



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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Hon. Colleen Young
Lloydminster

[The committee met at 17:00.]

Chair Weger: — Welcome to the Standing Committee on Human Services. My name is Mike Weger. I'll be the Chair. To my left I have Mr. Tajinder Grewal chitting in for April ChiefCalf, and Mr. Brent Blakley. On my right I have Mr. Barret Kropf, Mr. Kim Gartner, and Mr. Kevin Kasun chitting in for Minister Colleen Young.

Today the committee will be considering the estimates and supplementary estimates no. 2 for the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Ministry of Education. We will take a half-hour recess at 7 p.m. Advanced Education has two votes: vote 37, budgetary appropriation; and vote 169, lending and investing activities.

**General Revenue Fund
Advanced Education
Vote 37**

Subvote (AE01)

Chair Weger: — We will begin our consideration with vote 37, Advanced Education, central management and services, subvote (AE01). Minister Cheveldayoff is here with officials from the ministry. I would ask that officials please state their name before speaking and please don't touch the microphones. The Hansard operator will turn your microphone on when you are speaking to the committee. Minister, please introduce your officials and make your opening remarks.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to everyone here. It is indeed a pleasure to be here to speak about the Ministry of Advanced Education's 2025-26 budget. I'm joined by Deputy Minister Louise Michaud; Assistant Deputy Minister Mark Wyatt, directly behind me; and Assistant Deputy Minister Lindell Veitch; and chief of staff Josh Hack. We also have support of ministry senior officials, who will introduce themselves if they come forward to answer a question.

Post-secondary education is vital to the growth of our province. Ministry of Advanced Education is responsible for a post-secondary education sector that supports a growing Saskatchewan and leads to a higher quality of life. The people of Saskatchewan rely on our post-secondary institutions to provide the training and knowledge they need to succeed in their careers. We are dedicated to ensuring that Saskatchewan provides high-quality education in institutions that are student-centred, accessible, responsive, sustainable, and accountable.

In the 2025-26 budget, the Ministry of Advanced Education's budget delivers more opportunities for students and focuses on high-quality training programs that meet the needs of Saskatchewan's labour force and growing economy. In '25-26 we are investing \$788 million in the post-secondary sector. This investment will support our institutions and students. We are extending our multi-year funding agreement with this sector, increasing operating funding for institutions, creating and expanding targeted training programs, and continuing financial support for students. Our investment recognizes that post-secondary education supports all sectors of our economy. It will

help us reach goals in Saskatchewan's Growth Plan, the labour market strategy, and the health human resources action plan.

I'd like to highlight our key investments in the budget, starting with the multi-year funding. The multi-year funding approach has, by all accounts, been very successful. It aligns with government's priorities: education and training that is responsive to the labour market, affordability for students, institutional accountability, and innovation that supports financial sustainability. It provides funding certainty to our institutions, which enables effective longer term strategic planning.

Our province is facing significant national and international economic uncertainty. As a result we are extending our multi-year funding agreement with post-secondary institutions for an additional year. This approach allows the province and institutions time to work through potential impacts of external factors that are beyond our control.

I am pleased to say that through this extension we were able to increase institutions' operating funding. The institutions will receive a permanent increase of \$12 million to base operating funding, which reflects the one-time 2.2 per cent increase provided last year. We are also providing a one-time \$6 million increase in operating funding. These numbers reflect a total of 3 per cent increase to operating funding in 2025-26. Extending the multi-year funding agreement also maintains the 4 per cent cap on tuition increases.

This balances the need for institutions to raise revenue with predictability and affordability for students. This extension of the agreement supports financial sustainability and accountability.

In operating and capital, I'll now dive further into the details. In 2025-26 Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions will receive more than 718 million in operating and capital funding. This investment supports over 55,000 students in achieving their educational goals and preparing to join our growing, dynamic workforce.

Funding of \$40.9 million will support key capital investments like the new Saskatchewan Polytech Joseph A. Remai Saskatoon campus, Carlton Trail College's trades building in Humboldt, and planning for a new North West College campus in North Battleford.

In addition, \$24.6 million will be provided to institutions through preventative maintenance and renewal to ensure safe, functional, and efficient campuses for students, faculty, and staff across the province.

In the area of health human resources training expansions, training plays a pivotal role in shaping a dynamic health care workforce and is integral to realizing the goals of the health human resources action plan. Our ministry's strong commitment to health care training is evident in the 2025-26 budget. We continue to make key investments in both new and existing health training programs. Health care training remains a key priority, allowing students to prepare for and pursue rewarding health care careers right here in Saskatchewan.

This budget delivers nearly \$62 million to support health care

training initiatives, including the continued expansion of over 900 seats in 33 health care training programs in areas of critical need to the province. Approximately \$35.3 million, a 15 per cent increase over last year, will continue previous expansions and add 60 new seats in areas of critical needs throughout the province. Ten of those seats are in medical radiologic technology programs, 24 are in registered nursing, 10 are for nurse practitioners, and 16 are registered psychiatric nursing programs.

Notably the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association has been advocating for over 120 RPN [registered psychiatric nurse] training seats in the province. Our government accomplished that goal with 16 additional seats. And in 2025-26 budget also includes \$600,000 to enhance virtual reality capacity in registered nursing programs, improving overall student experiences and access to clinical learning. Those are just a few highlights. I'm sure we'll get into more as the evening progresses.

Health human resources and the new domestic programs. Overall HHR [health human resources] investment includes \$17.2 million to continue developing four new domestic programs at the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytech. Students will start being accepted into the physician assistant program in fall of 2025. The other three programs — speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, and respiratory therapy — will begin accepting students in the fall of 2026. These are significant positive steps that will help address the high demand for these professionals while keeping our students and graduates right here in Saskatchewan.

Physicians are an essential part of our health care system and their services are in high demand. In '25-26 the Ministry of Advanced Education is delivering \$51.9 million to the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine.

43.2 million will continue to support 108 undergraduate medical seats, 150 postgraduate resident seats, and a 15-seat expansion in the physical therapy program. \$8.7 million supports continued development of physician assistant, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology programs, three of the new domestic training programs that I referred to earlier.

Between the ministries of Advanced Education and the Ministry of Health, the College of Medicine will receive approximately \$200 million in funding this year. These investments are indeed critical to meet the needs of Saskatchewan people, and we couldn't do it without the active support of our post-secondary institutions.

Of course training is only one pillar of the plan. We continue to collaborate with the ministries of Health and Immigration and Career Training on further strategies to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care providers for Saskatchewan.

In the area of Indigenous supports in '25-26, the Ministry of Advanced Education is providing \$19.9 million to Indigenous institutions and programs that support Indigenous student learning. \$16.2 million in operating funding will be delivered to our Indigenous institutions — the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Gabriel Dumont Institute, First Nations University of Canada for example.

Indigenous teacher education programs will receive \$204,000 to support revitalization of Indigenous languages. And we continue to provide annual funding of \$50,000 to the First Nations University of Canada for Indigenous language scholarships.

Speaking of scholarships, our government continues to invest in student financial supports, empowering students to complete post-secondary education and gain the knowledge and skills they need to become our future leaders. In '25-26 the budget delivers more than \$46 million in direct financial support to post-secondary students. 34.4 million will provide loans and grants to more than 22,000 students. Another 12.2 million will fund scholarships and bursaries such as the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship, the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship, and the Scholarship of Honour.

Students will also benefit from supports after graduation like loan forgiveness and repayment assistance, incentive programs, and return-in-service payments for certain professions.

The graduate retention program. Our government has also expanded Saskatchewan's unique graduate retention program. It now offers up to \$24,000, a 20 per cent increase, in tax credits to graduates who stay and work in the province completing their studies. Something that we can all be proud of, this program has benefited more than 85,000 graduates since its inception. No wonder the province keeps growing.

International education. International education and students play an important role in enriching Saskatchewan's communities, maintaining a skilled and talented workforce that supports our labour force needs, and supporting the goals of the Saskatchewan Growth Plan. This is the second year of the federal government's cap on study permits. This change has impacted student enrolment, economic growth, and institutional revenue.

Through Saskatchewan's international education strategy, we are building strong connections with post-secondary institutions, partners, and stakeholders around the world. This creates opportunities for research collaboration, innovation, and the exchange of knowledge and skills. We will continue focusing on program integrity, student supports, and overall student experience to ensure Saskatchewan remains a destination of choice for international students.

There are a few more areas I'd like to quickly highlight. The Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan will receive \$13.9 million in operating funding, which is a 6 per cent increase. The funding supports continued implementation of five new seats for Saskatchewan students. The college is also receiving an additional \$250,000 in capital funding for the planning and design of an expansion that would allow for increased enrolment in the future.

2025-26 budget delivers \$1.6 million for Mitacs, an increase of \$430,000. This will add more research and innovation internships for Saskatchewan students, driving the province's economic growth.

The Global Institute for Energy, Minerals and Society, or GIEMS, will receive \$530,000 to support research and innovation in the energy and mineral sector through coordinated work between the University of Saskatchewan, the University of

Regina, and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

In closing, I want to again acknowledge and thank all of our partners across the post-secondary sector. Their commitment to Saskatchewan's Growth Plan and the labour market strategy is clear, as well as their dedication to ensuring our students receive a high-quality education. The Ministry of Advanced Education shares that commitment and dedication. New and expanding training opportunities will encourage students to build their lives and careers right here in Saskatchewan, helping to meet the needs of our labour force and our growing economy.

We also continue to closely work with our sector as we navigate through international changes that impact our province. Our commitment is clear. Over the last two years we have invested \$1.6 billion in post-secondary institutions and student supports.

[17:15]

We continue to remain committed to investing in students, education, supporting the financial stability of institutions, aligning with labour force priorities, and shaping the future of our province through higher education.

Committee members, Mr. Chair, thank you for your time. I appreciate the opportunity to put some highlights forward, and I certainly look forward to answering any questions that you may have. Thank you.

Chair Weger: — Thank you, Minister. I'll now open up the floor for questions. Mr. Grewal.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and also thank you, Minister, for your opening remarks. I would also like to thank all the officials for your hard work. I know it is uncertain times. Putting together a budget during this time is extremely difficult. Thank you very much for your time and efforts.

So looking forward to the discussion this afternoon. And my first question is going to be, Minister, that there is a significant increase in your ministry's central services budget, and it's increasing by 7.3 per cent this year. Can you please explain why there is such a large increase, and what are the major reasons for that increase?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yes, well thank you very much for the question. And I'll just begin by saying, I have been in your shoes. When I started my career back in 2003-2004, my first role was the Advanced Education critic at the time. And my first day in the legislature, I led off question period because there was a strike going on at what was SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] back then. It was an interesting time. And I'm sure you're finding it's an interesting portfolio that has so much to offer and so much to capture your interest.

And your question: yeah, you are correct. The change is 7.3 per cent, and that's for central management and services. It's gone up from 16.526 million to 17.735 million. 671,000 increase in salary adjustments resulting from the settlement of collective bargaining agreements with SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union] and associated out-of-scope increases. So that takes care of about half of that increase.

And the second item is a \$940,000 increase for asset validation program. And you know, that concerns the facility condition index and making sure that the ministry understands the condition of the capital of the buildings that we are responsible for. So that's the bulk of it.

And it does have a third area here. It says \$1,000 increase in minister's salary. So I guess I'm responsible for 1,000 of that 1.209 million. Other than that, yeah, no, the bulk of it is those two areas, and two important areas for sure.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. And since the 2020-2021 budget year, your ministry's central services budget has increased by 19.1 per cent. Can you comment on what's driving that continued increase in your central services budget over the years and whether you think that growth is excessive?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. I partially answered the question with the current year, with the 671,000 and 940,000 that I mentioned earlier. But the growth from 2020 and '21 resulted largely from our funding for the IT [information technology] upgrader to our student aid system. So a very large portion of that increase was due to that upgrader.

Tajinder Grewal: — Simply due to one factor, it went 19.1 per cent in last six years?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Pardon me?

Tajinder Grewal: — Due to just that factor, it increased by 19.1 per cent in last six years?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. You know, the numbers appear large in a percentage way, but really when you look at the absolute value it's not that large. And as I indicated, the \$940,000 increase in the asset validation program, the 671 increase in salary adjustments, and approximately \$2 million for the funding of the IT upgrader, you know, it works out to about \$3.6 million over that long time frame. Which in this particular area it seems like a large increase but in absolute dollars it's quite understandable.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. Over the past six years, the province has increased the funding for universities, Sask Polytechnic, and regional colleges by only 5 per cent and that's roughly 0.8 per cent per year. During the same time, inflation rose by nearly 20 per cent. So why is the province purposely underfunding the post-secondary education system?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. I don't have all the exact years that the member's asking for, but I can just concentrate on the last three years. And when we first signed the multi-year funding agreement, the first two years that was a \$60 million lift, and then \$12 million in '24-25, \$18 million in '25-26.

[17:30]

So that's, you know, some \$90 million there. You know, we're providing stable funding in consultation with the institutions. Of course part of their funding comes from ICT [Immigration and Career Training], the career training budget as well. But you know, overall the multi-year funding has been well received and

has been meeting the needs of the institutions.

Tajinder Grewal: — Minister, my question is about percentage increase, not the millions of dollars. So can you comment on that? The per cent increase, why is so much less than . . . Inflation is 20 per cent, and you're funding only 0.8 per cent per year. So in terms of percentage, you give me the figures in terms of percentage. How much is that? It's not underfunding purposely?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. And just for the committee's information, the province is the largest contributor to this sector's operating budgets. We provide 59.2 per cent of the total revenue. That's '22-23 figures. Over the last decade funding has gone up by 6 per cent. Institutions have done an excellent job to improve their financial sustainability and enrolment. They're up 24 per cent.

And we've been challenging the sector to find efficiencies in their area, to do much more with some more money, and they've certainly enhanced those efficiencies with early retirement and renewal of faculty. They're raising new revenues as well, and we all know that international education has helped with those revenues as well.

According to Stats Canada, Sask has one of the most publicly funded post-secondary sectors in Canada. In the country we are the fourth-highest proportion of government for both the university and college sectors, so we rank very well across the country. Funding has gone up.

You know, I realize it's never enough, but that's part of the partnership that we have here with the institutions, where we challenge them not only to use the increases efficiently but to look at their own way of finding efficiencies as well. And that's been the way. But again when you compare us to other institutions across the country, we're in about fourth place, which you know, we can always do better, but we've had a good record so far.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. So this year the Ministry of Advanced Education is increasing its funding by over 7 per cent, while the funding for the stakeholders is falling by 0.82 per cent. Shouldn't the focus of your budget be on the universities, Sask Poly, and regional colleges?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah, well absolutely. Yeah, absolutely it is, and you know, 90-some per cent. And that's what I tried to say. The scale of what you were saying about central services management was a very small portion of the overall budget. And you know, we're well into the 90 per cent that goes into institutions. And a lot of the budget that we referenced earlier was capital-based, and you know, it's projects that come and go. And if there's an IT project it might skew that number up, which it has in this regard, but as it falls off, that number, you know, might fall in the future as well. Not comparing apples and oranges, or apples to apples. They're apples and oranges, I guess.

So you know, there is indeed a big difference. And you know, on that first budget, I indicated it's moved in the last year \$1.2 million, and over the whole time period it was \$3.6 million, so a very small portion of the overall budget. And again the large vast majority of funding goes directly to those institutions, well over 90 per cent.

Tajinder Grewal: — Last year the number was 727,943, and this year the number is 721,939. And basically one of the immediate impacts of this freeze on the funding for the post-secondary sector has been rapid increase in student tuition for Saskatchewan students. And according to Stats Canada, Saskatchewan's undergraduate fees are the second highest in Canada, a full 31 per cent higher than the average undergraduate tuition in Canada. So what was the increase in tuition fees in post-secondary institutions last year in 2024-25?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks again for the question. So it's important for the member to understand that operational funding is indeed up and has increased. And you know, the capital flow goes up and goes down from time to time, but operation funding is up. And a part of the negotiations for the multi-year funding was an agreement that tuition would be capped at 4 per cent. And we feel that's a fair way of doing things.

We want to ensure that our universities are, you know, top of the class as far as providing the services that they do. And we feel that the 4 per cent is a fair agreement, and the institutions agreed with us. But that is part of the multi-level funding, and it again continues on as we extend the multi-year funding for another year.

Just to point out, you know, in the post-secondary education, \$721 million goes directly to the post-secondary institutions; and central management and services again is \$17 million, which is 2 per cent; and student supports are \$48 million, which is 6 per cent. And certainly 91.6 per cent of the budget goes directly to those institutions.

Tajinder Grewal: — Do you have the numbers for the tuition increase last year? Tuition fees?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. Once again thanks for the question. So yes, the tuition for the domestic undergraduate program is second highest in the country, but we are third lowest for domestic graduate tuition, sixth lowest for international undergraduate tuition, and third lowest for international graduate tuition.

So of course there's variables in there. The average tuition for domestic undergraduate is \$9,609 in Saskatchewan. And percentage increase last year at the University of Saskatchewan, USask, tuition increased by an average of 3.83 per cent, and the University of Regina increased by 4 per cent. And you know, most are in that near-4 per cent range.

[17:45]

Tajinder Grewal: — So don't you think that these high tuition fees are not good for our children remaining in Saskatchewan and receiving their education here?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well I think, you know, we offset that with some programs that are very, very successful — the graduate retention program, for an example. You know, it's an investment and costs do go up. And we feel that, you know, the 4 per cent limit that was negotiated with the multi-year funding agreements is fair.

You know, we always want to do better. We're always shooting to be middle of the pack. But you know, right now we're second highest in undergraduate but third lowest for domestic graduate and sixth lowest for international and third lowest for international graduate. So you know, when you average all of those out, we are near the middle of the pack.

But you know, more importantly, we want to make sure that there's fair funding, that there's fair increases, and an outstanding education that is offered. And I'm comfortable saying that.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. So over the term of the Scott Moe government — this is according to Stats Canada — your government has increased tuition fees by over 35 per cent. Is this not simply increasing the affordability issues that face Saskatchewan households? And why would the government believe that to be an appropriate result of your policies?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. And yeah, I've got some pleasant news here for sure. Like in the undergraduate area, second highest in the country, but when you include student fees, all of a sudden we move down to fifth place. So we have very modest student fees compared to other jurisdictions, which is very, very positive. And you know, as far as the percentage increase over terms — I'm talking about year by year — under 4 per cent.

And certainly what we're hearing from parents and students is they want stability. They don't want to see the big fluctuations. Like we've seen Alberta go up 10 per cent in one year. And you know, I again think that it's something that our government really focuses on, is long-term stability as far as costs go. And that's why we worked it into the multi-year funding agreement to make sure that it goes under 4 per cent.

And I think it's fair to say as well, in the whole cost of a university education the housing component is very important as well. And in Saskatchewan we have, relative to other parts of the country, not all parts of the country, but for the most part our housing costs are certainly more moderate than in some of the larger provinces and the larger cities and all of that. So it all comes together, and I think again we're in a fair position where we want to be in this sector.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. So are you comfortable with 35 per cent increase during the last seven years?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well I'm comfortable that if increases are necessary, which they are, and they're negotiated and if they're 4 per cent or less . . . I just said the University of Regina was 3.83 per cent last year and 4 per cent. And you know, of course the costs do go up. But we look at ourselves compared to other jurisdictions, and when student fees are included we're in fifth place. So we're, you know, reaching our goal of being at the middle of the pack.

Tajinder Grewal: — But your numbers you're not showing this. Four per cent is showing way more.

So my next question is, how much will our post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan have to increase tuition fees this year?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well there's a cap because of the extension of the program. It's a cap of 4 per cent, so it can't go over 4 per cent.

Tajinder Grewal: — Okay, thank you. One of the ways to reduce the impact of tuition fees increase is to better fund student support; however looking at your budget, student support are only increasing by 0.62 per cent. So, Minister, can you advise whether this level of increase will reduce the average level of debt that Saskatchewan students are having to incur to go to the university?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right, thank you for the question. In '25-26 the government will provide 113.5 million in direct support to students through tax credits, grants, and scholarships. And funding of course is targeted to those most in need. A provincial grant combined with the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship provides up to \$1,750 over an eight-month school year. Typically, low-income students receive up to \$5,920 in combined provincial-federal grants.

So you know, when you look at the average tuition and you look at the monies that a student most in need is able to get, and you know, with the expectation of those students doing some work over the summer, I think that we're in a pretty good place when we look at that.

And of course I could get more into the graduate retention program, and if indeed there is some debt that is incurred, it can very, very quickly be addressed or eliminated through the graduate retention program over the number of years if that student stays in Saskatchewan and is able to find a necessary job.

Tajinder Grewal: — I have a follow-up question that you have increased 0.62 per cent increase in funding for student support. Is this the recommended increase that your ministry submitted to the Ministry of Finance this year?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. And certainly this is a very important area and one that our government takes very seriously. The Student Aid Fund is fully funded, and we do projections on what indeed the needs will be for '25-26. Of course I'm not going to get into the exact numbers that you go to treasury board with and what you come back with, but in this area we're very confident that we're meeting the needs of all the students.

And a very important factor is that we don't say no to anybody either. If there is indeed an under-projection and an increased need, we will fund that as well. What we have found is that our projections have been accurate. The Student Aid Fund is fully funded with the monies that have been provided.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. During the last three months I had a chance to visit many post-secondary institutions and meeting the management. One of their concerns is that lack of international student enrolment. If you compare from the last year, this year is 40 to 50 per cent less, and it will further decrease next year and there will be good revenue lost to many institutions.

Does the ministry have a plan to cover that revenue or the institution has to cut some services due to that lack of revenue by loss of international students?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well of course the member is correct. You know, it is a real concern for us. And it was a federal government decision that was done without any consultation or certainly very much a lack of consultation. You know, we feel that we would be better served if the federal government came to each province and assessed what was happening. I know that there have been abuses in the system, and I'm very pleased to say that those abuses aren't as prevalent in Saskatchewan as they have been in other provinces.

So we understand why the federal government made their decisions. We are absolutely concerned about its effect. You know, it's affecting the first-year students but it hasn't affected second, third, and fourth year so we're not feeling the entire effect on it. But you know, it is going to be a top concern for us going forward. It is a top concern for the institutions. I've talked to the institutions many times about it. You know, U of R [University of Regina] has more international students than the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] as a per cent, and Sask Poly as well.

So the concern is there, definitely. But the institutions and the ministry is working really hard to see how we can offset that by setting up agreements with different countries and searching out who we think can best be an area where we can increase international students.

[18:00]

You know, part of the problem is when the federal government sends out the signal around the world that numbers are going to be reduced in Canada, you actually get less applications as well. So you know, we're very concerned about it. And I know the member knows that, you know, it was a major topic of the Ontario election when that took place, with all three parties, their major parties agreeing too that they could have been better served by the federal government.

But the U of S and the U of R and Sask Poly certainly, and the other institutions have very good international relations. And it just hasn't started over the last year or two; they've been working at this a long time. And there are some reassurances there that we're going to try to get those international student numbers to be as high as possible and as high as will be allowed by the federal government.

You know, I mentioned the three main institutions, the largest institutions, but you know, I was out at Suncrest community college, and they have a fair number of international students there. And the smaller regional colleges are concerned about, you know, the future and the decrease in numbers as well. And you know, continuing care aides, for example, programs like that that are thriving right now. It is a concern for the future for sure.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. My question is about the loss of revenue. This is real that they are feeling the loss of revenue now, and going to worse next year. So is the ministry going to have a plan to cover that loss, or those institutions have to cut some services to make up?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well we'll be monitoring that very closely. We'll be looking at, you know, a future multi-level funding agreement that we would like to put forward. You know,

a number of years ago when the request was made it was well received, and the multi-year funding has served us very well. So you know, we'll be looking at all aspects of funding going forward.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. My next question is, what is the approved 2025-26 capital budget for each of the two universities, Sask Poly, and the regional colleges?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. Well I have a series of numbers for you here. The total capital budget is \$40.9 million. Approximately 29.4 is for the two universities, 8.2 for Sask Polytech, 2.8 for the regional colleges, and \$520,000 for the federated and affiliated colleges.

The University of Saskatchewan received \$22.094 million in capital. University of Regina, 7.274 million; Sask Poly, 8.261 million; regional colleges, 2.837; and 520 for the federated and affiliated colleges — Luther, St. Thomas, St. Peter's, and Campion.

Not to pre-empt the future questions from the member, but what do each of these include? Preventative maintenance and renewal at the University of Saskatchewan is 14.844 million. Health human resources is 7 million. Western College of Veterinary Medicine is 250,000. University of Regina, preventative maintenance and renewal, 6.574 million; HHR, 700,000. And Sask Poly, HHR is 4.892 million.

And the Joseph A. Remail Saskatoon campus renewal is \$2 million. I'm sure we'll get into discussions about that at some point, but it's a real jewel in our system and certainly am very pleased with how things are progressing at the Remail campus.

And preventative maintenance and renewal for Sask Polytech is \$1.369 million. And I have the numbers for the regional colleges as well if the member wants them.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. Can you please also list me all the capital projects over \$1 million that get funding for the universities and regional colleges?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. We have four main projects that are over the \$1 million threshold: the Saskatchewan Polytech HHR medical laboratory technology, medical radiologic technician, and respiratory therapy in Regina, \$3.5 million; Sask Polytech Saskatoon campus, as I mentioned earlier, \$2 million; University of Saskatchewan, new and expanded health and human resources programs, \$7 million; and the Carlton Trail College trades building expansion, \$1.034 million.

So that's the ones over the million-dollar threshold. Of course there's several that are under the million-dollar threshold, but that should answer your question.

Tajinder Grewal: — So just \$2 million for Sask Poly for 2025-2026, right?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Correct, yeah.

Tajinder Grewal: — What is this funding specifically for?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Again thank you for the question. The budget invests \$2 million in the project for '25-26 to complete site preparation work. That was tendered in August of 2024, in advance procurement to construct the new technology and trades centre. Site preparation completion is estimated at a value of about \$700,000, and the remaining funds will be used for advance construction procurement.

I just want to expand upon it as well. You know, this is a major project for the city of Saskatoon and for the province of Saskatchewan, in the neighbourhood of \$300 million. The government is going to be putting forward in the neighbourhood of \$200 million.

But \$100 million is going to be raised by Sask Poly and their capital campaigns. And they're doing very, very well. They're meeting their targets and I think the number is in the low 60 millions right now, and they're working towards \$100 million in contributions through their capital campaign, which is just incredible.

And of course the naming of the facility is named after Mr. Joseph Remai. I had the opportunity to be there when that donation was announced. Just an incredible philanthropy from the Remai family here towards that wonderful facility, and we're seeing many corporate donors come forward as well. And you know, it's because they are philanthropists, but they have their own wants and needs as well. They know that a thriving Sask Polytech will help their businesses. Whether you're in the mining business or IT or any other area, a thriving Sask Poly will help the economy grow.

So they're well on their way. We're meeting the needs that they're asking for at this particular time, but I can tell you, I always look forward to an update on how things are coming along, as far as that goes.

Tajinder Grewal: — So do you think, Minister, that \$300 million will be the total cost for the whole project?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah, that's what's projected right now. Of course we hope that things remain on time and on budget. But of course, with the geopolitical world that we live in today, it's hard to project from one day to the next, you know, as we talked about in question period the last couple of days. Look what's happened in the price of oil in the last number of days, you know, and it all affects what goes in.

But you know, we issue very competitive RFPs [request for proposal]. They are well received. We have competitive bids going forward. We're undertaking an RFP right now, and as minister I'm pleased to see the competition that is there and the interest that is there. It's on the radar screen of every company in the province, I think.

Tajinder Grewal: — And how many years it will take to construct it, the whole project?

[18:15]

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. Of course, you know, we have a very, very aggressive timeline. The whole project is staged into three main stages, and the first

stage is the trade and technology building, which they could start on as early as 2026. And you know, that's part of the RFP that's gone out now, and the target date for the completion of that first phase is 2029.

There'll be future phases as well with the health sciences and the student services and all of that, but those are our target dates to begin with now, and so far everything's on time.

Tajinder Grewal: — It's good to know they're starting in 2026. What will be the first building or facility that will be built?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — It'll be the trade and technologies building. That's the first building that . . .

Tajinder Grewal: — That will be completed by 2029?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — 2029 is the target completion date here.

Tajinder Grewal: — Okay. My next question is more to multi-year funding agreements with post-secondary institutions. The previous Advanced Education minister said several times that the past two years they're having negotiations with the post-secondary education. So my question is, are you still in negotiation, and what is the status of the negotiations?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah, we're hearing very clearly from the institutions that they would like to continue with the multi-year funding, and negotiations have been taking place. But in light of again the geopolitical situation that we're in, in North America right now, we just thought it would be prudent to extend the existing agreement for one year. And I must say the institutions agreed with that as well.

So we wanted to make sure that it's steady as she goes, but I think it's fair to say as we look back on the previous agreement over the number of years, it's served its purpose. It's provided that stability. It's allowed institutions to look, on a multi-year basis, look forward. And you know, when I became minister, that's one of the first things I've heard from all of the different institutions, that they very much appreciated it. They thought it was a good exercise and they thought we should look at those.

You know, once we're finished the whole budgetary process and the legislative process here in the spring, I'm going to search out and start those negotiations with the various institutions as well.

Tajinder Grewal: — So it just continues.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah.

Tajinder Grewal: — Okay. And my next question is about your business plan reference to promoting collaboration among post-secondary institutions to implement sector-wide initiatives. What are you referring to here?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. Lots of answers for this one, you bet. You know, collaboration is certainly a major theme with the advanced education in Saskatchewan. And you know, I have to say, the first tour that I did after becoming minister, I went to the Dr. Sylvia Fedoruk Centre at the U of S. And in my first briefing with them, they talked about the collaboration that

they do with the University of Regina at that centre, and then at Sask Poly and all of that. And you know, oftentimes when you become a minister and you're responsible for certain areas, you have people working in silos, and you know, this organization doing this, and this organization doing this. And it's your job as a minister to try to get them to talk to each other and to collaborate.

But I found with this ministry, it's already happening in spades, where certainly the three major institutions work very well together. And you know, there's a brokerage model with the regional colleges as well, where that collaboration takes place there, where regional colleges are able to deliver. You know, the ministry meets with the institutions as part of its oversight and accountability role, and it helps with those efforts to coordinate. And in fact, we're hosting a sector conference this fall to bring all the parts together and to be able to collaborate in a formal manner.

I can give you other examples as well. You know, collaboration in the nursing area, the virtual reality area — where we just made an investment this year — is something that happens. And even just the location that it's going to happen between Sask Poly and the University of Saskatchewan, you know, that took a lot of collaboration to bring that together. You know, that idea had been around for a while, and not everybody was sold on it, but it took extreme leadership from the top levels of both institutions to bring it together.

Another one that we should talk about tonight is the Global Institute for Energy, Minerals and Society, GIEMS. And it's a collaborative research, training, and innovation partnership between the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, and Sask Poly, which was developed to promote and align research and innovation in the province's energy and mineral sectors. And I know the member, being formerly employed at the university, would be well aware of the innovation and the work that is done in collaboration in this area.

So you know, it's something that is happening. There doesn't have to be a lot of push from the minister or the ministry. It seems to be taking a life on its own. But I think we see it in other sectors as well in the province and certainly in, you know, the agriculture sector and the food security sector here in the province as well. But I just see a continuation of that happening here, and the collaboration is, you know, very well received. And I think when our constituents, our taxpayers hear about this collaboration, they think it's the right thing to do and that everybody is leveraging off of each other in that regard.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. So my next question is about Sask Polytech. There are significant waiting lists for some programs. So can . . .

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Sorry, there's significant . . .

Tajinder Grewal: — Waiting list. Waiting list for some programs. So can the minister advise on the specific programs that have significant waiting lists, and also which ones will be addressed by the funding in this budget?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. And you know, it is indeed an important one because, you know,

we do have wait-lists. When you have a thriving, growing economy, a burgeoning private sector, you certainly create demands and you create wait-lists.

And that's something that our government, not only do we, you know, just want that to happen, we set targets, we set goals. And I'm sure the member is aware of the government's growth plan for 2030, and it's something that the institutions follow very closely. They try to anticipate where the growth is going to take place and what areas are needed.

You know, I can get further into the question. The BHP academy for example at Carlton Trail, where it's a partnership with the private sector, people are, you know, encouraged to enter that academy. And the course work is designed to ensure upon completion their very high likelihood of becoming an employee of that private sector institution, in the case of BHP.

[18:30]

You know, as far as our government goes in the areas that we're trying to meet the needs, the health human resources for sure in that area, some \$117 million. You know, we've invested \$170 million to support over 900 new health care training seats in 33 programs. So that's a very direct answer to the member's question about what this budget will do and continue to do, and has been happening since 2020.

And you know, it's a burgeoning industry. Every province in the country wants to have more doctors and more nurses. And we know the likelihood of training more of them here in the province increases the likelihood of them staying in the province. And that's why we're increasing the seats at the medical college and as well as the residency and all of that and expanding into the physician assistant program, for example, and nurse practitioners and things like that. And so that's certainly what we are addressing.

You know, we work very closely with the regional colleges, and you know, career training with the Ministry of Career Training as well, ICT. They're close partners with us in that area as well.

A waiting list is not necessarily a bad thing — because they keep a waiting list — and sometimes it takes a little bit longer to get in the program. But you know, I believe it shows that you have a thriving economy and that you want to increase that. Like in medical school, for example, I believe we have over 800 applications. And we're very proud of, since we became government we had 60 seats, and now we're moving from 104 to 108 seats. But it's still not enough, and we're looking at creative ways to enhance the number of physicians, certainly, and other health care practitioners that come to the province.

I hope that answers the member's question, and we can continue to talk about this area if you like.

Tajinder Grewal: — My question is about Sask Poly programs. So I mean if there is a demand in the industry, they're looking for people, trained people, and people want training, then what's the hurdle there? So the demand is good for the economy to train people, industry needs those people, but why it's not happening?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question.

And I can get to the specifics of it and then take a step back and talk a little bit wider about it as well. But you know, a wait-list exists in the medical radiological technician program, the nursing programs. You know, we never get enough nurses, but we certainly are expanding and doing all we can to train them. Heavy equipment truck and transport, power engineering, industrial mechanics — those are all the examples of areas that are in high, high demand because we have such a thriving economy in Saskatchewan.

In Sask's post-secondary sector, a record number of students. The number now, I keep using 55,000, but the updated number for '23-24: 59,080 students. That's up 9 per cent from last year, so we're in a really good situation where we're meeting that demand because the numbers are increasing. You know, 6,000 more students than in 2019-2020, and you know, the growing capacity is meeting the student demand.

And again we work very closely with ICT and the minister in that regard, you know. They do some of the gauging of the vacancies, and they look at, you know, what's needed where. And we work very, very closely with them.

The institutions themselves like Sask Poly, they have advisory councils and they talk to the private sector. But you know, just anecdotally, I met with the Saskatchewan Mining Association, for example, and hearing directly from them about what they would like, and the request is usually more, more, more. And you know, we try to gauge what the most relevant areas are and ensure that we're able to meet that capacity. But it is encouraging to see a thriving sector that is very much in demand in these areas.

Tajinder Grewal: — So my next question is about *The Regional Colleges Act*. It requires a regular review and, according to my information, no review happened since 2010-11. Is the ministry planning to review it this year?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. Yeah, the regional colleges, a real important part of the ministry and of the operations in Saskatchewan. You know, they're very nimble and responsive. And I'm sure the member will share that opinion if he's had a chance to visit some of them, like you said you have. And yeah, I wish I had the opportunity to visit more early in my tenure, and I'm looking forward to doing that after we break from session.

But I have had a chance to take in some of their community days. I was up in Melfort and took in the one at Suncrest, and I was just very impressed. They brought in the mayors and community leaders. And they just all talked about how important the regional colleges are to the network, and how they stream together well with Sask Poly and the universities and just allow people to get a chance to have their education very close to home.

And so I'm convinced that there's a real role and a continued role for them, but I realize that there, you know, from time to time, you have to take a look at the whole scope of things. And you know, in 2018 there was a regional college review undertaken. And that took place, and now we're looking at the scoping and the assessment for a review of *The Regional Colleges Act*. But in light of what's happened this year, it's not our top priority.

I think, you know, rising above it would be the negotiations for

the multi-year funding agreement so we could move that forward. But we'll continue to do some work in the background and be ready maybe a year from now to more fully answer that question as far as the review. But you know, I'm not hearing many problems, and I listen very closely to the members of the legislature that represent the areas where the regional colleges are, and I hear for the most part very, very good things. So you know, I anticipate maybe there's something that can be tweaked or something that can be changed.

Very recently we had two colleges that wanted to come together and felt that they could be better served by a merger, and that was the Cumberland and Parkland colleges that came together to create Suncrest College. And there's ongoing work. They're sharing new technology systems and they're finding that that partnership is working very well. So I guess that'll be part of it to see, you know, have we right-sized the area, the catchment areas for the regional colleges? Do we have the right number?

So we will be looking at the Act and the scope and looking at the review that took place in 2018 in due course.

Tajinder Grewal: — Yeah. I agree with you on several factors on the colleges. Like I was there last Friday at Suncrest College. My question was on the Act, but it looks like it's not a priority for the government to review the Act.

So my next question is about this very good program you used to have named Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings, called SAGES. That program was suspended in 2017-18 and then cancelled in 2022-2023. It was an excellent program giving incentive to the parents to invest in RESPs [registered education savings plan], then eventually our students, our children were using that program.

Is there any plan to bring back that program which was very popular, very excellent program?

[18:45]

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. And certainly yes, you know, the SAGES program was in place and it was a popular program. But you know, a review was done and it was cancelled. And you know, decisions were made to look at the graduate retention program and to enhance that program and to see.

And it wasn't because one was a bad program and one was a good program, but we just thought that, you know, the graduate retention program might address a larger need. And you know, with SAGES and what happened there . . . And you know, there's many more products now for RESPs that parents and individuals can contribute to and help to fund education. And those programs are growing in popularity. So a decision was made to enhance the graduate retention program and to suspend SAGES.

And with the overall popularity of the graduate retention program, we feel that we'll just continue down this road. But not to say that the SAGES wasn't a good program. But in light of limited budgets and the focus on success, we decided to go and give the graduate retention a priority. And that's why you saw a 20 per cent increase in the program as well.

We heard from people that have gone through the program and accessed it and said that the graduate retention program was so important to the launch of their career. It helped them save some money to buy a house, to stay in the province. And that's, you know . . . Again, two good programs. A decision was made to focus more on one and, again, I shared the numbers with you earlier: 85,000 people that have taken advantage of it.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Minister. I agree with you that the graduate retention program is a very good program, and the funding increase from 20,000 to 24,000 this year, I applaud that. And my question on that program is that, say for the last five years, I'm looking for the data — the numbers in terms of dollars — for the male graduates versus the female graduates. I'm talking the tax credit accessed in the last five years. Can you provide it? You may not have a number right now.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — I've never seen a number like that, but we'll see if we can find that.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much. As I suspected, yeah, no we don't have a gender breakdown. You know, the graduate retention program is a partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency, and I don't think they've seen a need to break it down by gender.

Tajinder Grewal: — Is there any possibility to find those numbers?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Not from what I can hear here. It's a partnership that we share. I guess, you know, we could ask the question at some point if necessary. Does the member feel that this is a necessary area that we should be looking at?

Tajinder Grewal: — Just that I heard some concern from some female graduate students. They are not accessing that program fully because of some conditions. They're raising families, going to mat leave, so I mean, the male graduates having a better access to the tax grant as compared to the female graduates.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Oh okay, well that's interesting. Yeah, mm-hmm.

Tajinder Grewal: — So there's a couple of examples I heard, like people approaching me. They're saying that there are certain limits there that are not good for the female graduates.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Hmm.

Tajinder Grewal: — Because they go to the mat leave, then they come back, and they're not fully accessing the program.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much. Yeah, I must admit I haven't heard that mentioned to me once in various discussions with people. But yeah, as the member knows, it's a non-refundable tax credit. And there's seven years in which to use it, which can be carried forward for an additional three years, so 10 years to do it.

Tajinder Grewal: — Good for nine years, and if people are going on a family program, have one kid and the second kid or

third kid . . .

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah.

Tajinder Grewal: — I heard some issues from the people there. They were unable to access as compared to the male graduates.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Okay, fair comment. We don't have any stats to back that up. But you know, thank you for the member's research and concern, and it's something that we'll try to look at.

Tajinder Grewal: — Okay, thank you. My next question is, how many students are enrolled in the University of Saskatchewan's medical school, including residents?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. Very good question. And you know, across the four-year undergraduate medical education program, the College of Medicine has currently 108 entry positions. And then across, it's 424 students. And in the College of Medicine postgraduate medical education residency program, there are currently 480 residents across 27 active training programs in eight provincial training locations. So very important numbers.

I know in following the Nova Scotia election for example, this was a topic that was very much part of that election campaign where they wanted to . . . the Premier and opposition parties were competing for, you know, how many residencies in different universities across Nova Scotia, for example. And this is something that we take very serious. And when we became government there were 60 medical college seats, and we've gradually increased it. You know, it went up to 90. It went up to 104 and 108.

And you know, when talking to people some may still feel that's kind of modest, you know, 108 — but it does cost about a million dollars per student. There is a cost, and there is a demand on teachers and educators in that area as well. But as minister, that's one area that I want to see us continue to improve on. And I've met with Sask Poly, with Dr. Rosia, to talk about it. And both Health ministers and myself had an opportunity to talk about this very subject.

And of course, you know, as I said earlier, we believe that the more you can educate these people, the higher the likelihood they're going to stay in Saskatchewan. We've provided incentives for them to locate in areas under 100,000 people. And you know, it's going very, very well, but it's so, so competitive. But there's areas that I can't get into now, but we're trying to think outside the box and do areas.

You know, with 800 applications and 108 spots, it's something that we have to look at. Okay, where do those other applicants . . . where are they going? Are they going to other universities? Are they going to other countries? Do they want to come back to Saskatchewan? Do they want to come back to Canada? Can we make it easier for them to do that? You know, these are all questions that we're working on. Not to drift too far from the question, but I've given you the numbers, and I think they're very good numbers.

Tajinder Grewal: — A follow-up question. How many of these

student doctors are from outside of Saskatchewan but within Canada?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much. And as the member may know and the committee may know, we have no undergraduate international students in Saskatchewan. So we ensure that those are for our Canadian students. In our resident programs, we have currently 58 international students out of 135 residents at the current time.

Tajinder Grewal: — What's the annual tuition for a Saskatchewan resident attending the medical school at the U of S?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. Thank you for the question. The annual tuition amount for College of Medicine is \$21,056. Amongst the 12 schools of medicine across Canada, the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan has the fifth-lowest tuition fee, and student fees total \$1,121 in addition to that.

Tajinder Grewal: — Minister, you said there is no international student attending medical school at the U of S, right?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — That's correct, yes.

Tajinder Grewal: — And how many students are enrolled at the U of S pharmacy school?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — I'm trying to be quick here because I know we're getting close to the end of our time. College of pharmacy, University of Saskatchewan: first year, 77 full-time, 9 part-time; year two, 74 full-time; year three, 84 full-time; year four, 87 full-time. So what's the math on that? 160, 171, 140, 151 . . . 322?

Tajinder Grewal: — Okay. And how many of these students are Saskatchewan residents charged the regular tuition fees, and how many of these pharmacy students are foreign students and charged international student rates?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — In the college of pharmacy, how many are international students?

Tajinder Grewal: — And Saskatchewan versus international.

[19:00]

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — All right. We don't have the breakdown of the number of international students, but in the college of pharmacy the tuition is actually the same as domestic and international. It's \$23,892 per year.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah. But I'd kind of like to know that number too, so I'll try to research that down and if I'm successful I'll share that with the member.

Tajinder Grewal: — It is very interesting to me that international students have the same fee. Normally it's four and a half times.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yes. Yeah, that's the exception here for sure.

Chair Weger: — Thank you, Minister. Having reached our agreed-upon time for consideration of these estimates, we will now adjourn consideration of the estimates and supplementary estimates no. 2 for the Ministry of Advanced Education. Minister, do you have any closing comments?

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well thank you very much. I'd like to congratulate the member on his first estimates in this area. Very well-thought-out questions, very pertinent questions. And we stayed away from the politics here, and I think it was well served. But thank you.

As I said, I was in your shoes at one time. I know it's not easy doing the research. And I commend you on the research that you have done. It's made us think about some things, and with the goal of serving even better. So thank you to you.

Thank you to committee members who participated, and thank you to Mr. Chair. And of course a big thank you to my deputy, the assistant deputy ministers, and the hard-working people at the Ministry of Advanced Education who take their job very seriously and do an excellent job supporting me in my role and supporting all of us and to ensure that we have a world-class advanced education system here in Saskatchewan. So thanks to all involved and thank you to those who are watching in this evening as well.

Chair Weger: — Thank you. Mr. Grewal, any closing comments?

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the minister for very respectful dialogue. I hope we're still friends after today.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Oh, absolutely.

Tajinder Grewal: — And thank you to all officials, your hard work and your staying here long and putting together the budget. And also thanks to the committee members, Mr. Chair, Legislative Assembly officials, and Hansard operator. Thank you very much.

Chair Weger: — Okay. I will echo all of those same thank yous, and this committee will now recess until 7:33.

[The committee recessed from 19:03 until 19:33.]

Chair Weger: — Okay. Welcome back, committee members. Just on my left, we have Mr. Matt Love chitting in for Noor Burki and Ms. April ChiefCalf with us now. And then on the right, just to update, we've got Mr. Brad Crassweller chitting in for Barret Kropf. We will now consider the estimates and supplementary estimates no. 2 for the Ministry of Education.

General Revenue Fund Education Vote 5

Subvote (ED01)

Chair Weger: — We will begin with vote 5, Education, central

management and services, subvote (ED01). Minister Hindley is here with officials from the ministry. I would ask that the officials please state their names before speaking and please do not touch the microphones. The Hansard operator will turn on your microphone when you're speaking to the committee. Minister, please introduce your officials and make your opening remarks.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll be brief on the opening remarks. We won't do the 30 minutes that we did the first night for the members here this evening.

I'll maybe just introduce the two that are at the table with me right now. We have obviously some other officials joining us from the Ministry of Education. But Deputy Minister Clint Repski to my right and Assistant Deputy Minister Jason Pirlot to my left. And a great team of other assistant deputy ministers and executive directors and senior officials behind me to help answer any of the questions that the committee members may have here tonight. And with that, we'll turn it back over to you four for questions.

Chair Weger: — Thank you, Minister. I will now open the floor for questions. Mr. Love.

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thanks, Minister, for your opening comments that were delivered at the last meeting of this committee.

You know, despite our attempts at forming an agreement to move that meeting time to when I could be present, I understand that that wasn't possible. But I do want to express thanks to my colleagues, who very competently filled in and asked a number of important questions surrounding K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education and early childhood learning and all the, I think, five hours of questions that you answered last time that this committee met.

So, Minister, I'd like to start by following up on some of the answers that you were not able to provide last time, or commitments that you made at that meeting to table documents. Hoping to see those documents tonight. So those tabled documents that you committed to last time were supplying numbers, as has been customary in this committee over the last number of years, for students receiving intensive supports, broken down by division; EAL [English as an additional language] students broken down by level and division; as well as your commitment to provide operating grants for divisions following the signing of the teachers' collective bargaining agreement.

Are you in a position to provide those at this time?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks to the member for the question. We have most of the information here which we can provide here tonight.

So what we do have is the CÉF [Conseil des écoles fransaskoises] enrolment but we only have it for two years, I think it is, for '24-25, '25-26. So that's what we have. We have as well an update on capital, calculation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care annual budget, the intensive support data by school division, and the English as an additional language data by school division.

We don't have the CBA [collective bargaining agreement] calculations, so the operating grants for the individual school divisions. That is, to my understanding, still being worked on and calculated with the school divisions, so that work is happening right now. And I think as I committed to at the previous meeting, as soon as that is done, that that information will be publicly available. It's my understanding we'd be able to share that with the committee as well. But we can table what we have here tonight.

Matt Love: — Okay. Thanks, Minister. Additionally one of the questions brought forward one week ago was if there were any changes made to the funding formula. At that time you indicated that that was contingent on the collective bargaining agreement being signed. That was signed the day after our committee meeting and I learned of that last Thursday, that that was signed. So can you update if any changes have been made to the funding formula?

Angela Chobanik: — Hi there. Angela Chobanik. I'm the executive director of the education funding branch. So we are working on some new components within the funding model to reflect the changes in the CBA. So specifically, within the funding model we have some pieces under the category of instruction. And so we're building new formulas within that instruction piece to reflect the complexity pieces within the new CBA.

Matt Love: — Okay. Is that being impacted by the number of teachers that are required to be hired to be in compliance with the new CBA? Like the classroom complexity teachers, is that impacting the formula?

Angela Chobanik: — So the formula pieces that we are working on are to reflect the new clauses in the CBA. So specifically where schools are between 75 and 149 students, and above 150 students, and then a pool of funds available to reflect the other students.

Matt Love: — Okay, I'll have more questions about those teacher hires later, but I appreciate the answer on the formula at this time.

Minister, one week ago we asked you to detail the \$54.4 million that was communicated by your government on budget day and in your opening comments last week. That was broken down to things like inflation, non-teacher salaries, and transportation, but you said that you were not able to do that due to the CBA not being signed. Are you able to do that today — to break that down into the categories that you communicated to the public on budget day?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Yeah, thanks for the question. I guess just essentially we do have the CBA signed. The calculations are still being worked on in terms of what that impact is as part of that 54 million. Again we don't have those. It takes more than a week to be able to do those calculations based on the ratification of the CBA, and that's what's still happening. So yeah, we don't have the answer to that yet until we have the final calculations, and that sort of impacts that bucket of 54 million.

Matt Love: — So, Minister, you've had much longer than a week. Last week you indicated and your officials indicated that

it was premature to release that until it was signed but that high-level work was being done to understand the impacts.

So I do want to acknowledge that, you know, I didn't create these categories. These were the categories that you communicated to the public on budget day. And these categories have very little to do with the CBA, with the exception of those teachers in the specialized support classrooms. So this should be something that, you know, again pointing to your own comments last week that you just had to wait until the agreement was signed.

So when can we expect to know — you know, again what you communicated and your government communicated on budget day to the public — when can we expect to get details on how those dollars are broken down?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — So what I just communicated about 60 seconds ago is it takes more than a week to complete these calculations. So to the best of my knowledge the teams are working on trying to complete those calculations and figure out what the actual dollar amounts are, and that should take place fairly quickly I think.

This is my first experience going through a CBA-type of a process. I don't know if there's anything additional you want to mention, Clint, about how long this has taken previously, but again until we . . . Having the CBA signed and ratified is one thing. Converting that language into calculations and dollars and cents, that's another component as well. Again I don't think it's going to take a long period of time, but Clint, anything further you want to mention just about the process?

Clint Repski: — Sure. Clint Repski, deputy minister. In terms of the timing, we do want to have all the packages finalized for the school divisions and as soon as we possibly can. At this point in time, it'll be within two weeks.

We've been talking to the divisions. We've been talking to the board Chairs. They're anxious to get their budgets up and running. We fully understand that. But from start to finish, once we have all of the information it does take about three weeks. Unfortunately it's still a very manual process to go through all of the calculations in the funding grant, so to go line by line and be specific. It'll be within a two-week period so that divisions can start and finalize their staffing decisions and their hiring. They'll have their budgets in that time.

Matt Love: — Thank you for that insight. Minister, we also talked last week about the \$130 million that again your government communicated to the public on budget day and in a number of press releases and in your opening comments last week.

[19:45]

And at that time you did have some good information, which I appreciated, on the cost of the contract as far as some of the salary increases and the retroactive pay. And that was good to learn. But can you provide some insight onto the number of teachers that will be required to be hired as a result of the CBA?

And you referenced them earlier based on the size of the school. Can you provide more insight as far as what the calculations are

at this time and how many teachers need to be hired and what the cost of hiring those teachers will be? Including if you've made any calculations on what classification those teachers might be in and what step they'll be on on the grid.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Okay. As the member and public knows, it was broken down into three different categories based on school size. So I'll maybe just start with the number of schools in each of those categories. And we do have some calculations around the additional teacher requirements and FTEs [full-time equivalent] that would translate into based on the arbitrator's decision.

So 150-plus student population schools, there's 443 of those. In the category of 75 to 149 students there would be 129 schools. And 74 and less student population, there are 147 schools. We're looking at a total of 719 schools.

Additional teacher requirements: so for the 150-plus the arbitrator ruled a 1.0 FTE. The additional teacher requirements in that category would be 443. In the middle tier of 75 to 149 students, that's the 0.5 FTE ruling by the arbitrator. So that translates to 64.5 FTEs. And then of course for the under 75, those are the schools that will be using the \$20 million fund. So that we don't have a number for because that still has to be sort of sorted out as to what that's going to look like for individual schools of that size. So total additional teacher requirements would be 507.5 FTEs.

Now in terms of the cost . . . In classification by the way, just on classification, we used a broad average. But it's estimated the number of incremental teachers at approximately \$100,000 per, so that gives you a number of about 50 million — 50.75. And then plus you add on the small-schools complexity fund. That's 20 million there. So ballpark, 70.75 million is what we're looking at.

Jason Pirlot: — Jason Pirlot, ADM [assistant deputy minister], Education. Just one real quick note on the 20 million: actually that money will be allocated based on enrolment, so school division enrolment on a relative basis, right. So across the province it'll be allocated out based on each school division's relative percentage of enrolment.

Matt Love: — So that's not just the schools under 74. Okay, that makes . . . Thanks for clarifying that. That's appreciated.

So, Minister, that's, I mean that's a lot of teachers. And I think that they're needed. You know, we've certainly seen over the last number of years very challenging situations of thousands more students. I think in the last four years, 15,000 more students and 86 fewer classroom teachers, so we certainly need more teachers.

Do you have any concerns about the ability for school divisions to staff at this time of year? I mean they don't have their budgets yet, and they need to find 507.5 new teachers. Can you just comment on any concerns that you have on the ability for divisions to meet these contractual obligations, and any concerns you might have on a potential teacher shortage, including what this might do to substitute teacher pools? Because that's obviously where a number of these teachers will be pulled from.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Yeah, thanks for the question. It is

certainly . . . it's a big number. It's a significant number of teachers and, you know, we'll be working closely with school divisions and also with our, obviously our post-secondary institutions as well in terms of the number of teachers that are trained every year and come out of our post-secondary institutions and hopefully hired here in Saskatchewan.

So I think it certainly does, you know, lead to further conversations with our partners at Advanced Education to talk about the numbers of teachers that are being trained, how many that we are hiring and keeping here in Saskatchewan, working with our partners in the North as well. You know, I've had a chance to meet with groups. Earlier this week I met with Northern Lights School Division. Had a couple of representatives come down to Regina to meet with me about some of the challenges that are unique to northern Saskatchewan.

So the new CBA and the arbitrator's report impacts everybody. But the 507.5 FTEs, you're right. It's a significant number. But I think, you know, we're confident that we'll be working with our partners in the system to be able to try to make sure that we're doing everything we can to have enough teachers to fill those positions as quickly as possible.

Just in terms of, you know, the follow-up questions around teacher shortage and whether that's anticipated and what the impact is on the substitute teacher pool, I think there's some language in the agreement. And Clint, I don't know if either you or Jason wants to maybe speak to that portion of the agreement and how that is stipulated in there.

Clint Repski: — Yes, thanks for the question. It is a lot of teachers. When we got the arbitrator's report looking at how do you fulfill that obligation, it's a tall order. On average Saskatchewan hires around 500 new teachers a year. This is effectively doubling that over a period of time.

So when we look at article 17, which is what you're referring to, there is a clause in here that talks about in the event where you can't hire. So the expectation for the agreement and the conversations we've had with the school divisions is you need to attempt to hire these positions as you normally do. If you're able to staff, great. If you are unable to staff, those dollars are able to be reallocated to other provisions. So the money doesn't sit. It does get reallocated. And that process, once they've given it trying to hire those teachers, you can meet with your principals, your local, to have that conversation of, okay, if we can't hire a teacher what can those resources be used for.

And in the meantime, as we get our teacher numbers up across the province, that is going to have to be the provision that's going to be in place. We are not going to be able to hire that many teachers this upcoming year, so based on clause 17.6.1, in collaboration, "the principal and members of the school staff will identify other professional services to support class complexity in the school."

So the resources will be there based on the calculation that the minister had previously spoken to. And yeah, anyway, we'll see what we get for teacher hiring. It is a tall order.

Matt Love: — Yeah, no doubt it's something that we'll continue to pay close attention to and, you know, anticipate what can be

done to address those needs. And in particular, you know, my colleagues here are reminding me of the impact that that could have on northern and rural and remote school divisions where staffing resources, as jobs open up potentially in some of our major centres and bigger school divisions that . . .

I remember, you know, when I left the College of Education and had very few classmates at that time who were saying that they had planned to go and teach in the North. Several of them did go to do that.

[20:00]

But as teacher positions open up, certainly I just want to express my concern that this could leave students in the North without qualified, certified teachers in the classroom, which we already know is a challenge for Northern Lights and Creighton and, you know, other northern divisions. So we'll be watching that closely Minister.

I want to move on to another question from last week, if I can, that was brought forward by my colleague, Ms. Senger, who's sitting next to me. And the question — I just want to revisit the context of the question — was really a question about classroom complexity and about the challenges in Saskatchewan to provide an education for all students. And you know, we have become aware on our side that there are an increasing number of students who are being denied access to an education in Saskatchewan through a various number of designations. And school divisions I think have different terms for these — and my colleague communicated this well last week — sometimes called deferred enrolment, sometimes called assigned to home.

And certainly we've heard from divisions that this is a concern. They want to afford every child the right to education, and yet we've been hearing increasing concerns that not every child is afforded that. And we asked you last week, Minister, if you've heard any of these concerns and you said no, that none of them had come to you. I'm wondering if you want to revisit that in light that I was at the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] gathering and talked to trustees from several school divisions last Thursday evening and I asked if any of them had communicated this to you or to the ministry and all of them said that they had.

So I'm just wondering if you'd like to revisit that question. Have any school divisions, directors, trustees, Chairs communicated to you an increasing concern that they cannot accept all of the kids, all of the students that they would like to accept with the belief that every child has a right to education?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks. I'll double-check for the member. I don't believe I said that specifically. I think, you know . . . I'll go back and look. I just took some notes from the questions last week. I think there was a question around whether I was aware if any specific human rights violations had been brought to the government's attention or to my attention. I don't believe so. I think my answer at that time was no, I don't think I had.

But has it been raised with me as minister about the increased complexity of students, some of the challenges that divisions and schools face? Certainly. I think last week I commented, just as an

example, having met with Saskatoon Public school division and Catholic school division, but you know, in particular talking to Saskatoon Public about some of the increasing numbers that they've been seeing in terms of students that have additional needs. And so we had a discussion about that around the table with the board members from Saskatoon Public, and then subsequently toured John Dolan School afterwards as well.

But I would say that, again, certainly it has been brought up in conversations with the school divisions that I have met with, and they've all kind of spoken to their specific circumstances within their divisions. Obviously each division's a bit different, and each school a little bit different as well in terms of the areas, you know, and the neighbourhoods that they serve. And some find it more particularly challenging than others. So I think certainly we're aware of it and it has been brought to my attention.

Matt Love: — Yeah. And just to be clear, Minister, the concern that we're raising here with this question is not just the broad concept of classroom complexity or those medically complex students that are so wonderful at John Dolan School. And I'll mention, probably the best day of work that I have as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] is attending their annual track meet at John Dolan School. It's the best. It's a lot of fun.

But the question is about students who . . . You know, due to a decade of really challenging budgets the school divisions have worked with, they're turning students away. They're saying, we can't safely take you in and care for your needs at school; it's not safe for you or for others. And that trend is increasing. And what I'm hearing from divisions, that they're reporting this. They're sending this in to the minister and to the ministry. They're sending in hard numbers of how many students they're having to turn away.

I heard of a division at the start of September turning away 140 students that they could not accept as full-time students because they did not have the resources. That's a big concern. That is a really big concern. And then that division got to work. They did everything that they can over time to accept as many of those as they can, but at the end of the day they could not accept them all, not even part-time.

And so that's a big concern. And, Minister, I encourage you to keep your eye on this concern and to listen to school divisions. Because they want to do what we would all expect they would want to do, which is provide an education for every child. So I do encourage you to pay attention to that trend. And I had the same conversation with the minister last year and encouraged him to pay attention to that trend as well.

I'm going to move on to some questions about Jordan's principle, Minister. My question is, how many educational assistants are employed in Saskatchewan, throughout the province, employed through Jordan's principle funding?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks. We can't specifically identify which EAs [educational assistant] are funded through Jordan's principle. So the way that the process works is that school divisions will apply directly for the funding from ISC [Indigenous Services Canada] from the federal government. And then when they receive that funding, they make those staffing and hiring decisions based on the dollars that they receive.

It's my understanding they don't report that to us and they don't indicate, you know, in terms of how many EAs they have at a particular school division. They don't break it down by which EAs are funded by which bucket of funding, I guess, within the overall total amount of funding they receive.

So yeah, short answer is, we don't have a breakdown of how many EAs they're hiring because, again, it's an application by the school division to ISC, and then from there they make their hiring decisions based on the dollars that are allocated to them.

Matt Love: — Would you have any kind of ballpark sense of how many that might be?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Like total number of EAs, or just to speculate on how many might be Jordan's principle-funded EAs?

Matt Love: — Yeah, like is there 500? Is it 1,000? Jordan's principle EAs. Do we have any kind of ballpark sense of what there might be?

And I'll ask you a second question here while you conference on this. Does your government take credit for hiring these EAs and having these supports in place in our school divisions?

[20:15]

Hon. Everett Hindley: — In terms of number of EAs, I'll just maybe give a few numbers here for context. So these are a provincial total number. So again, we don't have a breakdown of how many would have been hired by the school divisions through Jordan's principle funding. But '24-25 year, 4,901 educational assistants; '23-24, it was 4,497; '22-23, 4,116; '21-22, 3,801; and 2020-2021, 3,777. So it's been increasing. The total number of EAs hired by school divisions in Saskatchewan has been steadily increasing over the past. This goes back five years including '24-25.

The vast majority of the EAs, and I just chatted with the officials here — and you know, I don't think we're able to give a ballpark — but the vast majority would be hired through provincial funding. But in terms of again how many would be funded by, and even just a ballpark, how many would be funded through Jordan's principle, we don't have that information available. Again it's a direct relationship between the school divisions and ISC. But again I would say that the vast majority of the EAs that are hired and funded are funded through provincial dollars.

Matt Love: — So, Minister, I'm wondering if you can comment on this phenomenon. You point out the exact numbers that I have had access to. And what we've seen is in our school system and that education sector staffing profile that you just referenced, many designations have either flatlined or gone down as student numbers have increased, including drastic reductions in things like teacher-librarians, reductions in psychologists, reductions even in classroom teachers. With 15,000 more students yet a reduction in teachers. But EAs have increased over the time period as you rightly pointed out.

My concerns is that that increase in EAs is due to school divisions accessing Jordan's principle and, as we've seen this past winter, the loss of eight EAs in Saskatoon.

So I guess my question to you, Minister, is if you and your government are taking credit for the increased number of EAs working in the system, do you take responsibility when they lose their jobs?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks for the question. So just for way of context here to the member's question, and I think I referenced it a little bit before, but just around . . . And I think the member too mentioned it in his question around . . . And I think that, you know, the example given was psychologists in addition to EAs and other types of professional supports that might be hired in a particular school division, in a school.

So the ministry provides the funding to the school divisions with the operating funding. But boards of education, they have the responsibility to make the decisions on a hiring basis and based on what they feel works best to accommodate the students they have in a particular school in their division.

So the divisions then decide whether they, you know . . . Based on what they're facing, their particular school or school division, is it better that they use that funding to hire a psychologist, or would it be better utilized for EAs? What do they have for availability perhaps in that community when it comes to those sorts of professional designations?

So that does speak to the flexibility that school divisions have to make those locally based decisions dependent on what they see would be the best use of dollars to provide the supports needed for students within their schools. So that again kind of speaks to the school division responsibility.

I would say, you know, that there has been some work done though, and some of the things that school divisions have asked for around additional funding for . . . And some of this is through the multi-year funding agreement. Some of it of course is through supports for learning, but you know, as an example I think it was the '23-24 budget where there was an additional \$7 million added into the funding to go to school divisions specifically for EAs.

And this was asked for. It was some of the feedback that the ministry and the then minister at the time was hearing in consultation with school divisions. I think that translates to about 200 additional EAs if I'm not mistaken, from that specific \$7 million fund. So it speaks to, you know, what we've heard in the past and continue to hear, you know, when we're meeting with school boards, with trustees, with divisions, with teachers on the ground in terms of what's working and where do they need additional supports.

And that's why you're seeing, you know, the funding increased in record amounts over the past couple of budget years from this government.

Matt Love: — Thanks, Minister. The question was about Jordan's principle funding, and if you take credit for EAs will you take responsibility for those folks. So you're likely to hear from me in a letter on this matter just so I can get some more clarity on that. But I do have lots of questions I'd like to get to in our remaining time here tonight.

So I'm going to ask the question: the previous minister of Education issued a ministerial directive to school divisions

banning third-party groups who provide crucial, sometimes life-saving education in Saskatchewan classrooms related to bodily autonomy, consent education, abuse prevention, sexual health education, and so much more.

You're a new minister. Will you be revoking that directive? And when can school divisions expect to resume those crucial partnerships with third-party educators?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks to the member. Just for, you know, just way of clarification. There's no budget line item for this particular issue or initiative, so it, you know, doesn't really specifically relate to the budget. But regardless, the directive was issued to school divisions in August of '23 specifying, as the members would know, that teachers are presenting the sexual health education materials in the classroom. That directive still remains in effect.

Have I been meeting with groups who have reached out? Yes, I have. I've had the opportunity to speak to some groups who have wanted to discuss the directive and whether or not the government plans to change that. So I've listened to those groups and taken their opinions and information that they've presented. I've taken that under consideration and thanked them for the time that they've done to do so and will continue to meet with those groups. But for the time being the directive remains in effect.

Matt Love: — Minister, I hope to see that change soon. I'm hoping to get through two final questions if time permits, so I'm going to move on to a question about the SDLC [Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre]. Has the SDLC published its annual report for last school year as all school divisions are expected to do? If so, where can it be found? And what is the SDLC per-student funding projected for '25-26?

[20:30]

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks for the question. Just conferring with the officials from Sask DLC [Distance Learning Centre]. The annual report hasn't been completed yet. Expect it should be done here shortly, so this spring, and it will be published online and made publicly available. But we expect that to be done here in the not-too-distant future.

Just around the per-student funding for '25-26, I'll maybe get the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Sask DLC, Darren Gasper, to speak to that. At a high level, I'd just say that my experience with the DLC thus far and some of the briefings that we have had, and even just in a couple of media events we've done around a couple of the courses, there's been increasing demand and enrolment.

We've seen that in the recently announced, in the past year or so, the oil and gas 20 and 30 program, where it has become fully subscribed in a matter of days, if not much longer than that. And then even today we had an opportunity to spend some time at Sask Poly, where they had a one-day kind of a learning camp for high school students to learn about the auto body tech program. And again, it's been around for a couple of years, I think, and the numbers there jumping dramatically.

So some very good signs when it comes to the enrolment and the interest and the online availability of courses that can be offered

through DLC. But maybe I'll just ask Darren if he can shed any more light around the funding arrangement and how that works for DLC and how it impacts the students.

Darren Gasper: — Yeah. Thank you for the question, Mr. Love. We don't have a specific amount per student because our budget is based on a course tuition collection per course. So for example, it's \$500 a course at the high school level. So if we have a student that takes three courses, \$1,500 would be invoiced back to that particular school division.

Matt Love: — So how does that relate to the \$18 million in the budget line?

Darren Gasper: — So the 18 million is the base funding through the GRF [General Revenue Fund] for us, and the remainder of the budget is built through the tuition collection back from the school divisions.

Chair Weger: — Okay. Having reached our agreed-upon time for consideration of these estimates, we will now adjourn consideration of the estimates and supplementary estimates no. 2 for the Ministry of Education. Minister, do you have any closing comments?

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just briefly, thanks to the Ministry of Education team who are here with us in the room, the committee room here tonight, and those that are not here but doing the work behind the scenes. We had quite a team here last week for estimates. So thanks to everyone from the Ministry of Education for their support day in and day out for the Ministry of Education and what we're doing for schools.

Thanks to the committee members and Mr. Love for your time here this evening, and Ms. Senger and ChiefCalf for your work and questions here tonight. And we've got some follow-up that we'll try to get to you as quickly as we can here, particularly around the CBA again. As Deputy Minister Repski indicated, we're anticipating in a couple of weeks here, max, that we should have those numbers communicated to the school divisions and then have that publicly available for your committee members here as well. So thank you.

Chair Weger: — And Mr. Love, any closing comments?

Matt Love: — Yeah. Thanks, Mr. Chair. I want to thank Minister Hindley and all the officials who are here tonight and who work in the best interests of our incredible children and youth in this province each day when you come to work. You know, we are big fans of publicly funded, delivered education and the work that our teachers do in the classroom, and work that our trustees and board Chairs do, and directors and administration. None of that happens without the work that you do.

So I want to thank you for your service to our province and for joining us here in the committee tonight. Thank you to Hansard, my fellow committee members, for all of the time put in to the questions that were brought forward here and to the work that we've accomplished here in this committee. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Chair Weger: — Okay. And I will echo all of those same thank yous, and state that this concludes our business for today. I would

ask a member to move a motion of adjournment.

Kim Gartner: — I so move.

Chair Weger: — Mr. Gartner has moved. All agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Chair Weger: — Okay, carried. This committee stands adjourned to the call of the Chair.

[The committee adjourned at 20:36.]