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December 16, 2019

Trent Wotherspoon, Chair
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
2405 Legislative Drive
REGINA SK S4S 0B3

Dear Trent Wotherspoon:

During the September 26, 2019 consideration by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for the Ministry of Social Services, I committed to provide additional information on several issues:

1. **Vicki Mowat:** "between October 1st, 2015 and September 30th, 2016 the ministry placed 50 per cent of the children who became permanent wards on the adoption list within 120 days. I'm wondering if we have data on the proportion of children who were successfully put on that list that are of Indigenous descent, if you have that breakdown."

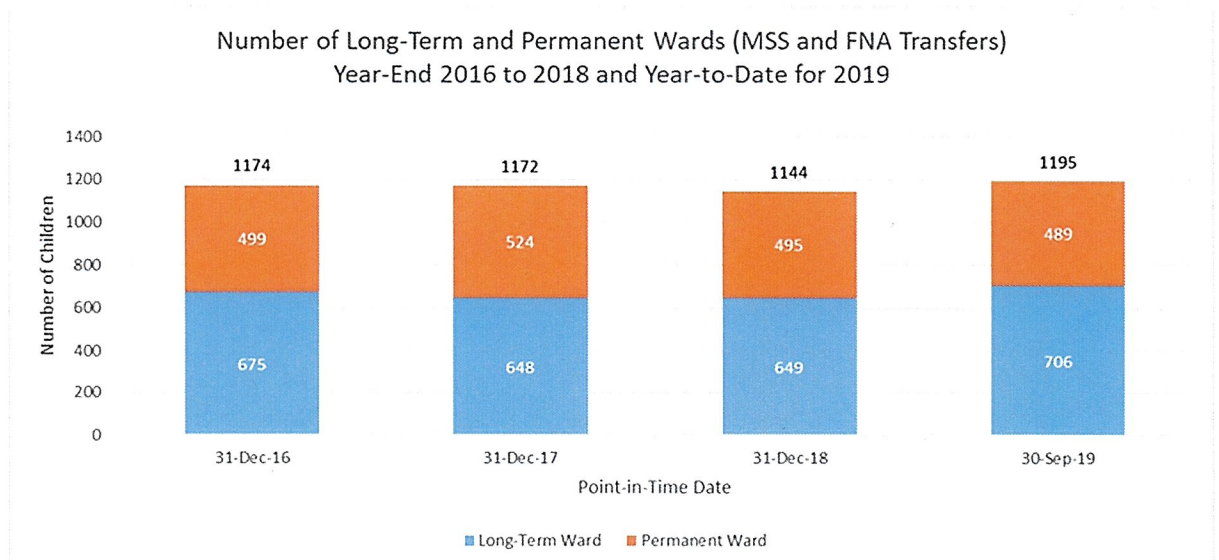
| | 2015 | 2016 |
|----------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Proportion of Indigenous Children Registered | 89% | 79% |

2. **Vicki Mowat:** "It would be great if it could be provided back to the committee, just so we could get a sense of what the breakdown looks like, and also whether . . . Do you know whether there's a variation in timelines between the south, central, and northern service areas as well?"

In samples of files reviewed by the ministry's Quality Assurance Unit, there was some variation between the service areas in timelines to register children for adoption within the 120 days. However, the variances were not statistically significant.

3. **Vicki Mowat:** “I see that on chapter 39 when we’re looking at the number of permanent wards, on December 31st, 2018 the ministry had 465 permanent wards and 609 long-term wards in its care. Can you provide an update on what that number looked like for 2019, anything that you have presently, as well as 2017, 2016, so just so we can get a sense of a trend?”

Note: the numbers noted above only represent ministry (MSS) wards and do not include First Nations Agency (FNA) transfers, while the below chart includes FNA transfers.



4. **Vicki Mowat:** “Thank you. In terms of the staff complements in each service area, do you have a breakdown of what the FTEs look like for folks who are providing these services?” “Can you also provide any note of vacancies at the same time?”

There are 73 Children’s Services Caseworkers throughout the province who are dedicated to providing services to long-term and permanent wards. There are also a number of staff located in smaller offices who have a blended role and provide a variety of services.

At the time the question was posed, four staffing actions were underway with regards to positions that provide services to long-term and permanent wards.

5. **Vicki Mowat:** “So we know that there’s been an increased focus on increasing the adoption rates. Has there been a corresponding funding increase or allocation of resources for agencies that provide these services?”

The ministry provides funding to the Adoption Support Centre of Saskatchewan to provide pre- and post-adoption related services.

| Fiscal year | Annualized |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2015-16 | \$200,744 |
| 2016-17 | \$200,744 |
| 2017-18 | \$203,815 |
| 2018-19 | \$244,015 |
| 2019-20 | \$362,549 |
| Grand Total | \$1,211,867 |

6. **Randy Weekes:** “My question is about the length of time that a child would be in either long-term care or permanent, and including children that just go into foster care on an interim basis. My question is, how long before an older child would be adopted?”

The length of time a child may spend in care on either a short-term, long-term, or permanent basis varies case by case. This information is not readily available in the ministry’s case management system, Linkin.

7. **Randy Weekes:** “So what is the per cent of children being adopted after five or whatever the number is that you use?”

In 2018, 36% of children placed for the purposes of adoption were six years of age or older.
The table below provides the age ranges of children placed for the purposes of adoption in 2018.

| Placed for the purpose of adoption by age at time of placement | January 1 - December 31, 2018 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Age 0-2 | 18 |
| Age 3-5 | 21 |
| Age 6-9 | 14 |
| Age 10-12 | 3 |
| Age 13 + | 5 |
| Total Placements | 61 |

8. **Mowat:** “On page 196 it indicates that the ministry had 180 child protection caseworkers as of March 2018. Is there a number of how many there are today?”

For September 2019, the ministry has 212 Child Protection Caseworker employees.

9. **Vicki Mowat:** “So it says, of those children who are wards of the minister, the ministry staff caseworkers cared for 94.3 per cent of the children, and First Nations agencies cared for 5.7 per cent of the children. I’m wondering if the percentage of care provided by the First Nations agencies has increased as we’ve seen new agreements come into place.”

As at September 30, 2019, 5.5% of children’s cases were being managed by First Nations Agencies and 94.5% were being managed by ministry caseworkers. The change is minimal and not statistically significant.

10. Vicki Mowat: “On page 216, about the third paragraph in, it says:

In 2016, SaskHousing completed an analysis of communities that were experiencing long-term vacancies. SaskHousing identified 34 communities with a population of less than 300 where there are chronic vacancies of over 30%. SaskHousing developed options for addressing these vacancies.

Management presented these options to the board and decided to sell certain housing units. Can you provide an update on how many units were sold and what the total revenue was?”

Between June 2017 and July 31, 2019, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) sold 153 units for a gross sales amount of \$4,499,901.00. Of those, 99 were in communities with populations less than 300.

| June 2017 - July 2019 | Sale Proceeds | Units |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Greater than 300 Population | \$2,689,200 | 54 |
| Less than 300 Population | \$1,810,701 | 99 |
| Grand Total | \$4,499,901 | 153 |

11. The Chair: Okay, so if we could just have supplied back to the committee the ones that have been sold, and then I think that there was a question around dollar value maybe, so that could attach to the community and the unit. The ones that are listed obviously there won't be a dollar value other than whatever it's listed for. And then can you also supply, unless you're able to at the table here today, the units and respective communities that the decision's been made that will be sold?

Below is a list of properties that are currently listed. Please note there are currently two properties waiting for possession, two properties that are conditionally sold, and one direct sale to the community of Weyakwin.

| Active Properties | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Community | Address | Units | Price of Property Listed |
| Brabant Lake | 4-3 McKenzie Street | 1 | \$30,000 |
| Glaslyn | 321A & 321B Wood Crescent | 2 | \$58,000 |
| Govan | 406 Elgin Street | 1 | \$35,000 |
| Kipling | 312 2nd Street | 1 | \$60,000 |
| Milestone | 1305 Winnipeg Crescent | 1 | \$134,900 |
| Regina | 1938 Robinson Street (land) | 0 | \$64,900 |
| | 1932 Robinson Street (land) | 0 | \$64,900 |
| | 1839 Robinson Street (land) | 0 | \$49,900 |
| Rhein | 11 1st Avenue NE | 6 | \$71,600 |
| Stoughton | 209 Heward Street | 1 | \$110,000 |
| Wapella | 118 3rd Avenue North | 1 | \$44,000 |
| Weyakwin | 34 Ross St. | 1 | \$28,000 |
| Grand Total | | 16 | \$751,200 |

I trust this information meets your needs.

Sincerely,



Tammy Kirkland
Deputy Minister of Social Services

cc: Members of Standing Committee on Public Accounts:
Don McMorris, Deputy Chair, Greg Brkich, David Buckingham, Herb Cox, Lisa Lambert, Vicki Mowat, Randy Weekes