

The Assembly met at 10:00.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Kwiatkowski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on behalf of citizens of northeast Saskatchewan concerned about the condition of Highway No. 23 west from Junction 9 to the town of Weekes. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway No. 23 to avoid serious injury and property damage.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

This petition is signed by citizens of Porcupine Plain and Tisdale.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition on behalf of citizens concerned with overfishing with nets at Lake of the Prairies. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with the federal government, First Nations representatives, and with other provincial governments to bring about a resolution in the Lake of the Prairies situation and to ensure that our natural resources as a whole are used in a responsible manner by all people in the future.

The signators, Mr. Speaker, are from the community of Langenburg.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present regarding the conditions of the highways in our province. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the necessary repairs to Highway 35 in the Indian Head-Milestone constituency in order to prevent loss of life and to prevent injury, and also the loss of economic opportunity in this area.

Mr. Speaker, as in duty bound, the petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed from many, many residents of the community of Lang.

I so present.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition from citizens concerned about the increased premium hikes to crop insurance and reduced coverage. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to halt its plan to take money out of the crop insurance program and hike farmers' crop insurance premium rates while reducing coverage in order to pay off the provincial government's debt to the federal government.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of North Battleford and Biggar.

I so present.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today with a petition from citizens in rural Saskatchewan that are concerned about the lack of cellular telephone coverage, and the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause government to provide reliable cellular telephone service to all communities throughout the Wood River constituency.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks of Meyronne.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received:

A petition concerning a change of name to the Moose Mountain Health District; and

Addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 7, 11, 129, 132, 134, 164, 165, and 169.

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING,
SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Standing Committee on Agriculture

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table the final report on the Standing Committee on Agriculture on farm land ownership. I will be making a motion to that end at the end of my remarks.

On April 12, 2002, the Standing Committee on Agriculture received its order of reference that it examine and make recommendations to the Assembly with respect to the agriculture land holdings provisions as set out in The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act. To that end the committee sat and received verbal presentations from farmers, interested groups, and individuals. The committee also received a number of written submissions.

Witnesses expressed their hopes and their fears, and there are

historical reasons that contribute to the breadth of the anxiety concerning Saskatchewan agriculture that witnesses expressed during the hearings.

Mr. Speaker, the question simply put: should Saskatchewan farm land ownership rules be loosened? The witnesses demonstrated strongly held opinions on both sides of the issues as did the committee members. It was obvious to the committee members that all Saskatchewan people have a special place in their heart for Saskatchewan agricultural land.

Mr. Speaker, the work of the committee was about listening to people of Saskatchewan and hearing their views about what changes, if any, they thought were needed. It was clear that all presenters wanted to have a strong agriculture industry in Saskatchewan, an industry that provided people with the ability to live on the land and in the rural communities across our province. They wanted an industry where young farmers and their families could be a part of their community, while retiring farmers could retire in dignity.

To achieve this, the suggestions of the presenters were as varied as were the opinions of the committee members. One thing that all presenters pointed out was to achieve the effects of the desired agriculture industry, the farm land ownership issue was only one piece of a much larger puzzle.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other members of the Legislative Assembly that served on this committee with me. Those members were: the member from Watrous — the Vice-Chair of the committee — the member from Saskatoon Nutana, the member from Saltcoats, the member from Cypress Hills, the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld, the member from Saskatoon Meewasin, the member from Melville, and the member from Redberry Lake.

Other members that sat in on the committee were the members from Saskatoon Southeast, Saskatoon Northwest, Saskatoon Greystone, Regina Victoria, Regina Qu'Appelle Valley, and Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, these members are to be commended for the time and the efforts they devoted to a very worthwhile cause.

I would like to thank the staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly for their diligent work on this committee, and the assistance provided to the committee by researcher Avrum Fenson in preparation of this report.

The committee wishes to extend its appreciation to all individuals and groups who made oral presentations and submitted written briefs.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the member from Watrous:

That the report entitled *Report on Farm Land Ownership* of the Standing Committee on Agriculture be now concurred in.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 72 ask the government the following question:

What are the details of the contract that the provincial government had with the investigator looking into allegations of harassment against former minister of Environment and the MLA for Saskatoon Southeast?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House six adult students that are sitting up in the west gallery, and they're from the Regina Open Door Society. And they are students of English as a second language and language instructions for newcomers to Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, they're here today to take in part of the proceedings of the House and I'll have the opportunity of joining them a little later on for a photo and a brief visit. And I just hope they all enjoy their time here, and I'd ask all the members to offer them a very warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This morning seated in your gallery are 10 organic farmers from Costa Rica, and accompanying them today are Kyle Syverson, who is the interpreter, and Ross Korven, who is the coordinator of the program.

These organic farmers, Mr. Speaker, from Costa Rica are here on an exchange. Our Saskatchewan . . . 10 of our Saskatchewan farmers were in Costa Rica in January or February of this past year.

Earlier this week the members from Saskatoon Sutherland and from Nutana and from Regina Elphinstone and Saskatoon Greystone had an opportunity to meet with our organic farmers and talk with them a bit about the work that they're doing in their country and the things that we could learn as we build the agricultural industry in both of our countries as it relates to the organic, as it relates to the organic industry.

They're here to study our practices and us to learn from them. And I want this morning to ask all members of the House to join with me and say *bienvenido à Saskatchewan* as you're here in the House, and enjoy the Farm Progress Show in our province.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it is my pleasure to rise here and join the Minister of Agriculture in welcoming our guests from Costa Rica.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ross Korven is of course to myself no stranger. Mr. Korven has often been involved in the promotion of our beautiful province of Saskatchewan. In fact, Mr. Speaker, many years ago when I was chairman of the school board for

the Prince Albert Rural School Division, Mr. Korven had the opportunity to bring a multitude of students from Mongolia to further advance their opportunities in understanding the English language. And certainly those students are probably forever grateful for that opportunity. And certainly the students in Prince Albert were enriched because of that process.

And so, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, we too want to welcome the farmers from Costa Rica and hope they enjoy their time in Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

National Aboriginal Day

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Friday, June 21, is National Aboriginal Day and festivities are taking place throughout the country, our province, and in this, our fair capital city, Regina.

Canadians have been celebrating National Aboriginal Day since 1996 when June 21 was designated as a special day to honour First Nations, Inuit, and Métis culture and to recognize the outstanding contributions Aboriginal people are making and have made to Canada.

June 21 was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice and because many Aboriginal groups had already marked this day out as a time to celebrate their heritage.

In Regina, one of the celebrations is a street party hosted by the Aboriginal Family Services Centre and it gets underway at 5:30 on 5th Avenue and Rae Street. A short program will be followed by a display of dancing and singing from various groups. Rumour has it that there may even be a dunk tank, Mr. Speaker.

Throughout the day there will also be festivities in Wascana Park. Inuit throat singers will be one of the highlights in the afternoon, followed by other outstanding cultural performances. Arts and crafts will be displayed alongside food venues and there will also be entertainment and activities for children.

Certain members of the media will even be on hand to try their hand at making bannock, a tasty contest I'm sure, Mr. Speaker.

There is also the historic SIFC (Saskatchewan Indian Federated College) powwow at their beautiful new college building. There is a barbecue at the Indian Métis Christian Fellowship centre, and Regina Treaty Indian Services is hosting a round dance tonight at The Gathering Place.

There are many reasons to celebrate National Aboriginal Day and just about as many opportunities to join in the fun. I urge all members to join in the celebrations for National Aboriginal Day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(10:15)

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, June 21, is National Aboriginal Day across Canada. National Aboriginal Day was first proclaimed by Governor General Romeo LeBlanc in 1996. June 21 was chosen because of its cultural significance with the summer solstice, which is the first day of summer and the longest day of the year.

Many Aboriginal groups have set aside June 21 to celebrate their heritage. Today, National Aboriginal Day is part of the national, nationwide Celebrate Canada festivities held during the 11th period . . . 11-day period from June 21 to July 1.

Mr. Speaker, National Aboriginal Day is not only a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the diverse cultures and the outstanding contributions of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people of the country, but it is also a great opportunity to celebrate the many celebrations and traditions that will be taking place in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the theme of this year's National Aboriginal Day is sharing traditions. And with so many events happening close to home, I encourage residents of all communities to take part in some of the festivities.

Right here in Wascana Park, Mr. Speaker, there will be First Nations and Métis entertainment, Inuit games, cultural demonstrations like teepee camp, pottery making, storytelling, sports, children activities, arts and crafts, live performances, and of course lots of food and fireworks.

So, Mr. Speaker, we owe much to the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of Canada, and National Aboriginal Day is our way of recognizing the many contributions to this country.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

New Hospital Opening in Melville

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to inform the House today about a milestone in my constituency. Later this afternoon I will be in the city of Melville to help open a new hospital. Yes, that's right, Mr. Speaker — a new hospital for the city of Melville and surrounding communities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Osika: — The new St. Peter's Hospital will serve short-term patients and long-term care residents and bring health care into the 21st century as a lasting legacy to our children and future residents.

City of Melville residents and thousands from local villages and RMs (rural municipality) have planned, lobbied, and fundraised for over a decade for a new hospital. They have held community suppers, celebrity roasts, silent auctions, and talent shows. They've worked also through some setbacks and false starts. And yes, Mr. Speaker, they've even worked through the scare tactics of the opposition.

The ex-Tory member and self-proclaimed Sask Party candidate

for Melville left a legacy of a broken pipe from the old hospital to future representatives. Well I'm happy to report that pipe is being laid to rest by this member of the coalition government as the hospital is open today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, even the member from Melfort labelled this project as a white elephant of the Fyke report.

Mr. Speaker, I'm jubilant at the prospect of this afternoon's event. I look forward to visiting with the citizens and touring the facility today. The Miller Elementary School children are performing an original song today titled "It Takes a Whole Community to Build a Hospital."

And, Mr. Speaker, this coalition government will continue to support communities in rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Steelman Student Wins Excellence Award

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, leadership, innovative thinking, community involvement, and academic excellence are the measures by which Amber Klatt of Steelman, a student at Lampman School, was judged in her application to the . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. I find it . . . find it very difficult, members, to be able to hear the statement. I just ask members . . . And the member may start over if she wishes.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leadership, innovative thinking, community involvement, and academic excellence are the measures by which Amber Klatt of Steelman, a student at Lampman School, was judged in her application to the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation Excellence Award program.

She passed with flying colours, receiving 1 of only 600 awards to be handed out across Canada this year. The foundation received over 7,000 applications from across Canada in this year's awards. Following a three-month selection process, awards were distributed at the national, provincial, territorial, and local levels.

Amber will receive \$4,000 to be applied towards the cost of her studies in science at the University of Saskatchewan this fall.

Amber is an all around athlete and a repeat winner of her school's leadership and spirit awards. She has been active in the SRC (student representative council) at her school, is the voice of the youth's viewpoint on her local health advisory board, brought motivational media to her schools as a part of Students Against Drunk Driving and has organized luncheons for the . . . marking the International Women's Day. And at the recent grade 12 graduation, Mr. Speaker, which I was honoured to attend, Amber was class valedictorian.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Cannington has asked that I

send his congratulations to Amber as well. And I would like, at this time, to ask all members to join me in recognizing the achievements of Amber Klatt. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatoon Jazz Festival

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the world of jazz, there has been a Count Basie; a Duke Ellington; a King of Swing, Benny Goodman; a Prez, Lester Young; and at least one Lady, Billie Holiday

Now after apprenticing for five years as a volunteer, I'm happy to announce that, beginning today and continuing to the end of the month, I am the official MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for the SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Forbes: — The festival is headquartered in my constituency, with continual concerts around the city, with excursions to Regina, North Battleford, Moose Jaw, and Lloydminster.

So, Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for jazz, I want to invite all members and everyone within a downbeat of my voice to head to the riverbank around the Bessborough and have a toe-tapping, finger-popping time of your life. As my colleague from Sutherland said earlier this week, the sun is out, summer officially began about an hour ago and it's time to think about relaxing.

As has been the case for 16 years, you will be able to hear a tremendous variety of improvised music — Dixieland, traditional jazz, zydeco, blues, gospel — you name it, Mr. Speaker. There are international stars, up-and-coming musicians, and an amazing collection of local talents, one of our secrets that this festival goes a long way towards revealing. And in the spirit of this most democratic musical genre, there are free concerts daily on the riverbank.

As always this Saskatchewan event is successful because of the hard work and planning of its staff headed by President Karen Kowalenko-Evjan and its corporate, individual sponsors, and primarily because of more than 200 volunteers, all of whom come together to present this week-long gift of wonderful music to us all.

So see you in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Prosecution Settlements

Mr. Hillson: — The first malicious prosecution case arising out of the allegations of satanic child abuse was settled this week at a cost of \$1.3 million. Yet the Minister of Justice, while signing the letter of apology, said there was nothing more than errors in judgment and continued to deny that any malicious prosecution had occurred.

Meanwhile this week a malicious prosecution judgment came

down in Alberta. Jason Dicks had spent 22 months in prison. The prosecutor, who is no longer with the government, had lied to the court and made use of a forged letter in building his case. If a case that sent a man to jail for two years and involving the most despicable prosecution tactics results in a payment of not much more than half of what Saskatchewan paid, then what are we paying for?

Mr. Speaker, there are still approximately another 15 similar case arising out of bizarre allegations of ritual satanic child abuse. The Popowich settlement suggests that Saskatchewan taxpayers could well be on the hook for 10 to \$20 million. To pay out that sort of money without a full-scale inquiry, and while the government continues to deny that anything very much went wrong, is as illogical as the initial allegations that ritual satanic child abuse and the eating of babies was a widespread phenomenon in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we need the answers. The Minister of Justice needs to tell more to the people of Saskatchewan who will have to dig deep in their pockets to pay for the bungling.

The Speaker: — Before I go further I would just advise the member, in future when he's making statements with respect to people who are in or out of the Assembly — and I'm not disputing facts — but I would ask him to watch the language that he uses and there are certain words that we don't use in this Assembly.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Financial Assistance for Agriculture

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while the federal government is talking about billions of dollars for agriculture, it's now clear that very little of that money will actually find its way into the hands of the Saskatchewan farmers.

Yesterday the Minister of Agriculture said it only amounts to about \$2 per acre in Saskatchewan; \$2 an acre, Mr. Speaker, isn't very much money.

Today we hear that this package was designed by a federal deputy minister whose goal is to drive farmers out of farming. And, Mr. Speaker, this package will go a long ways in achieving that goal.

Mr. Speaker, has the minister confirmed these numbers? Does the federal Liberal's big announcement only work out to about \$2 an acre for Saskatchewan farmers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — I'll ask the Minister of Agriculture to address some of the more specific questions that I know the member will have this morning. But I do want to report to the member that we have not been made privy to specific amounts.

Interestingly enough I spoke with a journalist this morning who had an interview yesterday with the federal Minister of Agriculture, gave forewarning to the federal Minister of Agriculture that he wanted to know specific numbers around

Saskatchewan, and the federal Minister of Agriculture to that journalist said, I have no idea; I don't know the numbers.

So we are here in a difficult spot when a federal government announces a major agricultural program and cannot provide, from the minister, the numbers to journalists or in fact to members of the opposition or to members of government.

Now the fact of the matter is this, Mr. Speaker, and I want to point this out to members; I'm sure all members will enjoy this. This I have in front of me, Mr. Speaker, is the front page of today's *Globe and Mail*; it has a picture of the Prime Minister of Canada standing here just after announcing this farm program, wearing a nice little red hat I see. Right behind the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, is a barn that's on this farm where they announced the program. And I just want members to note the name of the barn . . . the name of the farm. It's called the Buckstop Farms.

That's absolutely right. This is exactly where the buck stops — right here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I think that the Premier should perhaps pick up the phone and find out how much money this does amount to, rather than asking the media, because it's extremely important that producers in Saskatchewan know. If it does indeed turn out to be \$2 an acre, that isn't very much money — especially when you consider that this spring the NDP (New Democratic Party) jacked up the crop insurance rates by about \$4 an acre. They cancelled spot loss hail and that amounts to about \$3.50 an acre. The NDP government cancelled the land property tax rebate. That cost the farmers about 50 cents an acre.

So when you add it all up, even if we get the federal share of this money and it does indeed turn out to be \$2 an acre, the Saskatchewan farmers will still be worse off than last year by about \$6 an acre.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is Saskatchewan farmers aren't getting much help from either level of government. Why did the NDP pick this year of all years to attack the farm families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Watrous will know that in this year's budget we provided for farmers in Saskatchewan this year a crop insurance program, Mr. Speaker, that kept our premiums and their premiums on the crop insurance program whole. That's why we put the \$14 million in, Mr. Speaker.

That member will know that we took and implemented in Saskatchewan today a forage program and a pasture program through crop insurance — unprecedented in Canada — because, Mr. Speaker, we were concerned about the drought in Saskatchewan. We made an investment in the crop insurance program to ensure that that happens.

Mr. Speaker, we also enhanced . . . ensured that . . . making sure that the crop insurance program, the premiums would be

such that farmers today would be able to insure in this province. And the numbers of our crop insurance portfolio show that we have more people, Mr. Speaker, today that are enrolled in the crop insurance program than they were last year, Mr. Speaker.

So today on this side of the House, this government's made an investment in farm families and farm communities, Mr. Speaker, because we're concerned about Saskatchewan farm families — investing in agriculture while our federal friends, Mr. Speaker, are cutting agriculture in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Well, Mr. Speaker, in light of what the minister just said, as the minister will well know, he cut his budget — his agriculture budget — this year over and above last year.

The Saskatchewan Party supports the position of a trade injury is a federal government responsibility. But we don't support the NDP attacking farm families and ignoring its own areas of responsibility. Four dollars an acre for crop insurance; \$3.50 for spot loss hail; 50 cents an acre for property taxes — and that's how the NDP government supports the agriculture. That's why we've received over 3,000 . . .

(10:30)

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I would ask members to refrain from yelling across the way during the questions and during the responses.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, that's why we've received over 3,000 postcards from farm families condemning these increases. Mr. Speaker, we support the province's position on trade injury, but the NDP is undermining its own credibility when it jacks up farm input costs by about \$8 an acre.

Why is the NDP attacking the farm families of this province?

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Yesterday in this Assembly, I listened very carefully to what the Leader of the Opposition said as it relates to the trade injury, Mr. Speaker, and listened very carefully to the Leader of the Opposition when he said that he became engaged and intervened in farm policy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And he quoted from *Hansard*, and I have it in *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker, on three occasions, he says, our party got engaged on May 1 of this year — May 1, Mr. Speaker — in developing what Canadian-Saskatchewan agriculture policy should be, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we have been engaged on the US (United States) farm Bill and subsidies since June of last year. And I tabled for the members opposite in this House, not more than a week ago, all of the work that this government has been doing, Mr. Speaker.

And the Leader of the Opposition and the member from Watrous yet today have not delivered, Mr. Speaker, one scrap of paper, not one scrap of paper, on what the agricultural policy in this province should be because, Mr. Speaker, they're

bankrupted when it comes to agricultural policy . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan Government Insurance Treatment Outcome Study

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. We raised questions about the trade injury in this House because that government has abandoned farmers in this province.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Yesterday, CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) TV aired a report about an insurance treatment outcome study that has been commissioned by SGI. Some SGI claimants have raised concerns that they were enrolled in this study by SGI without their consent, and that this personal information they had shared with SGI was turned over to researchers.

From December of '97 to November of 1999, everyone who filed a personal injury claim with SGI was automatically part of this study, a study which gathers data by asking insurance claimants a lot of very intimate, personal questions.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain why SGI enrolled its customers in this study without their prior knowledge, without their consent, and without explaining the study to them?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I don't remember whether it was earlier this week or last week, the members opposite were asking questions about questions, Mr. Speaker. Today the member is asking five-year-old questions so boy, those guys really need to get some new questions, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Mr. Speaker, this issue was in fact . . . this issue was in fact raised almost five years ago. This issue was addressed through Crown corporations. That committee dealt with this issue, Mr. Speaker.

The point of the study, Mr. Speaker . . . the point of the study was to determine by . . . determine for, I should say, SGI — the university was doing this for SGI — to determine what was the best mechanism for rehabilitation since we moved to the no-fault process, Mr. Speaker. It was nothing more than that. It was to provide better injury rehabilitation for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the questions may be old because the incompetence of this government goes on and on and on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the other disturbing issue

here is that some of the insurance claimants who became involved in this study believed, and were told, that if they didn't participate, if they didn't supply some of the extremely personal information, that their insurance benefits would be terminated.

Mr. Speaker, not only did these people not understand what the study was about, what the information was going to be used for, or why this information was even needed, these SGI customers felt threatened. If they didn't co-operate, they might have their benefits and treatments cut off by SGI.

Mr. Speaker, if one of these claimants had refused to participate, would they have lost their benefits? If the answer from the minister is no, then why did these people feel threatened? Why didn't SGI do more to communicate with their customers and explain the studies and their rights to refuse to participate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for what some individual might have said, but I can assure the member and I can assure the public of Saskatchewan that there was never a policy in place that would cut off benefits for individuals who wouldn't participate in this program, Mr. Speaker. That would never be the case, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to the release of this information to the University of Saskatchewan for this study for the purposes of determining what would be the best rehabilitation processes, this process was reviewed by the university's ethics committee, Mr. Speaker. It went through their ethics committee. It was reviewed by the university's protocol, Mr. Speaker, and determined to be appropriate, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the member, Mr. Speaker, to at least acknowledge that point.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It used to be that a minister was responsible for the statements and actions of his department. I gather this minister is not responsible for anything.

Mr. Speaker, when a Saskatchewan person enters a personal injury claim with their government owned insurance company, they have a right to expect that their personal information will be protected. But now we understand that not only did they turn over personal information to the researchers conducting this study . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Members, it's okay to have the occasional ebb and flow, but let's not just try to keep the level of noise up to here because it's very difficult to hear and shows a disrespect to the Assembly itself. And I ask members to be . . . Order, order. So I just ask members to keep that in mind and to be respectful of the House and to be respectful of other members.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the minister of SGI doesn't want to accept responsibility or answer, it seems a lot of his colleagues would like to.

Mr. Speaker, this demonstrates a clear disrespect on behalf of SGI towards personal injury claimants. And according to one Canadian bioethicist professor, this is clearly unethical.

Mr. Speaker, why did SGI not only violate the rights of personal injury claimants in this manner, but also break basic ethical standards? Will the minister apologize for this breach to the personal injury claimants who participated in this study against their will?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Well again, Mr. Speaker, this issue was dealt with by Crown Corporations and in fact has been voted off by the Crown Corporations Committee.

The intent of the study by the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of SGI was to determine which were the best processes for rehabilitation. It wasn't any, the intent was no more than that, Mr. Speaker, it was to save the public money, Mr. Speaker.

I think I would say though, Mr. Speaker, in acknowledging the member's point that in light of new national standards that have come, that have been developed since that study took place five years ago, I think it is fair to say and acknowledge the point that he makes that this process may not have been adopted today if this same request was made, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Investigation of Claims by Government Agencies

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the minister of SGI. Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago the minister stood in this Assembly and claimed that he had not been fully briefed on the surveillance practices of SGI. And he also announced his . . . shortly after, that SGI would be doing an investigation on his not being able to be briefed, and also on SGI surveillance policies, specifically the surveillance policies of Virginia Cook, an SGI claimant from the Griffin area.

Earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated he expected the release of this report by the end of the week. Mr. Speaker, it is now Friday and we haven't heard anything from that minister on this report.

My question is to the minister: has he received the report; but more importantly has he been correctly briefed on this report? Will he release that report today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am able to tell the member that just as I was walking into the Chamber this morning, I was told that the president, the president of the corporation, SGI, has received the report from Price Waterhouse late last night. In fact, if I'm able to leave the Assembly after question period sometime today, I will be fully briefed, and I will be fully . . . I will . . . provided the full report, probably within an hour or so, Mr. Speaker, and then we'll be responding publicly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. This report cost the taxpayers \$50,000 of taxpayers' money to find out why that minister wasn't briefed properly.

Yesterday, or earlier this week, we heard of another report, \$25,000 on why a minister abused or mistreated their staff. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I would ask . . . I was just going to ask one member from Prince Albert to kind of hold it down, but I'd ask the other member, his neighbour from Sask Rivers to do the same thing, and that is just to tone it down a little. I would prefer now to ask the member from Indian Head-Milestone to continue.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this session so far, in just two reports, has cost the taxpayers \$75,000 for the incompetence of that government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I ask that minister, an hour after question period, if he will be briefed properly and then give a report on the report done by SGI.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've outlined the process, but let me say this. The member suggests that the cost for the report that Price Waterhouse is charging is somehow inappropriate. Mr. Speaker, let's wait to see what that report says.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important . . . The members, the members opposite, I'll give them credit; the members raised legitimate questions on this issue, Mr. Speaker, asked that the processes, I think, be reviewed as well.

And I think that was appropriate. They've been reviewed. Let's wait to see what the report says to decide whether or not the bill for that is inappropriate. I think probably it's not inappropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not once did we question the cost of the report. What we are questioning is a lack of ability in this cabinet to run a government without having report, after report, after report on . . . (inaudible) . . . incompetence. It's not the cost of the report, it's the number of reports this government has to have commissioned because of incompetent ministers that this Premier keeps putting back into cabinet. Out of cabinet, back into cabinet — that's what's costing the taxpayers money.

Mr. Speaker, will this Premier admit that his incompetence has cost the taxpayers \$75,000 in this session alone?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Well, Mr. Speaker, you certainly get the feeling that anybody could sort of stand up and answer the

question because I'm not sure what the question was.

But let me say that with respect to competence, Mr. Speaker, when I listen to the member from Swift Current day after day get up and make positions on, as an example, the energy issues and then they go outside of the House and say something different, Mr. Speaker; when I listen to different positions from the Agriculture critic, Mr. Speaker, about their position on agriculture, Mr. Speaker; when I listen to a whole host of issues, including, Mr. Speaker, the leader of the party who holds one position, Mr. Speaker, as it pertains to the Indian gaming agreement, Mr. Speaker, and the party holding another position, Mr. Speaker; as it pertains to ethanol, Mr. Speaker; I don't have enough time to go through all the contradictory statements that that party makes on different issues, Mr. Speaker.

I would suggest that they in their party should spend a little bit of time getting fully briefed by their officials, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(10:45)

Funding for New Police Officers

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well this isn't the first time we've seen the minister of SGI confused, he's confused all the time. He won't even pay attention to his briefing, but we'll see how well he does this afternoon.

Today, Mr. Speaker, my question's for the Minister of Justice. Yesterday the Saskatchewan Party caucus met with the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers. It was a very good meeting except that they were disappointed that the NDP has failed to live up to its 1999 campaign promise to hire 200 new police officers. According to the police, the NDP has only provided funding for 71 new officers to date. That's 129 officers short of their 1999 promise, Mr. Speaker. And the Justice minister is making no commitment to live up to his promise.

Mr. Speaker, where are the total of 200 police officers the NDP promised? Why is the NDP breaking its promise?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder why the member keeps asking this question. But it does enable me to remind him about his promise, which was to have zero money for policing, Mr. Speaker; to have no money for justice, no money for health, no money for education, Mr. Speaker.

What has this government done, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, we contributed last year \$88 million to maintain and enhance policing services in this province. Mr. Speaker . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Mr. Speaker, that's \$7.3 million in new funding. Mr. Speaker, this is record funding for policing for safety and security in this province ever, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — So the member likes to keep hearing that and the contrast between the Sask Party's commitment to policing in this province and this government's commitment, Mr. Speaker, could not be more stark.

And he says he had a meeting with the police officers and they talked about the policing promise.

We had meetings with the police officers too, Mr. Speaker. And he will remember when the budget came forward the head of the Regina Police Service said that she was delighted with the progress we're making.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the police officers aren't nearly as delighted with this Justice minister and what he's doing today and what he's been doing yesterday and what he's been doing for the last long time, and that is breaking his promise.

Mr. Speaker, the police federation gave all MLAs a briefing package and it included an NDP fundraising letter from the Premier which began with the statement, a promise is a promise. It was tucked on top of that wee little bus that you remember was on that letterhead, Mr. Speaker. The officers said they wanted to remind the Premier of his words so he will keep his promise of 200 new police officers to Saskatchewan communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier said a promise is a promise. Why is he breaking his promise of 200 new police officers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Mr. Speaker, as the member knows we've been making progress on this promise, Mr. Speaker, with 70 — I think it is 71 — new police officers, Mr. Speaker. If the member looks at the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) budget he will see that there are more police officers in our communities than ever before.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — And, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward we will ensure that we do hire more police officers as required by the people of the province. We've made significant progress — 70 more than this government . . . this party would ever have offered, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to do the very best we can to have even more police officers on our streets and in our communities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday as we met with the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers one of the things that we discussed and is a concern of theirs is that the police officers are often exposed to blood and other bodily fluids. Mr. Speaker, they have to dodge more things than bullets and cars stolen in the city of Regina — bodily fluids of suspects and other people that they come in contact with.

When this happens, police officers have no way of knowing, no way of knowing, Mr. Speaker, if they've been exposed to hepatitis, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), or other communicable diseases. There is no requirement for the person to provide a blood sample. And hospital personnel, as you know, Mr. Speaker, are prohibited from disclosing information obtained from those blood samples.

Mr. Speaker, the police federation is asking the government to introduce legislation that would require blood testing of the source person when the exposure results from a criminal act — the kind of legislation that was recently passed in Ontario to provide protection for officers in that province. Mr. Speaker, will the minister introduce similar legislation in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Mr. Speaker, this important matter is being considered by the Uniform Law Conference which is all of the officials in justice from across Canada. They'll be looking at this this summer. And, Mr. Speaker, in the fall the ministers of Justice at their annual meeting will be considering this question too.

And I want to say to the member that this government takes second place to nobody in considering its commitment to the police in this province. And we trust and we respect the work they do and we will do everything we can to protect them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 210 — The Attachment of Debts Amendment Act, 2002

Mr. Heppner: — I give notice that I will be moving first reading of the Bill No. 210, The Attachment of Debts Amendment Act, 2002.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and table written responses to questions 361 through 382 inclusive.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Responses to questions 361 right through to 382 inclusive have been tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 73

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Osika that **Bill No. 73 — The Status of the Artist Act/Loi sur le statut de l'artiste** be now read a second time.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to get up today to talk about Bill No. 73, An Act respecting Artists. As I go through the Bill, Mr. Speaker, it's very typical Bill introduced by this NDP government — it's a lot of fluff and absolutely no substance.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just comment on some aspects of this Bill, and I know I'll be raising more questions in the Committee of the Whole. There's a couple of issues that I'd like to address primarily. One of the statements in the Bill, in article 3:

3 The following are affirmed and recognized;

(a) (and it's) the important contribution of artists to the cultural, social, economic and educational enrichment of Saskatchewan.

We totally agree with that, Mr. Speaker. The value of the artistic talents of this province and what this does for the province is definitely recognized. I'm not so certain why it would be showing up in a Bill other than for just the recognition factor. But it is part of the Bill and we definitely recognize the importance of artists being very valuable to our culture and to the economic framework of this province.

Mr. Speaker, some issues with this Bill that I'll question in the committee. But when I look at such aspects of the policy respecting artists and I have to question, as soon as I read this Bill in the policy respecting artists, it starts out in section 5: "the right of artists to free speech and freedom of artistic and cultural expression."

The first thing that comes to mind, Mr. Speaker, this is included in a Bill, right of artists to free speech and freedom of artistic and cultural expression. Does this mean that before, that artists did not have this? This is the question that I have in this Bill.

It almost looks like there's a whole aspect of this Bill just to make the Bill a little bit longer and larger. Because I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that under the rights and freedoms of individuals, that everybody has the right to free speech and freedom of artistic expression.

Along in policy respecting artists also, there's a number of other issues in here. The ability of artists to obtain education, professional development, and training. And one has to again look at the fact that they've always had that ability, Mr. Speaker. By putting it in the Bill, does it mean that they did not have that ability to do this before?

The Speaker: — And why is the member from Watrous on her feet?

Ms. Harpauer: — With leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery are some very special guests, especially to one of our Pages, Michelle. It's her parents, Christine and Darwin McNichol. And they live in my constituency, so I'm very proud to be able to introduce them in the House today.

And I invite all members of the House to please welcome them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 73 — The Status of the Artist Act Loi sur le statut de l'artiste (continued)

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to continue on this discussion and debate with this Bill.

Part (c) of part 5:

(c) the right of artists to form advisory bodies in which they may express their views and advance their cause . . .

Again, Mr. Speaker, does this mean that the artistic community did not have that right before?

These are all clauses in this Bill that actually apply to every individual and every person in this province and in this great country of ours. But it's included in the Bill for some reason; I'm at a lack as to why we would include this. We could go on for pages and pages and pages of stuff we could put in — the right to drive a vehicle, the right to own property.

It's just a whole bunch of rhetoric that's in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, including:

(h) the desirability of making artistic works available to the public.

Well again, it's in the Bill. Does that indicate that that is not available now to our artists and our artistic community?

So, Mr. Speaker, there's an awful lot of stuff in this Bill that is . . . in fact is just part of being a Canadian and a Saskatchewan resident.

Mr. Speaker, I go on, on this Bill and I look at the advisory committee. And this, Mr. Speaker, is supposedly where the meat of the Bill, the teeth of this Bill — it's in section 7. And I'll read, it says:

7(1) The minister may establish one or more advisory committees to investigate and report to the minister with respect to the following matters concerning artists:

And it goes on.

But here is the meat of the Bill and it says, the minister may.

It's like the Minister of SPMC's (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) letter of intent. You may intend to, you may not. This Bill — you may or you may not. There's absolutely no substance to this Bill.

And we spoke to members of the artist community and this was brought forward. The minister may establish. There is no timeline. There's no teeth to it. The minister may also may not want to. It's just that the minister may. And so absolutely no substance to this Bill whatsoever.

If the minister . . . If the minister really wanted to introduce a Bill for the artistic community to have a little bit of punch to it, why would the minister not say, the minister shall. And there's a huge difference between the two words, may and shall. May — you may or you may not. Shall — it's an obligation. And this government does not like to be obligated to anything. It's straight rhetorical Bill.

(11:00)

And also if the word shall was included in this Bill in a timeline it would definitely have some meat for the artistic community. And I would suggest that the minister may look at putting in an amendment to . . . the minister shall establish one or more advisory groups, within six months of this Bill receiving Assent. Now this Bill would have some substance to it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's another part of this that comes to mind immediately when I read it. And it says that, in regulations, Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary to carry out the intent of this Act. Mr. Speaker, I read this Bill, I've gone through this Bill, and I can't figure out what the intent of this Bill is. There's no substance whatsoever to the Bill. And I know the artistic community wishes to have this. It's a step in the right direction. And I think there is a step but there's absolutely no substance to it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to just talk for a minute on a little bit of the history of this Bill. In 1990, Bill C-7, Status of the Artist Act was first introduced. And in 1992 it was passed by the federal Parliament. Mr. Speaker, I repeat — 1992.

Now, now, Mr. Speaker, in the introduction of this Bill by the member from Melville, he says, and I quote:

Through this government's leadership and example, the Bill will set a groundwork for artists.

Ten years? Is that the member's definition of leadership? It's leading from behind. Very, very typical of people over there leading from behind — 10 years. This Bill was introduced and passed in the federal government and now the minister has the audacity to say we're the leaders in this, 10 years after the fact, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill suggests it's creating a platform to initially . . . initiate dialogue on social and economic issues involving artists. Creating a platform to initiate. How wishy-washy can one get — we're creating a platform to initiate. Again, there's no teeth whatsoever to it — we're creating a platform to initiate. We're going to create a platform

to allow somebody to create an advisory committee that can advise the government on what they should be advised on. So there's absolutely no substance to this Bill whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, at this time, although the Bill is in the right direction, and after meeting with the . . . with members from the artistic community, they would really like to see this Bill go forward. They understand that there's no meat to this Bill whatsoever, there's no substance to this Bill, but they would like to see it go forward because it's a step in the right direction.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I support the artistic community, and would suggest that we put this Bill to the committee, and I'll ask questions more directly in the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, up on your gallery we have two special guests that have come to visit. We have of course, John Cocarell, and also with John is Carmen Biletski.

Mr. Speaker, they'll be getting married this summer. For many of you, you're probably why I'm introducing John — he's my nephew. His mother is Marion Cocarell, the principal of the school in La Ronge, and Carmen is from Southey. And I think that I've . . . I thought it was a very special, you know, occasion for them to come and visit the legislature, you know take part in a bit of democracy you know, before their wedding.

For me personally, and with my family, we'd like to wish them the best in their marriage, and also to continue the good work that both of them do for this province.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 73 — The Status of the Artist Act Loi sur le statut de l'artiste (continued)

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at next sitting.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 34 — The Education Amendment Act, 2002 Loi de 2002 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation

The Chair: — I would invite the Minister of Learning to introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. To my immediate right is Michael Littlewood, executive director, legislation and school administration. To my immediate left is

Rosanne Glass, director, community education. And to her left is Kim Mock, legislative policy analyst. These are the three officials with me this morning, Mr. Chair.

Clause 1

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Welcome, Mr. Minister, to your officials. I am pleased to be able to ask a few questions on this Bill today. It's not too controversial — probably not controversial at all — but there are some clarifications required on some of the aspects of the Bill.

I would like first of all just for you to briefly explain to me what this Bill does to the francophone divisions? There's just a few sentences in the Bill talking about the restructuring of francophone school divisions and maybe you could just clarify for everyone what this actually does.

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Chair, as the member opposite would know, when restructuring of school divisions occurred in the francophone school division community about three years ago, school divisions were amalgamated from nine down to one. That required a whole bunch of drafting changes in a lot of pieces of legislation to reflect the fact that there was now one francophone school division.

And this was one particular area within the Act that we missed when we did the previous drafting, so this is just correcting a drafting error that was missed when the original amalgamations occurred.

So I think the member opposite will find that that is really just a little bit of a housekeeping thing and really of no consequence, other than to draw it into line with the previous drafting amendments that were done.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Making an error is I guess something that happens on that side of the House.

Mr. Minister, can you . . . I also wanted to ask you about the amalgamated school divisions that they now have a right to apply different mill rates for up to two years. How many school divisions are using this provision at this time?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. When we talk about restructuring and the initiatives that this government has undertaken to support restructuring of school divisions in the province of Saskatchewan, one of the issues that we found that had come up when school boards were in discussions about restructuring, was that in situations where there was a significant difference in the mill rates, say between an urban board and a neighbouring rural board, was such that it could be seen as a disincentive to amalgamation.

So we took the advice of many of the boards of education in terms of allowing them to have a variable mill rate for a phase-in period for a board that had undergone restructuring. So we took that advice to our restructuring coordinating committee, and the recommendation from that committee was that we do include that in the legislation when we brought forward the amendments to The Education Act.

And this is something that the stakeholders have asked for and

in certain conditions . . . or in certain possibilities it might be applied. None of the current discussions are at the point where they could say that this is something that they would do, because they're not at the point. Some of them have passed motions of intent to amalgamate. A lot of boards are in discussions but they're not at the point where they would say that this is something they would apply. But they are waiting to have this particular piece of legislation so that they can put that into the mix of how this would fit into the overall package of restructuring within the area that they're talking about.

So this is something that the stakeholders have asked for and what it will do is provide another piece of the puzzle in terms of providing incentives and opportunity for school boards to restructure.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I know that this is an issue and it's not just between urban boards and a connecting rural board, but lots of times there's rural boards right beside each other who have very different mill rates.

And, Mr. Minister, the last group of questions I want to ask you about is the Prince of Wales Scholarship Fund. I know that this is an incentive that a lot of people are quite excited about, but there are also a large number of schools are disappointed because they're not able to get into this . . . into the list at all because they're not a community school.

I'm wondering why a decision was made to make sure it was just community schools that had the opportunity for the students to receive this scholarship.

(11:15)

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly when we look at a couple things here, the Prince of Wales on his visit, and for some time before that, has always expressed an interest in issues of education but also in issues of youth . . . children and youth at risk.

Our Community Schools Program is initially and was designed to deal primarily with core neighbourhoods. The philosophy has recently been expanded by the Role of the School. And what we're seeing now with our community schools expansion is that we have more community schools coming on stream all the time.

But the desire of the Prince of Wales scholarship was to be specific for education but also to deal with youth at risk. So the Prince of Wales scholarship really reflects the desire of the Prince of Wales and what we would like to see happen in this province.

And we also recognize, as part of the question that the member opposite was alluding to, is that with this Act we are in essence setting up a foundation that will grow with time. And obviously that means more of these scholarships will become available as time goes on. And depending on how well the endowment-type provisions will grow, we could have lots of community . . . these particular Prince of Wales scholarships available in the future.

So it really was . . . it really did reflect the desire of the Prince

of Wales in terms of how this was targeted to community schools.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Minister, when we get into Learning estimates after this Bill, we'll have an opportunity to discuss community schools and the fact that part of the Role of the School talks about all schools having the philosophy of the community school.

So then we're going to be opening it up to more schools and are . . . is there going to be separate opportunity for schools that have children that are . . . have . . . are at risk or have special needs? Will they be picked out separately?

But right now I guess the concern that I've had mostly are from schools that are saying, okay, \$500 may not be a lot of money but it's something that would be helpful towards furthering education.

Mr. Minister, you talked about community partners and the fact that the Prince of Wales Scholarship Fund could grow and . . . as more partners are actually putting money into it to provide opportunities for students. How many community partners do you actually have involved in this scholarship program at this time? And if there is more, can you tell me how much money has been donated to this fund?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Chair, obviously it's not possible to receive donations until the legislation is passed that creates the foundation. But it certainly is the intent of the department, with its community partners, to promote the activities of the Prince of Wales scholarship and to actively solicit donations to the fund.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Have you got people hired in your department right now that will be administrating this fund and actively promoting it so they have more money for the fund when it becomes available under legislation?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Certainly at this point in time there have been no additional staff hired. And I would probably suggest to the member opposite that it's likely that we probably wouldn't be hiring additional staff because this is a bottom-up approach.

We will be working with the Saskatchewan association, the Saskatchewan Community Schools Association. Not only have they provided names in terms of the selection committee but also in terms of how this evolves over time.

This will be driven by communities and not driven by the department. So we'll see how this grows over the years. If certainly there is a requirement at some point in time for additional administrative staff then we would look at that, but I don't anticipate that in the very near future.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Minister, that means that right now the Department of Learning will be paying for the staff that will be administrating this fund. How much money is there in this fund at this time?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Currently we're offering 10 scholarships at \$500 each. The fund obviously doesn't exist

because the legislation hasn't been created, but that's the commitment.

So we're not talking about a lot of dollars. I think the concept is important and the ability to expand in the future is important, but currently the amount of dollars available is not that great at this point in time.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Minister, then there isn't a fund that you are using that you just pay so much interest every year and the principal is sitting there. It's just an amount of money that the Prince of Wales is actually giving out each year that you're dividing up. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — The department is providing that additional \$5,000 and that is in the funding of the department. What we will be doing is once the endowment or the foundation is created, then the dollars that come into that fund of course will be administered. And however that is dispensed in terms of . . . or how it's managed with regard to interest bearing, that will be determined by the group that controls that particular foundation.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to the staff. I have no further questions.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 46 — The Registered Music Teachers Act, 2002

Clause 1

The Chair: — Does the minister have any additional officials to introduce?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Chair, I have the same officials with me as with the previous Act.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to the minister. I just have a couple of short questions for this Bill. How many registered music teachers is this going to affect in the province?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Chair, there are approximately 225 current members.

Ms. Draude: — And, Mr. Minister, is this proposed legislation similar to other jurisdictions or is this something that's new in Saskatchewan, or the type of legislation new in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Chair, of course this Act has been in existence in terms of some time within the province of Saskatchewan. And what we're doing by this current Act is really aligning it with similar professional associations in terms of the legislation that governs their particular organization. And it really is in keeping with how this is applied in other jurisdictions across Canada.

The Chair: — Why is the member for Estevan on her feet?

Ms. Eagles: — To introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this honoured Assembly, 14 grade 4 students from Midale Central School. They are seated in the east gallery.

And amongst the students I have a niece, Cassidy Eagles, and a great-niece, Jessica Swedburg. And they are accompanied by the teacher, Jana Epp; chaperones are Louise Vandenhurk, Tammy Swedburg — who happens to be my niece — Tom Littlejohn, Rhonda Penny, Dixie Martinson, Cindy Werner, and Colleen Scharnatta.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming them. I hope you enjoy the rest of your day in Regina and have a safe trip back to Midale. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 46 — The Registered Music Teachers Act, 2002 (continued)

Clause 1

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Minister, you'd indicated that this Act is something that the association has been asking for. I'm wondering if this has taken a considerable amount of time to come forward or is it something that . . . Has it been delayed for any reason or is it something that was brought forward as soon as the association asked for it?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well, Mr. Chair, the thing is that there is a routine within the department, of course looking at all the legislation that it's responsible for and reviewing that. And it was about four years ago that it was noted that the current piece of legislation, which I think had not been opened up since 1979, needed to be looked at.

So the Registered Music Teachers' Association was contacted by the department. They were very enthusiastic about being approached with regard to updating their professional legislation.

And that's taken, over the last three or four years, to get it to the point where everyone was quite happy with the Act. And we're very close to having it approved and I know that all of the music teachers out there are very pleased with this piece of legislation.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I just have one final question, and I'm not sure if it's something that you will be able to answer or not because it's not within this Bill. But if you're a member of the Saskatchewan Music Teachers' Association, does that give you any type of association with other provinces?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With

membership in the provincial association, membership in the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations is also included with that membership. So the portability is across Canada.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your officials.

The Chair: — Members, the Bill is quite a lengthy Bill. Is leave granted to deal with it in parts?

Leave granted.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 49 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

(11:30)

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 34 — The Education Amendment Act, 2002 Loi de 2002 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 46 — The Registered Music Teachers Act, 2002

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — Before we go to Committee of Finance, why is the member from Estevan on her feet?

Ms. Eagles: — To introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of this honoured Assembly, I'd like to introduce 38 grade 4 students from Pleasantdale Elementary school in Estevan. They are seated in the east gallery.

And they are accompanied by their teachers, Denise Epp, Karen Conquergood, Heather Vermeersch, and Kelly Hilkewich.

And we are just going into estimates here with the Minister of Learning, so you might find that very interesting. It's actually one of the quieter parts of the day here at the legislature, a lot quieter than question period. But I'm sure you'll enjoy the proceedings and I look forward to meeting with you in a few moments.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming the students and the chaperones and teachers from Estevan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Learning Vote 5

Subvote (LR01)

The Chair: — I would invite the Minister of Learning to introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my immediate right is Mr. Ken Horsman, associate deputy minister of Learning; and to my immediate left is Mr. Wayne McElree, assistant deputy minister of Learning; and to his immediate left is Dr. Michael Littlewood, executive director of legislation and school administration. And I have Mr. Don Sangster just behind me on the right, executive director of school finance; and behind me just to my right as well is Mr. Cal Kirby, executive director, facilities planning.

We've also got Ms. Edith Hazen, acting associate executive director of student financial assistance, behind the bar. I've got Ms. Frances Bast, directly behind me, director of financial planning and operations, corporate services; Dr. Margaret Lipp, executive director, curriculum instruction, in the back of the room as well; Kevin Veitenheimer, manager of financial planning and administration, university services, in the back of the room as well; Ms. Marilyn Jenkins, director of public library services in the back of the room as well; Mr. Gord Sisson, director of financial policy and program support, corporate services. And I think that's all of the officials today. I think I've got them all. Okay. That's the crew today.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'd like to welcome the minister and all of the officials to the estimates today. Mr. Minister, I just have one or maybe two questions. It depends on the reply.

I wrote a letter to you on . . . two days ago after I met with Nick and Bonnie Pana and I'm sure you're familiar with the background of the Pana situation. They have children that they wish to send to the Glentworth School but they're obliged to send them to the Limerick School at the present time. And I know in correspondence that I had received from you, they had signed a waiver at some point in the past. One of those waivers, as an example that when I spoke to them, they say they may have signed. They don't remember. And when the Wood Mountain School closed I think there's probably a rush of things that went on and they signed this piece of paper that they don't even remember signing that gave their tax base to the Red Coat School Division.

Now, Mr. Minister, I know in previous correspondence that I had with you, you had suggested or stated in your letter that you would get in contact with the Panas in the near future. And your letter was dated May 2. Well in fact they have not had contact from you or anybody else in the department as yet and the

school year is drawing very much to a close. And they would like to have this resolved before the school year ends, for a number of reasons, that they would like to be able to make some decisions on their own based on what this decision might be.

And another factor in this, Mr. Minister, and I pointed it out in the letter I sent to you with a map, how the boundaries were drawn. You'd have to see the map and look at it and see how irregular the boundaries are. To me there's no rhyme or reason how the boundaries were drawn. It's kind of willy-nilly, quarter section and over couple miles and up and over a couple miles the other way. And so there's no, there's no explanation that I can see, for the boundary map.

And in addition, in addition, Mr. Minister, there are people that are in the other school division that in fact are going to Glentworth School. They have asked for authority to go . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . and the member's heckling is quite willy-nilly too I might add, Mr. Chair. It's absolutely senseless and pointless because you can't understand what the heckler is saying.

But again, drawing up these boundaries and, in fact, with people already from the other school division that are going to Glentworth School and people from within a couple of miles of where the Panas live that are actually going to Assiniboia school. And as I stated in my letter, distance is also a factor because it's 18 miles to Glentworth and 28 miles to Limerick.

So with all that being said, Mr. Minister, and I've given you all of this information in the letter, can I get some assurances from you today that you will speak to the Panas immediately and there will be resolution to this issue?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well, Mr. Chair, certainly this is an issue that I have been made aware of. And there is some history to this issue that dates back several years.

What I can tell the member opposite today is that I have referred the issue with regard to the Pana family directly to our educational Boundaries Commission, and the Boundaries Commission I have been told will be contacting them directly next week.

We also have heard that there are several other families in the area that also have some concerns with regard to the boundary changes that occurred approximately two or three years ago. And these will also be referred to the Boundaries Commission to see if we can resolve this issue to the betterment of that community, Mr. Chair.

(11:45)

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, if it's referred to the Boundary Commission next week, would you provide some assurances that I would receive a reply by next week, by the end of next week? Because as we know school is going to be out soon and we might only be here for another month. So I'd sure like it resolved before parliament ends.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Chair, what I can do is send the

member opposite a copy of the letter of referral from myself to the Boundaries Commission.

In terms of the resolution or recommendation of the Boundaries Commission, I cannot commit that they can make that recommendation by the end of next week. But certainly we can notify the Pana family that it is before the Boundaries Commission and that, hopefully, that will be resolved expeditiously by the Boundaries Commission, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like . . . I'm seeking a little bit more of a commitment on a timeline. I mean we could submit it to the Boundaries Commission and it could take months, a year, however long, and to me that's not acceptable.

And I would like if you would commit to some sort of a timeline that we could expect an answer, whatever that answer might be. If it's going to take a week or 10 days or however long it might take, and so I would like if you could commit to some kind of a timeline that we could maybe hold the Boundary Commission accountable to.

The Chair: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Yates: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a young man in the Speaker's gallery, Drew Canham, who has just today completed his grade 10 year at Balfour Collegiate. And after writing exams this morning, thought he'd come to the Assembly and see what we do in this hallowed Chamber, Mr. Chair.

And I've had the opportunity to speak to him about . . . during he was taking a class in which they were studying the political climate in Canada, and we had a chance to talk and have a discussion about politics in our province. So Drew came today to see for himself and also visit his sister who is one of the Pages in the Assembly as well, Mr. Speaker. So to all of you, Drew Canham.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Learning Vote 5

Subvote (LR01)

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Chair, I can assure the member opposite that I will be asking the Boundaries Commission to get on with resolving this issue as quickly as possible.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I also have a situation in my constituency that is pertaining to boundaries as well. I'm sure the minister is well aware that as

different small schools have had closures, there's situations where families are in one school division and perhaps live closer to a school in a different school division now that their nearest school has closed.

The specific case that I have in my constituency is a couple named Perry and Colleen Sopatyk and they have been corresponding with the Department of Learning. Perry and Colleen live close to the boundary between the Lanigan School Division and the Saskatoon East School Division and their children are designated to attend school at Viscount which is within the Lanigan School Division. But they wish to enrol their children in Colonsay in the Saskatoon East School Division.

And there's a number of reasons for their request. And as the minister is well aware, there's situations that have changed in rural Saskatchewan. People are getting jobs farther and farther away from their homes.

So a quick summary of why they've made the request is that they do their business in Colonsay, all of their social activities, family contacts and so forth are in Colonsay. And probably more importantly, Colonsay's en route to Colleen's job whereas Viscount is in the opposite direction. And that's a few of the reasons that they've stated for requesting a change.

And initially Perry and Colleen approached the Lanigan School Division with their request to enrol their children in Colonsay rather than Viscount but the request was turned down. And as the minister can probably appreciate, it's very difficult for families to get approval for boards of school divisions to transfer their children to a different school division because the divisions are very protective of their enrolment numbers. And they are becoming even more protective as we see enrolment numbers fall.

So they then began to explore the possibility of changing the boundaries between the Lanigan School Division and the Saskatoon East School Division so their yard site would fall within the boundaries of the Saskatoon East School Division. The land involved used to be, apparently, in the Saskatoon school . . . or Saskatoon East School Division but at some point in time, and the Sopatyk's are unsure of when, the boundaries got moved and their yard site then was in the Lanigan School Division.

The change that Perry and Colleen have proposed would involve land owned by four other owners, and they have gathered written permission from the other landowners to make the change. The change would involve 10 quarters of land or two and a half square miles altogether. It doesn't involve any other children other than the children of the Sopatyk family.

Perry and Colleen approached the regional director, Lawrence Chomos, and they wrote a letter to the Department of Education making a request to change the boundaries. Initially Lawrence Chomos led Perry and Colleen to believe that the request would not be a problem, but after he met with the other regional directors he reversed his position and Perry and Colleen's request was denied.

The Department of Education also denied the request in a letter dated January 16 and signed by a Ronald Thomas from your

department. And in that letter, Ronald Thomas cited two reasons for denying the request. One was that the Lanigan School Division felt its ability to deliver education programs would be adversely affected if there was an erosion of its division boundaries.

Perry and Colleen argued that this is a bit of an overreaction considering only 10 quarters of land are involved. But they also offered a suggestion as to how the loss of education taxes due to the loss of the 10 quarters of land could be addressed because there is land in the same area owned by Ducks Unlimited that's along the school division boundaries. And they're suggesting that that land could be exchanged for the land that Perry and Colleen are requesting to be moved into the Saskatoon (East) School Division, and this would make the boundary change basically revenue neutral.

The other reason that was cited in the letter as to why the request was denied was that the Lanigan School Division Board was concerned that other families will request land transfers. And the Sopatyks believe that that's quite a stretch because there isn't a lot of families that live along the boundaries. They can't foresee this being . . . having the office of Learning flooded with such requests.

The other interesting thing that's in the letter, Mr. Chair, is that it goes on to say, and I quote:

In considering any land transfer requests, the department must consider both the specific personal interests of the family or families requesting the transfer.

And yet there is no indication that that consideration was made in the decision of the family itself.

So Perry and Colleen Sopatyk wrote a letter directed to the Minister of Learning dated February 26. Their request was simple; they simply asked the minister to recommend that their request for a change in boundaries be sent to the Boundary Review Commission Board for review.

And the minister replied on March 19, and he said, and I quote:

I will be reviewing this matter in consultation with my officials and will then provide a more detailed response to your request.

But the Sopatyks have not heard anything from the minister since, and it's now been three months.

So my question would be, has the minister had enough time to consider the request by Perry and Colleen Sopatyk and will he send their request to be reviewed by the Boundaries Review Commission board? If so, when?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Chair, it is my understanding that the Sopatyk family has been contacted recently and that there will indeed be a meeting on Monday of next week between the Sopatyk family and both . . . and representatives of both boards of education, along with the Boundaries Commission, to discuss these issues. So I'm hoping that we can have a resolution to this one as quickly as possible as well.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'd like to also welcome the minister's officials here this morning.

Mr. Minister, the last time I had an opportunity to discuss estimates with you, you still were not in a position to make any announcements as far as the Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation, as far as specific announcements to both boards of education and the universities as far as how much funding each . . . in the case of the universities how much funding they would get for capital funding this year.

I'm wondering, are you now in a position to make those kind of announcements? Have you contacted the universities in . . . recently, within the last week or so? Because I have talked to them, I believe about a week ago, and they still had no new information from your department. And I'm wondering where that process is at, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. As indicated previously when we were in estimates, we were in the process of compiling our capital list based on the list that had been provided to us from school divisions on the K to 12 capital side. And I can inform the member today that the capital list . . . has been compiled and will be mailed out today for the K to 12 side.

I have recently met with President McKinnon from the University of Saskatchewan, as well as officials and, about a week or so ago, with the president of the University of Regina. And we're in the final stages of compiling the capital list for the universities this year and I would anticipate that we'll have that list finalized within the next week or so.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, would it be possible for you, for you to provide us with a list of the capital funding projects you've approved, your department has approved for boards of education?

And if I under . . . you said that list is being mailed out today and we would appreciate receiving a list also.

But I heard you say that you are . . . you still haven't finalized any of the capital projects with the two universities. It appears that there seems to be some difficulty in getting this new capital funding mechanism up and running and I'm wondering what the problem is.

Is it a problem of the two departments being amalgamated or is it . . . or is it a problem that this whole new structure of capital funding was kind of a last minute idea to help balance this year's . . . supposedly balance this year's budget? And I suspect that that's probably the latter reason as to why this program isn't up and running. And I think we're all looking forward to some of the details, Mr. Minister, of this program.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. And I can assure the member opposite that there is no delay in terms of the capital allocation. We have to wait for the universities to present our . . . their list to us. We have recently received those lists from the universities.

It is a more expansive list than we've seen in previous years

because the amount of dollars available are considerably more this year. So the good news is, Mr. Deputy Chair, is that with the additional dollars available for capital construction and infrastructure in our university campuses, that the universities have actually taken considerably more time in compiling their lists and we are in the process of allocating those dollars. And we'll have an announcement to make in the very near future.

(12:00)

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Minister, we seem to be getting two different views on this whole area of capital funding. I understand that the universities have had their projects lined up for quite some time and they had to resubmit their priority list and . . . which indicates to me that there is some delay in the program.

And also when we in this legislature discussed interim supply to fund activities of government to the end of June, there was no request for funding under the infrastructure . . . Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation which tells me that there were . . . things weren't in place to actually go out and do some . . . spend some money and build some facilities at the universities which also would indicate to me that you . . . your department really hadn't figured out how you're going to operate this new structure, Mr. Minister.

But you say that you have all the details pretty well worked out. I wonder if you could perhaps provide me with some details as to, under this new structure of capital funding, what type of expenditures will qualify for capital funding under this new process? I mean we all realize that a new building or perhaps a major renovation to a building, whether it be within the post-secondary education system or in the K to 12 system, but what about some of the equipment that's required and so on? Could you provide us with some of those details as to what's first of all eligible for the . . . for funding under this capital program? And the terms as far as years and those sorts of things, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. As indicated, we are mailing out the capital list for the K to 12 sector today — the approved list. Obviously to have the approval means that the structures are in place for the financing of that capital. So there's no delay in getting the infrastructure, support infrastructure, in place.

With regard to the second question with the eligibility criteria for how the capital is allocated, there has been no change. The eligibility criteria and how we allocate capital on the K to 12 side is the same as we've done it in previous years with categorization in to four broad categories.

With regard to the university sector, we look at the categorization with regard to capital equipment. Then we look at the minor — what would be considered minor capital expansions — and then of course the major capital infrastructure.

And depending on what type of equipment, for example, if it was say, a new computer server for a university department, that would fall into a categorization where that would probably be mortgaged over five years. Minor equipment may be amortized over 10 years. And then of course when you get into

the major capital projects, such as a new building, the amortization schedule may be as large as 30 years in that case.

But that needs to be worked out because it is a tripartite agreement between the university, the Department of Education, and the Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation. Because that it is a tri-part agreement, all of these capital projects have agreements assigned to them and once the ink is dry, then the projects proceed.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Has there been any new category of items, particularly in the minor capital items that added to that category that in previous years would more normally fall into the regular maintenance budgets and that sort of thing? I guess my question is have some maintenance-type items been moved into capital under this new structure?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Deputy Chair, there's no change to the procedures this year. We are looking at some changes next year. And as the member may be aware that when we announced the budget this year, and some of the press releases from the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association indicated that we would be implementing a new concept with regard to how we finance maintenance in subsequent years, and that will be next year.

So we have targeted, I think, in the neighbourhood of 9 to \$10 million beginning next year to cover some of the minor capital allocations in our K to 12 system that could be, the process of approval, could then be speeded up because it would provide those dollars to school divisions and they would then allocate them and there would be a certain cap in terms of the dollars available.

But there would be more leeway in the types of projects and types of equipment that could be purchased under this new plan that was announced at the time of the budget.

Mr. Hart: — So there will be a shift, Mr. Minister, of some items in the K to 12 system. Will there also be a shift of those type of items or other items in the post-secondary system?

Certainly in the post-secondary system there's a greater array of equipment and furnishings and that sort of thing that need to be furnished at our universities and SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) and so on.

Is there a similar shift, and if so, Mr. Minister, how many dollars are you looking at shifting from operation and maintenance to capital?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Certainly, Mr. Deputy Chair, there has been no major change in the allocation on the university side with the change in how the capital is being financed.

And if you look at, for example, how the capital is allocated to universities there's always a proportion of that that is aligned to maintenance and restoration type activities, which could also include minor equipment.

So there has, that structure within the university side, has really not changed. And we don't anticipate there being any change in the near future with regard to the allocation as well.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, we dealt with capital funding in the K to 12 system and in post-secondary, specifically with the universities. I wonder, as far as the capital funding of new projects on the various SIAST campuses, is that funded . . . will they be funded through your new Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation? How is that whole area handled as far as capital projects at SIAST?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and to the member opposite for his excellent question.

With regard to our SIAST campuses, the larger projects would be funded through the EIFC (Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation), and we do provide dollars on a cash basis for some of the smaller restoration type projects.

So really the answer is that it's twofold: some dollars on a cash basis and some . . . and the majority, in terms of the big projects, with . . . through a tri-part agreement with the EIFC.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could provide for me any major capital plans on any of the SIAST campuses. Is there any plans for new facilities? I understand within the last year or so there was a major . . . a new building put up in Saskatoon. And I'm wondering what the plans are for this upcoming budget year?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. I have had an opportunity to review the business plans and facility plans for our SIAST campuses. And I can indicate to the member opposite that there are no new major capital expansion projects identified by SIAST for the upcoming year.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that there was some discussion, I believe a year or two ago, with the . . . looking at perhaps a building project at the Woodland Campus in Prince Albert. If I understand it, the process or the rationale behind it is there is this new initiative by your government to increase the number of jobs in forestry and a whole new emphasis on forestry. And along with, that there was a thought . . . there was some thought that there was a need for some research facilities at the Woodland Campus in Prince Albert. And I'm wondering where that project is, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and thank you to the member opposite. It's my understanding that the proposal for that forestry research centre had come from the Department of Industry and Resources. There was initially some discussion about whether that should be attached to the Woodland Campus or whether it should be located downtown. And I don't know where that's at. It's not something that SIAST or our department has been looking at.

So I would suggest that they would ask the Minister of Industry and Resources when he comes up in estimates, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I understand that when some of the facilities were being built at . . . on the Woodland Campus, that there was some provision made for expansion. And I understand that one of the projects was this forestry centre building. And in fact that some . . . one of the facilities on the Woodland Campus actually has heating capacity to heat

a proposed building.

And I'm wondering if that in fact is correct, and how large a facility and what extra capacity do you have in . . . at the Woodland Campus for that type of thing?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Certainly I'm not aware of the particulars with regard to the forestry research centre. So what I can do is acquire that information and provide that to him. And also I would encourage him to ask those questions of the Minister of Industry and Resources when he comes up in estimates.

I can mention though that we are part of a multi-training program that is separate from the capital side on research and we do look at providing across-department training dollars for forestry initiatives.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. So if I understood you correctly then your department has no funds allocated for a forestry research centre building at the Woodland Campus, Mr. Minister. Is that correct?

(12:15)

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — That's correct, Mr. Deputy Chair. That's not on our particular radar screen at this point in time and we have not allocated any dollars for capital with regard to a forestry research centre. That would be within another department.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Minister, if such a research facility was to be built in Prince Albert, is there a capacity on the Woodland space for that building to be built? Also are there other research facilities at Woodland that would complement such a facility? In your opinion, Mr. Minister, if such a centre was to be built, would it make more sense to have it built . . . or would it make good sense to have it built at the SIAST campus rather than in another location?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — I think the answer, Mr. Deputy Chair, the most appropriate one is that you would look at having a feasibility study and a planning study, and look at what are the best linkages and liaisons that would occur, whether this is best suited close to Woodland Campus or is it best suited for another location or is it best suited to be perhaps located beside P.A. (Prince Albert) Carlton?

Well we don't know. So I think whatever the results of the feasibility study that would indicate the best location is, you know, the proper way to go on this one.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Minister, has your department or, in the past, the Post-Secondary Education department, ever conducted such a feasibility study with regards to a forestry research centre at the Woodland Campus?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — The answer is, no, we haven't conducted such a study. It's not within our particular jurisdiction at this point in time.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'd like to turn my questions now to the university funding mechanism, those extra dollars. I believe last time we discussed this issue in estimates you still had not made a determination as to the divvying up of those additional dollars. Have you at this point in time made that decision?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Mr. Deputy Chair, we're very close to having a final resolution with regard to our university funding mechanism. We're probably within two weeks.

Currently, at this point in time, the dollars available to both universities from last year's base has been provided, but we have not yet allocated the new dollars that have been available because we are still in negotiation between the two universities. But we're very close to having, I would think, a resolution to a problem that the member opposite would know has been ongoing for some time and has been the subject of many recommendations dating back probably seven or eight years, including the MacKay report and DesRosiers.

So I think it's very good news that we are getting as, probably, as close as ever to actually having a resolution with regard to our university funding mechanism. So I think that's good news for the House and for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Minister, so what you're saying is that, as I understand it, this special envelope of money was a three-year funding proposal and we're in our last year of this particular funding mechanism and you are very close to negotiating a permanent arrangement between the two universities? Is that what you're saying? And you will have this in place within the next two weeks?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Yes, Mr. Deputy Chair. We are in the final phase of the three-year phase-in with regard to the DesRosiers formula. There was additional dollars provided by the provincial government to address a long-standing inequity. That global amount of dollars has been provided in increments over the course of three years. This is the final year of phase-in. Those dollars have been set aside for the DesRosiers implementation.

And the member opposite is correct in that we are getting very close to having a final resolution for a more permanent solution in how we will be funding our universities in the future, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. Mr. Deputy Chair, to the minister: Mr. Minister, I want to go back again to Woodland Campus in Prince Albert. There's some areas of concern that the community has about the facility there.

Certainly last year the facility lost its truck driving course to Moose Jaw. It was quite a loss to that facility. A lot of jobs . . . some job transfers took place, and certainly the emptying of a building in the Prince Albert area. We now have an empty building that SPMC is now looking after. It's an unfortunate loss. And certainly to the Prince Albert area, there was some job creation around that.

But more than that, Mr. Minister, also involved with that was the advantages for young people in the Prince Albert and region

to be able to go to a local truck driving school. Because we certainly know, Mr. Minister, in this area of employment in the province, there's a bound . . . lots of employment opportunities.

But further to that, Mr. Minister, we also understand now that at the Woodland Campus in Prince Albert is that there are two further program cuts this year. One is in the ceramics area. Again enrolment was low. There was only seven students involved in it this spring.

But certainly we understand, of course, that if you move that program to another facility, those students are not going to follow. This is one of those programs that is more of a local initiative, and certainly it's not something that people are going to move any distance to be able to participate in this class.

So, Mr. Minister, I wonder if you might be willing to make a few comments as to the reasoning that went on behind the restructuring for that specific class because certainly it's of concern to the people of Prince Albert, and certainly those people who were looking forward to that ceramics class in future, Mr. Speaker . . . or Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. When we look at our SIAST campuses and the reputation as being pre-eminent deliverers of technology and trades activities in the province of Saskatchewan, we also recognize that every year our SIAST campuses have business plans, they have operating plans.

This provincial government has increased the dollars to our SIAST campuses by over 4 per cent this year.

What we have found that they have flexibility within their training and course curriculum environment to provide courses as the demand dictates. The demand for the ceramics course in P.A. with declining enrolments was such that it was really not feasible to, perhaps, maintain that course when they were seeing an increased demand in other areas.

So what they have done is they have added a new course to the Woodland Campus, SIAST, and it's resources law enforcement diploma. There's an new Internet communications certificate. They will also be adding a GIS/GPS (Geographic Information System/Global Positioning System) remote sensing and data imaging certificate.

And of course we're looking at the expanded nursing programs, 40 new training positions in Prince Albert as part of our nursing education training.

So these are decisions that are made autonomously by the SIAST board. They look at where the enrolments are, they look at the demand for courses, and they make adjustments on an ongoing basis. And we agree with that flexibility.

With regard to the movement, the move of the truck driving to Saskatoon, and I think part of it to Moose Jaw, this was in relation to what the demands of the industry were; that there was consultation. The industry felt that it was beneficial to have these training courses closer to where the major hub of industry was. And it is my understanding that's the reason why the SIAST board made that decision.

So they are autonomous boards. They have flexibility to make decisions based on course demand and training demand, and that they make these adjustments on an annual basis so that there will be courses removed and courses added on an ongoing basis. And they are autonomous to make those decisions depending on the labour market in the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Wiberg: — Mr. Deputy Chair, to the minister. Mr. Minister, certainly we need to allow administration opportunity for flexibility. But in the example that I used, this ceramics class, I very clearly stated that those opportunities would be lost to those students. They're certainly not going to travel any great distance for that type of course. It's something that is a very short course. And so then what's going to happen, Mr. Minister, is that there will be a position lost in the system for this educator. And that, Mr. Minister, is unfortunate.

And certainly you mention that the truck driving school has moved to Moose Jaw. You thought it would be better to decentralize, in consultation with the industry, although in the Prince Albert region, Mr. Minister, I want to make you clearly aware that a very large portion of the trucking industry in this province is based out of Prince Albert. And so then we still feel quite strongly that that program — probably by the SIAST officials — will need to be looked at in the very near future.

Because certainly there was another program lost last year, Mr. Minister, and that was the heavy duty mechanics course. That's been moved to Kelsey in Saskatoon. And that's another, again, unfortunate loss in Prince Albert. But there has been another loss that I'll get to that we also need to speak about.

But you did mention some programs that are starting up. But I wish to inform the minister that myself and the member from Prince Albert Northcote had the opportunity to attend the awards ceremony at Woodland Campus last Friday. And I wish to advise the minister that the courses that he mentioned are already up and running, and students are doing very well at it there. And so I thought I'd just inform the minister of what's happening in his department already.

There is a course, though, that we are very concerned about in Prince Albert. In the desire to centralize, Mr. Minister, is that the course for business administration diploma, the diploma course now has to be done in Moose Jaw. But the certificate program could be, up until this spring, Mr. Minister, could be attained in Prince Albert. And now that's being closed out and the entire program is being moved to Moose Jaw. There is a significant job loss that's going to be happening in Prince Albert. I believe there's about five staff that were associated with that, to my understanding, Mr. Minister.

And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you'd be able to comment on whether your department has appropriately looked at the ramifications of reducing students' abilities to access education on a more local basis rather than having to do it on a provincial basis, Mr. Minister?

(12:30)

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Certainly when we look at the provision of course curriculum,

that we are moving towards greater enhancement of Internet classes and technology enhanced learning. Through our TEL (technology enhanced learning) project, we are planning on having over 150 courses available. This, of course, will be available through the Internet in multiple locations and, really in essence, across Saskatchewan.

I also wish to mention to the member opposite that one of the . . . very close to the top of the priority list for the future for the SIAST campuses is Woodland consolidation where we will be seeing some expansion of not only core services and classes, but consolidation in other areas as well.

And when we see that the SIAST campuses are managed provincially by one board, that they look at the provincial perspective in labour needs and technology needs, and decisions are made so that one campus might lose one course and one campus might gain one course

But when we look at the improvements to Woodland Campus, the additional dollars that have come in, and this fall the start of 40 new nursing positions, that certainly I feel that Woodland Campus is providing an excellent opportunity to provide training in the province of Saskatchewan.

Also, Mr. Speaker, when I mentioned some of the classes, the new classes, of course, I was referring to that these were new classes offered at Woodland this year. And I wish to congratulate the graduates of those new programs and wish them every success for a successful career in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Mr. Minister, and to your officials, the big concern that K to 12 education is looking at today is I guess a different one than we had on budget day — although it was in the back of everybody's mind — that day we were talking about the amount of dollars that was going to go into education and the fact that it was actually a cutback and that the taxpayers were actually going to be cost . . . it was going to cost them more money.

But today the big concern that many school divisions have and teachers and parents is the teacher negotiations and the contract that is being in dispute right now or being talked about at the moment.

I understand that it has been decided to go to a conciliation, and there is a frustration on the part of both the SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association) and the STF (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation) that the government really has not put forward any kind of a mandate. Both the SSTA and the STF have presented proposals and they're waiting for the government. Can you tell us where you are in this process?

Hon. Mr. Melnychuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and thank you to the member opposite because she really does ask a very timely issue because it is my understanding that the negotiating teams are meeting at this very moment.

With regard to the conciliation process, negotiations are ongoing. There is a meeting that is happening right now. We

also recognize that conciliation has been applied for, and it is my understanding that the Teachers' Federation has indicated their member of the conciliation panel. The government trustee group has not yet indicated its member for the conciliation panel.

Then together they will jointly choose a Chair of that conciliation panel, and at that point they will be looking at the various positions of the parties at the table, and they will providing recommendations you know probably more as we get into the middle or maybe later in the summer in terms of their recommendations where they see a settlement might exist.

This of course becomes a public document. It also is a requirement for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation under the Act that when they choose the route under the Act of going the conciliation job action as opposed to the binding arbitration side, because two paths are allowed for under the Act with regard to collective bargaining, that once that conciliation has occurred — and it can be called for at any time once negotiations have begun — that it then puts them in a position where they then could move to the next step in terms of going to their membership for a mandate with regard to potential job action.

So I'm hopeful that negotiations will be successful, that they are ongoing, conciliation will occur in a parallel fashion as negotiations continue. And I would expect that as we get closer to the middle, end of summer, that we will be closer to having the issue of collective bargaining resolved at that time, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, Mr. Deputy Chair. Mr. Minister, I understand that the Chair has not been appointed and that the SSTA have not appointed their member yet. But when you talk about being hopeful, well I think the parents and the SSTA and the STF are wondering when we . . . We're looking at summer holidays coming up; we're nearing the end of June; most of the month of July there's . . . there won't be any talks taking place because of the holidays and at the end of August the contract is finished.

We've got September, parents are wondering are we going to have job action starting right away in September? There's still a very big frustration that the government, your department, has not come forward with any type of a mandate saying this is what we can actually start with in the bargaining process.

Everybody knows that the government at least has to say, this is our stand on it. Have you made that stand? Is there anything in your . . . anything going on right now that you can give both groups of people any kind of hope that you are actually working on some kind of a settlement rather than just saying, I'm hopeful it's going to end before school starts in the fall?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Obviously it's not for me to comment on what is being negotiated at the table at this very moment. And certainly when we look at the history of negotiations with teachers over the past 30 years, I can indicate that there has been a successful negotiation of every contract for the past 30 years and that the bi-level bargaining process and the way we approach collective bargaining with teachers in the province of Saskatchewan has

been quite successful and is a model that is looked at by many other jurisdictions as being a model that is quite functional and that other jurisdictions would like to emulate.

When we look at what is actually happening at the table, positions are being discussed. Certainly when you look at the range of items that might be discussed at a collective bargaining table, they are large. There have been I think now five or six separate meetings. And I think the most important thing to recognize for the people of Saskatchewan is that the contract with teachers does not expire till the end of August and that when we look at the track record in terms of when negotiation has started and how that negotiation has progressed, even at this point in time we are way ahead in terms of where we're at with negotiations than at any previous contract that I can recall in the past, you know, 10 or 15 years.

So in essence, the process is further along now than it ever has been before. And all I can say is that . . . let the parties negotiate. And we're all hopeful that a fair settlement for teachers and ratepayers can be achieved at the bargaining table.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Of course the process has been working and we are all very hopeful that it is going to work. And you'll understand that we haven't made a political issue out of this because when we're talking about education and the future of our children, it's not politics. It's the future of our province.

But, Mr. Minister, it is still a great concern when we see that, in the past, teachers have said they have been . . . they've tightened their belts for a number of years. We know that . . . what teachers' wages are doing compared to other provinces. We know the lack of teachers in various areas.

And we know that, on the other hand, the property tax owners in this province are saying I cannot bear one more cent on my taxes. It's something that this government is going to have to, going to have to eat. And at the same time, we understand the pressures of government.

So people are saying the government is looking at extra funding for agriculture, they're looking at a lot of the other issues and budgetary restraints that are coming. But education is still a priority. In fact in your Throne Speech I believe it was the third pillar of building this province, was education.

So, Mr. Minister, I think that what we need to know is that, other times, you're saying we're further along in the process on June 15 now compared to the end of the bargaining time than we were at other times. But I also believe that, at other times, the government at least had put forward some ideas. There was something concrete for the SSTA or the STF to say this is what the government is saying.

What are you saying at this time when it comes to money?

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Certainly when we look at our track record for education and the additional dollars we provided, not only in the K to 12 side but on the post-secondary side, it has been substantive the last few years.

When we talk about even for . . . with regard to recruitment and retention of issues, that we've had a tremendous impact with the additional dollars provided in last year's budget, over \$1 million to deal with recruitment and retention in rural and remote areas of Saskatchewan and northern Saskatchewan. And I can indicate to the member opposite that there has been some significant success with regard to recruiting and retaining teachers in northern Saskatchewan because of that initiative.

And that initiative has resulted that in this just-concluding school year that, at the beginning of the school year, the Northern Lights School Division, for example, had all of its teaching positions filled, which is the first time in some 10 or 15 years that they were able to achieve that. They've done remarkable work in making sure that they are recruiting teachers to northern Saskatchewan.

Now we recognize that more needs to be done. We recognize that wages and working conditions are crucial to recruiting and retaining teachers in the province of Saskatchewan — and we're sensitive to these issues. We also recognize that collective bargaining is happening at this point in time.

And I can assure the member opposite that this government wants to see a fair settlement for teachers, that teachers are supported in the province of Saskatchewan and that we want to see a fair settlement for our teachers, recognizing the circumstances. But we also recognize that there are fiscal constraints that also need to be taken into account.

So I say let the collective bargaining continue and we will monitor that process as it evolves, and we'll let them negotiate at the table, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Mr. Minister, a couple questions. And you and I chatted a bit about this, the Southeast Regional College in the southeast corner of the province, and the number of dramatic changes that are taking place within the college.

And certainly one community in particular and I know I have three other colleagues that will probably be raising some of the same concerns, although they're not as dramatically affected. The community of Whitewood has, and the Southeast College, has spent a fair bit of money in the last few years, really building a facility for the college to function in.

They have the special care aide program that has worked very well over the past number of years, and a number of university courses have been taken by the college in Whitewood. And, Mr. Minister, I guess a couple questions is, how are these colleges funded as far as direction? Where does the direction come from?

Does the department have any involvement or any suggestions regarding the programming? And is the department kept up to speed when major changes are being made within the college, and in particular in Whitewood's situation? I think they're going from something like 3.4 down to .6 positions within that facility itself.

I know there are other communities that are arguing well they're lacking some of the space they need for the programs

that they are offering. And I think that's some of the arguments the college is bringing forward.

But I'm wondering if you can bring me up to speed on where we're at and what the community of Whitewood can look forward to in regards to some of the major restructuring taking place?

(12:45)

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and thank you to the member opposite. I have had some discussions with the member opposite with regard to this issue and I just would like to inform the House that regional colleges are autonomous boards. They are made up of community representatives. With regard to the Southeast Regional College it, as all regional colleges, do provide a business plan on an annual basis to the department, which is approved.

There were . . . there may have been some glitches in this last go-round with regard to their business plan not including some of the aspects with regard to reorganization. So we've asked the union representatives and the board and members of the community to get together to talk about some of these issues.

Certainly it is within the purview of a regional college to look within its region in terms of how it provides courses and course content to meet the needs of industry and training opportunities within their region. It may mean that there might be a decrease in a particular training opportunity in Whitewood. And it is my understanding that there would also be a corresponding increase in Moosomin in terms of some of those training opportunities.

But I have asked, I have received correspondence from the council and mayor of Whitewood. I have received some concerns from some of the representatives of the employees in the regional college area and that they are currently discussing these issues, and I'm hopeful that we can come to a resolution with regard to the reorganization in the very near future.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Deputy Chair, Mr. Minister, a further question and that is how are regional colleges funded? Where do they get their funding? And in regards to the boards, how are the boards appointed? Is this the Department of Education looks through a number of names that are submitted and puts in place a board? I wonder if you could just give a response to those questions, please.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. With regard to the question from the member opposite, I think first off it's important to recognize that there was a significant boost in the funding from the Department of Learning to regional colleges this year — a little over 14 per cent in the global dollars available which was a significant bump to the funding of regional colleges.

So the short answer to his first question is that regional colleges receive their funding from the Department of Learning and there was a 14 per cent increase this year.

With regard to his further points, Mr. Speaker, the boards of regional colleges are appointed by order in council, but they need to represent the geography of their region and they need to

have certain qualifications. In other words they should be qualified in understanding financial issues, they should be qualified in understanding educational needs of their communities, and so forth.

So they are appointments made by the government based on a set of criteria that would complement a good board structure, and they then make decisions for that regional college in their community.

So funding comes from the Department of Learning, a 14 per cent increase this year, boards are appointed, and boards are responsive to their communities. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Deputy Chair, a further question. And maybe the minister could have this in writing by Monday as it'd take up a fair bit of time on the floor. But could you give me an idea of the 14 per cent increase and what that means to each one of the regional colleges? Like with the Southeast, what they would have received as a result of the increase this year, and the other regional colleges in the province? If I could have something in writing for Monday, that would be appreciated and that would be fine.

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well I can give him that information right now with regard to the grant for the Southeast College. It was 1.77 million last year and it's 1.896 million this year. The total for all colleges was a little over 13 million last year, and it's 14.7 million this year.

So those are the global numbers, but if he has any more specific questions with regard to programming he just has to ask and I'll provide that information to him. So thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

The committee reported progress.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask — or Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry — I'd like to ask leave of the House to move a motion respecting sitting hours.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Hours of Sitting

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers:

That notwithstanding rule 3(1), on Thursday, June 27, 2002, the times for the daily meeting and adjournment shall be 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and when the Assembly adjourns at 1 p.m., it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, July 2 at 1:30 p.m.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to move that this House do now adjourn and wish all the

members a good weekend.

The Speaker: — And I too would like to wish everyone a very pleasant weekend.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:55.