

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to guests here in the gallery and those watching from home or elsewhere on the Internet or television.

I want to welcome Colton Profit – a great future, about to graduate with his Bachelor of Science in Nursing and going on to farther studies – a great career ahead of him. Allan Malone is a good friend and he and his family spent a lot of time this past year in Halifax, illness and a tough year and condolences to you and Barbara, Alan. The Acorn's from East Wiltshire – Colville Road, here – Caleb, Cara and Jamie. And of course, Eddie Lund – we can't mention you everyday Eddie, but we're glad to see you here as a regular; saw you on the weekend too.

The member statement yesterday about Lawrence Macaulay but let me add a word; 30th anniversary, continuous service as a Member of Parliament and a great Prince Edward Islander to Lawrence and Frances, to recognize that they've been through nine consecutive electoral victories and are going for the 10. On Saturday night, Lawrence spoke about this and he mentioned and mentioned with real feeling, as a lesson to the rest of us, that he lost his first nomination and he lost his first election. That's a good way of getting a message out to the public that the business we are in – it's a good thing to stay at it.

Alan Andrews, recognized yesterday, received his Order of Canada, has been announced previously and he's been a driving force in sports and generally in the community building in Prince Edward Island for a long time. Going back to, probably Allied Youth would be one of Alan's first involvements.

Tomorrow morning, there will be an annual get together that's called Advancing Island

Connections. I've have opportunity of each of the last several years to attend. Last year there were upwards of 400 people took part in bringing together newcomers and existing businesses and leaders in the business community in Prince Edward Island to explore opportunities for partnership and opportunities to keep our Mighty Island growing. We look forward to that event and to all the good things that will come out of it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure for me to rise as well to recognize some guests that we have in the gallery today. Of course, Eddie Lund has already been mentioned and Allan Malone – wonderful to see you both here, gentlemen. I noticed we have journalists joining us and I think we have some more journalism students, so it's always great to have them in the gallery.

I'd also like to send out a big hello to the constituents of Stratford-Kinlock, I know that many of them tune in via EastLink or on the Internet, and I know when I visit particularly Andrew's of Stratford and St. John House, I always get a warm welcome and many words of wisdom or direction of what perhaps we should be asking government. I appreciate that advice, and I'll keep coming back for it.

I'd also like to send out a warm thanks to the staff at Beach Grove Home that does an incredible job looking after the seniors there. In particular, I'd like to say hello to my mom and dad, that are both at Beach Grove and the care that they receive is exceptional.

Last but not least, I look forward to attending an event in my home district of Stratford this evening. It's the closing ceremonies for the Stratford Community School. It's a wonderful event that I attend every year and it's great to see the growing numbers of individuals that participate in the community schools because as we all know, the day we stop learning, is the day that everything ends.

I applaud the individuals, not only the students that participate in the various courses, but especially the instructors that provide the instruction and their time to help with the community schools not only in Stratford but all across Prince Edward Island.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It's a pleasure to be back in the House, and sometimes I have a flashback to my previous life. If I look in the front row of the gallery here today, I see with Colton and the Acorn family all members – all patients of mine from my previous existence. It's lovely. You're probably happy to have a glass barrier between yourselves and me today. Anyways lovely to see you all.

I want to welcome other members of the gallery.

I want to specifically mention Dr. Susan Hartley, who is with us today, a health and wellness critic for the Green Party and always lovely to see you Susan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everybody here today, and say hello to all the residents of West Royalty-Springvale and also, to those in Andrews Lodge that are out in the west end.

I'd also like to recognize the people that are putting their names up for the benefit of our community: Joe Byrne, great advocate for the NDP party, and J. Kevin Arsenault. They all are interested in the welfare of this province. I thank them for that.

I'd also like to say hello to Al Malone, a constituent, and express my sorrow for troubles he's had with his wife, Barbara. I hope everything works well for you, Al.

That's about it, Mr. Speaker; it's great to be here today with you.

Thank you, sir.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure to rise and welcome all to the public gallery today.

I'd especially like to welcome Al Malone, and Eddie Lund who is here.

As well, I'd like to draw special attention to Colton Profitt. Colton Profitt, obviously, is one of our very bright, young Island students who is going to UPEI, getting ready to graduate from our Nursing Program with many others out there.

I had an opportunity to go out a couple days ago to talk to some of our young nurses out there. I'll have another chance to go to talk to Colton and some of his class tomorrow to have a great conversation with them about what Prince Edward Island has to offer. Hopefully, they will all decide to stay and work and live and play right here on Prince Edward Island. So, it's really great to have Colton involved today – doing very well in the Nursing Program, I might add as well.

Also while I'm on my feet, something I neglected to do yesterday – so I guess I'll start with an apology, but to my fellow Lion member and great, great friend, George Vale, who celebrated his 80th birthday on the weekend. We had a great family party there, lots of Lion members and lots of community members around to celebrate with George.

George is one of those community-driven spirits who never stops working for our community of Sherwood and all individuals in that area. I apologize I didn't get to do that yesterday, George, but well deserved today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to welcome everyone who may be watching from District 18 Rustico-Emerald. I also wanted to give a shout out to my father and mother-in-law, Myron and Anna Turner sometimes watch from the Premier's District, in District 9; so hello to you.

I know it's not just the farmers who are having a tough time this year with the weather. It's been so wet for them, but also the shell fishers this year with the early freeze. They're having a tough time.

If you're a wild oyster fisher, trying to find those open stretches of water to get as much harvest as you can and if you're running an oyster farm you have to sink your gear before the water freezes over. I know that they have been at risk of losing inventory and losing gear.

In particular, I wanted to recognize some of the folks who have been sinking the cages. They've really been working hard to make it happen, and I've really – really saved the living of a lot of fishers and it's come at the cost though of frozen faces and torn ligaments and even – I know one person fought through it all and kept on working with a broken foot. So I give a shout out to them and all they do for the Island economy and the shell fishers.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

Ms. Mundy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure to rise today and welcome all my colleagues back to the House. I'm glad that they travelled home safely last night and missed the storm that we had. I'm glad to see them here, all shoveled out and ready to work.

I'd like to welcome all my colleagues back to the House and glad that they travelled home safely last night and missed the storm that we had and glad to see them here all shoveled out and ready to work.

I'd also like to recognize Colton Proffitt in the House as well. Colton was very valuable to me, District 22, during my last campaign

and he brought a youth lens to everything that we did.

I'd also like to announce in the House and congratulate Roxanne Carter-Thompson and wish her the best of luck on her nomination this evening in Charlottetown-Parkdale.

I got to meet Roxanne during our work with the adventure group, and also, when she chaired our first ever whole community poverty reduction advisory council. I want to thank Roxanne for her work, wish her the best of luck and can't wait to see the change she's going to make in our world when she's elected to the Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Caleb Acorn

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today I'd like to acknowledge Caleb Acorn of Cornwall.

Caleb hosted a boys retreat on Saturday to tackle the issues of consent, bullying, peer relationships and juvenile justice after receiving a \$1,500 grant from TakingITGlobal, a group which aids youth in addressing community issues that matter to them.

Caleb was encouraged to apply for the grant by his mother Cara Acorn, a youth worker at the Cornwall youth centre where the retreat was hosted.

This retreat featured speakers talking on a wide range of topics relevant to Caleb's age demographic and was well received by his male friends.

I would like to congratulate Caleb on showing initiative and taking a leadership role in his community.

Leadership comes in many forms. You don't have to be elected to public office to be an effective community leader on the contrary – many leaders never hold office or work in any time of provincial leadership position

but they manage to bring ideas and people together and make things happen.

The places with great leaders tend to create more of them because leadership is contagious. Great leaders raise the bar for their community; they bring others into the fold and create a culture of leadership.

What Caleb accomplished by hosting this retreat is a prime example of a person building future leaders through education by investing in educational resources and engaging in community leaders we are paving the way for young people like Caleb to create positive change on a local, provincial and federal level.

I fully believe that if we continue to support our youth by giving them the resources they need to succeed, we will see them persist in the future towards working to better their respective communities by taking lead in projects they care about.

Thank you Caleb and all the best in your future endeavors.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Scotchfort Remembrance Day Ceremony

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On November 8th, the Abegweit First Nations in Scotchfort held a ceremony in honour of National Aboriginal Veterans Day.

Senator Brian Francis was in attendance and told a story of a Mi'kmaq soldier named Lawrence Maloney who was born in Nova Scotia but moved to Lennox Island after the Second World War.

During Maloney's service in Poland, he was captured by the Nazi's and taken to a concentration camp where he was subjected to mistreatment and forced labour.

Many years after the war, Maloney, who was a residential school survivor described life in the concentration camp as harsh but added that residential schools were sometimes harder.

Senator Francis closed by emphasizing the importance of paying respects and saying thank you to our Aboriginal veterans for their courage and their service and to remember how much work we have to do in this country to promote reconciliation between Canada and its Indigenous peoples.

National Aboriginal Veterans Day is a memorial observed in Canada in recognition of Aboriginal contributions to military service particularly in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War.

More than 7,000 First Nations members served in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. An unknown number of Inuit, Métis and other Indigenous people participated. One veterans group estimates that 12,000 Indigenous men and women served in the three wars.

The ceremony concluded on an emotional and moving note. A special trail built on the First Nations as part of a major military exercise across PEI was dedicated to the family of Sapper Erik Bronson Bernard, a soldier from the Scotchfort First Nations who was killed in a motor vehicle collision in New Brunswick on Nov. 27, 2016. Bernard's mother, Gloria, was in attendance.

Today I would like to reaffirm the Island's commitment to reconciliation with those Indigenous people and pay my respect to those who gave their lives to serve a country, which at that time, did not even recognize them as citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Planet Earth

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Planet Earth is 4.5 billion years old, give or take.

Science tells us that about 99.5% of all species that have ever existed on the blue planet over that time have died off in five previous mass extinctions. Those are sobering odds for anyone who assumes that our future place on this planet is absolutely and permanently secure.

Homo sapiens have inhabited planet Earth for about 200,000 years. If we condense the 4.5 billion years age of the Earth into a 24-hour period, humans have been around for about a minute and a half of that day – we arrive just before 11.59 p.m. But, despite our late arrival we've made quite an impact.

Our special ability has been to take parts of the planet and to transform them into something that better suits our desires. Rocks and trees become homes; metal ores become tools and weapons, and trains and cars and later space rockets and cell phones; fossil fuels provided us with the energy which gives us heat and mobility and has powered the industrial revolution. We are an extraordinary species indeed.

For much of our time on Earth, humanity has been an insignificant player in global affairs and our impact on the rest of the planet was minimal. It took 200,000 years for our population to reach 1 billion, and only 200 more years to reach 7 billion. Those people all need to be fed, housed, clothed and increasingly they want modern conveniences – all requiring more resources – so we find ourselves having to forge a new relationship with our planetary home. No longer are we an inconsequential part of the web of life, but a dominant force that is changing, both life on Earth and the very chemistry of our atmosphere.

A sixth mass extinction is underway, and we are the cause. Climate change is happening, and we are the cause. If we don't want to end up as one of the 99.5% that are gone from this planet, we need to start behaving like the brilliant and adaptable species that we are. A species as gifted as ours is well-suited to a lengthy tenure on this amazing planet. For the sake of our children, let's put our differences aside and our heads together and figure this out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Neurology is an important medical specialty that provides vital services to a wide range of medical conditions, from epilepsy to cancer, and to MS.

State of neurology services on PEI

Question to the health minister: What is the current state of neurology services here on PEI?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Currently, on Prince Edward Island we have a full complement of neurologists, which that number is three. They do provide a wonderful service to Islanders and at any given time, I'm sure they have a wide range of patients, as was mentioned by the hon. member, and they do great work and we're very fortunate to have them, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'd ask the minister to certainly go back and do some research with regards to that answer when he said that we have a full complement.

Like any in-demand medical specialty, patient wait times are a very serious issue.

Wait lists to see neurologist

Question to the minister of health: Do you consider the current two-year wait list for neurology services contributing to good patient outcomes here on Prince Edward Island?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I do stand by my comments that we are at full complement of three neurologists on Prince Edward Island. There was at two points of time this year where our neurologists – one was out early for a

personal leave in the springtime, back in service though, and we do have another neurologist that is out currently but will be back by the end of the year.

In the interim, though, we've had locum neurologists that have filled in. We currently have a locum right now that covers some days of the month.

But, like every other medical specialty, there are times where there are waits. As a private health service, Health PEI does not track those specific times, but we continue to work with the neurologists.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister feels that a two-year wait time to see a neurologist is acceptable when you may be sitting at home wondering or not whether your diagnosis of MS or a cancer illness, or many other serious health issues, maybe be complicating your life. But, the minister is okay with Islanders waiting two years to see a neurologist.

To supplement our in-province neurologists many patients use temporary visiting clinics with off-Island neurologists to help reduce wait times and avoid travelling to another province for medical attention.

Access to temporary visiting clinics

Again, question to the health minister: Can Island patients still access these local, temporary visiting clinics?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Although I don't have specifics on Islanders requiring neurology services, we do have reciprocal agreements with other provinces in our region.

I'm sure, from time to time, there are requirements that require special attention and Health PEI provides methods and means for that. But, we support our neurologists locally with locum service when it's

required. As I said, we have one now that is working in PEI and we'll continue to talk to neurologists in the situation, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, in fact, we used to have two neurologists from Nova Scotia that would come here to PEI for a couple of days a month and help to supplement the services to patients on this long wait list of two years.

This is no longer the case. This government cut that program so we no longer have those visiting neurologists coming to PEI to help eliminate the backlog.

The minister said we have a full complement of neurologists here in PEI; however, Health PEI's website shows that they're currently recruiting for a new neurologist.

Retirements of local neurologists

Question to the health minister: Does government anticipate any further neurologist retirements in the near future?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member is correct. We currently are recruiting for a neurologist on Prince Edward Island.

One of our neurologists has indicated officially and formally that they intend to retire at some point in time next spring, so obviously recruitment and retention are out trying to recruit a neurologist to come to Prince Edward Island.

In the meantime, though, we have locums that are available that are assisting and as I said earlier, the locum that is out on special personal leave intends to be back before the end of the year, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Wait lists to see neurologist (further)

I was talking to someone that was potentially exhibiting signs of having MS. I'm wondering if the minister of health – what kinds of things would go through his head if he was exhibiting signs of MS and had to wait over two years to see a neurologist.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member knows that I am not a clinician, but I do know that when it comes to the neurologists and their diagnoses, it's based on acuity need. The ones that are priority do get moved to the front of the queue and that's the normal practice that they have had in place for some time.

I anticipate if somebody was showing signs of MS, that neurologist would do the necessary medical treatments to ensure that their needs are met, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Health PEI resources for specialty recruitment

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Another question to the health minister: Is the psychological toll on patients of extended wait times factored in when Health PEI commits resources to our specialty recruitment?

Some Hon. Members: Good question.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I said earlier, all of our health needs of Prince Edward Islanders would be met by some medical attention when needed.

We do have a reciprocal agreement with out-of-province. Just as recently as last

spring, I was standing to my feet talking about cataracts and eye surgeries that were going out-of-province. I do believe that if the neurologists had needs to send somebody out-of-province, or to bring another physician in from a specialist – a specialist in from some other area, that would be something that would be met and would be provided, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These patients are referred to the neurologists. They're not just referred for no good reason, they have good reasons to be there and they're spending two years waiting, thinking, wondering what to do.

I was talking to a person that was exhibiting MS symptoms – they have decisions to make, they have serious life decisions to make. They could be looking at a new home, the different capabilities of that new home if they're going to have MS, but here they are waiting two years to see a neurologist.

Two-year wait lists to see neurologist

Does this government think that waiting two years to see that neurologist to get an MRI is appropriate?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I said, our neurologists are very highly trained individuals doing wonderful work here on Prince Edward Island.

As I said earlier the wait times are based on acuity. They're assessed based. They continue to work with their patients and all Islanders to ensure that their needs are best met and in a timely fashion as possible.

Anytime that we hear of any medical condition that has a wait time, we are always concerned about that but we do our best and we try to ensure that Islanders health needs are met efficiently and safely, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was told we used to have a neurologist come over from Sunday to Wednesday a couple of times a month to help with this backlog.

Visiting neurologists

Why did we stop that?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I don't have data on visiting neurologists that have come to Prince Edward Island in the past, I can check that and bring that back and I'm willing to do that.

But I do know that we do have locums that are Prince Edward Island that are working – locums that are available to come to Prince Edward Island. As I said we are recruiting right now for a neurologist and perhaps it will be one of those locums that come and stay and live in Prince Edward Island and help the needs of Islanders, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Increasing neurologist complement

If there's over a two-year wait to see a neurologist and our complement is three, do you think that we should be increasing that complement, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to physicians on Prince Edward Island, we are now at 262 physicians in its entirety. Compare that with when I myself and personally and other members of the Legislature came to power in 2007, we were sitting at 196. Couple that again with 31 nurse practitioners that have been added to the system over the last number of years.

We are working very hard to ensure that Islanders healthcare needs are met.

Does it mean that we're absolutely where we need to be? Absolutely not, we will continue to recruit, we will continue to go out and talk to physicians; we will continue to ensure that all health care needs for Prince Edward Islanders are well met, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously, the options of helping solve the problem of the wait list for the neurologists is not working. We've talked about a locum every once and a while – that's just maintaining the status quo or losing ground.

What options are this government looking at, besides what the minister has mentioned, for fix this problem? Two years is just not appropriate.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As minister of health, it's not my decision how many physicians we need or how many physicians in particular programs or covering particular health issues.

There is a committee that is made up of physicians and staff that determine that and they meet regularly to determine are complements where they need to be, do we need to make adjustments? And that is ongoing work every day.

I'm sure that committee is looking at issues like this. If it is a concern, they are dealing with it and will continue to work so.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Reinstating visiting neurologist

Will the minister commit today to reinstating that neurologist that came over here for three, four days a week until we get this backlog down to an acceptable time?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think what I would be prepared to commit to today is to go back and talk to my staff, talk to them about what happened in the past –

Mr. MacEwen: You've been doing that for 10 years.

Mr. Mitchell: – the neurologist that came from other provinces was that an effective practice? Did it show the results that we needed or for what purpose if it is not happening today, why was that practice ceased?

I'm willing to go back, talk to my staff –

Mr. Trivers: Less talk, more action.

Mr. Mitchell: – and if there's something that we can do there, absolutely we'll have a look at that, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: The Energy Efficient Equipment Rebate requires that upfront payment is made and then the application can be made for the rebate. That's how rebates work, so the longer it takes to get the rebate; the more costly it is to the applicant.

People are finding that once they are approved to receive an Energy Efficient Equipment Rebate, there is a delay before payment.

Delays in rebate payments re: energy efficiency

Question to the Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy: how long are Islanders waiting for their Energy Efficient Equipment Rebates?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We want to congratulate Islanders for taking advantage of this new program to convert to other sources of heat.

We've had a 300% increase in applications since the first of April. We are now up to about 2,500 applications. We have hired extra staff to process those applications, and things are progressing so that we are making sure that those are gone out.

We have access to direct deposit for clients who have applied for those and we're continuing to work on that.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Islanders do want to be energy efficient, and it's great that the government took our advice in the lobbying and put this program in place.

Even after the Energy Efficient Equipment Rebate application form is filled out, the sales receipt with date, make and model numbers is collected, a certificate of compliance from the electrical installer is obtained. All of this is sent to efficiencyPEI and then it's deemed they meet the eligibility requirements. Islanders are being told it is a wait of three months to get these rebates.

Some Hon. Members: Three months?

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Yes, three months.

Three-month wait for rebate payments

Question to the minister of energy: How are you planning to fix this problem?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, as I noted, there is direct deposit for those payments but each one of those heat pumps that are being installed saves over 1,000 litres of oil which is equivalent to 2.75 tonnes of greenhouse gas.

An Hon. Member: Three months.

Hon. Member (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: If you look at that and we're moving towards expanding –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – our programs, but we've also saved Islanders over \$10 million in energy costs through those programs and another \$10 million in electricity rebates and we're continuing to put more programs in place to save Islanders more money.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So Islanders with a household income of \$35,000 or less qualify as low-income, and of course we know that's way too many Island households right now.

So low-income can get rebates from anywhere from \$900 for a more efficient oil furnace to \$7,500 for a geothermal heat pump – that's just the rebate.

This is great, but how can low income households possibly afford to outlay that kind of cash and then wait for three months to wait to get their rebate back?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Low-income Islanders re: energy efficient programs

Mr. Trivers: Question to the minister: Why did you implement an energy efficient equipment program that low-income Islanders simply can't afford to use?

Premier MacLauchlan: They are using it.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: As I noted, we have a 300% increase in those applications since April; 2,500 people now have accessed that program, but we also have a free weatherization program which we've helped over 4,300 low-income clients with –

Mr. R. Brown: Oh great.

Ms. Biggar: – 500 businesses have accessed those programs. \$5 million in ENERGY STAR equipment and that is all to go towards our carbon reduction plan, and

that's why we are so proud of Islanders for taking advantage of those programs.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we're hearing is that low-income Islanders in fact are not using the program because they can't afford to use it so I welcome the minister to table that data anytime she likes.

Mr. Trivers: Seniors on fixed incomes particularly stand to benefit from energy efficient upgrades; however, once they figure how to apply for the program, they find themselves in a dilemma. How do they come up with the up-front money to make the upgrade? If they can get a loan or put it on a credit card, is it worth it for the amount of interest they'll have to pay?

Change in energy efficient program

A question to the minister of energy: Minister, will you commit to changing this program so that it is accessible to those who need it the most?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This government is the government that reinstated the home renovation program that was cancelled by the PC government.

Ms. Biggar: We've helped –

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – 4,000 low-income Islanders through that home reno program. We are helping 2,500 also in combination with that, to put in more new efficient energy equipment. We're doing the free weatherization program; we're continuing to work with Islanders to address their needs. We're saving them \$10 million a year on electricity rebates and we're continuing to add to our programs.

Thank you.

Mr. R. Brown: You got 'em on the ropes.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, this is the government that brought in the HST, raised the HST, they're taking money out of one pocket – a lot of money – and they're giving a little bit of it back with the other hand.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Another problem with this program is that any home energy efficient upgrade projects that have already been started or just recently completed are not eligible. Islanders are trying to be more energy efficient and are taking the steps they need to make this happen; however, because of the program application procedure, many find out that they are not eligible until after the fact. They've already done the work – even though they seem to meet all of the program requirements.

Question to the minister of energy: Will you commit to changing the energy efficient equipment program to address this problem?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Mr. Speaker.

We're also saving Islanders with oil reduction, tax on that, the propane, wood rebates, the tax on the rebates. The member over there is not correct in saying that everyone is ineligible – we will look at an application that meets the requirements going back 12 months.

An Hon. Member: Oh, great.

Ms. Biggar: We have done that. So, if they meet the criteria, if they meet the energy star value – we have worked with those clients to help them access this new program and we'll continue to work with them.

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

Next question will be from the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, we celebrated the day of the child and everyone in this House reconfirmed our commitment to care for all children.

One of the most disturbing trends that we are seeing, however, is the number of children and families, who are facing mental health challenges. Despite that, we have been unable to maintain a full complement of clinicians and community mental health children's services.

Clinicians and children's mental health services

Question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: How many of these positions are there currently? And how many of them are vacant?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I don't probably have that exact detail on that, hon. member. I'll check and bring it back. But, what we are working on and what we continue to work with the minister of education and his department on is student health well-being teams and we're seeing great success from that

We continue to invest in our youth programs and in light of an announcement last week of a \$100 million dedicated to mental health and addictions on Prince Edward Island, we'll be working on adult programs.

I can assure the hon. member that from birth to adult, we have a very primary focus on health wellness and we'll continue to look at those numbers and improve if they need to improve. And I'll bring back the exact number of people that we have working in the system.

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party, your first supplementary.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

I understand there are significant vacancies, and with these vacancies we are hearing

concerns from families who are in need of the longer term intensive focus that those sorts of significant mental health concerns demand. These families are claiming that services beyond crisis intervention and triage are unavailable in community mental health centers.

Retaining of staff in mental health

To the same minister: Why had it been so difficult to retain staff in children's community mental health?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to Islanders mental health, it is a major concern for us. Currently we have a complement of 13 psychiatrists working in the system; we are speaking with physiologists. And obviously, UPEI is developing a new psychologist program, which we hope that we can attract physiologists to work in our mental health system in Prince Edward Island in the coming years.

We are now strengthening all programs and children's mental health and well being is certainly one that we continue to work on. Our student well-being teams are showing great success, and we know that we can build on that and continue to work with our younger Islanders in special needs.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party, your second supplementary.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks so much, Mr. Speaker.

We all recognize the challenges in this area, but we're also hearing from the clinicians themselves, that they are stressed and anxious and frustrated with the system. And yet, they're afraid to speak openly at work or in public about where the problems exist.

To the minister: Will you commit to creating a culture in this department where staff feels that they can speak more openly and actively contribute to finding solutions?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly, I encourage all my staff to come forth with ideas, with solutions on any problems that they see within their department. But as a result of that \$100 million that was just announced last week in the capital budget and is part of the consultations with Islanders that are suffering from mental health conditions and their families, and having conversations with them.

It was clearly indicated to us that community mental health is a gap on Prince Edward Island, and that's why a lot of that money – the \$40 million – part of that will be going into strengthening community mental health, to building on areas that we know that we need to get better on. So, we will see better improvements on that in the very near future.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the minister of education. Over the last number of years in Stratford, there has been a lot of discussion about the new need for a new school over there. I know the town put forward a proposal that they should have a 7 to 12. In the capital budget that was put forward, \$38 million was set aside for a new school, as everyone knows; Stratford is the fast growing municipality in the province.

Concept of new school in Stratford

I was wondering if the minister could tell us: why they went with a senior school instead of the 7 to 12 concept that was put forward by the town.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a good question. The direct answer is that this was based on recommendation by the Public Schools Branch, and specifically in their meeting where they set out these recommendations; they delineated an

immediate need for capacity at the high school level in Stratford or in the greater Charlottetown area; which would be most readily and appropriately alleviated through a school in Stratford.

That's not to say there won't eventually be another school in Stratford, but it is to say that the Public Schools Branch, as they indicated in their recommendations, did wish to have more time to review an appropriate set up in terms of school configurations there in Stratford.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford, your first supplementary.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Amount of land required for Stratford school

And that does lead well into my second question because it's around the question of land. How much land does it take for a school? And if we are looking down the road of possibly completing the 7 to 12 concept, how much land do we really need? How much land does the town – have they identified any piece of property of whatever for this school? But around the acreage, do you have any idea how much land we really need to complete the complex, now and in the future?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Mr. Speaker.

This is an interesting one, in this particular situation. We have of late, indicated that we have a strong willingness to work with communities in an effort to develop appropriate educational institutions in their communities. We met with Mayor Dunphy and councillor Cooper on a number of occasions; they had indicated a desire to procure the land and put an athletic complex around the schools. They've indicated that they wish to do that and secure that land, which they had indicated would be between 110 and 160 acres, I believe, and that they would make it available to us to put the schools on.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford, your second supplementary.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

When I go into the Tim's over there at the Petro in Stratford, this is one of the biggest questions that comes is about this new school and what it's going to take to put it in place. They are very pleased that we've taken the first step, for sure. They are certainly interested in the timeframe. That size of acreage, there can't be that many places in the town they can put that.

Timeline for new Stratford school

I was just wondering if the minister could give us an actual timeframe of when we'll get this thing started, at least.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly when the capital budget goes through here, presuming that it does, we will endeavour to work with the town to set forward on the selection of land and what that school might look like. The town had indicated to us that they felt there were three or four parcels that might be possible either in or around the periphery of Stratford as it exists right now. So, I'm sure they're looking into the different possibilities, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Minister, this past summer your department placed wheelchair accessible mats on some

of the provincial park beaches on Prince Edward Island. I think this was a great idea, and anything that we can do to make it more inclusive and to remove any barriers that all Islanders can enjoy our beautiful beaches is welcoming news.

Public response on beach wheelchair mats

Can you tell the House today what the response has been for those placements of mats?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The addition of the mats and the floating wheelchairs has been a great addition to the product that we have here in Prince Edward Island. We received a number of comments from tourists, the PEI Council of People with Disabilities were onsite actually one day and were very pleased with the product that we have, and the products performed very well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, your first supplementary.

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Accessible beaches in 2019

Minister, will you continue to make these beaches and all provincial beaches, including Jacques Cartier in West Prince, accessible for wheelchairs in 2019?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Mr. Palmer: I can't say that I'm shocked by the request.

I could see this one coming, but we are planning to roll this out right across PEI. Jacques Cartier Park is one that we will be doing this summer.

Ms. Biggar: Great.

Mr. R. Brown: Good MLA.

Mr. Palmer: So we will be continuing this right here with a ramp and a mat and a floating wheelchair.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, your second supplementary.

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I feel like I'm in Staples – that was easy.

So let's try another one – we'll try another one. Okay?

So it's my understanding that Jacques Cartier Campground is the only provincially-owned campground that doesn't have Wi-Fi access.

Wi-Fi access at provincial campgrounds

Minister: Will they see Wi-Fi access is the very near future?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are other campgrounds that don't have Wi-Fi in our system, and we will be doing that next year, including the campground in the member's area.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Islanders have been long in calling for an action plan in investments in mental health care in this province.

Mental health supports

Is the health minister committed to doing all he can do to further improve mental health supports here on this province?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The short answer to that question is: Yes.

Last year alone; \$34 million into mental health in Prince Edward Island; this year, as of last week, another \$100 million will be invested in mental health and addictions over the next five years.

As part of consultations, we heard from Islanders about – a new mental health campus would be wonderful, but that would not fill all the needs associated with mental health or addictions. We needed more community support, we needed dedicated ERs, we need tele-mental health.

I as minister and we as government will continue to make those investments so that mental health and mental health wellness is what we are achieving by these investments.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Well thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Let's be clear, you've announced that number – those two numbers coming into almost what we think is an election period when Islanders were needing that money years ago.

It is important that the health minister is committed to further improvements to our mental health system.

Proper care and time of treatment

Is the health minister also committed to ensure Islanders suffering from mental health problems receive the right care at the right place and at the right time?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely, hon. member, that's exactly what we're looking to achieve. That became quite clear in conversations with staff, with clinicians, with clients, and their family, that we needed to make large investments in community first approaches – build in the community where they live and are close to home to make enrichment investments in there that will improve their mental health and addictions situations.

That's why \$40 million of that new \$100 million is going towards community development; it's going toward tele-mental health – all areas that were highlighted to us by clients, their families, and those working in the system, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Well thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Well, let's be clear. Islanders have been asking for this help for years. So the right time was years ago, the right place was across the Island, and the right time was back then.

Funding for mental health court program

Question to the health minister: Why then did you refuse to fund our bill to establish a mental health court program in Prince Edward Island, which could have led the country when it was brought to the floor last evening?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As minister of health for Prince Edward Island my job and my role is to invest in health and mental wellness. I can't make that any clearer. That is why we are earmarking dollars to go into the much needed areas for mental health and addictions on Prince Edward Island – be it adult day programs, dedicated EDs as I mentioned earlier, but more importantly, community and enhancement for supports for needs that are not being met today.

That's where those investments, as minister of health, that I am very proud to be able to look at that today and continue with that work, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Our bill to establish a mental health program here on PEI was on the floor last night. This bill, because of the need for public investment to launch this little program,

requires the procedural royal recommendation from any cabinet minister, which commits governments to fund it prior to third reading.

Not one cabinet minister asked last evening would commit to funding a mental health court program.

Refusal of funding for mental health court program

Will the health minister explain why this happened?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think I tried my best to make it clear to the hon. member as he sat at the committee of the whole yesterday. I think his intent is sincere, but I did do – as minister responsible for mental health – I did ask him questions about his bill.

I understand that there are flaws in there. I understand that others have concerns about that. Quite frankly, I would have to spend some time with that bill and go out and consult with clients of mental health to see does that bill – would it ever meet their needs?

So, all I said to the minister yesterday was I would need more time to look at that bill in its entirety to consult with Islanders on it and I did agree that his intent was sincere. I still do that today, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well I appreciate that, minister.

All we need is to listen to Islanders and support the establishment of a mental health court program.

Why is this government refusing to take action on a program that will have real merit to help those suffering from mental health and are before the courts?

Can you answer that minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

As we indicated when this bill was on the floor last night, we have some very serious constitutional concerns and some internal inconsistencies within the bill.

The hon. member himself took the bill off the floor acknowledging those issues, and decided to proceed another way.

I'll say now what I said then: We have the best court system in Canada right now where we have almost zero wait times to trial, zero wait times to a disposition, where the individuals that are going through mental health or therapeutic courts in other jurisdictions are getting the direct help that they need in the ways that they would in other jurisdictions through the court system that we have.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will agree with the minister. We do have three of the best judges in this land residing over the provincial court, bar none. But, I will say, that whatever we can do as a government and as opposition to help people with mental health issues, not go before the court, and being put into a program is a step forward.

Status of mental health campus

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness give us an update on the mental health campus planning committee and what stage they are at?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to commend the committee who has done a large amount of work over the last number of months. This is the same group

that last year alone indicated we needed to invest that \$34 million, which we did, to improve programs as the walk-in clinics, as the strength and insight programs for our Island youth, as well as investments with our student well-being teams.

Couple that this year with investments on a new mental health campus, with dedicated EDs, with tele-health for mental health – I can only commend this group for the amount of hours they put in and next week this group will be coming together and we'll be doing some more talking about this in a larger scale, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Recommendation of mental health court system

Given what the minister says, and if this committee comes back and they make a recommendation to have a mental health court system put in place, will you consider it and look at our bill?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

As I said yesterday, I am not the minister of the judiciary or legal aspects, but as I said to the hon. member yesterday, I would like to have continuous conversations with those that are suffering or dealing with mental health issues in regards to a bill of that nature. That may come to fruition sometime over the next coming months, but that wouldn't be done in the next few days.

Our committee is focusing on the needs at hand. They're focusing on that \$100 million announcement. They're focusing on blueprints and drawings and figuring our RFPs. I think they're at a very busy time in their schedule and I look forward to working with them on all aspects of it.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora, your final question.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very curious if the Minister of Health and Wellness had any knowledge or any briefings or read any reports or studies on the merits of a mental health court prior to the bill being introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I believe it was back in 2015 when we were first elected to this Legislature, the hon. Premier, who was minister of justice at the time, indicated that our department had commissioned a study in relation to a therapeutic court on Prince Edward Island and we had reviewed that possibility and came to find that what would inevitably look to be accomplished through that court, we were already doing it.

That's not to say there's not work to be done. There's always work to be done, but we have some great programs that we're looking to enhance and we're always looking to do better on; diversionary programs that do enable a lot of the things that the hon. member has proposed about a mental health court, and we will look to continue working with the minister of health, and with others, including family and human services, to improve the services we have on offer for Prince Edward Islanders.

But, you have to look at what you're trying to accomplish, and what I would have to say to the House right now, is that we do not have the issues that many other Canadian jurisdictions suffer with in relation to mental health courts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Statements by Ministers

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Tax Relief for Islanders

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the result of a strong economy and responsible spending, our government has been accelerating investments in the priority areas that mean the most to Islanders.

Every Islander has contributed to our economic success and should share the benefits of the strong economy; one of those benefits is through tax relief.

Our 2018 provincial operating budget included an increase to the basic personal amount by \$1,000 over two years for Islanders.

I am pleased to announce today that the implementation of this increase will be accelerated and retroactive to January 1st, 2018.

Some Hon. Members: Great.

Mr. MacDonald: Spousal or common-law partner amounts and eligible dependent amounts will also be proportionately increase.

This significant support will help Islanders with the cost of living. This will benefit approximately 84,000 Islanders, saving them an extra \$4.1 million a year.

This represents the fifth increase to basic personal exemption since 2015. As a result of these changes, 5,200 Islanders no longer pay any provincial income tax.

Our government knows that small businesses are the backbone of our strong economy. Building on the commitment made in budget 2018 to reduce tax on small business, we will be further reducing the rate by 0.5% as of January 1st, 2019.

This small business tax reduction will help approximately 2,600 businesses and increase total savings by \$2.4 million.

In addition to these changes, the tax on gasoline and diesel will also be reduced by 3.42 and 4.37 cents per litre respectively on January 1st, 2019 with a further reduction on January 1st, 2020 of 1.21 and 1.68 cents per litre.

We are ensuring regional competitiveness while further reducing the tax burden on Islanders.

Our booming economy has far exceeded our expectations and we are thrilled to be in a position to make investments that will put more money back into Islanders' pockets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. R. Brown: Just say thanks.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Well, Mr. Speaker, here we are at it again; re-announcing things that they've already done in the past and doing what Liberals do best: Raising taxes on one hand and then giving a little bit back on the other hand.

Bringing in the HST; raising the HST; and at the same time – now, they're going to – of course, it's good. Raise the basic personal income tax amount, the exemption amount, but that's amounting to 27 cents a day.

So, let's raise the HST; \$25 million a year and give back 27 cents a day. That's how they do it, but I am confident Islanders will not be fooled. They're not going to let this government use their own money to buy their vote.

I want to talk about this point five decrease in the small business tax.

Mr. MacEwen: Yes, give us the facts.

Mr. Trivers: So, it's good. That's what the business community is saying. That's what the Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce – that's what the Canadian federation (Indistinct). But you know what else they're saying? They're saying, now, although we don't have the highest small business income tax in Canada – we're getting down – we still don't even have it down to the average for Atlantic Canada.

How are we supposed to attract and keep businesses here when they're paying more taxes in Prince Edward Island than any of our neighbouring provinces?

Mr. MacEwen: How did it get so high? Tell us why it got so high.

Mr. Trivers: This is an area where – it's the businesses that are making the economy boom. It's the businesses that should get to keep more of their tax dollars, and it's just simply misplaced priorities by this government.

The other thing we're seeing is that they're decreasing the gas tax.

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Mr. Myers: Aren't they increasing it, too?

Mr. Trivers: On the surface this might sound good – to the average person sounds (Indistinct) – but don't be fooled again because of course, they're raising, as well, the gas price as part of their carbon tax, and the whole irony of it all is that when you don't tax gas, you're not doing anything at all to help reduce carbon emissions.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: So this government really is very confused about what they're doing.

They flip flopped on many, many issues just over three years. When they started off, they signed the Paris agreement; they were the first to sign the pan-Canadian climate agreement –

Mr. Myers: That's when they thought people liked Trudeau.

Mr. Trivers: – and they were bringing in a carbon tax and it was going to be a PEI based –

Mr. Myers: That's when people still liked Trudeau.

Mr. Trivers: – and now –

An Hon. Member: That's over.

Mr. Myers: That's long over.

Mr. Trivers: – they basically flip flopped on the whole thing and they're trying to go with, basically, very little tax at all and not even going to try and tax things that are actually doing carbon emissions.

That's what I have to say about that gas tax.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: In closing, I just want Islanders to look at the record of this government and past Liberal governments; Liberal governments since 2007. Their record is very simple. They raise taxes. They

raise taxes. They raise taxes again, and then they reach down with a few crumbs when an election year comes and they give you 27 cents a day and say: Vote for us.

Don't be fooled again.

Thank you.

Mr. Myers: Liberal times are tough times.

Mr. R. Brown: Liberal times are great times.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know according to the data provided by the province that one in six Islanders, or 23,000, are living with low income.

The basic personal exemption allowance does not actually help people in low income. It is (Indistinct) all Islanders can benefit from, but the only workers who are exempt from taxes are either working part-time or living in extreme poverty, which doesn't exactly fit the government's narrative about helping low-income earners.

The personal exemption is significantly less than the poverty line, which is estimated to be around 20,600 at the moment for PEI for a single-person household. So, one of the most effective things that we can do to assist low-income Islanders, the 23,000 low-income Islanders, is by targeting an increase in the basic tax exemption for those in the lowest income bracket. This allows us to effectively use the funds that we are raising through our various sources and target for direct impact with those who need it most.

We have other options available to us; also, through the revenues that we collect that can specifically assist low-income earners, including exemptions and credits on things that disproportionately affect those in low-income and including, for some cases, for instance, even sales tax exemptions or credits on fundamentals like groceries and utilities.

But in terms of assisting low-income Islanders to live a life that is one of dignity and opportunity, we can begin by putting

more money in their pocket and one of the most effective ways to do that would be by the next basic personal exemption being targeted specifically to assist those most in need.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Family Home Centres

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Demand for early learning and child care is increasing in this province as our population and economy continue to grow.

Working with partners, we are responding by adding nearly 400 child care spaces in just over a year.

The new centres and spaces that opened recently in high-growth areas, such as Stratford and Charlottetown, have met a pressing need. But smaller communities may require a different solution.

For example, the best answer for families in rural communities may be more spaces in family homes as the population of young children in the area may not be large enough to make an early learning and child care centre viable.

To address this need, we are offering incentives to encourage the establishment of more family home centres which are licensed programs that offers care for up to eight children, usually in a family home.

We are committed to licensing at least 14 new family home centres in 2018-2019.

To this end, regulation changes that came into effect last month increased the number of children that can be cared for in a family home centre from six to eight.

We removed the requirement for small home-based centres to supply business and staffing plans. And now we are offering several grants to help Islanders open a licensed program in their home.

A Capital Improvement Grant of up to \$15,000 is available for home renovations,

baby furniture and play equipment. Quality Improvement Grants of up to \$8,000 per year are being offered to enhance programming and create more infant spaces in Family Home Centres. New Training Grants are being offered to help home childcare providers with licensing requirements and education costs.

Licensed Family Home Centres will require providers to meet quality standards related to staff certification, child-staff ratios and space requirements. They will increase access, particularly for infant spaces, and for families in smaller communities. And they will offer more choice for parents, particularly for those parents who prefer a home setting for their young children.

I ask the members to support Island children and families by spreading the word in their communities about these new opportunities to open Family Home Centres.

Information and applications are now available on our website at princeedwardisland.ca/familyhomecentre.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, for one, agree with the minister that early childhood education is incredibly important in our system here in PEI, and it's – the investments into that sector are going to reap benefits down the road. There's no doubt about it. I've seen it in school, especially now with young kids going through.

It sounds like a great investment. I'm assuming that the minister has done all the necessary consultations.

You know, rural areas had been calling for more access to child care spaces. We need that out there. There's some that are doing really well, and there's other spots that are trying to open, but can't access it.

I do have a concern, and that's – it sounds like this government, still at the end of the day, going to be picking winners and losers. Who gets it? You have to qualify. If the program is there and someone wants to run

that business, why can't they access it? Why can't they make a go of it?

That's something that we need to change with this government. It should not be who decides, yes or no. We've seen it with long-term care beds; we've seen it in all kinds of different sectors. Put the investment out there, and if someone can come up with the business plan to make it work, let them try and make it work.

Any investment into this sector, I think is a good thing. I'm very curious to see about the details. The minister's absolutely right, we needed more flexibility within home spaces, and some people like to do that because it's much more convenient. I hope they are much more flexible with the rules than they were for previous early childhood centres.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Of course I represent a rural district, so access to child care in your locale is an issue that I've come across. Many of my constituents have brought to my attention repeatedly in the three years I've been the representative for District 17.

There's certainly the demand there. We know there's demand for child care across Prince Edward Island. We know that within the existing facilities – regulated facilities – there is capacity. The problem is, what is not there are the early childhood educators to provide the care and the education that these children need.

In the agreement – the provincial agreement that was – and I note that in all of these new family home centres, and by the way I love the concept and again it's entirely appropriate for an area like mine that care be available close to home, but I note that it will require certified educators, ECEs.

I'm going to quote from the Canada – Prince Edward Island Early Learning and Child Care Agreement from 2017, the second annex.

It says this: "Prince Edward Island is on the verge of a crisis in attracting and retaining early childhood educators."

Now that indeed is a problem and it's related to a number of things – primarily the wage scale for the people who work in that industry. While it's great that we're creating 112 new – actually I'm not even sure if these are new spaces, whether these are 112 of the 358 or if these are 112 in addition to the 358. It wasn't clear in your announcement; I look forward to finding that out.

That's the bottleneck. The bottleneck is in having enough ECEs available so that these spaces do get filled. We know the demand's there, we know that the capacity is there, we just have to pay these people in a way that recognizes the importance of the task they are doing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Island Filmmakers

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have a growing and vibrant film community on Prince Edward Island. Not only are PEI filmmakers growing in numbers, but their skills and capabilities are growing as well. Island filmmakers are producing a greater volume and quality of work than ever before.

In order to continue that work, filmmakers need support. That's exactly what our government is doing. One year ago, this week, we launched the Cultural Action Plan: Cultivating Growth. That five-year plan will increase both the economic and social well-being of Islanders through strategic investments in cultural initiatives and creative industries like film.

Many of the initiatives in the plan are well under way, and many more are in progress in my department and the Department of Education, Early Learning, and Culture in cooperation with organizations right across PEI. We are investing \$3.5 million in new spending over the life of the action plan.

One of the initiatives in the plan is Film Forward, which provides funding to develop talent and content among emerging and mid-career PEI filmmakers. It will make them more competitive at a national and international level and forward the creative careers of these filmmakers in a meaningful and strategic way.

This program will help filmmakers create calling card films they can use to enter international festival circuits and help them move their careers forward to larger budget projects, including feature films.

The provincial government through our new cultural development division at Innovation PEI provided \$100,000 to support Film Forward as part of close to \$450,000 in film-related investments this year. Four prizes of \$20,000 each will be awarded tomorrow. The other 20,000 is used for workshops and other professional development activities.

I'm told the selection process was very difficult, given the high-quality of submissions received by Film PEI. Tomorrow we will recognize four recipients, each of whom has demonstrated excellent abilities and novel ideas for their productions.

Congratulations to all the recipients, and I wish them all the best in their projects and in their future careers in film.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, there are so many things to say here. I don't even know where to start. –

Mr. R. Brown: Just say thanks.

Mr. Myers: The first thing that comes to my mind is does everything have to be a contest with this government? It's all about a group of people get together and they pick winners and they invest in them. You're doing it down there at the Startup Zone with your Ignition funding; now you're doing it with films. You did it with your come home program – one person got to come home in

your contest. I mean, come on. Come on about it.

You know, you're not doing a great job picking winners and losers. Why isn't there a fund where filmmakers can access the fund and try to bring their film or their skills to market?

It's a competitive industry as it is. You guys don't have to decide who wins. You know who will decide? People – the people out there who watch. There are so many meetings now to have your film viewed. All of those have their own metrics.

Mr. Myers: Did you know that Netflix has its own metrics? You know how they know what Netflix films to film and what kind of TV shows they want? They know what people are watching. They have billions of dollars of data about each and every one of you who log in every night to watch a TV show or a movie. They know what you want – they know exactly what you want. And now, they are able to go and build a TV show based on your wants, they are able to source scripts for the things that people want. People are already picking winners out there, allow our industry to grow and allow people get to the point where Netflix is coming to them and saying: I like what you do, and we have a big gap of people wanting to watch that type of thing and we can offer you something, and then away they go.

Youtube itself has its own metrics. Just simple views on Youtube and there's lots of people on Prince Edward Island who are making a way for themselves using Youtube. I know lots of you have probably been to Poge Beach, but some of you have maybe even watched a show that takes place in Poge Beach. But you know, these are people who are utilizing that type of medium that Youtube offers.

My own son, who is 15, has been making films now for as long as I can remember. But as the older he got, he learned how to splice them, and to voice-over, and to add effects and stuff. He has never been taught anything. He has no formal course work or anything in this, and he continues to make films. And I love the way he sees the world, and I love his creativity. I'd love that if somewhere down the road, he wants to

explore this as a career choice that he doesn't have to go to Toronto or Los Angeles to do it.

We could do it here. But not if we have to compete at that seed level; you don't know that the four people who wins this award are going to be able to take it to that level – no one does. But if you cut out 100 other people in the process of picking four, then we'll never have an industry here. What a lot of these people want, and we've talked about it in the last election campaign – a lot of filmmakers who you're trying to attract here through this – they want the tax rebate. Everyone else is offering it, so you can't get them. Nova Scotia has a good one, Ontario has a good one, and British Columbia has a good one—

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: – there's where films are being created now. Hollywood films being created in places like Halifax. If you're in Toronto now – every time you're in Toronto you see something is being shot. It's a movie or a TV show and it's a high-end production that they are doing.

And I know we're not Toronto, I know we're not Vancouver. But we have a ton of different scenery here and small-set displays in places, even like Charlottetown and places smaller that would be really adequate to film that type of film where you were looking for that kind of background and scenery. We have a great opportunity here.

But if you want to in the big leagues, you have to play the way the big league players are playing. And that's what they want – they want the tax burden taken away from them. And that's what we promised them in the last election. I would love to see this industry grow; I would love to see the arts and culture industry in Prince Edward Island continue to grow, but it can't be through just competitions. There has to be opportunity for every single person who wants to come into it.

You've been doing it for years, where you have given money to businesses that don't necessarily work out, but you have a success rate. I don't know what it is because you keep it a secret, but you have a success rate for the amount of money that you put into

small business, there is a real success rate. You could have that if you would expand – take off the blinders and look at the world and say: there's tons of people out there who grew up with creativity, who grew up with screens, who grew up with digital cameras and the ability to splice and put together and post to Youtube and get their own following, like my own son. You have a whole generation coming up. You have to expand your scope and the way you look at it, so there is an opportunity for each and every one of them.

Yeah, maybe they won't make it. We see parents hauling their kids all over the Maritimes for a hockey tournament – we all know they aren't going to make it too, but they're still giving their kids the best opportunity they can. They still believe in them, and they're still investing in them. If you guys believed in opportunity, if you believed in Islanders, you would do the same thing, and help drag them all over the Maritimes and invest in them in the hope – in the hope – that some of them could make it to the big leagues.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's really exciting to see this idea come to fruition. It was discussed for the first time almost 12 years ago, when Film PEI was still the Island media arts cooperative, which is almost 40 years-old now, and is actually the heart and soul of the film industry in PEI and has long been seeking support from government for funding, both for incentive funds, as mentioned by my hon. colleague, and for funding and programs to support emerging talent.

Without the emerging talent and skills and training, we don't have the people to work here in the industry or to show them the roots to get to do the projects they want to do. So I'd really like to congratulate the hard work of Emma Fugate, president of Film PEI, and Renee Laprise, who is the executive director of Film PEI, who have been fighting for, literally over a decade for this to happen. As this being one of the first sort of, boots on ground initiatives out of the

gate, shows a lot of the amount of work they did behind the scenes to be ready to go when the money turned up.

Thank you for the investment and thank you to the team behind it that actually makes amazing things happen in our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, hon. Member.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that the same be now received and read a first time. The name of the bill is the *Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (No.2)*.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Premier MacLauchlan: Little suspense.

Some Hon. Members: [Laughter].

Clerk: *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (No.2)*, Bill No. 57, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, just a brief explanation about this bill.

Mr. MacDonald: Reducing the taxes for Islanders, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Great.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Gasoline Tax Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable minister of health, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Amend the Gasoline Tax Act*, Bill No. 58, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, you can explain this one too.

Mr. MacDonald: Reducing taxes on gasoline, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Brown: After they increased (Indistinct)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Personal Property Security Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Amend the Personal Property Security Act*, Bill No. 59, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, would you give us an explanation, please.

Mr. J. Brown: Sure, Mr. Speaker.

This is really just a housekeeping bill, – sorry Mr. Speaker. This bill amends subsection 71.1 subsection (5) of the *Personal Property Security Act*, to correct a fee reference so that it aligns with the corresponding reference in subsection 50.1 sub. (3) of the *Registry Act*.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *Act to Amend the Judicature Act*, Bill No. 55, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, a brief explanation of this one, too.

Mr. J. Brown: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill amends section 33.1 of the *Judicature Act* to clarify and enhance the functions of the children's lawyer, in particular this amending act provides that the children's lawyer can conduct an inquiry, act as legal counsel or as litigation guardian in a proceeding in respect of all matters concerning custody of, or access to, a child and that the children's lawyer can initiate proceedings on behalf of a child where the children's lawyer is of the opinion that the legal rights of the child with respect to custody or access are in jeopardy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Government Motions

Orders of the Day Government

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, that the 1st order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 1, Consideration of the Capital Estimates, in Committee.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, that this House do

now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

I will ask the member from Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point please come and Chair.

Chair (Casey): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to further consider the grant of supply to Her Majesty.

Hon. members as we've done this in other years, what we're going to do is go through the book. So, we're going to start on page seven: Capital Expenditures for Agriculture and Fisheries and we'll make sure we keep our focus on agriculture and fisheries before we move on to the next budget, just to keep it organized. I'd be happy to add your name to the speakers order. When we get there I'm going to read the expenditure and then I'll open the floor for discussion.

First, I need your permission to bring a stranger to the floor.

An Hon. Member: Sure.

Chair: Thank you, we'll allow him to come in and get set up and introduced.

Good afternoon, welcome, could you introduce yourself and your title for the record.

Jim Miles: Jim Miles, Executive Director of Fiscal Management for the Department of Finance.

Chair: Welcome Mr. Miles.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thanks Chair.

(Indistinct) an extremely general question as well so I want to start at the top.

The minister brought the capital budget back last week, he had a speech that coincided with the announcement of (Indistinct) and generally in the past the practice has been that it had been posted somewhere for the general public and I'm wondering why the

text to that speech isn't somewhere, or if it's an oversight, if that could be posted where Islanders could see it.

Mr. MacDonald: If it's not posted we can certainly get it posted for sure.

Chair: Hon. members, I would direct you to page seven.

Capital Expenditure Agriculture and Fisheries

2019-2020 Budget Estimate

Equipment

"Appropriations provided for equipment purchases." Field equipment: 50,000.
Total equipment: 50,000

Total Capital Expenditure Agriculture and Fisheries: 50,000

I have a question for Agriculture and Fisheries budget from the hon. Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: What is the actual 50,000 for?

Jim Miles: So the three items that it's going to be for this year is for the acquisition of the remotely operated vehicles, replacement of a 36 inch plotter and upgrade and replacement of seven GPS handheld equipment units.

Chair: Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: My understanding in the capital budget, you also purchased a drone system for the Department of Agriculture: how did that system work and help within the department?

Jim Miles: So that was last year and they bought the drone, they said it's very useful because they can survey up to 300 acres an hour. It provides better accessibility to properties in the spring and the fall and it has GPS abilities as well.

Chair: Member from Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: I think the minister is trying to do an interjection over there too, I'm wondering: was that drone – did it assist in

any way in ensuring crop rotations were being followed under the act?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: The main purpose of the drone was to make sure that we could do a good view of land and to try to determine the sight points, to determine where water might run and it was primarily focused around that.

What you might be referring to on land, I mean, there would be the satellite images for (Indistinct) photos and things of that nature.

The drone was not purposely used for determining crop rotation to our knowledge

In the potato industry we have about 90% of our crop is under crop insurance in the potato industry and we have not found any violations to the crop rotation act for those 90% of the potato acreage.

Chair: Shall the budget carry? Carried.

We'll now move on to page nine.

Capital Expenditure – Communities, Land and Environment

2019-2020 Budget Estimate

Equipment

"Appropriations provided for equipment purchases." Laboratory Equipment: 380,000
Field Monitoring Equipment: 25,000,
Forest Fire Vehicles: 70,000. Light fleet:
148,000. Total Equipment: 623,000

Total Capital Expenditure – Communities, Land and Environment: 623,000

Question from Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

I'm just wondering about the laboratory equipment, because it's a big jump and the light fleet that hadn't existed last year. What items were in those two?

Chair: Could you repeat that question? Sorry.

Mr. Myers: Sure. The laboratory equipment which is 380, and the light fleet which is 140,000 – could you tell us what items are in there, because one is a big jump and one is a brand new item?

Jim Miles: Okay, in the laboratory equipment for next year there's a soil drying oven, an autoclave, a somatic cell counter, and a LECO carbon nitrogen sulfur combustion analyzer.

Mr. Myers: Great. Okay.

Just the fleet, what are we purchasing with the fleet?

Jim Miles: Okay, because there were no employees hired – Under the *Water Act*, they need a vehicle to travel around the Island to do their inspections.

Mr. Myers: Okay, thanks.

Chair: Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Chair.

So in the forest fire vehicles, what are we replacing this year?

Jim Miles: This year we're replacing a 1986 Ford three ton.

Chair: Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: So what's that take our – what's the status now of our fire fighting for forest fires equipment?

Jim Miles: There will be three more Ford three tons to be replaced over the next three years after this one.

Chair: Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Thanks, Chair.

So are we now finally getting this equipment up to ULC standard or the insurance underwriters?

Mr. R. Brown: Yes.

Mr. Fox: Awful quick on that answer.

Mr. R. Brown: Yes.

Mr. Fox: Thank you.

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Chair.

With regards to the forest fire vehicles, there had been discussion in recent years that as some of the equipment ages out – there's a fire fighter, in particular, from the Stratford fire department who has a partnership, let's say with a fire department in Mexico, where he does a lot of collecting of used equipment and provides it to these communities in Mexico that otherwise could not afford equipment.

I know there was discussion here on the floor whether or not we could look at potentially taking some of the equipment that was being aged out and negotiating with this individual to see if it could be utilized in another community outside of our jurisdiction.

Mr. R. Brown: What do you mean outside of our jurisdiction?

Leader of the Opposition: Can it be sent to Mexico?

Chair: Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, do you have an intervention?

Mr. R. Brown: If you want.

Chair: You didn't indicate to the table, so I was just curious.

Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. R. Brown: We do send some equipment to Mexico, I'm told here.

Mr. MacDonald: I guess the question was there's an individual actually in Stratford that actually does this as well. So –

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: His name is Kory MacAusland, and he's been doing it for years now collecting used equipment that either doesn't meet the standards here in Canada or maybe it's being replaced in one of the fire departments across PEI.

He's known to do this work so that the fire departments across PEI will donate the equipment to him. He takes it upon himself to have it shipped to these fire departments in Mexico in rural areas of Mexico that otherwise wouldn't be able to afford the equipment. I know he had questions; he had requests before with regards to some of these forest fire vehicles, whether or not they could be donated as well to be sent down there.

Chair: Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'll gladly meet with the person, you can give me his number afterwards. You can give me his number afterwards. It sounds like a great idea.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you very much, minister.

Chair: Thank you.

The Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is for the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, if I may.

Minister, my local fire department in Tyne Valley actually, when they saw that forest fire equipment was being replaced, they wondered themselves if it might be an opportunity for them to get an older vehicle to have at a local – at their fire department. They would have the capability to do any upgrades necessary. So, if there's a local fire department that might be interested in obtaining that equipment to add to their fleet, would that be something that you'd be open to minister?

Chair: Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. R. Brown: Yes, but the equipment has to meet its standards before it can be used. If it's coming out of the pool now then it's not meeting the standards and another fire department can't take it. Because the insurance rates – if it's not certified, the

insurance rate would go up, but we'd gladly look at it if they want to upgrade it back to the standard.

Ms. Biggar: Yes, that's my point.

Thank you.

Mr. R. Brown: Another good idea.

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Chair.

With that, and I understand what the minister of transportation is talking about and it would be great to be able to do that, but that has actually been looked at from various fire departments, volunteer fire departments across the province.

The Minister of Communities, Land and Environment has corrected, these pieces of equipment no longer can be insured because they're outdated and the technology on them no longer meets the standards.

What has been determined is the cost to retrofit these vehicles to bring them up to the standard so that they would be insurable – the cost of that outweighs the cost of investing in new equipment, therefore that's why my understanding is, they're not going through a program to provide them to local volunteer fire departments here on PEI.

Chair: Borden-Kinkora.

Leader of the Opposition: Thus we have Chase the Ace (Indistinct)

Mr. Fox: Thanks, Chair.

Can the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment provide some detail on what actually, equipment, he's alluded that's been transferred to Mexico or provided to Mexico?

Chair: Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. Fox: The minister stated that the equipment's gone to Mexico. What equipment has gone to Mexico?

Mr. R. Brown: What equipment has gone to Mexico? They have a lower standard down in Mexico, therefore – it happens quite a bit here in Canada, a lot of equipment I know companies in Prince Edward Island, they'll take their used equipment and they can't sell it in Canada or they can't sell it in the United States. They get it to the border and a person – there's an agency in Mexico will come to the US border and pick it up and then drive the vehicles through the US into Mexico. That's usually how it's done, or it can be flat bedded down to Mexico, but there is a market in Mexico for used equipment and a lot of companies take advantage of it. Otherwise, the equipment would have to be scrapped.

Chair: Borden-Kinkora.

Mr. Fox: Well thanks Chair.

I sort of understood the minister from the way you previously answered, that we actually had Government of PEI equipment – that you sort of referenced or that had gone from the department or from government down to Mexico. That's why I was wondering what that equipment you're talking about is.

Mr. R. Brown: I'll get you a list.

Mr. Fox: Okay, thank you.

Chair: Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

So I just – I think I missed it gentlemen you mentioned what the light fleet was. Is it for the watershed groups, is that what you said?

Jim Miles: No, it was for the employees that were hired under the *Water Act* – with the changes to the *Water Act*, because there's more inspection.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay, and can you tell me what sort of vehicles were purchased? What kind? Were they trucks, were they –

Jim Miles: They'll be purchased next year, but I would assume they'll be half-ton trucks.

Mr. R. Brown: Three ton trucks; 30,000 each.

Chair: Thank you. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: So, and I see in – skipping ahead, in the capital budget we see in TIE there's –

Chair: We're not going to go to TIE, sorry.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: No, no, I know. I'm just using this for reference, Chair.

Chair: Okay.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: There's \$1 million budgeted for a light fleet there as well. I'm wondering whether there's any policy within government, whether it be in community, lands, environment or TIE for those vehicles to be increasingly fuel-efficient as we go forward, because those fleets turnover of course.

Do we have a policy in place to purchase the most fuel-efficient?

Thank you.

Chair: Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you, Chair.

Under the carbon pricing plan, or the carbon plan, there is a transportation section and there is the transportation committee looking at it right now. Matter of fact, a few weeks ago, I think education was coming for five vehicles and Treasury Board recommended that one of the vehicles be electric, and that's one of the issues we sent back.

Also, the federal government is now working on fuel efficiency on equipment and as those fuel efficient equipment standards go up, we'd be looking to purchase more fuel efficient and less carbon. Right now, the equipment – I know the new equipment that's coming in, the big trucks anyway – they have big afterburners on them and it costs quite a substantial amount of money now to buy a new truck nowadays – a new tractor trailer nowadays then it did a few years ago.

At one time, you couldn't sit in a garage if you were fixing it with the diesel engine on.

At least nowadays, you can spend an hour in there anyway, or two hours fixing it. They are getting really, really fuel efficient, the big equipment. It's mandatory in Canada now that any big equipment that is purchased nowadays, they're fuel efficient. That will be part of the transportation energy strategy that's being developed now between the departments.

And you're right, they more fuel efficient we can get – in the years gone by, we looked at high propane equipment, natural gas equipment –

An Hon. Member: Hydrogen.

Mr. R. Brown: – hydrogen – yeah, we looked at – we had a hydrogen bus for three years running around. And we were using the hydrogen that was generated from the wind farm, but it appeared to be substantially expensive at that time. But as technology improves, we can look at better purchases in terms of more efficient equipment.

Chair: Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

So I'm just interest in what kind of work the folks who are hired to enforce the *Water Act* might be doing that they would require a three ton truck?

Chair: Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct) fire trucks, not the – these are half ton trucks now –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: – 37. Yeah, three. No, they're – the new *Water Act* calls for a lot more investigation, a lot more monitoring. And we will be working with the watershed groups in terms of that. Equipment will be – the department will be using the equipment to go to the different watershed areas to make sure that the *Water Act* is being applied and that the watershed areas that are being monitored – that they are monitored.

We have a great program out at the new wellheads the city has out in Milton. They're doing a substantial amount of study out

there, so we want to make sure that we're monitoring the wells across Prince Edward Island to ensure that the aquifer is being not drained.

Chair: Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: That was – they're not three ton trucks, can you tell us what they are?

Mr. MacDonald: Half ton trucks.

Mr. R. Brown: Half ton trucks.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Half ton trucks.

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay.

Mr. R. Brown: Four additional trucks (Indistinct) environmental (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: \$37 thousand each.

Chair: You're good?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I'm good.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thanks, Chair.

I was just wondering what part of this budget might be for equipment that's used specifically by watershed groups?

Jim Miles: That wouldn't be –

Mr. MacDonald: It's not in the operational (Indistinct)

Jim Miles: That wouldn't be owned by the province, so it wouldn't be a part of this budget.

Mr. Trivers: It wouldn't be a part of this budget?

Jim Miles: It wouldn't be owned by the province, so it wouldn't be a part of this budget.

Mr. R. Brown: The watershed groups are funded.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) operation.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct) it can, when the government changed in 2007, one of the first things that happened was that the *Beverage Container Act* was put in, and everything that's collected *Beverage Container Act* goes to the watershed groups. That's for salaries, equipment, and I assume vehicles, also. We'd probably assist the watershed groups if they wanted to get together and purchase equipment together with the IE standard because they have a good tender on some of this equipment. We'd be willing to work with the watershed alliance in that area.

Chair: Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: So I'm thinking that they, of course, have field monitoring equipment they use in some cases, they also, in some cases, need vehicles, they also have to go out and sometimes they do capital work on – well, under bridges for example, things like that. So that's why I'm wondering if there was any capital here, to support the capital projects that they undertake.

But, it sounds like maybe I should ask that question again under TIE, to see if there is any capital provided there.

Chair: That would be great, thank you.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Shall the total Capital Expenditure for Communities, Land and Environment carry?

Carried.

Hon. members, I direct you to the Capital Expenditure of Education, Early Learning and Culture on page 11.

2019-2020 Budget Estimate

Equipment

“Appropriations provided for equipment purchases.” Trades Training Capital: 250,000. Classroom Technology: 2,700,000. Total Equipment: 2,950,000.

Capital Improvements – Schools

“Appropriations provided for school construction and Capital improvements.” School Construction and Renovations: 18,012,000. Capital Repairs: 2,000,000. Total Capital Improvements – Schools: 20,012,000.

Capital Improvements – Culture

“Appropriations provided for culture infrastructure.” Museum and Heritage Sites: 150,000. Total Capital Improvements – Culture: 150,000.

Bus Replacement

“Appropriations provided for the purchase of new buses.” School Buses: 2,050,000. Total Bus Replacement: 2,050,000.

Total Education, Early Learning and Culture: 25,162,000.

Mr. Myers: Question.

Chair: We have a question from Member from Rustico-Emerald – oh sorry, question from Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

Just looking for a list of construction and renovation – what schools?

Mr. J. Brown: Sorry, Chair, it was a list of?

Chair: Could you repeat the question, hon. member, please?

Mr. Myers: Well I'm asking the Minister of Finance, s a list of the school for construction and renovation.

Mr. MacDonald: Do you want me to read it off to you?

Mr. Myers: Yeah, please.

An Hon. Member: Could you table a copy?

Mr. MacDonald: Sure.

Mr. Myers: Yeah, table it. That would be great.

Mr. MacDonald: I'll read this one out.

Mr. Myers: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: Three Oaks: \$250,000; École La-Belle-Cloche had been completed; Stratford additional classroom space: \$1,564; L.M. Montgomery additional classroom space: \$1,6; West Royalty additional classroom space: \$3,5; Sherwood School replacement: \$1,3; École-Sur-Mer High School addition: \$7,7; Morell Early Years Center has been completed.

Total school construction renovations: \$18 million.

School Capital Repairs is at \$2 million.

Then it goes into museum and heritage sites and school buses.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: My understanding was that the Sherwood school was this year, in this capital budget?

Mr. MacDonald: It is this year.

An Hon. Member: It starts (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: It starts.

Mr. Myers: Oh, it starts – so it is spread over a period?

Mr. MacDonald: Four years.

Mr. Myers: Four years, and it's not being built for three years. I have another question.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: The high school in Stratford then, where does it place in this?

Mr. MacDonald: Two million this year, in this budget.

Mr. Myers: Okay.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: What does that cover – the plans, or design?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: So, it'll be – it's always tough to tell, but the process for any of these may – I guess Madam Chair, maybe the easier thing to delineate.

So the first thing that we do on them is we determine a need that's been done on this already – on the Stratford project. But there is further refinement required by the Public Schools Branch. In other words, how many students, what programs would be offered at that size of school.

So they have indicated that it be a school for 800 students; as an example, Charlottetown Rural right now was built for a capacity of roughly 1,200, would have an IB program, it would have a full band program, it would have shop, computer programs – the whole kit and caboodle because it's a good sized school. Then there gets to be this question of what can you offer in a smaller size school.

You take all of that stuff and come up with, at that point in time, what the allocations will be pursuant to a book that's put together for different schools of different sizes and enter into a planning process and there's a committee that's appointed at that point and time to determine what they would like to see and they're usually comprised of a chair, staff from the school, staff from our department, staff from TIE, and folks from the community and they look at what they'd like to see in their school.

Then after they get a space plan put together out of that process, an architect is brought in.

So between the space plan and the actual architectural drawings and then acquisition of land, all of those things would likely form part of the \$2 million and may, or may not, run into the next year.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: So when can Stratford expect to walk in the new school for the first time?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I believe it's 2023. I can confirm that if you bare with me for one second.

Chair: The Minister of Finance also has an answer.

Mr. MacDonald: The core of the financing is 14 million in 2021, 13 million in 2021-2022 and nine million in 2022-2023. So 2023 is the entry date.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: What year would they expect to walk through the doors for the first time in Sherwood?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: 2022-2023 school year, we would foresee, Madam Chair.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

At that time in 2023 – would be two new schools coming on, it looks like, at the same time – when Stratford’s high school opens, do you plan to decommission one of the city high schools?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Sorry there was somebody who walked in front of me there and I couldn’t –

Chair: Could you repeat the question please?

Mr. Myers: Just in 2023, when the Stratford high school opens, is it then your plan to decommission one of the city high schools?

Mr. J. Brown: No and I should correct myself too. The anticipated occupancy of Sherwood is 21, 22, although there could potentially be some budget money running in the next year.

No, this was the whole thing about a school in Stratford. We had a number of different options; I think there were five considered for high school infrastructure in the Charlottetown area.

As we looked at the different possibilities, you really had to consider what the numbers requirements of time – when the school would come online, where we would effectively be.

Their reality got to be that the projection – so current high school enrollment right now is 1,860 students in the Charlottetown area and the capacity is between 1,900 and 2,000.

With the (Indistinct) enrollments projections over the next five years, that’s projected to grow to, say roughly, between 2,400 and 2,500 students.

There will be a growing need for high school capacity between now and when the school is complete.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

I’m just going to ask one more. When you were coming up with this capital budget, I know there is major overcrowding in Montague Consolidated and it’s been something that I’ve been hearing about for awhile.

Obviously I know a lot of people involved, both of my sisters have kids in that school so it comes up, it’s come up numerous times. I also hear it when I’m at the rink or if I meet people out and about, they’re asking what’s going to be done about – the school is outdated, so it was built in that old style that they build in the 70’s.

It’s not the oldest infrastructure that you have, I understand, I know that Cardigan is older than it, I know Georgetown’s older than it. I know that there are numerous schools in Kings County that are older it. But it appears as though it is: number one, overcrowded, which is undeniable and the second is that it is probably coming to its end of life.

I’m wondering why there was no consideration given to Montague in this capital budget.

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: So I have a few comments in relation to that.

Firstly, I'm certainly aware of the condition.

On the invitation of the Member from Montague-Kilmuir, I actually went out and visited the school with himself and your sister, actually, and he was principal at the time, Carpenter and we did a tour of the school and we looked at capacity and all the rest of it.

In terms of capacity, I'll say that it's not in a situation that it's in anyway materially worse than many other schools on Prince Edward Island. In fact, it would probably be a lot better than many of the schools that we'd be dealing with.

That being said, we have not overlooked that school. In fact, the Public Schools Branch made a resolution in relation to that school back in September and we have heard through the capital budget speech and the different processes that have been going on here, that we have put forward a request to Treasury Board on behalf of our school boards for \$500,000 to review different school infrastructure issues that we would see and certainly Montague Consolidated would be high on that list and there's a couple others too, that we would envision being immediate priorities.

Chair: Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

So I mean you may not be aware of this because you weren't minister at the time, but the minister exactly previous to you did exactly that.

Bob Andrews took charge of it, I have the book I can give you a copy – he went through and he told us what was wrong with all the schools, he tried to close a bunch of them based on his recommendations.

If I were in those communities, I'd be worried that this is – obviously they don't trust you which is understandable, but at the same time they've already been through this.

I remember one of the schools up west in Bob Andrews report it said that the roof was

– I think it was the St. Louis school that there was something wrong with the roof but he had just looked at the picture on Google Earth and I'm not even making this up, unfortunately I'm not even making this up, and it just happened to be different colours –

Chair: Do you have a question hon. member?

Mr. Myers: Yeah, this is it. This is actually my question if you'd let me finish it.

His whole point was, that he didn't even do even a visual inspection, he did it through Google Earth, so I'm concerned, let me say the least.

So either the report that Bob Andrews put out was no good, which, I would say out of hand personally, that I thought it was no good, but you guys stood behind it and tried to close schools based on it.

So there's that, so either you believe the report of Bob Andrews or you don't and you're going to start this cycle again where you're going to spend \$500,000 to replicate the work that Bob Andrews did in a report where he said clearly what was wrong with some of the infrastructure in your thing.

So I don't know really what the point of that is and if you don't believe my sister, if you want to use my sister as an example because she's apparently the only one in Montague who wants that school – yes everyone else who's sitting on everybody else's knees aren't concerned about overcrowding.

These are the people who are telling you what they want, just like Stratford did and just like Sherwood did and just like many other schools are.

How is that going to make anything better other than kicking it down the road so you can stand behind and say: well we're doing a report and you're going to spend a whole year telling Montague that we're kicking it down the road, only to come around to the budget cycle again this time next year and they have to sit and pray the night before that you're actually going to listen to their concerns?

Chair: Minister of Finance.

Mr. MacDonald: I think part and parcel to this whole discussion, your question is relevant to exactly what we're trying to do. I mean, there's lots of people right across Prince Edward Island, and I'm one of them, speaking highly of the conditions of the schools and the size of the schools and the year they were built.

It's a strong point of mine to ensure that when you're having all these conversations with these people and people are coming forward, whether it be the home and school saying we need a new school or we need an addition to this.

I think it's time that we actually did an inventory by a third party to evaluate what is actually out there and put a priority list together for schools so there's no more questions asked – whether they like it or not, it will be plain and simple a third party review. I think it should be done.

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: A fair amount of my questions were already –

Chair: Okay, the hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Leader of the Opposition: Oh Chair?

Chair: Oh sorry, I thought you said your questions were already answered.

Leader of the Opposition: A fair amount.

Chair: Sorry, Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Stratford, additional classroom space, 1.564 million – just wondering, what's the total allocation of funds towards the additional classroom space, or room space, because it's not all classrooms, for Stratford elementary?

Jim Miles: It would be 4.9 million.

Leader of the Opposition: 4.9? And what's the completion date?

Jim Miles: It should be due for occupancy in September of 2019.

Leader of the Opposition: September 2019?

Chair: Minister of Finance, did you have an intervention?

Mr. MacDonald: No.

Chair: No?

Leader of the Opposition, do you have any more questions?

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Chair.

Yes, I do.

I think the minister already gave this information, but I didn't catch it all. With regards to the new Stratford school, you gave an overview of a committee that comes together to best determine what the need is in the community for the school.

Can you tell me if we'd be looking at vocational space in the school as well? The discussion we had here on the floor the other day with regards to the lack of skilled workers here in on PEI, myself, and I've heard this from many people, many Islanders, that say that we need to get back to focus on vocational education as well.

I know when I went to Charlottetown Rural back in the day, there was a component there and there is still a very good component in Charlottetown Rural. I, for one, would be a strong advocate to see that in the new Stratford high school.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Sure, Madam Chair.

One of the first things I'll say, that there's a budget line item devoted to classroom technology. Part of that would be: one and a quarter million over five years in trades and training equipment to support courses such as carpentry, welding, automotive, robotics and biosciences.

In terms of Stratford, and this, I will confess before this Chamber, that this was a frustration of mine in relation to the debate about where we would put new high school infrastructure and why.

And all too often – this addresses some of the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters' questions as well – we have all too often in this province gotten into a debate over who gets the next bricks and mortar in their community. With the greatest of respect to everybody that's involved in those debates, because everybody's hearts is in the right place, it's not the question that we should be asking ourselves, in my mind.

It's what can we do to get the best education for our children? And so that will be the job of that committee as it goes forward recognizing that in having chosen a school in Stratford, versus adding onto either or both of the larger schools in Charlottetown, we've already indicated that there will be certain programming that we'll not be able to accomplish. One of those programs that's been quite popular at Charlottetown Rural, as an example, it looks like it probably would not be able to be accommodated in Stratford – with the number that we'd be looking at would be an IB program. So those are the conversations that are had as the process moves forward.

The capital group will look at the different possibilities based on the numbers. As I indicated, there is a school construction manual that would provide a general outline as to what would go along with capital space planning for a high school in that number range, and the planning work would start from there, and they would overlay that with the appropriate educational pieces.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Chair.

So, just some clarification.

Did the minister just say that the new high school in Stratford will not include an IB program offering?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: That will most likely be right, Madam Chair, as there won't be numbers to make the program viable. You need to have a core number of students to make the IB program viable.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Chair.

I wonder if the minister has the information right now of how many students that travel across the Hillsborough bridge to the existing two high schools in Charlottetown that are enrolled in the IB program, what percentage they make up in the IB programs in Charlottetown?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I don't have that breakdown right in front of me, no.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: So, then it's pretty difficult to say that the demand or the numbers wouldn't necessitate offering an IB program at the new Stratford high school when the minister doesn't even know the existing programs that are offered in Charlottetown and how many of those students are from Stratford.

Chair, as I said before, the minister, I think, did give this information already but I didn't get a chance to copy it down.

Over the five-year plan on page 3, it gives the –

Chair: We're on page 11.

Leader of the Opposition: Yes, I realize that, Chair, but what the minister did provide over the five-year or four-year plan, is how much each year is committed to the new school in Stratford.

Could he repeat that?

Mr. MacDonald: Sure, so 2019-2020 is 2 million.

Leader of the Opposition: Yes.

Mr. MacDonald: 2021 is 14; 2021-2022 is 13; and 2022-2023 is nine.

Leader of the Opposition: Sorry? 2; 14; 13; and nine?

Mr. MacDonald: Thirteen and nine, yeah.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some of my questions have been answered too. I had actually asked the question on the funding for the school in my third question, but I think the 40 seconds ran out before the minister got it relayed, but I'm glad to hear that number now.

One of the questions that really struck a chord with me was the amount of land that would be needed for the school. Between 120 and 160 acres is a lot of land to find in the middle of Stratford. I know here's certainly not – I don't think that much good land past Glen Stewart or anything like that. So, it certainly must be in a different area.

Does the minister have any idea where they're looking at the present time? I understand it's the town that is committed to getting this land, I think. Is that not right?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thanks, Madam Chair.

As I indicated in Question Period and as likely everybody will be aware at this point in time because it was quite public, the Town of Stratford and in particular, Mayor Dunphy and councillor Randy Cooper, met with our department on a couple of occasions to make their pitch to the department and I believe they made a similar pitch to the Public Schools Branch, that it would be their pleasure that they would arrange the acquisition of land and they have an extensive plan to put sporting facilities on that land in, what I'll call a package or a complex, with the school infrastructure.

I gather they need to move some of the soccer fields out of their industrial park right now, and they have a need for additional infrastructure that they would like to see included in that.

So, they had indicated to us, I think they had three or four parcels in mind that they were looking at and I can't say where they are in terms of negotiations with owners of those parcels, or whether they own them already or what is the situation might be.

But certainly on the strength of that commitment, we would be looking to coordinate with them, and to – we feel that it makes sense, obviously, to have as great a community connection as you possibly can between the schools and the infrastructure that goes along with that, like gymnasiums and cafeterias and different things like that, and community uses. So, to the extent that we can, we will look to partner with the Town of Stratford in doing that, and to take them up on their offer.

Chair: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you, Madam Chair.

That makes a lot more sense to me, especially if they're moving some of the fields by the industrial park there. I think it's a great idea, too, to have more facilities if they have to move them and put them next to the school.

But, they are making arrangements, too, then to have enough room, I understand, if there is a seven to 10 added on there; seven, eight, and nine added on later down the road, there will be enough land set aside for that?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So as I indicated previously, the Public Schools Branch has actually indicated through resolution that they will endeavour to look at different, what I'll call, programming outlays that might be recommended for the Stratford area.

I think I gave different enrollment projections over the course of time. I gave the high school piece. At the intermediate level, the Charlottetown area intermediate enrollments are projected to increase from a current enrollment of 1,739 to roughly – to slightly over 2,000 in the next five years.

The intermediate functional capacity right now in the greater Charlottetown area is roughly that same amount. So there is capacity now at the intermediate level, though it will likely be kind of used up over the next five years or so.

The same capacity does not exist at the high school level. The elementary level, right now, we are pretty well hitting over that same time period the top of our capacity availability in the two Stratford schools, in terms of the catchments that are there right now. So I suspect that they'll look at that in a holistic way and determine what the best space programs would be for infrastructure in Stratford moving forward with a K-12 view.

Chair: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

This was my next question and concern, too. With the growing population there, would we need more room than we have at Stratford in Glen Stewart in total? But they are looking at that, I guess.

That's good because it's on the mind of a lot of people out there. Like I said, you can hardly go into Tim Horton's and meet with the brains of the operation in that community there without some discussion coming up on schools. So I'm glad they're watching every bit of it.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Chair.

As usual, I'm finding the budgeting process a little frustrating because we always go through – Then of course we want to get a breakdown, and you know the minister or ministers have the breakdowns in front of them. Then we cajole, can we table that, can you read the information, et cetera?

I was wondering if the minister would consider sort of proactively tabling the details of key line items as we go to those pages. I, for one, would have thought on this

page school construction, renovations: 18 million. The obvious question is: Okay what schools and when? That's what we just spent a whole bunch of time on.

If that was proactively tabled, we could have just gotten straight to the questions. So that's my first question to the minister.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Finance

Mr. MacDonald: It's something that we can take into consideration.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: So I'd like to start at the top here then and just go down because I'm interested in all these line items.

So the trades training capital – where's that going?

Mr. MacDonald: Table it or?

Mr. Trivers: You can table it if you want. I don't need to have you read it out.

Mr. MacDonald: Prepare students for the jobs in future construction trades, biotechnology, robotics, multimedia, and human health sciences.

So it would be –

Jim Miles: All the schools that have second – that have trades training. It's for trades and other equipment of intermediate and high schools. So it's just upgrades that are required on a regular basis.

Mr. Trivers: Okay and the classroom technologies, is that Chromebooks? Or what are you looking at there?

Jim Miles: Yeah, so there's replacement schedules for the Chromebooks of three years; laptops, four years; desktops, five years. There are approximately 12,000 devices in the school, which need regular replacement. This is the budget that will replace those.

Mr. Trivers: Do you have a breakdown of approximate numbers on that?

Jim Miles: What do you mean?

Mr. Trivers: I'm thinking so how many laptops, how many Chromebooks? The only reason I do that is I do the calculation and say okay we're paying \$800 a Chromebook and I'd say well you know, that may be a little bit high I think we could get them for \$400 or whatever.

Jim Miles: So there's, for example, 3,000 laptops and the laptops are replaced on a four-year cycle. There's 7,550 Chromebooks that are replaced on a three year cycle, and there's 1,450 desktops that are replaced on a five year cycle.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, much appreciated.

So we talk about school construction, renovations, but under capital repairs – is that just a general number or do you have that breakdown as well for all the different schools?

If you could table that, that would be excellent.

Mr. MacDonald: It's a general number.

Mr. Trivers: It's a general number?

Mr. MacDonald: So yeah, as issues come up, that money is used to repair, whether it be a roof in L.M. Montgomery or Elliot River or what have you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: So the museum and heritage sites, is that earmarked for any particular museum or heritage sights? Or is that just, again, a general number?

Jim Miles: No, just one second.

Mr. MacDonald: Want to go to your next question while he's searching for that if you have one?

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Sure.

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture, can answer the question.

Mr. J. Brown: So it is both.

There are identified capital repairs that are required by the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation, and we basically start to work through the list as we go. Particularly with some of the projects, we have been fortunate to be able to leverage to get some funding from the federal government as well. So obviously if we can leverage you're going to do that project first. But there are a number of different predetermined projects that we have.

Beaconsfield, as an example, there's some window replacements. Orwell Corner there's Stanley-Lindsay House Foundation that needs some work. Orwell Corner Historic Village, there's the Taylor house that basically needs an overhaul; it's an old historic home that's out there. Eptek, interior lighting upgrades are required; Green Park – there is some exterior issues, lighting issues, washrooms, and a roadway that are all requested and there's some equipment that they're looking for. Acadian Museum, there's some basic walls and things like that. Elmira museum, building exterior work; Basin Head, the boardwalk and roof, and the Watts building, there's some work there as well.

There's all kinds of work to be done, and basically, it's like anything else, there's priorities that are set on an annual basis or on a revolving basis and they go at them based on the money that we're able to allocate.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Well, thank you.

That's exactly the sort of information I want to know. Of course, as the MLA of Rustico-Emerald I'm listening for Farmers' Bank of Rustico, fisherman's museum on North Rustico. These sorts of places, right? The Lucy Maud Montgomery birthplace, stuff like that. I didn't hear them, I don't think, I'm not sure if that was the entire list.

I know that, for example, the museum out in North Rustico on the highway just beside On the Dock Eatery, they provide washrooms for the restaurant they let museum goers use. They wanted them to be

pumped out. They said: We will clean the washrooms to provide them to the public, if you can just pump them out because there's no septic there.

I wanted to maybe take this occasion to see if there was any agreement made on that, although it may be outside this budget?

Shut me up if you want, Chair.

Chair: Thank you.

The Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Those are community museums hon. member. They're – This is a capital budget related to the museums that fall under the provincial purview. You're talking about different museums – community operated museums. So they would, in all likelihood, get an operational grant each year to do the kinds of things that you're talking about.

Let me just say this to the question that you asked a few minutes ago: The answer, I think, to your question as to why you don't just table a list lies in what I said first. These are really revolving lists. Where, as an example we deal with all the time with schools, if a boiler stack blows off and you had every dollar listed to be spent in a certain order and you needed money for a boiler stack – we don't want to have to reconvene the Legislature to come in and get money for a boiler stack to go replace the boiler stack. It needs to be done today.

So that's why you wouldn't make it that specific in terms of what you're looking to do with these different funds.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: And of course, I understand that completely. I think that is just common sense.

What's also common sense is you guys are actually reading out into the Hansard, the very thing you said that would be too much to table. So that answer doesn't make sense to me, but with the school buses, I wanted to

know how many school buses you are replacing on that line.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Twenty.

Mr. Trivers: Twenty.

Mr. J. Brown: Yeah.

Mr. Trivers: Okay, that's all the questions I had, thank you.

Chair: That's great.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Chair.

I have a few questions here, kind of all over the map.

The first one is in regards to school buses. So obviously it has been a topic of discussion lately, if government and the departments decide to – I guess I'm just throwing some examples out there – if they decide to go the camera routes or the extension arms on the buses and so forth, is there going to be funding available for those buses to be done or is it going to have to wait in the following year for the capital budget?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is a question that is kind of important to me, but let me just tell you a couple of things. One is how we buy school buses.

So we don't buy – Prince Edward Island does not buy its own school buses, if you will. We go through a procurement agreement that is set up with the other ministries of education from the Atlantic Provinces, and that way we are able to arrange a volume discount effectively, or be a significant enough buyer that we have some ability to set our term. There are only

three manufacturers in North America, so you have to – they are big operations.

All that being said, two things about that: One is that the bus companies do a lot of research and pilot projects, as there was a focus on this. There was a fellow from I think Georgia or Virginia that talked about some pilots that he was running down there for one of the bus companies. We are able to access some of that research and we were able to look at them.

The decisions that are made, I think in fact they were made a couple of weeks ago, to purchase the buses for next year because of course, you have to order them and they have to be built, and you have to go from there.

Some of the items referred to would be retrofit items, some of the items can be additions that you get through the bus companies. For example, the strobe lights on the top, you can get them added fairly cheaply from the bus company. The bus companies don't have cameras they feel are reliable enough that they install on the front end at this point, although I think they are running a couple of pilots with cameras.

Likewise with the stop arms, it's my understanding they don't feel they have access to technology that is reliable enough that they install and provide their warranty with them.

Chair: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Chair.

Next on my list – and I just don't know the answer – so, who looks after the school grounds itself when we are talking about basketball courts, the track outside, the ball diamond and so forth. Is that through the department itself or is it through transportation?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I might just get you to further indicate what you mean by look after.

Like, build or –

Mr. MacKay: No, to basically maintain.

And the reason I ask – the high school in Kensington; I'm getting quite a bit of calls from the parents over the tennis court, the basketball court. It's deteriorating, and nothing is being done to it. The track outside is the same. The school is in good shape, but it is the outside facilities.

Last summer, the parents – there were 280 kids using the ball diamond for minor ball and there was basically no help to improve the ball diamond, so the parents took it in their own hands and did it themselves. They got volunteers for the weekend and so forth because there was no help.

I do give credit to the Minister of Finance when I reached out to him. He certainly did what he could to help out on short notice.

I'm just curious, like – when these facilities need work, who is to look after them and what is the process to keep the work being done to them?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

That is a good question. I'm glad you did provide the context because it is important.

The Public Schools Branch maintains what is there. If there's capital required to go into it, depending on what it is, it may be the responsibility of the community, or it may be the general responsibility of government.

Typically, when we're talking about it – we just talked about Stratford as an example, where we looked to partner with the town of Stratford in relation to infrastructure that they would like to see in their community, and then it would typically end up that we'd share the use of the infrastructure.

You would set out an arrangement to do that. Likewise with the Sherwood school, we are currently in early stages of talks with the Sherwood Parkdale Soccer Association in terms of what they might like to see with the gym there and a complex.

The answer is not universal. Generally we build schools and maintain them, and there

is not a set guarantee, but we do try to provide related sporting infrastructures around the schools. And you see money in the capital budget for École-sur-Mer, where we have arranged soccer field there that when the addition is put on, will replace an existing soccer field and ball diamond.

Chair: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Next, I did get quite a bit of calls, and there is a lot of speculation – you know how that goes, it travels like wildfire sometimes.

But, with the Tree Oaks renovation, with the amount of extra classrooms, and they are saying there's all kinds of extra locker space that looks like it's going to be for the future.

What is the plan? Are there schools in smaller communities that could be in trouble in the future? Is that what this Three Oaks School is being built so big for, to service as a bigger crowd? Because we are getting a lot more calls as the construction gets closer to being done.

The last call I had last week as the amount of lockers that are in the school. It's to service more than what's there now. Can you explain that?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: So, Three Oaks School was built back in the '60s, as I recall it, I don't have the exact date in front of me.

Jim Miles: (Indistinct)

Mr. J. Brown: Seventies, it could be.

Anyways, it was built for over 1,000 people at the time. So when the renovation was done, the footprint essentially remained the same. Things were (Indistinct) in at that point in time. There is roughly three quarters of the students there now that the school was built for.

So no. There is not a plan to shut down other schools. Geographically, if you look at TOSH and where it is located, there is not – I think you would be hard-pressed to say there is a natural fit to where you are going

to shut one school down and move the students to Thee Oaks, so that is not in the plans, no.

Mr. MacKay: That's great. Thanks for clarifying that.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

So, just to clarify, the difference in the line items here between capital repairs and renovations – renovations would be a planned expense and the capital repairs would just be, as the minister said, things as required through during the year. Is that correct?

Jim Miles: That's correct.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Right.

So I see that in the last fiscal of the estimate – we under spent on construction renovations by over \$3.5 million.

Could you explain what happened there?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: École-sur-Mer didn't go forward as planned, would be a big part of it.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks.

So, if we look forward in the five year plan, here, I was listening to the numbers that you have there for the Stratford school, and this is under construction and renovation, so this would include planned renovations. In the fourth year, 2022 -2023, it strikes me that the entire amount budgeted that year is for the Stratford school.

Is that correct?

Jim Miles: Yeah, there is a small amount for École-sur-Mer addition, but almost all of it to Stratford.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Right.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

So look forward over the next few fiscals, again, I don't have all of the details, but it strikes me that that entire cost is dedicated to construction, rather than renovation. We are having the half million dollar Third Party study done on the state of the school, but even without that, we know that there are many schools across the province that are going to need renovations. Some of them are going to need it urgently.

So, I'm just wondering why, as we follow that budget line over the next four or five years, there is essentially nothing budgeted for any renovations on any Island schools.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Jim, go ahead.

Chair: Or Jim, do you want to (Indistinct)

Jim Miles: Sure.

I guess once that \$500,000 study is done, we will put place markers out there to do the renovations that are necessary, as a result of what comes out of that.

So you are right. There is nothing really in the long-term to deal with that, but there will be once the study is done.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: When are we expecting that study – the results of the study to come back?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I suspect it would be ongoing work at least over the next fiscal year.

We may even try to get some of it underway this fiscal year. But it's not – like you're talking about having an architect and/or an engineer come in and look at the structures that are there. So, I suspect we will go where

we think the problems are worst first and look at them or have the party go there, so it would be one school at a time.

And then as the reports starts to come back in, hopefully by the time the next capital budgeting process rolls around, we'd have some more light to shed on what the next projects might be. And as I indicated here today, the Public Schools Branch has already identified in Montague Consolidated and Elliot River what they feel to be two pieces of aging infrastructure that are the next kind of question marks for them. We've also indicated in Stratford there may be a need in the intermediate level.

You start looking at those kind of question marks and really, it will be to figure out – and it's up to the Public Schools Branch to ultimately figure out what their priorities are so long as they're soundly set out, then that's kind of how the capital budgeting process works. This is all defined, by the way, in the *Education Act*. There's a process there.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks.

I think it's fair to predict that when that study comes back there's going to be a large list of expensive renovations required to Island schools.

In my own district, Englewood and Bluefield are both – Englewood in particular is 50-60 years old now and I know there's a substantial amount of work in there, and that's just one example. And a lot of schools were built in that era and they're all reaching the point now where they're going to need either replacement or substantial renovation.

I understand it's not budgeted here, but can you give us some sense of what you might budget per year? I mean there will be an endless – maybe not endless, but there will be a substantial list of renovations required. Are we looking at budgeting \$5 million a year, \$10 million a year? What are you thinking?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I'm not going to put a number on it right now. But, I think I would wish to say this: For a long time in this province, we have gone from who is next on the list or we have gone by who is next on the list in terms of, our school is the oldest or whatever the case might be. And as I was saying earlier, we really need to stop thinking that way.

Like I know in my own house, if it needs shingles on the roof, I put shingles on the roof. If it needs windows, I put windows in it. If we were to decide to have two more kids, I would have to make the decision: Do we about want to double our kids in the bedrooms that we have, or do we want to move somewhere else, or do we want to build an addition on?

And I think that's the way we need to start to think about our schools. We can't be thinking it's 50 years old, let's rip it down and start again. And to a degree, education, a good quality education, can be impacted by the quality of the infrastructure that you have, but it's probably not the biggest or anywhere near the top in terms of the factors that would impact your education and so it wouldn't be the first place – new bricks and mortar would not be the first place I would go with my education dollars.

We have to think about that in the overall scheme of things.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I absolutely agree with everything you said, minister.

I only brought those schools up as examples of which are representative of the age of schools across the province. I wasn't suggesting those should be or are at the top of the list at all.

I would, though, like to talk about École Évangéline because some of your remarks recently have created a little bit of controversy in the Acadian community and I wonder if you could clarify the situation there with regards to that school and where *la commission scolaire de langue française* fits into this capital budget – the advice you got from them.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thanks, Madam Chair.

I would maybe ask exactly what you're looking for clarification on. I'm happy to do my best.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Chair, so the budget puts money aside for École-sur-Mer but none for École Évangéline and I'm wondering whether that aligns with the request or recommendations or advice that you got from *la commission*.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So over the last number of years and this obviously predates my time at minister of education, French Language School Board has had their top couple of priorities centering around École-sur-Mer and a high school addition there, and École Évangéline.

The high school addition at École-sur-Mer was originally a – let me go back. I think it's three years ago they placed both as number one priorities and set out to have them considered as such.

And there is, as they stated, a requirement in the *Education Act* as to how the capital planning process is to work and that was pretty clearly a contravention of that requirement, I will say, and that's part of what causes me some consternation. They attached numbers to those submissions at the time and the requirements that they were looking to have met.

Last year, they delineated a number one priority being the high school addition at École-sur-Mer. In their ask, they asked for a \$3 million capital allocation to perform that addition. There were a number of different issues that were inherent in that \$3 million ask, but they all amount to it having been grossly too little to do what they wanted to do with the space.

And then when we got through to the space planning portion, which, as I mentioned,

happens pursuant to a school's planning book that has been developed and that the educational authorities of the Public Schools Branch and the French Language School Board are well aware of – when you have a school that is set out for a certain number of students, you get a music room that's such and such a size, and halls that are such and such a size, admin space that's such and such, a gym that's such and such.

So when we started going back through that, they started is to say: Well, we want a high school gym the same as is at Three Oaks. And the discussion gets to be: Well, no your school doesn't have 750 students or 800 or whatever is at Three Oaks. It's only got 180, I think is the number. It might be less than that.

So when you look at that piece, that's something that you wouldn't be setting out in the capital planning process to get. And so through all that, we had indicated to them at that time there are a couple of ways of dealing with this.

One is that we can decide not to go forward with the project as it's set out and we can proceed to figure out whether there's an additional way of looking at this, or we can go ahead with the project, and that was their decision, that we go ahead with the project but it was made too late in the year this year to go ahead with the project this year. And then they indicated that they were going to make an ask for the high school gym.

So this year, the ask was made for the high school gym. It was made in advance of the capital budgeting process this year as well, and for a soccer field to be added on to the project because when the renovation was to take place it was going to displace the soccer field they had and we increased the size of the soccer field from, I believe it's a junior high school-sized soccer field right now, to a high school-sized soccer field, at considerable expense as well.

And then finally, when they set forth their capital priorities this year, they had gone from a renovation request to École Évangéline last year and the year before, to a \$37 million request for an out and out new school. And in our view there wasn't sufficient underpinning to justify that request or the magnitude of it and so I would

say that there's not an indication that there's no money allocated for Evangeline school.

What we indicated is that we are looking to arrange \$500,000 to study our schools on Prince Edward Island and that we'd be quite happy to work with that educational authority to determine what the actual needs are at École Évangéline.

There's some other frustrations too, that that I might as well while we're talking about it, delineate such as a need for windows to be replaced at this school and the roof.

So we've allocated money for the roof to be done this year and I gather, some window projects that they think are in dire need as well. Well those projects are a long way down the list, they're not in the top three in terms of their asks over the last few years.

So you just start to wonder: why are they not there if there's windows that are literally having water leak into the school and why are we putting new things that they wish to have ahead of requirements that they had before.

We feel that's not in compliance with the *Education Act* and the capital planning process either.

Those are some of the frustrations that we would have overall and certainly it's not something – these are conversations we've had with them on an ongoing basis and I appreciate we don't typically go out of our way to have those conversations in public. So, I appreciate the question to the degree that it's been asked here, but that's been how that process has unfolded to date.

Chair: Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I appreciate your answer, no more questions Chair.

Chair: Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

It's been awhile.

The minister mentioned earlier about that third party review. Does he have a group in mind who is going to be doing that?

Has that been contracted out?

Mr. J. Brown: Sorry I couldn't hear that Chair.

Mr. MacDonald: You asking me or?

Mr. MacEwen: Yeah it's the capital budget isn't it?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes it – is it the capital budget today?

Mr. MacEwen: Oh that's what I was wondering.

Chair: Member from Morell-Mermaid, can you repeat your question and who you're directing it to?

Mr. MacEwen: Okay, I was just automatically directing it to the Minister of Finance, I apologize.

Minister of Finance: you mentioned earlier about a third party consultant or someone coming in to kind of redo the whole Bob Andrews year-long report on all the schools on PEI, which was a waste of money.

Do you have somebody in mind who is going to be doing that review?

Mr. MacDonald: No, it'll be an RFP.

Mr. MacEwen: When will that RFP be released?

Mr. MacDonald: Like the minister of education announced that, hopefully within – when will the RFP be released on the half a million dollars you're going to spend on the study for the –

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: We'd have to have Treasury Board authorize the release, obviously, so I'm not going to commit to one time or another, but I'd say as soon as we can arrange the process to take place.

It'll be done in concert likely with TIE and the typical mechanism would be – you go get Treasury Board approval to do it, then there'd be a process, obviously, and TIE

would typically design the actual RFP and we'd then go out.

The RFP could be, as I say, broken down into chunks of work at a time.

Chair: Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: So it doesn't sound very clear – like on the backend to prepare for – all that work is done, so how long to do that work as far as: it could be broken down what the details are, before you start that process of getting TIE to put it out.

Are we talking January? Are we talking in a years' time?

Chair: Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Mr. J. Brown: I did answer that question actually earlier that the Public Schools Branch, in particular, has identified a priority or prioritization of their most immediate priorities to have looked at and so we would work with them to ensure that those can be covered off first and we'd move forward from there. We'd hope that we'd have a pretty solid top few worked through before the capital budget planning process next year

The educational authorities need to have their capital requests in by September. 15th every year.

The hope would be we have a pretty good list by that point in time.

Chair: Leader of the Opposition, do you have a question?

Leader of the Opposition: I do but I've got a series of questions and it's going to take longer than we have.

Chair: You're good? Okay.

An Hon. Member: Call the hour.

Chair: Hon. members, the hour has been called.

Minister could you read this?

Mr. MacDonald: Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having under consideration the grant of capital supply to Her Majesty, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Gallant: I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford, that this House adjourn until Thursday, November 22nd at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The Legislature adjourned