for a total of 28,464 individuals. And that was hosted in 266 communities.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Are there wait-lists for any of those programs? Minister, while we're waiting, you noted 1,700 families or children?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Families.

**Ms. Beck:** — Families, okay. And when you say 7,400 services provided, I'm not sure.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I said 74,000 services. Just give me half a sec. There's no wait-list. Some of those would be home visits, mental health services, connections to community programs, those kinds of things. So those would be the connections services.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. No wait-list. How many families were screened? Or we're still doing universal screening?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It's a referral program, so there's no formal screening that gets done. And I understand there's capacity in the program to take on more families.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. So there's no hospital screening? The early childhood intervention program, again a modest increase there that basically I would describe as flat. How many families are involved with ECIP [early childhood intervention program] currently? How many children are receiving services?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — There was an increase in funding in this budget for ECIP. In the last fiscal year they served 1,354 children in the provincial program.

**Ms. Beck:** — Is there a wait-list for ECIP?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Currently there is. There's currently nine ECIP locations that have wait-lists totalling 273 families. That's a reduction of 20 per cent over the earlier quarter.

**Ms. Beck:** — I understand from previous questions that there is an intention to revisit the earlier strategy. Will these programs and how they interface, will those be under review within that process?

**Mr. Currie:** — Again we've received some federal dollars that have assisted in these opportunities, in these supports here. So when I call it a review, it's part of the ongoing observations of effectiveness: is it meeting the intended target? Is it meeting the intention of assist and preparation for the ones in the future?

So this as well as others continue to be looked upon as to, are they meeting the intended targets in terms of supports and enabling people to be prepared for their future? So this, as with the others you've referenced, would be part of that ongoing, when I call it a review, I'm also meaning kind of an assessment. Is it in fact meeting the needs of our community, of our children? And then we would make plans from there.

**Ms. Beck:** — In terms of community need — and part of the reason I draw attention to the relatively . . . I recognize there are small increases but relatively flat with, you know, respect to inflation and such — I don't see the need in the community being reduced. I know we have high rates of child poverty in this province for example, and you know, those children needing supports. We also see high numbers of children entering kindergarten without the skills that they need to be successful.

[18:45]

And so I guess I'm just a little surprised that while the need seems to be increasing, those numbers have remained relatively flat. And that's why I'm asking about, you know, when we look at a new early years plan, if we're looking at those investments and, you know, basing that on the need that's in the community.

**Mr. Currie:** — One of the things that we've noticed that . . . The ECIP increase has been a two and a half per cent increase. But we've also noticed that on average 27 per cent of the children who enter the ECIP with extreme delays, after intervention we found that the number shrinks to 7 per cent. So we found that the involvement and the supports that are realized through this initiative are in fact impactful, and we continue to see growth and development. So what we're seeing is continuing, as you asked before, in our ongoing review of what is an impactful intervention initiative opportunity, and this is one of those that we see providing that opportunity.

**Ms. Beck:** — I have no doubt of, you know, the impact and the importance. I guess that's the concern when I see a wait-list, that those families don't have access to that impactful programming.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — As you know, this is all flow-through money from the federal government that supports this particular program. But it underscores, I think, the conversations that I've had with Minister Hussen about the importance of not only supporting child care but supporting early intervention and programs like this.

So I've been encouraged with the conversations that we've had with the federal government about increasing support through this program and will continue to push that. It's certainly one of the platform considerations of the federal government so we'll continue to work with the federal government to see what we can do about enhancing federal support.

**Ms. Beck:** — So the flow-through from the federal government to ECIP and KidsFirst, do you want to give a breakdown

provincial versus federal dollars on that?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Just to correct the record, the federal funding on ECIP is to deal with children on-reserve, right? So that's their funding; the rest of it is provincial funding. So we will continue to have those conversations with the federal government with respect to increasing their contribution because we know that there is some significant need for those children who are on-reserve to access this program.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Minister. So with regard to this number that we see here, 4.394 million, how much of that is federal money? Or this is all provincial?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — It's all provincial money.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Minister, during the pandemic I think everyone realized the importance of connectivity. A lot of people were working from home, a lot of children learning from home. One of the things that allowed many students to access technology was the removal of the data cap that SaskTel allowed.

I'm just wondering when we're moving into the fall and should it, hopefully it doesn't, happen that there is another outbreak, have conversations happened with SaskTel to provide that support to families in order to allow children to access online?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — There haven't been any discussions with SaskTel with respect to that, but that certainly doesn't mean that there wouldn't be some conversations with SaskTel should that be necessary. Because we quite appreciated the fact that they eliminated the cap, and it did provide some opportunities for the online learning to the extent that it was provided. So that would have to be a conversation we would have with SaskTel at the time.

**Ms. Beck:** — And with regard to the cost to divisions providing technical support, be it, you know, I know some school divisions provided . . . I'm going to show my ignorance of the actual technology, but like a flash drive ability to access internet for some devices or handheld devices or tablets or IT [information technology]. Do you have an indication of the increased cost that school divisions incurred in order to ensure that students had some access to technology? And did the ministry provide any support for that technology?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We don't have any particulars in terms of what those additional costs will be. It's certainly something that I think is part of, kind of, the debrief, so to speak, as we go through this and we'll try to understand those numbers. But we don't have anything to present to you today.

**Ms. Beck:** — I remember in the 2017 budget there was note of an allocation increase for CommunityNet and LIVE Network services. I'm just wondering if there's any allocation to CommunityNet or any changes that are anticipated in this budget.

**Mr. Craswell:** — So the budget this year doesn't show an increase for the allocation for CommunityNet. The previous contract we had with SaskTel has expired and we're currently negotiating a new contract. As with lots of technology, the prices are dropping with respect to the kind of services that are available. And so what we anticipate over the next few years,

once the new contract is negotiated, is that for the same amount of money we'll be able to get an increased service, some different kinds of services, as well as increased bandwidths for schools.

**Ms. Beck:** — And that contract is currently open?

**Mr. Craswell:** — Yes, we're currently in the process of negotiating that.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay, and anticipation, completion date of that contract, do you have . . .

**Mr. Craswell:** — Summer.

**Ms. Beck:** — Summer, summer or fall, okay.

**Mr. Craswell:** — Probably summer.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you. Certainly yes, we've all tested the bandwidth in the province over recent months. Okay, thank you.

One question I had with regard to capital . . . I'm waiting to get the cane here. One of the capital announcements I believe was for Notre Dame college. Is that correct? Did I make that up, or was there . . .

**Mr. Wyant:** — Oh yes, in Wilcox. Yes, Athol Murray.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. I guess we always called it Notre Dame, with apologies to the French. That's the first time, since I've been critic which has not been forever, that there has been capital allocation for private schools. Is that a new thing, or is this something that's happened before?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — There's been a bit of a history . . . [inaudible] . . . We have provided money to Luther for the gym a few years ago. The government in this particular budget is going to be providing 20 per cent of the share of the renovation and the addition that they require out there.

**Ms. Beck:** — And what was the total amount? Sorry, I think you announced it in the budget, I just remembered.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So it's \$4 million, which is the government commitment to the addition.

**Ms. Beck:** — So the process for requesting funds for schools outside of the 27 school divisions, what's the process for those schools to access capital funds?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — They just make application and they're eligible for up to 20 per cent of the capital cost.

**Ms. Beck:** — Is that just historical high schools, or is that . . .

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — That's in regulations.

**Ms. Beck:** — Okay. In regulations, okay. Just for historical high schools?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Just historical high schools.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you for clarifying. Minister, do you have an

indication of how many students took advantage of the SaskTel program, the lift on the data cap during the, I guess, March to June period?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — We don't have that information, and I'm not sure whether we can get that information from the school divisions or not, and I'm not sure if we can get the information from SaskTel either. And we'll make the inquiries, but we don't have that. We're not sure.

**Ms. Beck:** — I guess maybe school divisions would have access to the number of students who requested paper packages or something like that who weren't able to access technology.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well yes, I would guess that they would have that information. I'm not sure if they've compiled that information from their individual teachers or individual schools or classrooms, but I would think if anybody has it, they would have it. We don't. But I'm not sure that they've compiled that information.

**Ms. Beck:** — Now I'm really getting close to the clock, but one of the things that was mentioned in the guidelines, and I just wanted to quickly canvass in terms of the plan, I think we all agree that mental health concerns have arisen in recent times. I'm just looking for an indication of supports that will be available either, you know, now or through the school year for the students and staff that are experiencing increased mental stress.

[19:00]

**Ms. Nedelcov-Anderson:** — The ministry provides grants for school divisions so school divisions can apply to the ministry for grants to support mental health and student safety training.

**The Chair:** — Having reached our agreed-upon time for consideration of the items of business, the committee will now adjourn consideration of the estimates and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Education. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your officials. Are there any closing remarks?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — None, Mr. Chair, except I would certainly like to thank you and the committee for their patience tonight, and all the officials, Deputy Minister Currie and his officials for their time and support. I certainly am very fortunate to have the leadership team that I have at the Ministry of Education. So I want to thank them and thank Ms. Beck for her respectful questions tonight. And Hansard. With that, those are my comments.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Beck, any closing remarks?

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I'm probably echoing many of the minister's comments, but thank you to yourself and the staff at the Table and Hansard, as well as the other committee members. Minister, to yourself, Deputy Minister Currie, thank you. It's always a pleasure. And thank you to all the officials that we've had over the last two nights. I don't want to think about all the sunshine we missed. But sincerely want to thank each of you for, I know, what has been a big burden in extraordinary time. Very important file that you all preside over.

And you know, Minister, the questions that I ask are hopefully in

service of, you know, helping allay some of those fears that are out there and helping find the way forward to ensure that we get kids back in the classrooms and in day care centres, and libraries open in a fashion that serves all of the people of this province. And I appreciate, hopefully we've gone some measure towards that over the last seven hours. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Thank you, Ms. Beck and Minister. And we'll now have a brief recess for sanitizing. Thank you.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

### **Bill No. 199 — *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act***

#### **Clause 1**

**The Chair:** — Welcome back, everyone. We will now consider Bill 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*. Minister Reiter is here with officials. Minister, please introduce your officials and make some opening comments.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am here with Rural and Remote Health Minister Warren Kaeding; with the deputy minister of Health, Max Hendricks; and counsel from the Ministry of Justice, Max Bilson and Kyle McCreary. We're here today to discuss Bill 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, 2019* and amendments to *The Health Administration Act, 2019*.

I believe we're all familiar with the issue at hand, as I spoke to this at the second reading back in November and as the bill was moved to this committee a few days ago. There's a real need to take action to support and strengthen the class action lawsuit against opioid manufacturers and distributors. This legislation will allow Saskatchewan to participate in the proposed British Columbia opioid class action. This is similar to legislation already passed into law in Alberta, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia, so we're not alone in this action.

As we are talking about a matter that is before the courts, I'd just like to remind you that there may be questions that we won't be able to answer, as we can't compromise our position in those actions in any way. I thank the committee for their time here tonight and, Mr. Chair, our officials and I would be pleased to take questions.

**The Chair:** — Okay. We'll open it up for questions. MLA Mowat, please.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thanks so much, and thanks to the officials for joining us this evening as well. I wonder if we can start off with why you think this bill is necessary to strengthen our position in the class action.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — I'll just make a brief comment, then I'll ask one of counsel to add to that. That would be mostly a legal issue, so my understanding is, as I mentioned in the opening comments and in the speech last fall, that I think it's important that we join British Columbia and the other provinces in this action for reasons I got into at the time. But as the question is more of a legal nature, I would ask whichever of the counsel would be prepared to delve into the legalities of the need for the legislation.

**Mr. Bilson:** — Thank you. My name is Max Bilson and I am a senior Crown counsel with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. And thank you for the question, to the member. And if I understand the question correctly, you were asking why the bill is necessary to support the class action.

I think in essence the bill is important for a number of reasons. The first of which I'd highlight is just that it does allow us to bring a direct action against opioid manufacturers and wholesalers in the same way that BC [British Columbia] is. And that allows us to indicate, to assure a BC court or any other court in Canada, that we as a province have taken the determination that we support this type of litigation. And that's an important signal to send to court.

There are a couple of other matters that I think are also why the legislation is necessary. The first of which would be it allows us to use statistical and epidemiological evidence on a population-wide basis, and that allows us to make a claim on an aggregated basis and it changes the limitation periods. That is also important when you're considering an action of any kind, including the BC class action.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you. Can you clarify what you mean about changing the limitation periods?

**Mr. Bilson:** — Sure. Thank you. The basic limitation period, as I'm sure you're aware, is two years from the discovery of a claim. But section 7 of the bill changes that limitation period to two years from the bill coming into force, so that shifts the limitation period potentially quite dramatically.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you. In terms of, you know, if we're getting into the damages that have been caused, what is our estimation of how the opioid crisis has affected us in terms of damages?

**Mr. Bilson:** — I'm afraid I'm unable to answer that question. That's an important question, no doubt, but that gets into litigation strategy and into matters of evidence that we're unable to speak to tonight.

**Ms. Mowat:** — I was suspecting that might be your answer, but I did think that, you know, it's something that we obviously need to be determining before we are going forward.

I think, in terms of if we're seeking to recover from opioid manufacturers, it would be useful to define the scope of the problem. So in terms of incidence rates with opioids in Saskatchewan . . . Actually I wonder if Ms. Chartier wants to ask some questions about incidence rates?

[19:15]

**Ms. Chartier:** — For sure. Well first, I think it's important to recognize that opioids have impacted people here in Saskatchewan and impact individuals and impact our health care system. So this suit and this bill are really important.

But to be able to quantify that, I know that I've asked written questions about opioid use in the past, particularly around residential treatment. I know we track crystal meth, but I was told in a written question that we don't track opioid reporting. People

who present into residential treatment facilities, it says this data is not available. So I'm just trying to get a sense of what data do we use to track opioid use or misuse here in Saskatchewan?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So we do track the deaths related to opioids. So these would be obviously people that have showed up at our emergency rooms. And I just don't have it with me but I can probably get it, the number of people that show up in our emergency rooms with an opioid-related overdose. So I have the deaths. So for 2017 there were 89. In 2018 there were 128. And for 2019 there were 112.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Could you go back any further than '17?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes I can go back to 2010.

**Ms. Chartier:** — You know what? Let's do that.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Okay so 2010 there were 51; 67 in 2011; 62 in 2012; 69 in 2013; 69 in 2014. In 2015 there were 94. In 2016 there were 83. And then 2017 was the 89.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And we, in terms of population, I am just thinking about the auditor's report in 2019. So those are opioid poisonings, or we also . . . I just want to get clarity around measures that you use. So you track opioid-related deaths. Can you tell me what other measures? I know you track opioid poisonings in hospital, but instead of me trying to guess or put them on the record, would you just mind giving us a list of all those things that you track around opioid use?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — You'll have to give me a minute to find that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. Yes, you bet.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So what we have is the 2019 rate per 100,000 which would be provided to us through CIHI [Canadian Institute for Health Information], and Saskatchewan rate's was 22.9 per 100,000. Now that's opioid-related poisoning.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And Saskatchewan was pretty high compared to, I mean cities like Vancouver and Toronto I believe had, compared to Saskatoon and Regina . . . I'm just casting back to that auditor's report that our rate was, per 100,000, higher than those two cities. Is that correct?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We have it provincially. And so we were a little bit higher than BC. BC was 22.4 per 100,000 and the Canada-wide was 15.2 per 100,000.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes, the auditor had it listed city-wise. So would she not have gotten that data from the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] or the ministry?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I'll have to check to see if we have that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. I guess, just going back to the question, so what measures are you using to track opioid use? So we know that you track opioid deaths. And we know you track opioid poisonings in hospital, and you track people who leave the emergency departments. I'm wondering . . . We'll ask for numbers here too, but I'm just trying to see if there's any other numbers that you use to track opioid misuse.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So the other thing that we do track is the utilization of take-home naloxone kits. And so between November 2015 and May 2020, there were 5,900 take-home naloxone kits distributed through the program, and over 8,400 individuals have completed the training to administer naloxone. As of May 1st, 2020, we have been informed that 980 of those kits have been used.

The other thing that we do track is the number of EMS [emergency medical services] responses to suspected opioid-related overdoses. And we have those quarterly for 2019: from January to March, 68; April to June, 78; July to September, 97; and from October to December, 78.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And that's across the province?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. So you've given us the number of opioid deaths, and then you've given us the rate in 2019 per 100,000. But could you go back? You had the deaths to 2010. I'm just trying to get a consistent picture of all these different measures, so opioid poisonings going back to 2010.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I don't have that information with us tonight.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Would it be possible to get that tabled in the . . . I won't ask for the week like I did the other day.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, I think we could probably put that together. Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes. So, like, you'd mentioned the auditor's report. And at the request of the auditor we did a run of information, so I assume that we can generate that information as well for opioid poisonings.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Going back to 2010, just so we stick with same.

And you also track the people who leave the emergency departments? Because I have had a written question here, and you had provided that information as a percentage of people who leave without being seen, a percentage of emergency department visits in Saskatoon and Regina hospitals with problematic opioid use. And you took us back to 2013-14 and you've provided us '19-20 Q1 [first quarter]. Would it be possible to just get those 2010, '11, and '12 years for that?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And then the EMS numbers, you gave us 2019, I think, just now. How far back have you . . . Is that a new stat that you've been tracking or have you been tracking that for some time?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We would have that for a few years for sure.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Could you take us back to 2010?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I don't know if we can go that far back.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. For however long you've been tracking that then.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

[19:30]

**Ms. Chartier:** — And why is it that you track crystal meth — people who report to residential treatment facilities using crystal meth — but you don't seem to do that for opioids?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Can I have a minute?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So methamphetamine, people that enter those settings . . . The coding in our data is very clear because methamphetamine is a unique drug. And it is less clear for opioids. It's a class of drugs with a wide range. And apparently just due to the nature of the database, it is something that we don't extract. Just, it's complicated and considered to be unreliable because there are a variety of opioids.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So just going back to the . . . Thank you for that. Just going back to . . . Neither Vicki nor I were able to jot down the naloxone time frame that you gave us. You said there were 5,900 kits distributed and we didn't catch the dates there. I think 2015 to . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — November 2015 to May 1st, 2020, there were 5,900 kits distributed to 8,400 individuals. And as of May 1st, 2020 — so since we started tracking — 980 of the kits were used to reverse an overdose.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Forgive my ignorance here, but how do you know that there . . . only 980 were used?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — You raise a good point. You don't necessarily, absolutely know if it's not reported to EMS or to somebody afterwards which, when there's illegal drug use, is a possibility, I think.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So that 980 really is just those reported to EMS . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — That's the only way we would know.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Well I was curious too in my written questions. I'd asked, I think in the fall, for all SHA-funded detox sites, how many naloxone kits were given out each month since the program began. And since January 2019, there had been 62 naloxone kits distributed from January 2019 until I think it was the fall when these questions were asked.

But the numbers in detox, well social detox, are over 4,000. And I'm just trying to find . . . There literally are thousands of people in Saskatchewan who go through brief and social detox. So I'm just curious why, in that time frame . . . Is it not policy that if you're leaving for social detox . . . Or wouldn't it be a good idea to make sure that people who are using illicit drugs are provided with a tool that can save their lives?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — But not everybody . . . Like, you're



saying . . .

**Ms. Chartier:** — Obviously not everybody who shows up at a brief or social detox has an opioid use issue, but I'm sure more than 62 of those people did. So what I'm wondering is around policy in brief and social detox. What is the policy around naloxone distribution?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So you know, when we talk about rapid and social detox, a certain percentage are there for crystal meth, right? A certain percentage are there for opioids and I would say a range of opioid-type of abuses from heroin to, you know, fentanyl, whatever. And what I'm told is yes, generally a person who is abusing an opioid and identifies with that would generally be asked. Oftentimes they already have a kit and so we don't reissue them another one if they have one. But generally that would be considered good practice. Is it 100 per cent across the board? I would hope so, but I don't know for certain because we don't track it. It's good clinical practice though.

**Ms. Chartier:** — But you do track the percentage who do show up with opioid use in our brief and social detox?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — That was the number I said that I couldn't provide to you for sure.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. I know you'd said you could table the opioid hospitalizations and we talked about the province-wide number, but you'd said you had done a run for the auditor on Regina and Saskatoon. So I'm wondering if it's possible to get Regina and Saskatoon. It would be interesting to see in terms of impact where the largest impact is. Would it be possible to do Prince Albert and Estevan, sort of getting a little further north and a little further south, or any of the other cities?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes. I'll see what we can do in terms of locality and what we can identify. You know, I think we told you in committee last time that, you know, again still not on the residential part of it but in the hospital thing, we would have information through CIHI I suspect that we could run, yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — But don't you provide the information to CIHI?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We provide it but we actually . . . It goes through a distillation process in CIHI and in categorization. As a deputy, I'll be honest, it's one of the frustrating things, the time delay until we kind of get the data back in a form that's useable and reliable.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. Fair enough. In terms of time frame, so obviously where we're talking about the short term here or what to do until we hopefully get settlement. Do we have a sense — I know court proceedings are long and drawn out — do we have a sense of what that might look like?

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — I share your opinion on how long things can take in the courts. And I was just talking to legal counsel, and they said there's just so many variables and so many things that

could happen. It's virtually impossible to put a timeline on it.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Well and I think that that's why we're asking some of these questions because we know the problem is pressing and urgent today. And getting money from the pharmaceutical companies would be beneficial, but we need to address the problem now, for sure.

Vicki, do you want to ask a few questions?

**Ms. Mowat:** — Sure. We asked about what measures are being tracked or what ways that opioids are being tracked. Do you know if other ministries are also tracking in different ways? I'm thinking of Justice, just in terms of getting a full scope of the picture.

[19:45]

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We assume that they do have data in Corrections about inmates that are incarcerated with opioid addiction, but we don't have that with us.

One of the things I just maybe thought I would talk about and repeat from, I guess, our earlier estimates is, in January I met with the chiefs of police, as I told you, from the two largest cities and the head of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. And we're kind of, you know, re-establishing . . . We have had a drug task force, but we're adding, I guess, some resources to that. We've established new terms of reference. We're going to make it a higher level committee that's chaired by myself or an ADM [assistant deputy minister] and also involving the chiefs of police so that it kind of gets the attention that it deserves.

One of the things that we talked about when we met with the chiefs in January was getting reliable and consistent reporting on kind of key measures related to opioid and crystal meth use in the province, and actually making those available so people have a good idea about the differences across the province and where there were escalations in the use of these drugs.

And so some of it will obviously take different ways of looking at our data and pulling our data on a consistent basis. Some of it might require enhancing our existing databases, but it's something just with the escalation in recent years that we feel that we need that information pulled together on a regular basis.

**Ms. Chartier:** — With respect to the drug task force. So that was the previous task force that was mostly cross-ministerial folks that Mr. Havervold had reported on. And I think Dr. Butt was on that. But a year and a half ago there weren't community members or other people. Am I correct?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes. When I talked about it with the police, it was expanding the membership of the committee to include people from the community — people that potentially represent community-based organizations, Indigenous groups — and so we get a broader spectrum. And so that's kind of where we're headed, you know, with a draft terms of reference. And actually just, I think, last week I sent out a letter to the police to re-engage them in that committee work as it got held up by the COVID.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Are you also including the RCMP on that?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, our commissioner attended that meeting.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. So you have a draft terms of reference at this point?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes. I haven't seen the draft yet, but my staff are working on it. And so I'll have something shortly.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. So once you've got your terms of reference in the works, when are you expecting to pull this committee together to start doing the work?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We're asking for meeting dates in early August.

**Ms. Chartier:** — I just have to put on the record I'm pleased to see that. I've expressed concern in the past that the committee wasn't broad enough, so I'm really glad to see that that is happening. And can't happen soon enough as numbers continue to climb, so I'm really happy to hear that.

So you're thinking early August for the first meetings?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — That would be the second meeting. It would be a second meeting where we discuss the terms of reference, agree on the membership, and that sort of thing. And probably for the second meeting too, in addition to the police side, we would be inviting a few other people to see if we've got kind of the recipe right, you know, for that committee.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So, Mr. Hendricks, you'll be sort of pulling together those other parts of the committee to ensure that you've got the right people invited?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, but I need to be clear. One of the things that I said to the chiefs when I met with them is I'm not looking to create a committee of a thousand. I want it to be nimble enough that, you know, we can move things along, while wide enough, kind of, that we can get different perspectives. And so you know, I would guess an ideal kind of size would be in, you know, the 10-to-12 range. I'm not thinking much bigger than that for the purposes. And over time too, like it's kind of, you know, evergreen. We can change it if it makes sense to do so.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And what kind of resources will be committed to this? Because you said you're going to elevate it to a higher level of committee. So what are we looking at in terms of resources?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We've established a position in the ministry to support the secretariat functions of this committee.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Thank you.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Just in terms of the emergency funding that was provided by the federal government, I know that it was sort of earmarked to fight against opioids, but also crystal meth, so I wonder if you can speak to how that funding has been employed as we're working to prevent opioid use in the province.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — The federal emergency treatment funding for '20-21 is \$1.35 million. Of that, 85,000 is being allocated to the

Saskatchewan Health Authority to build the capacity of health providers and allied health professionals; 90,000 will go to the SHA for resources and training for the treatment of patients using crystal meth specifically; 250,000 will go to recruit, train, and mentor health care providers to provide opioid substitution therapy; and 925,000 will go for an innovative treatment solutions fund to improve access and outcomes, which would be kind of on a RFP [request for proposal] type of basis or a prospective type of basis.

And so since '19-20, like last year we had 1.425 million and this year the amount is 1.35 million. And what we speculate that we'll get next year is 1.325 million.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Is it a total of five?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. Over a course of . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Three years.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes.

**Ms. Mowat:** — In terms of talking about what's being done to prevent addiction, I'm wondering . . . The auditor talked about the prescription review program being meant to identify prescribers, prescribing practices, by monitoring the 19 types of opioids, and said that because the ministry doesn't monitor all opioids prescribed in the province or actively monitor the program, it doesn't know whether the program helps reduce prescribed opioid misuse. I'm wondering if you can provide an update on where the ministry is at with that.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — The prescription review program, as you probably know, in that program we partner with the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals; the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan; the College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan; the SRNA, Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association; and the Ministry of Health.

And generally what that does is we use our systems in our drug plan to alert prescribers to things like multi-doctoring as well as potential inappropriate prescribing or the use of medication to which the program does apply. So that would be opioids, benzodiazepines, that sort of thing that are susceptible to abuse and misuse.

And then physicians are directly alerted by the program while other prescribers are contacted by their regulatory college. So generally what we try to use is an approach of education here. And we work with these physicians to educate them about their prescribing practices relative to their peers and what is appropriate in terms of prescribing. It's called academic detailing and it's, you know, kind of where we review what best practices are.

And we do continue to obviously monitor that physician's prescribing of those drugs. And occasionally, you know, if there's a person who doesn't respond to the education, that can escalate obviously into kind of the regulatory space where the college would take action against a physician who is prescribing, or a dentist I guess, or whoever.

You know, and I guess in terms of the harm that comes from that, really hard to track, you know, because if it's licit drug use — normal, you know, that sort of thing — and a person becomes addicted, that sort of thing, it might have been a perfectly justified prescription. You know, people that sometimes become addicted to opioids through, I guess, regular usage of it. And then obviously if it was illicit, where, you know, there was overprescribing and the drugs were distributed or diverted elsewhere, that'd be a different issue. It's just really difficult to track the harm.

So you've got to really hit it upstream with the physicians and other health care providers that are able to provide those. But all those drugs are tracked. And you know that you have to sign for them when you go the pharmacy and everything. And so there's a fair amount of education that goes on with that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just in terms of those auditor's recommendations, did the ministry accept all of those recommendations in that report?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I believe my EA [executive assistant] has that note, and I'll get that.

[20:00]

So in terms of the auditor's report, in June 2019, the auditor did release a report evaluating the Ministry of Health's process to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of opioids in Saskatchewan. The auditor concluded that generally the Ministry of Health's processes were effective but made seven recommendations of which we accepted all of them.

So the Ministry of Health has already fulfilled three of the recommendations. A fourth recommendation is still being considered, and we're consulting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons on that one. And then there are three remaining recommendations, and we're kind of in the process of doing jurisdictional scans.

To give you an example, there's a recommendation in there around risk-based approach to identify concerns in opioid dispensing in Saskatchewan communities. And to our knowledge, no other jurisdiction has been able or has done that. And you know, we just want to see what is out there and kind of what we're able to do to comply with that recommendation. But generally we're making good progress on all of the auditor's recommendations.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Could you tell us which — thank you for that — which of the three have been fulfilled so far?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Sure. The auditor made a recommendation that the Ministry of Health participate in a regular review of the list of opioid drugs associated with misuse and addictions. And to that we've developed a prescription . . . We've talked about the prescription drug review program, but we've also added a prescription review drug advisory committee. And one of the things that they've done in response, again, to this recommendation is that they've made additions to the list of monitored drugs, and those were made in February 2020. And this list will be reviewed annually so that it's always current, because new drugs are introduced in the market which can be

abused.

In terms of a recommendation, "We recommend the Ministry of Health work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons . . . to consider requiring its members to review patient medication profiles . . ." Policies to address electronic access to patient information have been approved in principle by the college and we anticipate that we're going to be able to do a stakeholder consultation with them in the very near future and that we'll have a future policy of requiring, mandating that there be a viewing of the paper of the EHR [electronic health record] prior to prescribing those drugs.

And then, "We recommend the Ministry of Health give those responsible for monitoring inappropriate opioid prescribing access to necessary patient information." Access to PIP [pharmaceutical information program], our prescription information program, was provided in December 2019 and we're currently considering that as of right now, by eHealth, and then . . . Oh, sorry. One of those was in progress. Sorry.

And then the fourth one, the third one actually completed is, "We recommend the Ministry of Health give those responsible for monitoring inappropriate opioid prescribing a functional IT system useful in identifying potentially inappropriate prescribing practices and opioid misuse." And MicroStrategy was implemented and in use as of May 2019.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you for that.

**Ms. Mowat:** — I have a couple follow-up questions on that. And that was a lot, so if you mentioned pieces of this, I apologize. The auditor also recommended that consideration be given to review patient history. Is that something you mentioned?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, sorry. It's possible. So yes, she recommended that we review patient medication profiles prior to prescribing. And that was the one where I said policies to address that. We're currently consulting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, or working with them, and there'll be a consultation meeting in June 2020. And it will basically mandate the review of the pharmaceutical information program, so it will require providers to do that.

**Ms. Mowat:** — I also wonder about the role of pharmacists in the whole picture. In terms of . . . I did meet with a pharmacist before who mentioned the fact that there's no billing code for regular medication reviews on patients in terms of deprescribing and identifying any potential red flags. Is that something that's being looked at? And can you speak to, you know, how a pharmacist would engage with identifying risks here?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Can I check into that one? I have a view, but I would rather consult.

So there is a fee code for pharmacists to do a prescription review on a patient, so we do pay for that. I'm hoping that was your question. You know, the other thing too is that because pharmacists have access to PIP, pharmaceutical information program . . . I'm not saying that every time they'll access it. If you go in to get antibiotics or something, that wouldn't necessarily, in most cases, warrant a review. But if you were going in to get an opioid, I'm almost sure they would review your

profile.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you for that. Going back to the federal opioid emergency and crystal meth fund, the \$250,000 to recruit and train health practitioners, so nurse practitioners and physicians. Just casting your mind back to a year ago where we lost two providers who had their licences to prescribe opioid agonist therapy removed because of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and challenges there. So working in addictions medicine isn't necessarily everybody's cup of tea. So with the \$250,000 that you're using to recruit and train, how is that going? And what is part of that \$250,000? Like what does that work look like?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So in '19-20, \$150,000 of the federal funding, of that \$150,000, 80,000 of that was annualized funding provided to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan. We also provided some additional money to them outside of the ETF [Emergency Treatment Fund] to recruit, retain, and monitor physicians prescribing OST [opioid-substitution therapy].

During that period, in 2019, we were able to increase the number of OST providers through the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan by 22, and there were an additional seven nurse practitioners that were authorized to prescribe as of May 20th, 2020. And the money is being used this year in a very similar fashion this year to expand it as well.

[20:15]

**Ms. Chartier:** — In terms of the numbers then, where are we at in terms of people who provide opioid substitution therapy? So you said seven nurse practitioners in May 2020, but . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — There are currently seven nurse practitioners that are authorized as of May 2020.

**Ms. Chartier:** — And then how many physicians? You said you increased by 22, but so how many physicians would there be at this point in time?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I will have to check that. Just a moment please.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Before you disappear, for a second, if you can find the recurrent number, but just some year-over-year comparisons?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, I'll see what we have. So there are 102 physician prescribers of OST right now, up from 22 from last period. I did check about whether we can get a year over year, and we can. We just don't have it with us this evening.

**Ms. Chartier:** — If you could, why don't we go back . . . Well we were using 2010 for those other things, so let's just make it simple and say 2010.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We'll do our best.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay, that would be great. And you maybe don't have those numbers.

Generally speaking, if someone has done the training to be a prescriber for substitution therapy, are they generally doing that? Like do you track that at all? So you have this many prescribers, but do we know if they're actually prescribing?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, we would know if they are prescribing it because it would be registered in our pharmaceutical. I think it would be varying degrees; you know, some people do this more intensively and have larger clientele that need that service, and some do it less frequently. But again, that would be something that we would have to go in and actually do a run to see how many are, you know, are doing that on a frequent basis and what their client loads are.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Geographically do we know where these physicians and the nurse practitioners are located?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, we could provide that but we don't have that here.

**Ms. Chartier:** — That would be very helpful actually to get a picture of where the 102 doctors and 7 nurse practitioners are.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Yes. In terms of the lawsuit, we don't really want to put the cart before the horse, but is there a plan for if we are successful where that money will be targeted?

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — I think your term probably, the cart before the horse, is probably fair to say the way we've been looking at it so far. Plus you know, as we mentioned earlier, timelines we just don't know. So obviously we could put it to good use, but there's no definitive plans yet.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Would there be a loose concept that, you know, it would go toward supporting folks who are actively fighting addiction or prevention or something that is within this stream?

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — I think it's fair to say that as the lawsuits advance we'll start having some discussions about it.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just going back to the federal money, again thinking about before we get to the final number of the lawsuit here, that 1.35 million federal dollars — my notes aren't entirely clear here — so it was 250,000 for recruiting and training the health care practitioners to prescribe, I think Mr. Hendricks said, 925,000 for innovative treatment solution fund. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, a little bit. The 925,000 is for innovative treatment solutions for remote prescribing and wraparound care. And unfortunately I handed the details off when I went up there, but I can get that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So in terms of all the details around the 1.35, did you hand off?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Would it be possible when you table everything else to table just the 85,000; the 90; and we've talked about the 250 and 925.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, we can do that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just explaining a little bit more detail, understanding what that . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — What the specific buckets are?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. Just chatting about the naloxone earlier and we just talked about brief and social detox. And I know right now our program, and I think I've expressed this in committee before, we have a few not-for-profit organizations who have the free kits and I understand now we do it in the hospital.

So it's been raised to me that we're not getting naloxone out the door to people who need it in quite the fashion that we should be, making sure that anybody who could be impacted has the opportunity to have one of the free kits. Is there any work being done on expanding the naloxone program? And just if you could clarify or confirm where people are getting the free kits at this point in time too.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — We can clarify in a minute. We've been making every effort to try and get that out as much as we can. Is there specific areas you're hearing from that are an issue?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Well, just outside of the Monday to Friday, like when an organization isn't open and you don't have 60 bucks or whatever it is to go to the pharmacy. I know you can go to the pharmacy and pay for one, but having access to free kits has been raised as a concern if you want it outside of a particular time.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Yes, particular hours.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — So we've recognized that providing increased access to naloxone is an issue. So as part of our harm reduction funding this year there's \$500,000 to expand our outreach services and increase access to naloxone. So we haven't developed the specific strategies yet, but it could be working with some of our community-based partners to expand hours, that sort of thing, so that we can make it more available on weekends and later on weekdays.

**Ms. Chartier:** — You don't have the . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — We're in the process of discussing that and implementing that.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. And so currently at this moment in time, can you just clarify where exactly one can get the free naloxone kit at this point?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Well right now they can get it from several . . . They can get it from CBOs, right? As you mentioned, they can get it from the pharmacy, but at a cost, right? What we're doing is looking at other avenues to provide naloxone so it's more easily accessible at no cost. And so we're just looking where to put that right now, but also the geographic distribution of it too. It's not just a big city-kind of issue, and so we're looking at where we would have potentially other partners to provide naloxone as well.

**Ms. Chartier:** — So when you leave the hospital after an overdose, are you given naloxone? Is that correct?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I think earlier I indicated that, you know, that

would probably . . . I don't know for certain that it happens every time, but I would consider that to be good practice. If not, I assume that they would be referred to a community-based organization where they could get it, but I will confirm that and let you know.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Okay. Have you thought about . . . And I'm not sure if this has changed or not, but I know the Alberta model, I believe — I could be mistaken here — but I believe in Alberta you could go into a pharmacy and get your naloxone, and then that would be not billed to you but billed to the province. Has that been considered, like making it accessible in pharmacies at no cost to individuals?

[20:30]

**Mr. Hendricks:** — You know, I think that anything that would improve access is on the table. I guess one of the challenges is that pharmacies in some larger communities have extended hours and are open till midnight. Some are open 24 hours depending on the area of town. In smaller communities that may not always be the case that you would have that availability, so I'm not ruling anything out. We would try and look at what meets the needs of that specific community most effectively in terms of expanding access, but that's a possibility.

**Ms. Chartier:** — With whom are you working? Do you have a task force or a group of people who are working on this?

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I hate to use this as an excuse, but again, this is kind of work that has been delayed. And you know, I think it's something that we would work on in the ministry and consult with communities and our community-based organizations. We haven't set up necessarily a specific task force to do this.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Just conversations with current partners.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes.

**Ms. Chartier:** — This is a strange question. I think I asked it in written questions, too. One thing that's been raised with me, not just death by overdose and not just surviving an overdose and using EMS services, but disability by overdose and ending up in long-term care. Do you have the current numbers where that . . . Or maybe not even just long-term care, but that would probably be the best measure. Let's just say the number of people who've ended up in long-term care because of an overdose.

**Mr. Hendricks:** — I will guarantee you that I don't have those numbers with me tonight. You know, it wouldn't be just long-term care. It could be home care. It could be a variety where, you know, their function has been diminished through some unfortunate incident. So I don't know that we have it. If we do, I'll endeavour to give you what information I can.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. I think you did have it for long-term care, but broadening that out, people who are now using . . .

**Mr. Hendricks:** — Yes, I don't have it with me.

**Ms. Chartier:** — No, no, no, for sure. But just in terms of when you take a look at what you do have, looking beyond long-term

care and what home care or whatever other supports, public supports people might have to access because of overdoses would be great.

I think that I am good with my questions. I think that that's all that we have at the moment. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. Are there any more questions or comments from committee members? Seeing none, we'll proceed to vote on the clauses. Everyone ready?

Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 15 inclusive agreed to.]

[Schedule agreed to.]

**The Chair:** — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*.

I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act* without amendment.

**Mr. Cox:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Cox so moves. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Minister, do you have any closing comments?

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all I'd like to thank Ms. Mowat and Ms. Chartier for the questions and the discussion tonight. I'd like to thank all the officials that are here tonight as well for their time. To the committee members, thank you. And last but not least, Mr. Chair, to you, thank you for your time tonight.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. This concludes our business . . . or I guess, sorry, Ms. Chartier.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Sorry, I just wanted to say again, and on behalf of Ms. Mowat and I, thank you to the officials here for coming tonight including you, Mr. Hendricks, as always and to the ministers and to committee members.

And this is officially my last committee. It was a false alarm last week when I said it was my last Health committee, but it's been a pleasure having the opportunity to ask those questions. And I'm not going to cry this time. I'm good, thanks. Anyway, thank you. And thank you, Mr. Chair, and to your Clerk.

**The Chair:** — This concludes our business for this evening. I would ask a member to move a motion of adjournment.

**Ms. Wilson:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Wilson has moved. All agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. This committee stands adjourned until June 29th, 2020, at 3 p.m.

[The committee adjourned at 20:37.]