

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**  
**March 14, 2001**

**MINUTE NO. 12**  
**9:00 a.m. - Room 10**

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Krawetz in the Chair and Members Draude, Harper, Higgins, Jones, Kwiatkowski, Stewart, Wakefield, Wartman and Yates.

**Substituting Members**

Ms. Draude for Mr. Gantefer

Mr. Harper for Mr. Trew

Mr. Yates for Ms. Lorjé

**Provincial Auditor's Office**

Fred Wendel, Acting Provincial Auditor

Brian Atkinson, Acting Assistant Provincial Auditor

Judy Ferguson, Executive Director

Rod Grabarczyk, Principal

Rodd Jersak, Manager

Joanne Matchett, Manager

Jamie Burrows, Acting Manager

Amy Schwab, Acting Manager

**Provincial Comptroller's Office**

Terry Paton, Provincial Comptroller

Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

Lori Taylor, Manager

2. The Committee proceeded to consider pages 121-132 of Chapter 2 (Education: Key Risk – Monitoring Vulnerable Students) of the *Fall 1999 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 2)*, pages 194-196 of Chapter 14 (Education: Teachers' Superannuation Commission) of the *Spring 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor* and Chapter 3 (Education) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Ms. Ferguson of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Department of Education officials appeared before the Committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Dr. Craig Dotson, Deputy Minister

John McLaughlin, Executive Director, Teachers' Superannuation Commission

Frances Bast, Director, Finance and Administration

3. The Committee recessed from 10:40 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.
4. The Committee concurred with recommendation 2-1 made at page 132 of Chapter 2 (Education) of the *Fall 1999 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 2)*, that the Department take a leadership and coordinating role to improve the monitoring of the movement of vulnerable children between schools and education systems.

5. The Committee next considered recommendation 3-1 made at page 181 of Chapter 3 (Education) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. It was moved by Mr. Wartman that:

The Committee acknowledges the fact that the Department of Education is complying with Treasury Board policy and according to that policy, the Department of Education is properly and appropriately recording and reporting on pension costs.

The question being put and a debate arising, the motion was agreed to.

6. The Committee concurred with recommendation 14-1 made at page 195 of Chapter 14 (Education) of the *Spring 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor*, that the Commission should ensure it provides its annual report to the Legislative Assembly by the date required by law.
7. The Committee next considered recommendation 14-2 made at page 196 of Chapter 14 (Education) of the *Spring 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. It was moved by Ms. Draude that:

The Committee does not agree with the Auditor's recommendation that the Teachers' Superannuation Commission should establish rules and procedures to independently verify information it receives from school boards, noting that the Commission has taken steps to firstly educate the school boards on their reporting obligations and secondly to verify that reliable information is reported to the Commission; and further that the Committee wishes to allow these steps to be implemented before deciding upon the issue.

The question being put and a debate arising, the motion was agreed to.

8. The Committee recessed from 12:00 noon until 1:30 p.m.
9. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 5 (Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Ms. Ferguson of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training officials appeared before the Committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Neil Yeates, Deputy Minister

Lily Stonehouse, Assistant Deputy Minister

Gordon Sisson, Director, Financial Planning, Finance and Operations

John Janzen, Acting Executive Director, Student Financial Assistance Branch

10. The Committee noted that four of the six recommendations made at page 209 of Chapter 5 (Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*, had been considered and concurred with in earlier Committee reports. Only the two new recommendations would be considered at the current meeting.
11. The Committee concurred with the fourth recommendation made at page 209 of Chapter 5 (Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*, that the Department should ensure its systems identify and track all costs related to labour market activities and provide regular reporting throughout the year.

12. The Committee next considered the fifth recommendation made at page 209 of Chapter 5 (Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. It was then moved by Ms. Jones that:

The Department should continue to work with the Federal Government to gain a common understanding on eligible costs before the fiscal year begins.

The question being put and a debate arising, the motion was agreed to.

13. The Committee adjourned at 2:55 p.m. to the call of the Chair.

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Margaret A. Woods  
Committee Clerk

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Ken Krawetz  
Committee Chair