



**PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

Third Session
Forty-Seventh General Assembly

**Proceedings of the Standing Committee on
Social Services**

April 7, 2014 - Issue 2

Department of Education

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Education

Chair: Glenn Littlejohn, MHA

Vice-Chair: Tony Cornect, MHA

Members:

Lisa Dempster, MHA

Gerry Rogers, MHA

Glen Little, MHA

Dale Kirby, MHA

Kevin Pollard, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Sandra Barnes

Appearing:

Department of Education

Hon. Clyde Jackman, MHA, Minister

Sheldon Antle, Executive Assistant to Minister

Ingrid Clarke, Assistant Deputy Minister, Infrastructure

Heather May, Director of Communications

Joan Morris, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services

Don Stapleton, Departmental Controller

Janet Vivian-Walsh, Deputy Minister

Ed Walsh, Assistant Deputy Minister, Primary, Elementary & Secondary Education

Also Present

Lorraine Michael, MHA

Kim Ploughman, Researcher, Official Opposition Office

Susan Williams, Researcher, NDP Office

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Lorraine Michael, MHA for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi substitutes for Gerry Rogers, MHA for St. John's Centre.

The Committee met at 6:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CHAIR (Littlejohn): Good evening, everyone.

Welcome to the Social Services Committee of Estimates. This evening our Estimates Committee will be reviewing the Estimates of the Department of Education. I will take this opportunity on behalf of the Committee, Minister, to welcome you and your staff to Estimates this evening.

What I will do, prior to going to you, Minister, I am going to ask the members of the Estimates Committee and their staff to introduce themselves. Then we will go to the minister, and I will ask the minister to do the same.

Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: Dale Kirby, MHA for St. John's North.

MS PLOUGHMAN: Good evening, Kim Ploughman, Liberal Researcher.

MS MICHAEL: Lorraine Michael, MHA for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

MS WILLIAMS: Susan Williams, NDP Researcher.

MR. LITTLE: Glen Little, MHA for Bonavista South.

MR. CORNETT: Tony Cornett, MHA for the beautiful, great cultural District of Port au Port.

MR. POLLARD: Kevin Pollard, MHA for Baie Verte – Springdale District.

MS DEMPSTER: Lisa Dempster, MHA for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

CHAIR: Minister, welcome.

Minister, I will ask you to introduce your staff first and then you have fifteen minutes for

opening remarks. Once your remarks are concluded, I will give Mr. Kirby the first fifteen minutes, after that Ms Michael, ten and ten. We will give some grace if we are in the middle of something and there is a follow-up question or something like that.

In the interest of our friends at the Broadcast Centre – there is only one at the Broadcast Centre tonight – at 7:30 if we are not finished, which I do not expect we will be, we are going to take about a five minute break so the staff at the Broadcast Centre can have a little bit of break and attend to their needs as well. If everybody is in agreement with that, I thank you.

Minister Jackman.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you.

Clyde Jackman, Minister of Education, and MHA for the District of Burin – Placentia West.

I am going to get my staff to introduce themselves. All they have to remember is wait for the red light to come on and then you can speak.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Janet Vivian-Walsh, Deputy Minister.

MS MORRIS: Joan Morris, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services.

MS CLARKE: Ingrid Clarke, ADM, Infrastructure.

MS MAY: Heather May, Director of Communications.

MR. WALSH: Ed Walsh, Assistant Deputy Minister, Primary, Elementary and Secondary.

MR. ANTLE: Sheldon Antle, Executive Assistant.

MR. STAPLETON: Don Stapleton, Departmental Controller.

CHAIR: I am Glenn Littlejohn, Chair of the Committee. I am the MHA for Port de Grave.

Minister Jackman, for your opening remarks, sir.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In the interest of moving proceedings along, I am going to keep my comments brief. I made a fair number of statements about our investment this year and I will continue to do that.

I have to say, I am proud of our investments that we have made in Education in this year's budget; everything from full-day Kindergarten to school infrastructure, teaching resources, student assistants and more. I think equally as important, I am very proud and pleased with the legacy that we have since 2003.

When we look at it, we have a more generous teacher allocation model, as an example. I do not know if people know it or not, but there are 265 more teachers in the system today relative to student enrolment than there was in 2007. We have allocated over \$681 million in infrastructure. We have thirteen new schools; we have nine more on the way. We have twenty-six major extensions or redevelopments. We have eight more schools that are in progress, and one of them in your district, Mr. Chair.

We have \$56 million to eliminate standard school fees and \$21 million to extend pre-textbooks for all Kindergarten to Grade XII students. While we say that statement, when we were getting ready for Estimates today I looked at a list that we have on the cost of books now. I think it would just simply blow people's minds away at the expense and the cost of these books and the cost that parents would incur if they had to purchase them.

I think back to that, when we announced those types of things, these were the things we were certainly hearing from the parent community, that this was an expense on parents. I can remember being in the school myself, and I am sure Janet, my deputy, can remember, and Mr. Walsh who came in as a principal, that every September it was a heavy demand on parents getting students ready for school. To say that we have eliminated textbooks and fees, that will be one of the proudest parts of our legacy in K-12 education.

The Cultural Connections Strategy is \$18.7 million now with programming, and that did not exist before 2005. You can go into any

classrooms now and you see the interactive white boards, and the computers, and the iPads. We recognize that we are moving more towards technology.

I was at a school in Mount Pearl a little while ago, I passed by a door and this little one, a Grade I student was out on a little break and I saw him there with his iPad. While we have to be very conscious of keeping students active, we also have to be aware that the future of education, certainly technology is going to be a large part of that. Go into any school and new schools that are being built, and take a look at the skilled trades rooms that are in place. Our overall Education budget has increased by 48 per cent, despite a 17.5 per cent reduction in enrolment. This is one of the facts that I am very proud of, our per-pupil investment has increased by 75 per cent. We have gone from \$7,400 in 2003 to \$13,000 in 2014. Now those are numbers, but when you put it in comparison, our per-pupil ratio is the best in all of Atlantic Canada – so, again, our commitment to education.

My final point is that folks who are around me, I have been into this portfolio now since 2011, and these are the folks I work with on a daily basis. Our department is large but oftentimes I do not get to interact with the rest of the staff, certainly as much as I do with these people, and I would put these folks up against anywhere in the world in terms of their abilities, and I think more so in terms of their interest in education and our youth.

So, sir, I will conclude my comments there, and we will move on into our Estimates.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Just for the interest of Committee members, in the Budget Estimates book we are starting at page 15.3, Minister's Office.

I will ask the Clerk to call the first subhead, please.

CLERK (Ms Barnes): Subhead 1.1.01.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 carry?

Dale.

MR. KIRBY: Under Transportation and Communications, how much of that is transportation and how much of that is communications?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, I do not know if we – would we have the breakdown for that?

OFFICIAL: We can get that.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

One of the things that drove the cost up a bit this year – and you or Joan can speak to some of that or we can give him the breakdown. The Canadian Council of Ministers has a meeting every year. This coming July it is in PEI. This past year it was in Iqaluit; therefore, the cost of getting to Iqaluit compared to PEI is different and that is one of the results in driving that item up.

MR. KIRBY: That is CMEC, is it?

MR. JACKMAN: CMEC, yes – and I do not know, Joan or Janet, if you want to speak to specifically what was asked there.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Approximately \$3,000 for communications.

CHAIR: Dale, when you are doing your reference, can you just reference the number just so we can all follow along with you, please.

MR. KIRBY: Sure.

CHAIR: Thank you.

MR. KIRBY: It is the same one. Does that include staff expenses as well for transportation and/or communications?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that would include my secretarial staff, my CA, and my EA.

CHAIR: Dale.

MR. KIRBY: Your constituency assistant?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Or your communications assistant, is that what it is?

MR. JACKMAN: It would be my –

MR. KIRBY: Communication staff, not constituency assistant.

MR. JACKMAN: Mine, my EA, and my secretary.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

This line for Minister's Office – wherever it is, I do not know if it is here or not, so I will just ask the question more generally. Is there any expenditure for polling in either this page or the subsequent page? Has the minister's office conducted any public opinion polling in the last year?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MR. KIRBY: The amount for Purchased Services here, can you explain the nature?

MR. JACKMAN: From \$2,700 to \$700?

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: We juggled some around for services. We did not have as much purchased services so that expenditure was put towards the travel costs, the \$48,800.

MR. KIRBY: What was purchased for \$700?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That could be a variety of things. I could give you the breakdown. I cannot give you the exact breakdown right here, but it could be from purchased services anything from some printing, some advertising when school opens sometimes, and those kinds of things.

If you need an itemized breakdown, Mr. Kirby, we can provide it.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: I might even include a set of pens.

MR. KIRBY: If we go to the next one, 1.2.01.01, Salaries. There was a slight increase.

MR. JACKMAN: Those are signing bonuses for eight individuals.

MR. KIRBY: A signing bonus?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, from \$827 to \$867. The next line there is that there was a Manger of Communications hired that is in line with other departments.

MR. KIRBY: Why would the Department of Education be providing a signing bonus for hiring?

MR. JACKMAN: This is the collective agreement.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is part of the collective bargaining increases.

MR. KIRBY: Oh, I see.

MR. JACKMAN: The \$1,400.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is right, the \$1,400.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, I get it now.

Did anyone retire from this staff complement in the last year?

MR. JACKMAN: Not from this particular section.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

The Director of Communications is listed here and not in the Minister's Office, right?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Is there a particular reason why that staff person is listed here and not in the previous item?

MR. JACKMAN: Up under Minister's Office?

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: It is Executive Support.

MR. KIRBY: We have under there for the Transportation and Communications – how much is transportation and how much is communications, roughly?

MR. JACKMAN: I do not have that exactly written down here, but we can certainly find it.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: We will provide that, Mr. Kirby. I do not have that right in front of me, but we certainly can provide that.

MR. KIRBY: That is all the ten people that this line covers spent on transportation and communications for the area?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is correct.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Just one point, Mr. Chair, please?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Could we establish at the beginning that any request that is made, the information then gets sent to all parties?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, not a problem.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you.

MR. KIRBY: What was the \$5,000 expenditure under Purchased Services?

CHAIR: Subhead 1.2.01.

Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That could be a multitude of things in terms of a rental for a space for the staff professional development. It could be some promotional things. It could be advertising. It could be a multitude of things including the printing as well. I will have to provide that as well for you, Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

The next page, under General Administration, Administrative Support, 2.1.01.01, Salaries, we have an increase there again.

MR. JACKMAN: There were some retirement-related costs like severance for two employees and there was a signing bonus for twenty-five employees.

MR. KIRBY: Was there anyone new hired?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MR. KIRBY: Then there was a larger Transportation and Communications – well, it is far larger here than it is for the combined expenditure for ministers –

MR. JACKMAN: Are you looking at the \$289,000 or the \$192,000?

MR. KIRBY: Well, I mean with \$311,300.

MR. JACKMAN: That is what was budgeted.

MR. KIRBY: That is what was budgeted here.

MR. JACKMAN: The actual was \$192,000. There was certainly less travel.

MR. KIRBY: There are sixteen positions under this one, right?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Postage would be about \$223,000.

MR. KIRBY: For postage?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes. That would be associated with perhaps teachers' payroll which is a very large payroll.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

So a lot on communications then?

MR. JACKMAN: It was what?

MR. KIRBY: A lot on communications as opposed to transportation?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Then are there any details about purchased services here, or is that the same as the previous two?

MR. JACKMAN: You want the same as you did –

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Printing and advertising would be part of that. There could be some other things in rental spaces and photocopiers.

MR. KIRBY: So printing like ads in *The Telegram*, advertising –

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Departmental printing.

MR. KIRBY: Then advertising in the newspapers, Transcontinental – is that the sort of advertising we are talking about?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Advertising for the opening and closing of schools and for supplementary exams, those kinds of advertising.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

Grants and Subsidies, which organizations would receive grants and/or subsidies through this \$45,000 listed there?

MR. JACKMAN: Oftentimes we will get some requests for something outside of an ordinary program, so it is –

MR. KIRBY: Okay, sort of a discretionary –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, sort of.

MR. KIRBY: There was a projection that there would be \$80,000 in revenue, but that only came at \$18,500.

MR. JACKMAN: It is anticipated that number that we have there, and sometimes there might be overpayments for something. So those would be costs that would be asked for and returned.

Right now there are better controls, and there are less overpayments happening. These could be anything, like leave codes where someone might have gotten paid incorrectly or something and then you have to ask for it back. Like I said, because of stricter measures and I think more accountability at the department, there is less of that happening, thus the number is down.

MR. KIRBY: The projection for the coming year for this budget is the same as what it was before.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I suppose we could have lowered it, but we put it as an anticipated cost more than anything.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

The next one is 2.1.02, Assistance to Educational Agencies and Advisory Committees. Am I to assume there are quite a number of groups getting – would this be where –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes there are. That is funding for CMEC, which is the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada; Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training; Federation of School Councils; Cultural Connections; T.I. Murphy. That is just a few of them there but we can certainly give you the entire list.

MR. KIRBY: We can get a list of the various groups and the amounts of funding?

MR. JACKMAN: Encounters with Canada is another one.

MR. KIRBY: Have any of those groups had their funding reduced in this budget?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MR. KIRBY: A number of them did last year.

Does this cover any committees that would be established internally or these are all organizations entirely external from the Department of Education?

MR. JACKMAN: These are all groups, yes.

MR. KIRBY: One of the requests from the Federation of School Councils this year was for a parental involvement pilot project. It was \$25,000 for fifty school councils, \$500 each to increase parental involvement. Was this considered? That was part of the pre-budget consultation. Was there any particular reason why the department decided not to?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, in addition to this \$25,000, we provided them with \$5,000 to help with their convention this past weekend. I have indicated to the council, when they had this one I requested that they submit what their attendance was at their convention. I am more than interested in looking at where we go with the council.

MR. KIRBY: Last year when the school districts were all merged into the one English language board there seemed to be a commitment to try and engage with communities more through the Federation of School Councils but there does not appear to be anything additional in this budget for that. Is there anything under consideration for the future?

MR. JACKMAN: Like I said, I have indicated to them based on a go-forward basis to see where it goes, but despite moving with one English board and one Francophone board, the number of school councils has not changed from what it was last year. We will just gauge that on a go-forward basis.

MR. KIRBY: The number of school councils has not increased, or is that –?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, if there has been a closure of a school there would be one less, but there has not been a drastic change in the number of school councils that exist provincially through the consolidation of school boards.

MR. KIRBY: I know what you are saying. I guess my question is more –

CHAIR: Dale, your time has expired. Do you want to hold it there or do you have a concluding question?

MR. KIRBY: Yes, we can come back later. That is fine.

CHAIR: We can come back, okay.

Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: I think what I will do before I go into a line item is – it might be continuing a little bit what Mr. Kirby was doing there. It is a broader one, I guess.

Since we have been through Executive and we are into Corporate Services, it seems the place to ask this question rather than doing all the line items and then coming back. With the change to the single English language school board, have you, or are you in the process of – whichever tense should be used there. Are you thinking about putting in place a whole process for evaluating this whole change? Because it seems to me that to evaluate it you almost need to set that right up at the beginning in terms of the process, like who is in charge of it, what needs to be evaluated as we go down the road with this new system.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, certainly. The people who are in charge – but to say there is an administrative process in place now to do the overall assessment, there is not a group that is identified to do that, but we have our school board trustees that are in place. I have total confidence in the board, from the CEO down. We are not through a full year yet until August, but you will certainly be doing a – I do not know if there will be a formal review, but there will certainly be discussion with these people to see where there may be areas that we might have to revisit. There might be areas where we may even be able to look a little bit further, but we are not through a year yet.

MS MICHAEL: In doing that, would you then be reaching out to groups like the school councils to help in that kind of assessment and evaluation?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, I do not have to reach out to some groups because they provide their information quite readily and up front.

MS MICHAEL: If you have an evaluation process in particular areas that you are going to want to look at. Would you not want to identify those areas, not just assume that you are going to get information that you need?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Having more of a structured way of gathering information, say, from the school councils.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, certainly the school councils is one group, there is no doubt about it, but our administrators at the office here in St. John's, plus those who operate in the regional centres, are certainly working day in and day out on the ground. They will be providing us with what they see are the needs. I will certainly discuss it with our staff as to how we might be able to seek further engagement from other groups out there.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, just let me see now where we are. That was 2.1.02, right?

CHAIR: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Which means the next one is –

CHAIR: Subhead 2.1.03, Policy and Planning, Ms Michael, would be the next one.

MS MICHAEL: I skipped a page too quickly, that is what happened. Thank you very much.

That is where we are: 2.1.03. I guess I have one major question here and that would be under Professional Services where no money was required from Professional Services in the past year. What was that about?

MR. JACKMAN: We were planning on doing a review of our library services.

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: That did not go ahead, but recently we just had a meeting with the library board and we are reconsidering taking a look at that.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. I may have more questions about that when we come to another section that includes the libraries.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, I think that is all I have there.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible).

MS MICHAEL: Oh, right. A policy question here – could you give us an update, Minister, on the Strategic Adult Literacy Plan, where things are with that?

MR. JACKMAN: The adult?

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: That would be with AES.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, not here, that is what I thought. Thank you.

Moving over then to 2.2.01, under the salary line there was an over expenditure from the budget in Salaries in the past year. What was that about?

MR. JACKMAN: That is a salary continuance for one of the employees totaling \$51,000 and the signing bonus for eight employees.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, great. Thank you very much.

I do not see anything else there in a big way. I do have a question, though. First of all, under 01, Revenue, what is the money that comes from the federal government?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, we had it budgeted there for \$425,300. The federal government did change some of its funding this year. It is \$11,300 less.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: They are still funding the youth initiative.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. It is not a partnership – they fund it totally?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you very much.

Minister, I am wondering, with regard to the full-day Kindergarten – and I am delighted that we are going to have the full-day Kindergarten –

MR. JACKMAN: Are you going to say that in the House tomorrow?

MS MICHAEL: I said it already today, actually, if you had heard my first speech to the Budget.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you.

MS MICHAEL: I said a little bit more – I would like an Early Childhood Education plan that includes that plus child care, but you will have to read Hansard to see what I said.

I also said that I am curious about – because I heard you say, and if I am wrong, you can tell me –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: – and I cannot remember which time it was, but I thought you did say that there were a number of schools that could have been ready for all-day Kindergarten.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there is.

MS MICHAEL: I think you said forty-three or something like that.

MR. JACKMAN: There is about seventy or so.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

Why could that not –

MR. JACKMAN: No, I am sorry, there are about 100 or so that were ready –

MS MICHAEL: Oh, is it? Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: – and seventy or seventy-five that has to have some work done with them.

MS MICHAEL: So why could we not phase this in and start it with schools that could have been ready?

MR. JACKMAN: We considered all of that, but we just made a decision that it is going to be implemented all at the one time.

MS MICHAEL: For no special reason, just, let us go that way?

MR. JACKMAN: No. We decided that we would do it universally.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

I disagree with that, but –

MR. JACKMAN: I know.

MS MICHAEL: – at least I have your answer.

MR. JACKMAN: I could have tried and talked around it, but I knew I was not going to get there.

MS MICHAEL: The need is there, the need is identified, you have recognized it, and I say there would have been a lot of parents who would have been quite happy to have it started in September.

MR. JACKMAN: Where we are finding the highest demand is in the more urban areas –

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: – and that is where most of the work has to be done.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. That answer makes sense to me, see.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: All right, just checking and making sure I have no more questions under that.

Could you just give us some more detail about the status of the Youth Internship Program?

MR. JACKMAN: The –

MS MICHAEL: The Youth Internship Program.

CHAIR: Joan.

MS MORRIS: Funding there is to cover student employment. Usually there is around sixty-five successful applicants every year for that. There are a number of eligible areas – or groups, I should say, that could apply for the funding. This past year there was monies provided under

that for a number of community locations where students would assist in Internet connectivity and that kind of thing at the local level, either at public library boards or community organizations that were successful in receiving the grant.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, so sixty-five in all that is the total number?

MS MORRIS: That is my understanding; yes, it was sixty-five.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, good.

In general, what are the qualifications that are required?

CHAIR: Joan.

MS MORRIS: I would certainly have to check on that, Ms Michael, but I would presume that they would certainly have to have some technology background in terms of assisting clients at the various sites in order to be able to access the Internet and some rudimentary computer skills. They are trying to, I guess, model appropriate usage of computer technology.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: I can speak to that.

That is one of the qualifications that they have some technology experience.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Thank you very much.

CHAIR: Do you have a follow-up to that, Ms Michael?

MS MICHAEL: No, I think I have come to the end of that, so I am ready to pass it over.

CHAIR: Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: I will just pick up where I left off back on 2.1.02.10, Grants and Subsidies.

What is the total amount of funding that was provided for the federation school councils in this particular –

MR. JACKMAN: It is \$25,000.

MR. KIRBY: Just \$25,000.

Is there something that you have in mind to implement to ensure that there is a greater role for school councils and their input into what school (inaudible) –

MR. JACKMAN: I have attended two of their past sessions. One of the things that I expressed a concern about is the number of people who are attending. Most schools in the Province have school councils, so one of the things that I did ask this year is that I get a report on the number of attendees and then from that we will have some further discussions and go.

The groups that I listed here, like the T.I. Murphy Centre, they are asking for increases. Various groups ask for various increases and then as we move into the Budget process next year, we will make some determinations.

MR. KIRBY: It seems to me, as a parent of a small child myself, that it would be rather difficult to attend conferences out of town without some provision for child care. I do know in my district there are a number of parents who have involvement with the school councils at the elementary school level who are single moms.

I am just wondering if there has been any thought given to providing some – in addition to the \$5,000 that you provided for transportation to the Federation of School Councils AGM whether it would make some sense to provide a certain amount of money for the provision of child care. Maybe that would enable parents to attend the AGM if that is the department's concern.

MR. JACKMAN: To be quite honest with you, we have not looked at that; however, like I said, going in through another Budget year this will be a submission, no doubt, from the Federation of School Councils just as it will be that I will get a submission from the T.I. Murphy Centre and other groups around and we will make a determination from there.

MR. KIRBY: Does the department itself track how many active school councils there are at the

various schools across the Province? Do you know in a given month or school year how many active school councils we have had across the system?

MR. JACKMAN: No. I certainly have not made it up – I can just make a summation that I know that the school councils in my particular area are active, and I would assume that they are likewise across the Province. That might be something that the Federation of School Councils might want (inaudible).

MR. KIRBY: Since last year, since this overture was made about having more active school councils, have ministers or government members when they go out and do public events and various sorts of outreach that government would do – some people call it photo opportunities. When members of a government caucus are out doing that sort of work, are there additional attempts made to meet? Have there been, in the last year, attempts made to meet with school councils?

MR. JACKMAN: I know that certainly in some cases that school councils have made representation to – there is no way in the world I can get around the Province and meet with all school councils, but I know that I have met with some of them in my area, I met with some in Mr. Littlejohn's area, with a variety of interest. One of the things that I found is that every area is – not every area, but many areas have different interests.

I do believe that the majority of school councils are (inaudible).

MR. KIRBY: Have there been any discussions with the new English-language school district about what can be on the agenda for school councils that were talking about expanding their involvement? Because last year there was at least once issue with respect to school councils speaking out on issues related to maintenance, buildings, conditions of grounds and so on.

MR. JACKMAN: My thought on it is that unless there are collective bargaining issues and that type of thing, I would not see that being the role of school councils, but if there are issues related to a particular school I think the school council certainly should make representation –

CHAIR: Dale, I am going to try to come back on track.

MR. KIRBY: I knew that.

CHAIR: I want it a little bit related to Estimates. I will give some parameter but with school councils, the minister has answered how much money there is –

MR. KIRBY: I thought you would and I turned the page purposely to move on.

CHAIR: Thank you.

MR. KIRBY: You are welcome.

Sorry, Minister, when you were answering that question a little while back there under Policy and Planning, 2.1.03.01, Salaries, did you say there were eight full-time staff there?

MR. JACKMAN: Heading 2.1.03, under Salaries?

MR. KIRBY: Yes. Is that eight full-time staff?

MR. JACKMAN: No, there was signing bonuses for five employees.

MR. KIRBY: Five, was it? I thought you said eight. So that is all signing bonus?

MR. JACKMAN: No, there was a maternity position for part of the year that was not filled but as we move into the Estimates for 2014-2015 that has gone up because that position is being filled again full-time.

MR. KIRBY: There are salaries here for policy evaluation, but is also salary for that under Executive Support as well.

MR. JACKMAN: Which one are you looking at now?

MR. KIRBY: There is salary in here for staffing for policy evaluation in this one we are discussing, 2.1.03, Policy and Planning, Salaries, under General Administration, but there is also a salary for policy evaluation under 1.2.01.01, that is Salaries under Executive Support. On page 15.3.

MR. JACKMAN: On page 15.3.

MR. KIRBY: There is Policy Evaluation under General Administration, Policy and Planning.

MR. JACKMAN: I can see that. On 15.5 there is Policy and Planning.

CHAIR: Under Executive Support, Minister, in 1.2.01, Mr. Kirby is referring to.

Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: In 1.2.01., that reference to evaluation of policies and objectives would be more of a function of oversight of the Executive office.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

Under 2.1.03, Policy and Planning again, would there be funding in here for advisory committees of some sort or an advisory committee?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

Under 2.2.01, Information Management and Special Projects, in response to a question you said there was a salary continuance of \$51,000. Can you just elaborate on that, please?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, \$51,934 and a signing bonus there for eight employees.

MR. KIRBY: That \$51,000 was not for one position, that was spread across, was it?

MR. JACKMAN: That was for one employee.

MR. KIRBY: What was the nature of that one?

MR. JACKMAN: That is one of the individuals who were taken out last year through the Budget exercise. Some people opted for a package; others opted for salary continuance, so this is –

MR. KIRBY: I see what you are saying there, okay. Purchased Services under the same heading there, what was going to be purchased and was

not purchased? There was \$28,900 budgeted but only \$500 was spent.

MR. JACKMAN: Purchased Services would be anything from printing to whatnot that was not required, but I can tell you that \$10,500 of that was transferred to the line, Grants and Subsidies. When the CAP sites closed – there were forty-two of them and we needed \$250 each to continue that for April and May. So the dollars was taken from there and provided – it was not used for Purchased Services; therefore, it was transferred down there.

MR. KIRBY: It was used for what?

MR. JACKMAN: Once the federal government cancelled the CAP site, Community Access Program.

MR. KIRBY: Oh, okay.

CHAIR: One more question, Dale, because your time has expired.

MR. KIRBY: Sure.

Just out of curiosity, I got an e-mail the other day from a bunch of allied youth delegates who were stranded in Gander due to weather and they were going to get in touch with you to see if there was any travel –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that was not handled through mine; that was handled through Minister Kent's office. I think they were taken care of, though.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you.

Coming then to 3.1.01, Teaching Services –

MR. JACKMAN: Which section?

MS MICHAEL: Subhead 3.1.01.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

MS MICHAEL: I think we finished 2.2.01.

Appropriations for the cost of teachers' salaries and associated employee benefits, et cetera – under the Grants and Subsidies, School Boards there is a significant drop there, a decrease of \$470,300. Can you give us an understanding of that?

MR. JACKMAN: Maybe you are better to speak to that one than I am.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: There is a combination of things happening there, increases and decreases. There would be increases due to the step increases and upgrading of teachers that would give you approximately \$2.3 million. You would also have there – we are maintaining our units this year, the twenty-eight point five units. That is included in that, \$1.4 million. There is some transfer of funds from Health and Community Services. There are two treatment centres that will be opening one, in Paradise and one in Grand Falls I think. Partial amounts – they are not up and running yet, but some of the training for the teachers, so there was \$125,000 there. Then that is offset by the annualization of the budget savings from Budget 2013.

The school year and the fiscal year, how they do not match up – for example, there would be months there about five-twelfths which would be a decrease of \$4.3 million offsetting all of the other increases that I have mentioned for a final override, a decrease, of \$470,300.

MS MICHAEL: Do we have the number of exactly how many lost positions are involved here?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: There is no loss of positions in terms of – are you talking teaching units?

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: We are retaining our teaching units of this year. The annualization would have been involved in last year's Budget cuts where the Budget cuts we only went from September – the teaching units started in September of last year, 2013, up to March, and then this would have covered the April to August.

MS MICHAEL: How many were lost last year?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: One hundred and forty-two, plus eighteen in decline – 160.

MS MICHAEL: What does that mean?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Pardon?

MS MICHAEL: What does that mean, eighteen in decline?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Oh, every year we look at the overall enrolment and determine, based on decline, how many units should come out of the system.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: This year would have been twenty-eight point five, so the eighteen that did come out last year. This year we have retained twenty-eight-and-a-half, yes.

MS MICHAEL: You have retained those twenty-eight point five. I got that, thanks. That was going to be a question, but you have answered it before I had to ask it.

A concern that we have, and it is not just us, it is a concern that certainly I have heard expressed by the NLTA, teachers have expressed it – the Budget states only seven point twenty-five units earmarked to assist schools with the new Safe and Caring Schools Initiative. We are hearing, because of the cuts last year and changes from last year that administrators and teachers are really feeling stressed with regard to trying to do everything that is demanded of them. Now with the Safe and Caring Schools Initiative, which is a wonderful initiative, but needs, I believe, and listening to those in the system, I even more so believe, requires much more assistance than is being given.

Are you going to make changes? Are you looking at the teacher allocation formula in the light of the increased responsibilities? It seems to me there is a tremendous overload, and having been a teacher myself and an administrator, I just do not know how they are managing inside the system. I really do not.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, if I look at increased demand, we have increased demand because of the broadening of the autism spectrum disorder. We have increased demand because students are being diagnosed with other disabilities. So, there are demands on the education system; therefore, we have made certain decisions.

This year, in the Budget process, the number one request from school boards was student assistant time and teaching units. So, two of the things that were brought to the Budget process, we went after. I have to be quite honest with you that I came from the system too, only a little over ten years ago, and my first priority would be to make sure that are schools are safe and that we do indeed care. I would see that as a responsibility. I know there are demands. There will always be demands on principals, but I am counting on them that they are carrying out that duty and are indeed ensuring to the degree that we all can that our schools are safe.

MS MICHAEL: Well, I guess we are really going to have to disagree on this one –

MR. JACKMAN: There is no doubt about it.

MS MICHAEL: You cannot just look at one thing. It is such an accumulation of change with new demands, cuts in specialists, everything. When you put it all together, I really think that the people inside the system, the teachers and the administrators, are suffering desperately from these drastic cuts that have been made. I really do. The Safe and Caring Schools Initiative, this is something that was taken and laid on them – they too want safe and caring schools, but they need assistance in doing everything that is being demanded by the program itself. The demand is high.

MR. JACKMAN: I guess you and I could debate this back and forth –

MS MICHAEL: We will not do that, I know.

MR. JACKMAN: We could do that. I think that even twenty years ago, I attempted to provide safe and caring schools. We have certainly moved more into addressing issues that have arisen around bullying and I do not know if there is more violence in schools now than there were, but I think our schools are handling quite

well. I can go back to you, as if we were in Question Period, our class caps, that we have class sizes that – you have heard me say this before, the best student-teacher ratio in all of the provinces of Canada.

MS MICHAEL: I am not getting into that discussion with you because I will be thrown out by the Chair.

MR. JACKMAN: Then two of us will go outside and we will continue our discussion out there.

MS MICHAEL: We will duke it out outside? Okay, we might have to do that, Sir.

Supports to deaf and hard of hearing students, which is under that list, when you are saying supports are you meaning totally teaching units?

MR. JACKMAN: No, what has happened there is that there were six units because we still have students, with the closure of the School of the Deaf, who are still in our system. There was six there. It is reduced down to four. We have students who have graduated, so that number can change. As you know, you have students exiting school and you have some students who are entering school.

This year the number of units went from six to four.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

This will be something else that I will not discuss now, but I think we are going to have to have a meeting, Minister. I am serious.

MR. JACKMAN: Any time, Ms Michael, any time at all.

MS MICHAEL: I think we are going to have to have a meeting because I have been hearing real concerns about what is happening with the deaf students since they have been included and the change in their academic achievements. So it is a broader issue, but I want to raise it here and I would like to sit and talk with you about it.

MR. JACKMAN: Definitely, my door is open to you.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Thank you.

Under Employee Benefits, we are up a fair bit there, \$907,500.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it is primarily to actual employee benefits costs running through payroll. That is the employer's share of Canada Pension, EI, and Group Insurance.

MS MICHAEL: Sure. Okay, great.

I think those are all of the questions. My time is up. Maybe Mr. Kirby might have questions under that section as well.

CHAIR: Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: Under Teaching Services, 3.1.01.10, Grants and Subsidies.

MR. JACKMAN: Subhead 2.1.01 –?

CHAIR: No, 3.1.01, Teaching Services, Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: I am sorry. Yes, okay.

MR. KIRBY: Under Supports to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, I do not think the language here has caught up with the times, but there are no teachers. There are itinerant teachers, are there, that are included under here? Is that what it is? Are there itinerants that are covered under this line, itinerant, IRTs that work with kids with –

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: The four teachers you are talking about there, Mr. Kirby?

MR. KIRBY: Yes, there are four.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: There are four teachers that are in the schools where the children are and they are members of the school district. They are hired by the school district.

MR. JACKMAN: These are not teachers who –

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: They stay in the school.

MR. JACKMAN: They work with those –

MR. KIRBY: They are tied to four particular schools?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: They are tied to the school, yes.

MR. KIRBY: These schools are where in the Province?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Gonzaga mostly, and I think MacDonald Drive, maybe. There was one at Bishops College as well but I am not certain if that student has graduated, but they would be at the school with the students. These are separate from the hearing itinerants. These are separate.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. Are students with hearing impairment steered toward those two schools in particular or is it just –?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: This was historically from the closure of the School for the Deaf. These particular units, they started off with more than that when there was a greater number. They have reduced and actually were to be eliminated by this time, but we still have students so we have retained the units. These are specific to the school.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: They would not be steered to a specific school. If we have a student who is in a rural part of the Province or something then the services has to be provided. It is as simple as that.

MR. KIRBY: I am just wondering what those teachers with that degree of speciality, experience, what they would be doing in the event that there were no children with hearing impairments at Gonzaga.

MR. JACKMAN: That is the thing about it, there were six there. We have had a graduate, for example, so that is not required in that particular school this year.

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: Now we could have somebody who moves in from out-of-province into a particular school, then a unit would have to be provided specific to that student need.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: When there is an identification of a student such as that, the district handles that by hiring a teacher for the deaf as well with that qualification, but these in particular, these units referenced here, are more specific to those from the School for the Deaf.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. Can you please remind me again what the institutional schools in the Province are? There are just two covered under here?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That would be the correctional institute in Whitbourne.

MR. KIRBY: Is that all?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Right now, that is all there is.

MR. KIRBY: It does not cover the district school that was under the previous Eastern School District?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: No.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. It is just interesting that it says schools and not – so we are still spending \$30 million a year on substitutes. Is there anything under consideration to bring that figure down at all? It seems –

MR. JACKMAN: A lot of that is controlled by the Collective Agreement, and that is basically out of our hands.

MR. KIRBY: I would sort of suggest that it might not be out of your hands entirely. I know that the NLTA has been on about family days and different ways of handling absences. I am just wondering if any of those presentations from the NLTA might have involved bringing down this figure as a result of finding different ways to deal with –

MR. JACKMAN: I have not had the NLTA, but if they can suggest some ways in bringing it down, I am certainly more than willing to sit and listen to them on it.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

There is \$50 million for Employee Benefits, and those are CPP and health –
MR. JACKMAN: Yes, EI.

MR. KIRBY: Extended health.

MR. JACKMAN: Group insurance.

MR. KIRBY: There is an additional \$900,000 required, or somewhere in that ballpark, for this coming year. Is there a particular reason why there is almost a million –?

MR. JACKMAN: Are you still on Employee Benefits?

MR. KIRBY: Yes. Why is that going up by –?

MR. JACKMAN: The items that I have mentioned, we can provide you with the details specific to that.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. That seems like a big jump.

Revenue – Provincial, again, is this the same as what you had indicated earlier? If there was an error made and then going back and correcting it in terms of, I do not know, vacation leave or whatever.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That would be related again to overpayments, as was discussed earlier.

MR. KIRBY: And correcting that.

Last year, it just seems a bit unusual in comparison to all the lines we have discussed so far, that the department budgeted \$25,000 even, and then spent \$25,000 even on a line that is, as we previously discussed, somewhat unpredictable in nature. That was predicted exactly.

MR. JACKMAN: Do we have a specific item there, Joan?

CHAIR: Joan.

MS MORRIS: Really, the amount I guess that is provided there is a nominal amount of revenue that we would anticipate getting in the event that

a teacher may be overpaid by a day or someone who has gone on leave without the appropriate leave, that kind of thing. It is really just a nominal revenue allocation there to cover off those types of eventualities.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

School Board Operations, 3.1.02.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Where are salaries for school board administrators?

MR. JACKMAN: Where are the salaries listed?

MR. KIRBY: Where are salaries included in the operations?

OFFICIAL: That would be in Teaching Services.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is in Teaching Services.

MR. KIRBY: Oh, it is back there.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, School Boards at the top line there.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, I see it.

Under Purchased Services, is there a variety of things that were purchased to the tune of \$1.67 million?

MR. JACKMAN: The reason for the difference is that insurance rates were lower than was budgeted.

MR. KIRBY: That is one of the things that is included in there is insurance?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Is this where your rent is as well for schools?

MR. JACKMAN: No, okay.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That would actually be the insurance premium there on its own for the whole, all of the –

MR. KIRBY: That is all it is.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is all of it together. The reduced rate there is showing savings from a procurement initiative.

MR. KIRBY: Then there is Allowances and Assistance, \$75,000 was budgeted and \$63,000 was spent. Is that for trustees?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: That is around bursaries.

MR. KIRBY: For trustees?

MR. JACKMAN: No, no.

MR. KIRBY: Oh, for student bursaries.

MR. JACKMAN: Student bursaries. Yes, less students.

MR. KIRBY: Is it a district scholarship, or no?

MR. JACKMAN: No, it would be something like – it is not used now, but I have a community in my district where a student would go off on these student bursaries. They would leave home at Grade 8 or Grade 9 and go to some large schools. There are fewer people taking advantage of that now.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, I see what you are saying. They are not doing that any further because of CDLI, is that what the reasons are there?

MR. JACKMAN: No, it is for a variety of reasons. I had a parent who did not want to leave the child, so they left the community for two years. They went to another community and stayed with the child until they finished and did not move back again. I imagine that fifteen years ago the number of students who were going on bursaries would have been much, much higher than they are now.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

I am out of time, am I?

CHAIR: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: I don't mind if Mr. Kirby wants to continue.

MR. KIRBY: No, that is fine. I can come back later.

CHAIR: Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: I have a question under that, which is not a line item but it has to do with student transportation and the Deloitte report. There were good recommendations, and the department said it would form an advisory committee for implementation.

I am looking particularly, one of the recommendations is that the department should purchase software for bus routing, fleet maintenance, et cetera, to develop a stronger detailed contract for operators, to ensure consistency and better monitoring and include extracurricular busing. A third one I am looking at is the equitable delivery of driver training to all drivers. Has a committee been set up?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there is. The RFP is out for the routing software. The committee is in place and the school board association is represented on that.

What was the other one? You had one other item there you asked.

MS MICHAEL: The three recommendations: one was the routing; one was the contract, a stronger detailed contract to ensure consistency.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and that is what the committee is working on, the template.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. What about the driver training?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it was recognized that the training for the private operators was not up to, say, the standard of board owned, so there has been initiatives around that.

MS MICHAEL: Is that committee totally in house? You talked about an advisory committee, so I assume you would have people

from within the department and people from outside the department on that committee?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there is.

MS MICHAEL: Can you give us an idea, Minister, of the areas covered by people from outside the department?

MR. JACKMAN: We have two representatives from the school board busing association.

OFFICIAL: I think there are three for the schools.

MR. JACKMAN: Three. There are three from the school board busing association.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Thank you.

Let's go to 3.1.02 – no, that is where I have been, isn't it?

Okay, 3.1.03, I really do not have any questions there.

Subhead 3.1.04.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Under Revenue – Provincial, \$10,000 is what you have in there but it was revised up to \$140,000. What was that?

MR. JACKMAN: That is revenue that comes in from the purchase of textbooks by groups that are not part of our public system. For example, the Innu would buy textbooks, Conne River would buy textbooks. We have tutoring services who often will buy a set of textbooks in the areas that they are tutoring in.

I was mentioning before, the Level III math book is \$75.55 now; Level III math teacher resource is \$300. So you get more that these groups are buying textbooks.

MS MICHAEL: Right. It seems like some years you obviously do not expect much because this year it is back down to \$10,000 again. They made a major one at that time, I guess.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. That was 3.1.04.

Subhead 3.1.05; no, I do not think I have any there.

CHAIR: Ms Michael, you were saying 3.1.05.

MS MICHAEL: Yes, I think I am all right there.

Subhead 3.1.06.

CHAIR: Okay. Page 15.9, 3.1.06.

MS MICHAEL: Here we have School Facilities – Alterations and Improvements to Existing Facilities, et cetera. I am assuming – you can correct me if I am wrong – the Professional Services would all have to do with the planning for schools, would it?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: This year, of course, we have a few more on the list.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. I found with this one over the years, your budget depends on how much progress is made. Sometimes these are stalled because you have to deal with land issues and whatnot, so it is ever, ever changing. There is \$19.23 million allocated.

MS MICHAEL: You know I cannot resist this one, don't you? How much progress was made with Virginia Park Elementary?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I was expecting it. I never got the information to you, but I bet you there is somebody here who knows.

Ingrid knows.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: Yes, there was a tender for some site work at the school but unfortunately there were some problems with the tender. We met with Transportation and Works today and they are advising that they should have another tender out in early May for Virginia Park School. That would be (inaudible).

MS MICHAEL: Another one. People are not going to be happy to hear that.

MS CLARKE: It is progress.

MS MICHAEL: This is the third now, isn't it?

MS CLARKE: I beg your pardon?

MS MICHAEL: That would be the third one, wouldn't it?

MS CLARKE: This would be the second one.

MS MICHAEL: The second one. I thought that one had already been put out.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) in May.

MS MICHAEL: In May. Okay.

How long will that process take, could I ask? Is there any hope that the cleanup of the ground is going to start in the fall, for example? Is that something they can hope for in that school?

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: The cleanup will take place over the summer.

MS MICHAEL: Over the summer? Okay, thank you very much.

MR. JACKMAN: You have to hold us to that.

MS MICHAEL: Yes, I am going to hold you to that.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes you do, indeed you should.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much.

I know we have heard it and they are in different places in the budget, et cetera, but could we have the list of the schools that are new and those that are having major construction done to them, please?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we can certainly do that.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much.

Under Purchased Services, I am assuming that would also have to do with those who do the work on the schools, it comes from outside of government agencies and that is what all of that would be.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: Purchased Services is for the construction contracts, whereas Professional Services is for the engineers and the architects.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you that is a good clarification; I appreciate that. I just want to go over my list and make sure I do not have anything else.

Under 3.1.07, for the planning, construction, renovation and extension of educational facilities and for the purchase of equipment – this is new construction?

MS CLARKE: Yes, that is correct. This is for major construction projects.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. That is where, though, something like Virginia Park Elementary would go, wouldn't it? It would be under that because that is a major capital expenditure?

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: Yes, that is correct.

MS MICHAEL: Okay so if we could have then the two separate lists, those under 3.1.06 and those under 3.1.07?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: I think it would be the same list.

MS MICHAEL: Would it be the same list?

MR. JACKMAN: We will get you the list, yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: Under 3.1.06, that is the repairs and maintenance budget and that is on our Web site, the list of projects.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, very good, thank you very much.

Would the list of the new facilities be under that as well – no, just the existing facilities that have maintenance and repairs being done.

MS CLARKE: Under 3.1.07, the new construction, those projects are also listed on the Web site.

MS MICHAEL: Great, well then you do not need to send us a list. Thank you very much.

I will stop there instead of going on to the next one.

CHAIR: Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: I just want to go now to 3.1.01, Teaching Services, for primary, elementary, and secondary education. That says: Teaching Services, “Appropriations provide for the cost of teachers’ salaries...” and when I asked about school board operations about salaries there you said that the salaries for school district administrators are included in this line, but that is not indicated in the explanatory note there.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: School administrators would be under Teaching Services. School-based principals, if you are talking about district staff that would be under School Board Operations.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, that is what I was talking about.

Is there anywhere where the salaries for school district administrators are provided?

MR. JACKMAN: They would be under this but certainly –

MR. KIRBY: Could I have a breakout of that?

MR. JACKMAN: You can get a breakdown of that. We will provide that.

MR. KIRBY: Transportation of School Children: Does that include the purchase price for new school buses?

MR. JACKMAN: Are you under a particular section?

CHAIR: He is under 3.1.02.10, Transportation of School Children found on page 15.7, Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: That is for both board-owned and private contractors.

MR. KIRBY: I know there may be concerns around tendering, but is there somewhere where the cost for the public school bus operations versus all the private tenders –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there certainly would be.

MR. KIRBY: I do not recall seeing that figure anywhere else.

MR. JACKMAN: No, but we can get that, though.

MR. KIRBY: Is it in the report that Deloitte –

MR. JACKMAN: No, I do not think so. Don?

MR. STAPLETON: No, I do not think they provided the details in the report.

MR. KIRBY: Is it possible then to get a list – are there any privacy concerns around providing a list and you could probably just take out any identifying information of the private tenders that have been let in the past year for school bus operators? Are there privacy concerns around providing that just as it is?

MR. JACKMAN: I will check and see because one thing that we do know is that the cost of the contracts is going up. They are going up quite a bit. I will check into it and if there are no confidentiality issues, then I do not see any issue with giving you the information.

MR. KIRBY: The costs are going up, but I know you are on the public record, Minister, saying that your agenda is not towards consolidation into a smaller number or single school bus contracts. Based on my meetings

with school bus private- and family-owned operators, that it is a serious area of concern for them; they feel like they are being more or less priced out of the business. Unlike the larger operators, they do not have other lines of business that they can dip into or equity to back up the purchase of new buses and so on, so I just note that.

Under 3.1.02, School Board Operations, under 10, there is an Administration Grant –

MR. JACKMAN: That is an increase of the leasing for the school board spacing this year.

MR. KIRBY: That increase to \$19 million was an increase due to cost of space?

MR. JACKMAN: No – you are looking at where it has gone from \$18,730,000 up to –

MR. KIRBY: It goes from \$18,700,000 to \$19,200,000 and then it drops way back down by close to \$6 million.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, the first one there is the increase in rental space.

MR. KIRBY: That is a regular operating grant?

MR. JACKMAN: No, for leasing at Atlantic Place.

MR. KIRBY: Under which one?

MR. JACKMAN: That is where it has gone from \$18,730,000 up to \$19,279,100.

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: The next one, it is a drop –

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Again, are we talking about the \$12,883,100, Mr. Kirby?

MR. KIRBY: Yes, that is right.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: In that, we would have several things as well impacting that. You do have the 2 per cent salary increases for those that have collective bargaining increases. We would have the lease increase for the school district

which is annually about \$445,000 for the lease, but then against that you would have the annualization of the budget reductions. A lot of that would be to do with the less of the executive: the staff, the number of assistant directors, the number of directors would be included in that, as well as other administration reductions that would be part of that, and that would be about \$6.6 million, \$6.57 million; therefore, the reduction is \$5.8 million when you do the increases and the decrease.

MR. JACKMAN: That is a savings through the restructuring.

MR. KIRBY: The Regular Operating Grant above that is gone up by just about \$6 million. Just above that, that has increased from the budgeted amount by \$6 million.

MR. JACKMAN: That is for the 2 per cent salary increase, right?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible).

MR. KIRBY: That is all that is, that \$6 million?

MR. JACKMAN: There are collective bargaining increases. We had a transfer from R&M school facilities. There are utility expenses, these types of things.

MR. KIRBY: I do not know where to ask this question so I will ask it here because it certainly relates to school board operations. I raised this in debate in the House of Assembly, it may have been last week or the week before and then it subsequently appeared in *The Telegram* newspaper, but I do not think anybody was interviewed about it. I do not think you were interviewed about it. With respect to vacant schools, schools that are no longer in use, those assets were obviously purchased; the schools were built by the Department of Education. I guess funds were provided to the school districts to carry that work out. Where are we with those buildings and –

MR. JACKMAN: I believe there are eighteen of them.

MR. KIRBY: Eighteen?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. Just recently we signed off on nine. You have to get ministerial sign off, the board requests, so that then it can be put out for purchase. So we have nine of those eighteen underway, but I do agree with you that it is something that has to be dealt with.

MR. KIRBY: When those are sold, like Remax – are they sold by relators or how does that work from a business –

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Usually the school district will write to the minister to ask for permission to dispose of the property. Then they would have to come back in under the Schools Act, under the denominational interest that might be still in to the property, so they have to go through all of that to get an appropriate purchase and sale agreement.

That would come back in for the minister's approval. It does take some time to determine if there is still denominational interest in some of those properties, but oftentimes someone will approach the school district with an interest in the building whether that be a town, whether that be private wanting to buy the school, but that often happens that they will approach the school district themselves.

MR. KIRBY: I am just concerned about fair play in terms of if they are businesses in a community or a town, all those interested having an equal opportunity to compete, sort of almost like in a tendering process, to get the best price for those facilities.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: It would be either a tendering – or an RFP really is often a preferred way because you can determine the use of the building. You can determine many other factors. An RFP is often as well a way to go.

MR. KIRBY: So that is what is going to happen, do we know, or is that up to the English-language school district?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, I think there are some cases where there is not an interest so the schools stand there. We might get a community

that comes in and approaches, but there is an RFP process that goes out –

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: It comes back in for approval for the minister's signing, so then of course we would be reviewing that with the school district to determine the use as well.

CHAIR: It is 7:29 p.m. In recognition of the need for a stretch and all the rest, we will break for ten minutes. We will reconvene at 7:40 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Thank you, folks, a ten-minute break.

Recess

CHAIR: Welcome back to the Estimates of the Department of Education.

Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I do have one more question with regard to School Facilities – New Construction –

CHAIR: Ms Michael's microphone, please.

Thank you.

MS MICHAEL: I do have one more question or another question – I should not say just one more, who knows, but at this moment another question with regard to school design. I guess I am asking it specifically with regard to Virginia Park Elementary, but I think I would mean it for any school that right now is on the drawing board. I know the design for the school has been done but now we know that government has made the decision with regard to the all-day Kindergarten, is there going to be a need to go back and look at that school design to see if it will fit the new plans?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there will be.

MS MICHAEL: There will be?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Oh good, I am really glad to hear that. Thank you. Obviously that will

happen for any school that right now is on the draft board.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it will.

MS MICHAEL: Or you can pass the draft board because I think Virginia Park probably was –

MR. JACKMAN: All of them have to be taken into consideration.

MS MICHAEL: Right, all over you have to do that. Okay, that is great. I am glad to hear that. Thank you very much.

Going then to 3.2.01, Curriculum Development, I really do not have a lot of questions there. I think the main one in terms of a budget line item would be under Purchased Services which was budgeted at \$102,500, spent \$100,000 and this year down to \$83,500. What actually would come under that and how do you know that you need to bring it down that much this year?

MR. JACKMAN: One of the things that has happened and perhaps Janet can explain it a little more – that is the Queen’s Printer one, right –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible).

MR. JACKMAN: – is that before you would have individual items in here that would go to the Queen’s Printer so now you pay for it upfront, so it is not in a budget item any more. Do you want to explain it a little further?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Throughout actually our document you will find about \$177,000 where it would have represented the history of spending for particular divisions in the Department of Education and so rather than have the Queen’s Printer invoice us and us pay it basically based on our usage, it is automatically taken out and the printing will be free.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. I think I heard that before actually about what was going on.

Right now in the department how much curricular development is happening?

MR. JACKMAN: I will tell you – oh curriculum development, not professional development.

MS MICHAEL: No, curriculum development.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Currently this year, we are implementing the final year of the math, the curriculum, the Grade 12 course is being implemented this year. That will give us the full K to 12. We are also implementing English Language Arts and I think there are probably three or four grades there, including Grade 10. I will let Ed speak to the specifics of that, but the new curriculums this year would be English Language Arts and math. We are developing several others. There are others that we would be doing and I think I will pass that over to Ed. I know certainly in social studies we are working on some new ones there.

CHAIR: Ed.

MR. WALSH: I have nothing further to add than what Janet had mentioned. A number of things that are currently underway, and in the fall – we have not finalized all our plans at this stage, but that is in progress and that information will be available shortly.

MS MICHAEL: Looking at the budget, you have the resources completely in-house to deal with curriculum development. Is that correct?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Expertise, Ms Michael?

MS MICHAEL: Yes, the expertise.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Once we decide on a particular curriculum area to be reviewed – and there is a cycle, actually, for curriculum renewal by grade level and by subject, and we basically certainly look for the teachers in the system with the expertise as well. So though we would be the lead on all new curriculum, that would certainly be done by asking for the district representatives, and in this case it would be regionally as well in most cases to ensure that we have the expertise from the current teachers in the system.

MS MICHAEL: Right.

This is, I guess, more curiosity than anything because of having had a background in it. Do you use the special interest councils of the NLTA in doing that kind of thing as well?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Normally what we would do in any new curriculum, we would go to the school districts and ask for their advice on who would be the best person for a particular subject area. Oftentimes, they will have a program specialist themselves in the district that they would look to; but oftentimes, we will want teachers in the system. In terms of the special interest councils, oftentimes they are the ones the districts are looking for, because they are active and involved –

MS MICHAEL: That is right.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: – but we would certainly be looking for teachers who are active in the system and who would be able to speak best for classroom practice.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you.

Subhead 3.2.02, Language Programs – again, actually, I probably would have asked this question for the one above as well – under 01, Transportation and Communications, there was a big drop in that last year, by \$100,000 actually, and this year back up to \$143,900. Could we have some explanation what that is about?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: You are looking at \$68,000 there?

MS MICHAEL: That is right, yes, down from \$168,000.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: In terms of travel, we have all been trying to reduce the travel.

MS MICHAEL: No, it is transportation – I am sorry, yes, go ahead. Sorry about that.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: From all divisions you would notice that most of the transportation numbers are down. That was one of the ways within our own department that we had tried to

do cost savings and use that for other budget issues.

MS MICHAEL: Yes, but you are bringing it back up to \$143,900.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes. In that particular case, that was funding there to address the increasing demand for school bursaries for travel. In this particular case, that particular one there, we basically – I think a total of \$197,000 was needed for the increase in the bursaries.

MS MICHAEL: For bursaries?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: This would be for travel bursaries for students going, whether to Quebec or whether they are going to St. Pierre. So, we try to do the savings and then use it for the student travel.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, great. That is understandable. Thank you.

Under Purchased Services, the budget last year was \$249,500, revised down by about \$40,000, and then down more to \$192,100. What would be purchased under this, and why is it continuing to go down?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Purchased Services are no different than any division really, but because they were lower than anticipated in the current year, we have basically, in the revised budget there, certainly transferred monies, again to handle the student travel. That is about \$57,400 from Purchased Services.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Thank you.

Under 09, Allowances and Assistance, could you give us a description of what that is, the Allowances and the Assistance?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Ms Michael, that is actually the line where all of these amounts that I have referenced have been transferred into, to allow for the travel.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

Under Grants and Subsidies 10, could you give us a description of the grants and subsidies?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: The grants and subsidies that are referenced there would be to handle intensive core French or French Immersion grants. They would be summer programs. You would have some professional learning there, support for French teachers and that kind of thing.

MS MICHAEL: Perhaps we could have a list. Could we have a list for that?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Certainly.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much.

Then under the Federal Revenue, the federal government still has money going into the learning of French?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Under bilingualism?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes, under language programs, official language programs.

MS MICHAEL: Under language programs. Right. Okay.

I will stop there, Mr. Chair, because I only have ten seconds left.

CHAIR: Thank you.
Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: Thank you.

Back under School Board Operations, 3.1.02; last year when we were here talking about the amalgamation of the four English language boards, there were some questions about the amount of efficiencies that would be achieved through this. Minister, at the time you noted that it could be up to \$13 million. My colleague, Mr. Bennett, asked about – there was a discussion about providing a breakdown of the savings under HR and itemizing the amount of savings. We have not ever received an itemized breakdown. I think he referred to it as a spreadsheet.

MR. JACKMAN: Did he put a request in? Was it asked at last year's budget?

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay. I will check back on that. We will jot that down, too.

MR. KIRBY: It seems sort of glaring that despite the suggestion that there would be up to \$13 million in efficiencies, there was what I would refer to as an over expenditure of \$10 million. Based on our discussion this evening, I am to assume that was a result of the salary increases, signing bonus, increase in rent, and cost of purchase of new school buses. Was there something else that I am missing beyond that?

MR. JACKMAN: Let me see, what additional costs would there be.

You are asking specific to which line item, because I am looking at –

MR. KIRBY: Amount to be voted. Last year the amount budgeted was \$185 million, spent \$195 million, and now –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. There are some signing bonuses, there are some shift differential increases, and there are some standby increases. Like that would be, for example, shift differentials for janitors or maintenance people. There are district legal claims. The Labrador district had three that were outstanding; the Eastern had one, so that one is being dealt with.

MR. KIRBY: They need to be dealt with through the winding up process for those boards, is that what it was?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, those were ongoing things that the new board – if it were just still the English board, they would have one to deal with. Now that they have consolidated, well they have three additional. Because the Labrador legal situations now all fall under the one jurisdiction, so there are additional costs.

MR. KIRBY: There was also some discussion of in addition to there being some cost efficiencies that this would help improve student achievement. Is there any documentation, is there any review, any report, any analysis that has been carried out to show whether or not it would, or it has, or it might result in improved

student achievement having one single English language board?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. What it is, their strategic plan, that each of these boards was developing their own strategic plan. No doubt, there were very many similarities in them, but this board is continuing the consolidation of all that into one strategic plan.

MR. KIRBY: You are referring to those multi-year plans that each of the individual four predecessor districts had, and there is something in there about it?

MR. JACKMAN: No, their multi –

MR. KIRBY: Multi-year plans?

MR. JACKMAN: I am talking about their strategic plans. Are we using the same thing here?

MR. KIRBY: This is the previous strategic plans of the predecessor boards indicating that having one school district would improve student achievement?

MR. JACKMAN: Well I would hope, I would certainly hope, the number one goal of every strategic plan would be student achievement.

MR. KIRBY: Yes, I have not seen that in there.

MR. JACKMAN: In –?

MR. KIRBY: In the predecessor board's strategic plans that the move towards a single board would result in any way improved student achievement. I do not think there was even any discussion of the move to a single board.

MR. JACKMAN: I am just looking at it, first and foremost, that it does not matter if you have one board, three boards or five boards student achievement has to be number one. Each one of these boards previously was developing their own strategic plan.

MR. KIRBY: I am just thinking in terms of cause and effect.

MR. JACKMAN: I guess we can debate that.

MR. KIRBY: So, there is no analysis then, I guess, is really my point, or a report or review?

MR. JACKMAN: No, what the boards are doing is they are consolidating. Just the same as we would have an evaluation policy that would be more standardized across the Province, so now you are moving towards the entire Province working under one umbrella, if I could put it that way, student achievement –

MR. KIRBY: Is there any plan for some sort of analysis, or audit, or evaluation to be conducted within a year of the establishment of the single board to see if it is actually meeting those objectives or whatever objectives that there are?

MR. JACKMAN: We have our assessments which would be the CRTs, and they are doing other assessments likewise, national and international assessments.

MR. KIRBY: PISA and so on.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: When will we see the constitution and bylaws for the English-language school district?

CHAIR: Dale, I am going to ask you to ask for Estimates.

MR. JACKMAN: I can answer this one.

CHAIR: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: That is now being worked on.

MR. KIRBY: Then, after we see that, we will be given some timing for the election of the new trustees?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. My understanding right now is that they are working on the zoning. I cannot give you the exact status of it, but that is what they are working on: their constitution, plus zoning for representation in the future.

MR. KIRBY: There was a transition team that worked on the new English-language school district. Are their expenses included here under School Board Operations or where they paid for

that work, or is that work that they did in accordance with their regular duties?

MR. JACKMAN: The trustees that we are taking in from the previous boards, they just continued on. The independent Chair that we had did not take a fee for his service.

MR. KIRBY: We have, through ATIPP, information with respect to their expenses. I guess that will be posted in due course.

MR. JACKMAN: Sure.

MR. KIRBY: I think I will just move from that.

I just have one final question on that. The multi-year plans that were produced by the previous boards, they are all going to be merged into one single multi-year plan?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: What occurred there was we had asked all of the previous boards, had all of their plans in place, and the new school district, when they formed, took all those plans and did an analysis of that, especially around the student achievement piece because all of them are up for a new cycle, will have a new strategic plan for 2014-2018.

This current year, they would have done an activity report on that one issue of student achievement. The new English School District has done a report on that that will become public over time. So there was one where the consolidation piece was looked at, looked at the plans, and the concentration, given that there was just one year left – because right now they are out there doing their consultations for their new strategic plan.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

Where is the funding for the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association included in here?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, the funding for the School Boards Association does not exist.

MR. KIRBY: They are not getting any further funding?

MR. JACKMAN: No, their term was up as of the end of March. Now, they are looking to see if we will continue some sort of funding for them. There is one thing that I do agree; I think that our School Boards Association needs to have its trustees be provided the opportunity to stay current. Now, we are looking at the possibility of covering their registration costs, for example, in the Canadian school federation, but we have not decided on that yet.

MR. KIRBY: An association of two boards?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, my understanding – and like I said, we are just checking into this – is that you have to be a registered member. You pay a registration and then you are part of a larger Canadian school.

MR. KIRBY: So they would not have an executive director and administrative staff like they do now or whatever?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

CHAIR: Okay, I am going to hold it there.

Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much.

Looking at 3.3.01 –

CHAIR: Subhead 3.3.01, page 15.11.

MS MICHAEL: Student Support Services.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: “Appropriations provide for the development, implementation and evaluation of programs for children with special needs.”

These salaries that are listed here, they have to do totally with the development of the programs; it is not dealing with the children, per se, directly?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: This would be the salaries for the people who work in the department in that division.

MS MICHAEL: How many people work in the department in that division?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: In the Student Support Services we have seven there and couple of secondments are involved there but not on that – that particular dollar sign there would be for seven.

MS MICHAEL: This would be for programs for children with special needs no matter what that need is, so everything from autism through to children who are hard of hearing, to use your use your language there, the whole range?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: In the Purchased Services, what would be – first of all the Professional Services, it is only \$70,000. What would be the professional services that you are considering there? It seems to be a standard amount that you maintain.

MR. JACKMAN: While they are looking that up, the purchased services is the Queen's Printer thing again.

MS MICHAEL: Yes, I realized that. That was why I stopped.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That \$70,000 is related to the poverty reduction monies there. I would anticipate that it is related to the past teachers and perhaps some professional development there regarding the past teachers.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, I am glad you mentioned the past because I have a question.

I understand that the past program was piloted in eight schools –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: – and in last year's Estimates, Minister, you said that the decision would be made whether to continue it or not. Could we have an update on the past program?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Last year, those schools retained through their regular allocation, Ms Michael. Again, that would be the decision of the school district regarding that, but they have been very successful. In terms of the kind of things that the past teachers do, which are credit recovery and credit rescue – so that basically is sort of a policy piece that occurs in all schools really and in many schools, but these particular schools, the ones that you have mentioned, would have a teacher dedicated to that or a half-time teacher.

The answer to the question would that continue, that would be a district decision, but certainly last year the district used their current units to retain those.

MS MICHAEL: Could we have an idea of the success especially with regard to keeping the students at risk in school?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: I am sure I could provide you with a document to show some statistics there. I think the real benefit of those is really often in the person who is hired for that job connecting with the youth, getting them back in school and making them feel worthwhile towards their own goals. The success of that program is in the hiring of the right person or choosing the right person in the school to connect with the children. It is very one-on-one.

When we visited out in Grand Falls-Windsor, there was a teacher working with two different students at a time. It was completely one-on-one kind of work. You can have a student doing a course in a very short period of time. They might only need two credits to graduate, and rather than do it in the regular time frame that a school offers and the structure that interferes sometimes with student engagement, these past teachers have had great success.

I can provide you with – there is an evaluation that has been done and some statistics that I can give to you to show that we are very pleased

with that, and pleased that the district has continued with them.

MS MICHAEL: I would be interested in that. The \$70,000 covers that?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: No, I will double-check, but based on what we have there in our booklet it is related to that. I am assuming that might be some monies that were regarding some professional development related to that.

MS MICHAEL: Right, because where would the money for those past teachers come from, or where would it show up?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Right now, when the funding did cease last year as such for the teachers themselves, the schools that continue that, did that out of their regular allocation.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: I am just thinking about the impact of what you just said.

The evaluation that you are talking about I assume would have input from the teachers themselves who are the past teachers. Do you have a sense of how they feel about the program?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Thank you.

I do look forward to receiving that.

We will go to the next one, 3.3.02, the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority. I think this is pretty straightforward, but I would like some information on this because you say here that it deals with "...educational services primarily for students who are visually impaired and hearing impaired, coordinated through a facility in Nova Scotia." The name of which I forget, but I have heard the name of the facility.

MR. JACKMAN: APSEA.

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

My understanding is that it is mainly students who are visually impaired who are assisted here.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. We are doing some work with them now around the autism spectrum disorder, and there is development of some online resources teachers can use with that.

MS MICHAEL: Can I ask what the grant and subsidy is based on? Is it based on services delivered, or do they determine an amount and you just give a blanket amount? I am curious about how that works.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: APSEA is an Atlantic union of all of the four Atlantic Provinces, and this would represent Newfoundland's share in the total cost. They look at all aspects of that, what would be Newfoundland's share based on our numbers. As you said, the majority of the services are for the visually impaired, but we also have services as well for the hearing impaired when we have very challenging students in terms of the type of assessments.

To answer your question, the actual amount – and the reason it has increased, by the way, is just due to salary increases at APSEA, but it would be reviewed based on our total enrolments and our usage. There was a review of APSEA that was done last year, and one of the things was to try to do a better job of predicting what the services would be. There is actually a report on APSEA, if you wanted that as well, Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Yes, I would like that report, please.

How many students do we have right now being serviced by APSEA?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Well, that would vary, depending on what the services were needed. Right now in the Province we have 124 students who are blind or visually impaired, and depending on what Braille services they want, all of the Braille services would come from APSEA. So whether we have a child who is writing a CRT or a public exam, that Braille would be done through APSEA. If there was an assessment that had to be done, all of those

students, the 124, if they needed something, depending on what the needs were at the time for those children, would be serviced.

We have 321 students who are deaf or hard of hearing in the Province, though that is not as much of a service because the way that – though some provinces have both services in APSEA to the same degree, ours were mostly for the blind, visually impaired. We have used APSEA in recent years to help train and provide professional development for our hearing itinerants, just to give it much up to date and current practice. For any of the really challenging assessments for the hearing impaired, we have used APSEA.

As the minister said, one of the newest projects and perhaps one of the ones we are probably going to benefit the most from is called the Autism in Education Project which was really started at APSEA but is now part of CAMET, which is basically the joint council there. We are using that Autism in Education Project then through CAMET, that partnership there which we, as the minister said, did announce in January I believe it was, is online training for autism. There will be two levels of that.

We are working on that together as an Atlantic initiative, because it is certainly a challenging disorder and one where we are trying to reach as many classroom teachers as possible, student assistants, and trying to find – it is one of the most exciting pieces that we are doing together.

MS MICHAEL: Are parents of children with autism involved in this?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Parents of children with autism, this one originated in New Brunswick, the model. Yes, parents were involved in that, and when this training piece is done parents would be able to access that as well.

MS MICHAEL: They are not part of the training. The training is for teachers.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: I am sorry, say that again.

MS MICHAEL: The training is for teachers, is it?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: The training is for teachers, student assistants, and parents.

MR. JACKMAN: Parents, too.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: It will be an online piece of information that all of them can use.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

CHAIR: Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: I want to go back to 3.1.06 and 3.1.07. I guess 06 relates to – yes, current and capital, I get it now.

There has been a suggestion that there cannot be any submissions made to the department from the English school board for capital expenses for the Mount Pearl-Paradise school system.

MR. JACKMAN: Say it again.

MR. KIRBY: That they should not be making any submissions to the department until they use all of the space they have within that system. Is that your understanding of it?

MR. JACKMAN: I have answered questions, what members asked. We have not put a restriction on the district. Carry out your work, certainly do it as cost efficiently as you can. I would not expect that somebody will come in and say all right, we need to build a new school. That would be your solution. We have put no parameters on them, other than be prudent.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. That is different from my understanding, but maybe I will get back to –

MR. JACKMAN: You are listening to the member sitting next to you. You are not listening to my answers.

MR. KIRBY: I attended three public meetings myself in Mount Pearl and the Goulds in relation to that, so that was stated – I will not name the individual who stated it on behalf of the English School District, but it was stated at two meetings

that they were obliged to use all of the existing space before going to the department.

MR. JACKMAN: Would you suggest otherwise?

MR. KIRBY: Pardon me?

MR. JACKMAN: Would you suggest otherwise?

MR. KIRBY: There is a limit to that, I think, in terms of –

MR. JACKMAN: My bottom line is I would say to them use your existing space to see what you can do to accommodate the students who are there. Then if there are additional requirements, you come forward with it.

MR. KIRBY: Sure, I see what you are saying. I mean, it should be done within reason, but I do not think it should be used as an excuse to sell whatever reconfiguration plan –

MR. JACKMAN: I am telling you that we have not rejected where the boards have come from; speak to the member behind you. They come forward with a plan, and then we just bring it through a budget process and get it approved.

MR. KIRBY: There was some indication that the board is – it seems to vary depending on what day I am listening to communication on this and who I am listening to, but there is some suggestion that they are – I will not use the word committed, but investigating the possibility of a high school in Paradise. There is nothing in the Budget this year about that.

MR. JACKMAN: No.

We are, right now, in Paradise – the crunch for us right now is to have another primary-elementary school built there. You can go through the list of projects. The board have said that they see that out there, but in this particular Budget round there is not a submission around that.

MR. KIRBY: Is it the case that the land has been purchased near Octagon Pond for the third elementary school in Paradise?

MR. JACKMAN: That is still in the process.

MR. KIRBY: That is still in process?

MR. JACKMAN: We are dealing with the Roman Catholic Church here. There is an exchange of prices going on now between the board and the Episcopal Corporation.

MR. KIRBY: What is the estimated ribbon cutting date on that school? When is that going to open for business?

MR. JACKMAN: Ingrid can speak to it, but I think once they develop the land or the site, we project within two years from that.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: Normally, construction takes about eighteen months. We met with Transportation and Works today and asked them about the schedule for that particular project and they are reviewing the time frame.

MR. KIRBY: So a time frame has been proposed.

MR. JACKMAN: The time frame will be established once the land is straightened away. First and foremost, we have to get the land straightened away; hopefully, we will have that resolved before too long.

We have resolved some issues in some other areas with land. We are still working through a thing in Portugal Cove-St. Phillips. This one is the same thing.

MR. KIRBY: The question parents keep asking is what year, which September is that going to open?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, if we can get the land and that straightened away and get the plans all developed, I would say we are looking at about two years out.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: We are looking at 2016 for occupancy.

MR. JACKMAN: Two years out.

CHAIR: Ingrid.

MS CLARKE: I can tell you that the planning has progressed significantly. They have completed design development. They are just about ready now to go into tender documents. So that school, right now, is further ahead than the others that were announced at that time.

MR. KIRBY: What about the K-9 in Portugal Cove-St. Phillips?

MR. JACKMAN: We are continuing to work with the town on that. There are issues around the slope of land, elevation behind – all I can say to you is that everybody is engaged with it, trying to get it moved ahead. So department officials are engaged with the town.

MR. KIRBY: Does that mean that the land has not been purchased yet for Portugal Cove-St. Phillip's school; it has not been finalized?

MR. JACKMAN: The site has been –

MR. KIRBY: Selected.

MR. JACKMAN: Right, but what we are talking about are issues of access on and off roadways. I do not know, Ingrid, if you want to speak to it a little bit more.

MS CLARKE: Yes, the piece of land that has been approved conditionally for the school is owned by the Town of Portugal Cove-St. Phillips. It is behind the town hall. The town has plans to build a lifestyle centre near that piece of property, so it has been somewhat challenging to try to find a configuration for the school that also does not interfere with their plans for the lifestyle centre. There have been problems with the slope of the land and, like others have mentioned, about access and traffic congestion concerns off Thorburn Road.

We are working with the town; we are meeting with town officials on a regular basis. The latest suggestion is that the location of the school would move up closer to the soccer field and right now we are waiting for some of the snow to melt so we can do some test pits on this other piece of land.

In the meantime, there is a floor plan developed. With the proposed new location of the school on this particular site, there will not need to be any changes in floor plans. So the work that has been done, it will not be for not, but it has been challenging to try to find the proper location of the school on that property.

MR. KIRBY: I met with the public works committee out there six months ago and that does not sound a whole lot different than what the issues were then with respect to accommodating the school on the site and the traffic and so on and so forth. That is –

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: I think at the latest meeting – it is certainly not at the movement stage, but there is much more understanding and with the town certainly fully up to scratch on it. It is just that we are trying to move this thing along as quickly as we can.

MR. KIRBY: Now with this particular school and the one that is going in Paradise and I guess other builds that are planned, we are now taking into account the need to accommodate a full day of Kindergarten in the design of those particular schools.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we are and we are doing another thing in the one that is going to be built now. There will be consideration for the accommodations of students, say, in junior high. Schools that have been built have been traditionally built for primary, elementary; so now, for example, we might have wider corridors and the core might be a bit bigger so that if there are transitions in a few years' time, you might be able to accommodate population shifts that way.

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

Minister, a week ago in Question Period you committed to maintaining the class size cap for Kindergarten.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Are we talking about one class of Kindergarten students surrounded by four walls or –

MR. JACKMAN: There will be no teacher with more than twenty students.

MR. KIRBY: In what space, then? Each class of Kindergarten students will have separate classrooms?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, in some twenty or so, we have to add modulars on to accommodate them. As we get further into this, we will find some creative ways, if there need to be, to have classrooms addressed and –

MR. KIRBY: So you are not ruling out having then multiple classes in one classroom?

MR. JACKMAN: Multiple?

MR. KIRBY: Having, say, two classes of Kindergarten students separated by dividers (inaudible).

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, as we get further into that, we will take a look at that. We have classes in our system now that have that in place.

MR. KIRBY: They do not nap in the middle of the day.

MR. JACKMAN: They do not...?

MR. KIRBY: Nap in the middle of the day – have a nap. This is one of the logistical issues, the need for these kids to sleep somewhere in the middle of the day.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, all I can say to you is we will work our way through those issues.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

CHAIR: Ms Michael.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you.

Subhead 3.3.03.

MR. JACKMAN: Subhead 3.3.03, yes.

MS MICHAEL: “Appropriations provide for supports to students who are deaf and hearing impaired, including accommodations, transportation and American Sign Language interpretation.”

I am certainly curious, Minister, with regard to 01, the Salaries, where the Salaries in last year’s budget were \$338,900, and we are down to \$48,000. What is happening here?

MR. JACKMAN: For \$337,000 up at \$338,000, there is a signing bonus, but now what is happening is the interpreters now report to the English School District as opposed to the Department of Education. So at one point they were then on the Department of Education books, let’s say, and now they are allocated to the district.

MS MICHAEL: Was there an appropriate transfer of that sum of money over to the school board?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: May I ask what was the reason for doing that?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: These interpreters are in certain schools, and it is much more – instead of the department being responsible for these employees, if they are not in and there has to be a substitute called, it is much easier to have that handled at the school-base level and then of course the school district is in charge of the schools.

It was felt to be a much better fit to whom they report to and they would be part of the staff rather than directly from the Department of Education, but there is a transfer to School Board Operations of \$318,900 for that same purpose.

MS MICHAEL: What would the \$48,400 be retained for?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is for one employee, the 2 per cent salary for one person at the Department of Education who deals with a lot of the students who were at the School for the Deaf and some of the services that we provide there. Some of them travel back and forth on the weekend and some of the things that we have to handle there.

MS MICHAEL: It says here that accommodations are also included, but I do not see anything under the list that would say accommodations to me.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: A lot of times, what you are referring to are with accommodations, but of course you would have FM systems. Actually some of the students were given iPhones and different other things. So there are several accommodations made for those students.

MS MICHAEL: Oh, it means accommodations in that sense.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: As well for students, for example, from the School for the Deaf you would have accommodations, some of them here are boarding –

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: – and that as well.

MS MICHAEL: I guess that is what I am asking. Where would that be covered in this list, the boarding?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Under Purchased Services.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you.

What has been done to evaluate the impact because of the closing of the school and these students who are now in the four schools that have been referred to? I still have people from the community of the deaf and hearing impaired coming to me. There are grave concerns. I appreciate what we are doing here tonight – and this is not Estimates, but I guess I will repeat and you have already said that I can come talk to you, but it will not be just me. I will want some people from the community with me to sit down and have a serious conversation because there are many, many concerns.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: All I can say to you is if there are concerns, then we certainly want to address them. If you have some of the people

who want to set up a time with me, certainly contact me and we will do that.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, I will not take up your time here. Just to say how unhappy I was – at the time, I remain unhappy and I do not think that the needs of the people in the deaf community and hearing impaired community are being met by this government.

I know that the School for Deaf was not for the whole community, but in actual fact it was for the whole community and it was the centre of the community that has been lost for the community. I absolutely feel the need of making that statement here tonight. I do not know what else to say. I will just leave it at that and say you will hear more from me.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: I do not have any more line questions.

Heading 3.4.01, Student Testing and Evaluation, there was a jump in salary last year, a revision up from the \$1.2 million. What caused that?

MR. JACKMAN: There is signing bonus for fifteen employees.

MS MICHAEL: Fifteen?

MR. JACKMAN: Fifteen, yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

Under Professional Services, there was a fair bit less than had been budgeted and almost back up to the same amount. Wouldn't the Professional Services be more or less the same every year into this area, which would seem to be pretty straightforward?

MR. JACKMAN: The reduction there was that there was change in the format of the Criterion Reference Test; therefore, it was a reduced cost there. Then, the other one, the \$771,000 that is funding reallocated to Employee Benefits.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, up to the \$3,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, I see that.

I take it the Purchased Services here would more or less be the same as the Purchased Services you have outlined in other places.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: It is no different for here then.

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MS MICHAEL: How many people are employed in this area?

MR. JACKMAN: Under Student Testing and Evaluation?

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: It is fifteen, is it?

MS MICHAEL: Fifteen?

MR. JACKMAN: I am sorry, nineteen.

MS MICHAEL: Nineteen.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Are they all permanent? No.

MR. JACKMAN: No.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Thirteen permanent, six temporary.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, thank you.

Subhead 3.4.02, I think any changes are very, very small here. This is the teachers' professional development.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: There does not seem to be intent here to allow for more money in this area. As a matter of fact, the amount is down slightly from last year. Why would it be down at all?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: It is down slightly, about \$33,000.

MS MICHAEL: It is very slight, yes.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Approximately \$33,400 and that is, again, last year where teachers, as you know, as we discussed the 142 and the eighteen, this would have been an annualization of that piece there. So you are seeing a slight decline because of the five-twelfths of that – less teachers.

MS MICHAEL: All right. I know that the NLTA is not happy with a lot of stuff around the time allotted for professional development, but I again will not have that discussion here at this table, just to acknowledge that I know what is being dealt with. I think their concerns, which are public, we all know it is not private information, but I think they have a serious concern that needs to be paid attention to. So, Minister, I urge you to listen to them.

They have not asked me to say that, by the way, but as a concerned person and a past teacher, I do ask you to listen to them.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Dale.

MR. KIRBY: Minister, there have been issues with respect to new schools being built and not able to accommodate the numbers of students they are housing right now – I use that word intentionally. I am thinking about Carbonear.

MR. JACKMAN: Are you at a particular item or just commentary?

MR. KIRBY: (Inaudible) on back to what we were discussing before, which was –

CHAIR: Subhead 3.1.07.

MR. KIRBY: Yes.

CHAIR: I would think you are generalizing.

MR. KIRBY: Is there anything that has been changed in terms of addressing school planning to better plan for schools so that we do not have

modular classrooms in use with new schools as much as we have seen?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, we could certainly go out and build a school as an elementary school that could house 2,000 students, but research would tell you that is not the way to go. Therefore, we are constructing schools that will house somewhere around 600 students. The reality is in this particular area the population is growing so much that we are trying our best to keep up with demand.

There is no doubt about it, if we had these two land issues straightened up, and this third one, Portugal Cove-St. Phillips, we would be moving ahead on it, but as you see this year in the Budget we are continuing with school construction. We have a new development out here in Galway now, as that moves forward we can expect there is going to be even more demand. So we do what we can to keep up with the pace, but we certainly have not shirked any responsibility in terms of school construction.

MR. KIRBY: Sure, but if the design of the school is for 600 students and you have an additional number of students in modulares, then they are all at the same school anyways, right?

MR. JACKMAN: It is what?

MR. KIRBY: They are all at the same school anyways then, right, because –?

MR. JACKMAN: The modulares are only temporary, though, until we get these other schools constructed.

MR. KIRBY: Sure, I see what you are saying temporary, perhaps, like –

MR. JACKMAN: Three years.

MR. KIRBY: Sure, but if you have a school that is K-3 or 4-6, that is a whole period of schooling at that school site for some of our kids, right. That is their whole –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: For us who are no longer attending school or in the school system, whether students or teachers or staff or whatever, from the outside looking in I think the

reality is a little different than the inside looking out.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, we find that people who move into these modulares really like them, but still we are moving ahead with schools that will, in the end, house about 600 students.

MR. KIRBY: I know what you are saying, and I am sure your intent is well, but when we have issues like what we have already talked about with Paradise and Portugal Cove-St. Phillips and not even having those land transactions straightened out yet –

MR. JACKMAN: Well, if you can hurry up the Catholic Church I will be glad to accept what you could do to help us out, but I will say –

MR. KIRBY: I am sure it is a tough job.

Seventy-five schools need to renovate, fifty minor renovations and twenty-five major renovations to accommodate full-day Kindergarten. Are we able to get a list of the schools that are included in the seventy-five?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I do not see any problem with that.

MR. KIRBY: You have said that \$30.6 million is required over three years for the full-day Kindergarten?

MR. JACKMAN: Right.

MR. KIRBY: While we know that \$1.5 million is for this fiscal, what would be the nature of that \$1.5 million?

MR. JACKMAN: That will be your consulting work to do the groundwork for planning to say what is going to be required in those seventy-five schools.

MR. KIRBY: Do you have a figure then for what is going to be needed in 2015 and 2016?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we do. It is \$12 million, and in the third year it is \$16 million. That \$16 million in the third year includes the salaried positions, and then on an ongoing basis it is around \$13 million.

MR. KIRBY: Is that \$16 million a conservative estimate, would you say, or is that a – because I have done a lot of modelling on this myself, and that sort of seems to be the lower end to me. I think that number could potentially grow.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, to tell you the truth, that is the best estimate we can make at this particular point. We have seen where some projects have come in for various reasons that you need additional funds, but that is our best estimate based on all the information that we have gathered.

MR. KIRBY: It is lower than my lowest estimate. I will just say that for the record. Maybe I will be around and you will be around, and I can tell you so, but we will see.

MR. JACKMAN: No, you will not tell me so.

MR. KIRBY: The inclusion model. Do you have any analysis of how many IRTs we have and how many IRTs we need to accommodate the inclusion model that you have?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, we certainly know how many we have. I cannot give you the number off the top of my head now, but I am certain we can come up with the number that we have.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Seven per thousand is the IRT percentage, and it is 330 pervasive units that we have as well. So if you do the full analysis of special education units, one in six teachers – one in every six – is a special education teacher.

MR. KIRBY: One in every six is an IRT?

MR. JACKMAN: One in six is a special education teacher.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, of some sort.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: As you know, and we will hear more about this in the coming days, but I listened to the President of the NLTA speak on Friday night about more or less following up on

their pre-budget brief for this year about the NLTA's thinking –

CHAIR: Dale, I would remind you, we are getting down to about (inaudible) minutes away.

MR. JACKMAN: I will say to you that I am in the process of setting up a meeting to meet with Mr. Dinn on that exact issue.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

I have some further questions. I do not where to ask this again – sorry, we have this right? We have this now?

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, so I will not ask that question.

There are a number of curriculum reviews going on. You said that the final year of the math curriculum, which I believe has been making its way through the system –

MR. JACKMAN: It is the final year.

MR. KIRBY: – since the mid-1990s but was conceived in the late 1980s. Is that going to be – ?

MR. JACKMAN: No, that is not right.

MR. KIRBY: In 1987, I believe, that math curriculum was originally conceived.

MR. JACKMAN: No. The new Pan-Canadian one we went with, what year was that?

MR. KIRBY: It began implementation in 1996 or 1997.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: No, the one that we have done here, the WNCP, or the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, I am guessing now that it would be probably 2008.

MR. KIRBY: In 2008 that –?

MR. JACKMAN: This new math curriculum started to come on stream.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: The first year we did Kindergarten, Grades 1, 4, and 7, then we went 2, 5, and 8, and 3, 6, and 9 and at the same time then we started the high school. So this is the final year it will be K-12 implementation of the WNCIP protocol.

MR. KIRBY: Yes. I misspoke, too. It is 1997, I believe, if you look at the origins of that curriculum. That is when that started to emerge, around 1997.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Well, I cannot speak to that. I just know when it was adopted here, and it was certainly the curriculum that many of the other provinces have adopted as well.

MR. KIRBY: Yes. There is a raging debate going on in the country right now about this particular curriculum. I am just wondering, once we have gotten to Grade 12 and everybody is doing it, are we going to have a review of that curriculum or do we have to wait five years for that to happen?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: No, there is no plan to do a review in five years. The latest curriculum that is being implemented, there is a debate not only across the country, there is debate within this Province when I hear two professors at the university debating it, but I will tell you that this program is sanctioned by the mathematics people within the Department of Education.

MR. KIRBY: In the Faculty of Education you mean?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, Faculty of Education. I said department but faculty.

MR. KIRBY: I have asked a number of questions over the past couple of years about the ISSP and Pathways commission report. I recently asked how much it cost and I was happy to get that information. Has the Department of Education tracked how many of the seventy-five recommendations of that report have been implemented to date? I keep talking about the ones that have not been.

MR. JACKMAN: Let me see if I can get it for you. No, I do not have that here.

CHAIR: Okay. Minister, can you supply that to Mr. Kirby later?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Ms Michael, to clue up.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you.

Under 3.4.03, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation, my big question here has to do with the Grants and Subsidies, which is going down by \$178,000 approximately. Why would that drop be happening?

MR. JACKMAN: That is the same thing. There were some positions that were impacted last year in that particular division. So these are the annualized expenditure reductions because of the positions that were taken out of that division.

MS MICHAEL: Under Grants and Subsidies, what would the grants and subsidies be in this area? Who gets the grants and subsidies?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is actually the teaching salaries for CDLI, and that would indicate the reduction from last year's budget.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

The grants and subsidies go to the schools where these teachers are located?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: CDLI pays those directly through teaching services as well.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

I do not know how you assess this, is it by the number of individual students who access the program or is it through the schools, or a combination of both, that you assess the impact in terms of those who are involved? Are they usually in groups in a school or do you have individuals? Do you have some communities where you might even just have one child who is accessing? I am just getting an idea of the breadth of the program.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: In terms of CDLI, Ms Michael?

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes, it varies. In terms of that environment, you often do not have too many. There is certainly a maximum, but you could have one student doing one course in a particular school. We currently have about forty courses and 103 schools involved in CDLI. That could be a single student, and you could have two or three doing the course as well.

MR. JACKMAN: It is wonderful stuff they are doing. I remember me being in school, it was primarily math and sciences. Now we are offering music, art, skilled trades.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Yes, I heard about the skilled trades.

How many schools did you say have the forty courses?

MR. JACKMAN: It is 103.

MS MICHAEL: One hundred and three.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much. That was one of my questions.

Okay, we will move on. The 3.5.01 – no, it is 3.4.04, I am sorry. I do not know how I missed that because that was one I have questions about.

Could you explain to me what all is involved here when you talk about the development of programs? What are the programs that have been developed to prepare the children?

MR. JACKMAN: Under?

MS MICHAEL: Under the Early Childhood Learning.

MR. JACKMAN: That is the one for our Power of Play campaign. These are the kits that parents pick up when they bring their children for their two, four, six month checkups.

MS MICHAEL: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: The programs have been piloted and accepted now for twelve months and eighteen months, and further development of the kits for twenty-four and thirty-six months.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, so basically that is what it is.

MR. JACKMAN: These early initiatives, yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

The Salaries this year is \$353,400. How many people are involved in that, and what is the staff?

MR. JACKMAN: There are three there, and there are two additional ones that will be put in this year. That is related to development of the second phase, plus full-day Kindergarten.

MS MICHAEL: There is quite a jump, almost \$200,000 in the budget line from last year's budget line.

MR. JACKMAN: Under which one?

MS MICHAEL: Under 10, Grants and Subsidies.

MR. JACKMAN: Under 10, Grants and Subsidies. Yes, this is funding again related to full-day Kindergarten being brought in. It is because of the start-up of early literacy pilot sites, but there is also the increase costs for planning around full-day Kindergarten.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, so you are including it in there?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: Okay. Let me see if I have any more questions around that. No, I think that is all.

I come to 3.5.01, Provincial Information and Library Resources Board. I think I will just ask my general question on this one. The Early Literacy Foundations program which was launched in January, it is being piloted in fourteen sites, all of which are libraries –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: I know it is just started but could you give us an idea of where the libraries are, has the program fully started in all of those sites, et cetera – just a status report since January.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: There are twelve sites. We certainly have had some difficulties recruiting and retaining employees in this area. The first phase, we started with fourteen, but are down to twelve now in terms of retaining the employees. I can actually give you the list of the sites, if you wish –

MS MICHAEL: Yes, please.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: – and the types of activities that we are doing; but it is with the public libraries. It is related to the public libraries initiative, and it was just kicked off since Christmas, in January.

We can give you the names of the sites and the kinds of things that we are doing there with early literacy. It is meant to involve the parent with their child and to try to get them not just reading with them, but as a group as well – there is a whole whack of activities there, but it is all about doing it together with your child in your community.

MS MICHAEL: Well, I would be interested in getting the sites and what exactly is happening.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Certainly, and they are throughout the whole Province.

MS MICHAEL: In Labrador as well?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: Yes.

MS MICHAEL: I think the department has promised to help the CBS library find another location. Where are things going with that?

MR. JACKMAN: We have committed to that and there are two routes we could go, build or do a leasing, so we are working on a leasing arrangement. As the council builds its new town

council office, then they are looking at building on and we will pay the lease for the space.

MS MICHAEL: Okay, so they are going to accommodate their original plan in order to allow for the library to exist.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I think even in looking at the site they had land sufficient there to build it in.

MS MICHAEL: Right.

MR. JACKMAN: It will be similar to the arrangement over in Corner Brook.

MS MICHAEL: With regard to what has happened in some places, for example, with the closing of the school in St. Lunaire-Griquet, or in Griquet itself, where the library is being affected by that closure, are you assessing that kind of thing as a department with regard to mitigating against that kind of thing happening again?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, in this particular case, we are still looking for an option. We just found out recently through discussions with the mayor that somebody might be interested in the purchase of that particular school. Then, the libraries board will see if an arrangement can be worked out there.

We have been in discussions with the public libraries board as to what the future of some of these smaller sites is. We will continue our discussions with them.

MS MICHAEL: Right now, simply because I do not know, is the library not in existence at all in Griquet at the moment?

MR. JACKMAN: No, it is not at this particular point.

MS MICHAEL: Okay.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Dale.

MR. KIRBY: Thank you.

Minister, on April 2 – that was World Autism Awareness Day – you said that Eastern Health and Health and Community Services are developing an action plan for autism. Do you know when that is supposed to be completed?

MR. JACKMAN: No, I cannot tell you. I can have someone to jot it down.

MR. KIRBY: Yes. Last year you had a presentation provided to you by an occupational therapist. We are the only Province in the country that does not have OTs in schools.

MR. JACKMAN: The discussions that we had – I cannot speak to too much previous, but Minister Sullivan and I did indeed want to work more closely together around the provision of those services. The details around the positions we will be unfolding as quickly as we possibly can.

MR. KIRBY: Are there any discussions underway with the federal government regarding a national strategy for Autism Spectrum Disorder?

MR. JACKMAN: Not that I am aware of, no.

MR. KIRBY: With respect to the libraries which, I guess, we were just speaking about, there were new libraries requested this year. Are there any new ones approved?

MR. JACKMAN: CBS.

MR. KIRBY: CBS and that is it?

MR. JACKMAN: That was the one that was the number one priority for the board. As I said, we have been chatting with the provincial libraries board to see how we can move ahead with the future of some of these smaller rural libraries.

MR. KIRBY: Under 3.4.03, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation, there is only three permanent staff there at CDLI and the budget is \$475,800, so there must be a lot of part-time staff, temporary or part-time.

MR. JACKMAN: There are three permanent and three temporary.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, and three temporary.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. KIRBY: Would you describe them as –

MR. JACKMAN: That does not include the teachers, right?

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

How many teachers then?

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: There are twenty-nine teachers and one guidance counsellor.

MR. KIRBY: When was that number reduced – the twenty-nine?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: That is a recent number from the director.

MR. KIRBY: Okay. Is that lower than it was previously? Has that gone down?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: It has not gone down with this budget.

MR. KIRBY: Okay.

Do we describe the schools that are served by CDLI still as entirely rural?

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: I would say to you that if I got the 103 schools, the vast majority would be rural. The larger schools are offering most of those courses within their own school allocation.

MR. KIRBY: I am just wondering if there has been any move, discussion, analysis or study of making those courses available outside of the rural settings.

MR. JACKMAN: You are talking about urban?

MR. KIRBY: Wherever.

MR. JACKMAN: I have wondered the same thing. We have not moved there, but that is not to say that my head is not there.

MR. KIRBY: I could be contentious, but there are students who do their entire university degrees in their pajamas in Paton College.

MR. JACKMAN: We deal with lots of contentious issues.

MR. KIRBY: Well, not entirely, but pretty close.

CHAIR: Janet.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: I should say that the francophone school district, which is here in the city, avails of CDLI.

MR. KIRBY: Okay, so they do.

I wanted to ask a question about guidance. We have heard from school councils on this and others. The teacher allocation commission recommended a change to the ratio. There has not been any change. I am just wondering if that is something – the last quote I could find was from Minister Burke, who said it was being considered. I am not sure, maybe that was in 2007 that the department was examining adjustment to the ratio of guidance staff to student population.

MS VIVIAN-WALSH: From payroll we can see how much is allocated for guidance, and it is actually more than the allocation that is given to the district. If you look at the payroll piece and looking at the guidance counsellors there, you are looking at probably one to 400 or one to 397 there. If you add in the services of the educational psychologist with the assessment, it would be lower still.

MR. KIRBY: One of the problems I am having in my district right now, and I know it is not isolated to my district, it is a Northeast Avalon problem for sure and maybe elsewhere – there is not a sufficient number of English as a Second Language teachers to serve the kids in my schools. We have itinerants, and if you do not speak the language – I will try to explain this one. If you did not speak the language yourself and you only had service from an English as a Second Language teacher for a few hours every day, you can imagine being in a situation where you are – it is pretty isolating to not have that.

I am just wondering if there is any discussion or if anyone in the department is looking at the need for more ESL teachers? We are always talking about population growth and the importance of immigration to that. If we are going to have more immigration we are getting more refugees, we are getting more people who need that. I am just wondering if there is – I did have a communication with you last year, Minister, about this problem.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. I think there was a correspondence that came in recently but what we do is based on what the district will submit.

MR. KIRBY: I would suggest that in terms of the Population Growth Strategy it is probably something you might want to take back to your colleagues because I think it is something that is becoming a problem.

I am aware of the time. I just had one further question. We have had a lot of talk in the House of Assembly about openness in government. I am just wondering, Minister, if you would table the briefing notes that you are referring to throughout this session of Estimates this evening for our information, in the spirit of openness?

MR. JACKMAN: These?

MR. KIRBY: Whatever materials you are using to answer questions this evening.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, I have documents here with my own personal notes on it, so I will have to clean some of this up.

MR. KIRBY: That is my final question.

CHAIR: Ms Michael, do you have any further questions?

MS MICHAEL: No, I am fine.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: You are good, okay.

Just some housekeeping before we close, Minister. A little formality, Minister, I will get back to you.

Shall 1.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

MR. JACKMAN: (Inaudible).

CHAIR: Sure, Minister, seeing who you are.

MR. JACKMAN: I am just wondering your request, because basically what I have used here is the Estimates book with my notes jotted on it. I can give you another copy of the Estimates books if you want them, because that is basically what I have used here. So do you want a book?

CHAIR: Mr. Kirby.

MR. KIRBY: I guess my question was if you could table any briefing materials that you are referring to in answering questions.

CHAIR: I do not believe in Estimates that you have to table anything.

MR. KIRBY: I did not suggest that it was a requirement. I said in the spirit of openness.

CHAIR: You just wanted to put it on the record as – Yes, okay, I understand.

MR. JACKMAN: I will give you another copy of the Estimates book.

CHAIR: Clerk.

CLERK: You have to finish 1.1.01.

CHAIR: Yes, okay.

CLERK: Then we will go to the others.

CHAIR: Right, okay.

Shall 1.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, subhead 1.1.01 carried.

CLERK: Subhead 1.2.01 through 3.5.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 1.2.01 through 3.5.01 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, subheads 1.2.01 through 3.5.01 carried.

CLERK: The total.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, Department of Education, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Department of Education carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Education carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Minister, I would like to thank you and all of your staff for your openness and your willingness to answer questions tonight on behalf of the Committee. It has been a long day, I know, for all of us. I want to thank all of our

Committee members. It has been a long day and I want to thank you for your time, indulgence, and your questions tonight.

Once again, Minister, on behalf of all of us, thank you and thank you to all of your staff.

In closing tonight, we just have the minutes of our previous meeting.

Can I have a motion to approve the minutes of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, dated April 2, 2014?

Moved by Mr. Cornect, seconded by Ms Dempster.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: I remind Committee members that we have Estimates again starting tomorrow night at 6:00 o'clock with the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.

Can I have a motion to adjourn?

MR. LITTLE: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by Mr. Little.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

Good night, folks.

Thank you very much.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.