

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Colin LaVie

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Standing Committee on Education and Economic Growth

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LOCATION: LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER, HON. GEORGE COLES BUILDING, CHARLOTTETOWN

SUBJECT: SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOUR IN PEI; CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF PEI AND HOLLAND COLLEGE

COMMITTEE:

Karla Bernard, MLA Charlottetown-Victoria Park [Chair]
Hon. James Aylward, Minister of Health and Wellness
Sonny Gallant, MLA Evangeline-Miscouche
Ole Hammarlund, MLA Charlottetown-Brighton
Hon. Ernie Hudson, Minister of Social Development and Housing
Robert Mitchell, Leader of the Third Party

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

none

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

none

GUESTS:

Doug Currie; Sam Sanderson (Holland College); Sandy MacDonald (Construction Association of PEI)

STAFF:

Ryan Reddin, Clerk Assistant (Research and Committees)

Edited by Hansard

The Committee met at 1:30 p.m.

Chair (Bernard): Hello everyone, and welcome to the second meeting for the Standing Committee on Education and Economic Growth. Welcome back to all of my colleagues; Sam Sanderson and Sandy MacDonald. They're going to be doing presentations for us today and Doug Currie as well, and everyone in the gallery, hello.

I just want to remind everyone to go through myself, when speaking, so I can say your name to help the people in the corner over there. I said I was going to do a better job at that, so I am, today.

Has everyone had a chance to look over the agenda for today?

I'll ask for a motion to accept the agenda?

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct)

Chair: Moved by Robert Mitchell.

Shall it carry? Carried.

We are gathered today to hear some presentations on the shortage of skilled labour in PEI. I would like to, again, welcome Sam Sanderson and you can just get started. We turn the floor over to you.

Sam Sanderson: Well, thank you very much and thank you for the opportunity to present today. Unfortunately, I don't have any fancy slides or documents, but I'm going to shoot straight from the hip.

As an industry, as you look around, in every part of Prince Edward Island we're seeing tremendous growth in the construction industry. Every corner there is a project going on. No matter where you're at, there's affordable housing being built. There are commercial properties being built and many things moving forward.

You talk about the shortage of skilled trades; the number one issue facing the construction industry in Prince Edward Island, as well as the construction industry in Canada. In PEI alone here right now we have currently about 300 positions that we're trying to fill on our Island Builder webpage and job portal. Every day is a challenge to fill those

positions for our association members and non-members within the industry to allow them to grow and allow projects to proceed on time, on schedule, on budget.

As you see why we're so adamant and eager to talk about this issue and get involved; over the next seven to 10 years on PEI BuildForce Canada is estimating that we're going to have a shortage of roughly about 1,000 skilled trades' people on Prince Edward Island alone. Nationally, we're looking at close to 400,000; that creates some pretty huge issues moving forward.

We have to do anything and everything we can to encourage and entice our youth, our women, our Indigenous communities and our newcomers to look at the trade sector.

We've been very fortunate over the last few years to do some Youth in Trades Program, we've been running this program that's been federally funded for – I believe this is our 30th year. Over the last couple of years we've had some provincially-funded programs to encourage people to get into the trades which have been tremendously successful.

Currently, we are working with a group of newcomers, actually classrooms just started yesterday and we have some newcomers that are very interested and eager to learn about the trades in PEI and the opportunities moving forward, they're just a little bit of what's happening right now.

Are we doing enough? No.

We need to get into our educational systems, big time. We need to encourage and entice our youth to look at the trade sectors, show them what a great opportunity there is, not only now, but in moving forward.

For a long time the construction industry was considered a second class industry, a second class employment, that's no longer the case. Some of our biggest leaders in our communities and stuff are construction related people.

There is no better time to be in construction, or to be going into construction, than right now.

I have three granddaughters – my son-in-law

is a contractor and to be honest with you, I told all of them, if I have any say in the matter they're all going to be in construction in some way, shape, or form. So I'm hoping that works out.

Again, it's a great time to be in construction, it's a great time to look at construction. We're looking at some national campaigns on the national side of things to get back into our schools – or to get into our schools to encourage that. We need to start working with them at a younger age, maybe some elementary opportunities, junior high and high school.

A phrase I hear around a lot is: one of the worst things that ever happened was PVI was closed. That's a common comment to myself and many of our members and board members and industry people. If that was still going today, we probably wouldn't be in the position that we're in, it would create more opportunities.

Looking at wages today, we're certainly seeing a big increase in wages today because of the demand. So again, the opportunity is there. We're in the middle of doing a wage survey for the construction industry on Prince Edward Island as we speak and it's amazing the way that the wages are starting to increase.

Right now, an entry level labourer is anywhere between \$15 to \$18 an hour. Red Seal Carpenters are \$20 to \$33 an hour, the same with plumbers and electricians, anywhere from that \$20 to \$34 an hour range, so there's tremendous opportunities moving forward.

We need to educate. I think education is the key, creating those opportunities. I will come out and say very quickly, industry has to be a huge part of it. I think industry has got to be involved and create those opportunities. Get out there and – we've got lots of industry partners that are looking for ways to get involved, whether it be with little camps to encourage the youth to become involved. Again, getting into our school systems, or whatever needs to happen. We need to think outside the box.

One thing that we're hearing from many of our industry people is: we need the hands on experience. We need people to be able to put

the hands on the equipment, put the hands on the product, to actually see something that they've been able to work with.

One of the things that we're hearing from some of our young executives in the industry is: mentorship. They're looking for mentors. You can go online all day and Google and research and stuff like that, but there's nobody there to physically answer their questions, there's nobody there to physically show them how to do it and they're really missing that.

We held an industry summit a couple of years ago with some of the most powerful young executives in Canada in the construction industry; that was the number one thing that they were asking for was some mentorship, some hands on mentorship. That plays a huge role in our youth today.

I go back and think about myself over the years; I grew up in PEI and my grandfather was a fisherman and I learned how to build a lobster trap at a very young age, I learned how to use a measuring tape, I learned how to use a hammer, I was helping him change the oil in the boat or paint the bottom of the boat, kids don't have that opportunity today. Kids are coming to us with very limited skills.

They don't know how to use a measuring tape, they don't know how to do many things that are the basics of trades, so we need to get back in and show them and give them the opportunity. This is all information coming from people within the industry that are spending all kinds of time with people trying to help them along with their journey and obtain their certifications and qualifications to gain the experience.

I could probably talk about the same thing for hours and hours, but we really need to do something. We've started a momentum over the last couple of years as an industry putting our best foot forward and opening up avenues for people. Our last Youth and Trades Program, we had spaces for 10 people. We had 61 people show up for the information session that are interested. What do you do with those 51 people that didn't make it? You have to tell them 'no'. That was a missed opportunity for some of them. Will we have it next year? I don't know. I'd

love to be able to say: You know what? Yes, we're going to have two programs a year or 10 programs a year. We're creating opportunities for everybody. It is a really good start.

It actually goes hand in hand with the gentlemen behind me that are going to present after. It's getting people into the industry and creating opportunity. If they work in the industry for a short period of time and decide that they really like it, well, there's a great avenue to continue on and return to school and go through any of the great trades programs at Holland College. It's a way to interest them into the industry; so, many right now are not interested because they know nothing about it. They've never had an opportunity to be involved in it. We really need to open up those doors and open up the avenues to create that.

As an industry, we're willing to work with anybody and everybody to get this done; because, I've got members that cannot grow because they can't find the people to grow. We've got an affordable housing issue that we currently can't meet the demands because we don't have the people to build them, which, unfortunately, it becomes a trickle effect. What's it going to be like in seven to 10 years when we're 1,000 people short? Who's going to be around to build our hospitals, build our schools, build our homes? That's going to be really tough. Nobody can answer that question right now. We have to really put our best foot forward, put our thinking caps on and create the partnerships and get this done.

That's kind of my spiel and it's pretty basic and pretty simple; let's give people the opportunity.

A very smart man not too long ago made a little comment to me and he said: A job solves a lot of problems. It solves a lot of issues when you get people to work; you get them out excited about something and contributing to the economic benefits of PEI and wherever. They're making money, they're spending money. They're buying cars or buying homes, they're buying groceries. It has a huge impact.

I look around and over the last few weeks; I've had the pleasure of setting down with

some very prominent people from outside of Prince Edward Island and outside of North America and the things that they want to do is unbelievable here in little PEI. PEI is leading the country in economic growth and population growth. Everybody wants to be here; everybody wants a part of it.

I'm heading to a Canadian Construction Association board meeting in White Horse in two weeks time and you know what? I'm going to be damn proud to stand up let them know – let the country know what PEI is doing, what's happening here. We've got opportunity; everybody wants a part of it, so why not do what we can, where we can and help our communities out.

That's kind of it.

Chair: So, would you be open to some questions?

Sam Sanderson: Oh, sure. Always open to questions.

Chair: Robert Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell: Thanks Chair and thanks Sam for your presentation, straight from the hip, just the way I know you to be and a guy that's very passionate about the industry, about construction on PEI. To hear that your three granddaughters – I have no doubt in my mind that your three granddaughters will be involved in construction, if you have the part to play as their good grampy.

Sam, I'm listening to you, I'm nodding my head in agreement and one of the parts that you brought back early on that you mentioned the PEI thing. I know the gentleman to my right, James Aylward, has mentioned that before on the floor of the Legislature, as being something that may be a time to take another serious hard look at something like that, to your point and I agree with that too, young Islanders are not given the skills like you got or I got probably as a young boy with a hammer and a measuring tape and all that kind of thing.

I recall we had shop even in Grade 8, which was really important. I don't know if any schools have that type of program anymore, I know there's coding and things like that which seems to take young people's interest today. Maybe there's opportunities, even

younger in school, to get at least the shop, at least you're using the scroll saw or jig saw or some kind of – get something going.

If you could make one wish that would make the biggest impact towards that, is that what it would be, from your perspective, to get our Island youth in sooner into looking at trades as a real career option? Because I'll be honest, I don't know many millionaires but the millionaires I know have all come through that trades industry, right? Because they work hard and there's a great opportunity to make a lot of dollars and have a good life working in the trades.

If you had one wish would it be to develop a program like that? Or, is there something else? You didn't touch on repatriation; I don't know if that's an issue anymore. Newcomers, you mentioned that briefly, but is that something that we should put more emphasis on?

Where would be your number one emphasis to put on?

Sam Sanderson: Number one, I would have to say the educational system, getting it back into the schools, but I don't want to take away from the opportunity with newcomers and women and our Indigenous community and stuff. Again, we are currently doing a program with the Indigenous community in Lennox Island that is proving very very successful.

There is so many great areas that we can capture an audience from. I don't want to think one is greater or less than the other, I would love to see a combination of both put together in some way, shape or form and I would really like to see industry being a big part of it. I'm a firm believer that industry needs to be a huge part of whatever educational or program rolls out.

Mr. Mitchell: Into that point and in my discussions with folks, there is a strong appetite for their involvement, I think, as well, based on my conversations. Hopefully there is something that we can marry up together through industry, through our youth, through newcomers, whatever it is to get it done.

I guess we're not alone in this, I'm sure other provinces experience the same

shortage that we do, but we are moving forward, we're moving forward fast and when you go to your meeting next week with the pride of PEI behind you, hopefully that message gets heard in the national sense. Maybe that will draw some attention to PEI too, for you.

Sam Sanderson: We certainly hope so and PEI again is a leader in some of the programming that we've been doing as an industry. I speak with my counterparts across Canada quite regularly because they sit on the COO Council for all the construction associations in Canada.

It gives me some great opportunity to see what our counterparts are doing and other regions are doing, but PEI is definitely a leader in the areas and taking that step further because we have the flexibility and the availability to contact our local MLA's and our local government to make something happen.

It's only in PEI where I can send a Facebook message to my MLA or my minister and you know what? In an hour or two hours I'm getting a response back. It only happens in PEI and we're so lucky to be able to have that and to be able to create those opportunities and we can get stuff done so much quicker.

It's great to be able to lead and open up the thought process for some of our counterparts.

Mr. Mitchell: Thanks for your message today; I really appreciate it. I'll give the floor to some others. I'm sure there's – if I think of something I'll get the floor later on.

Chair: Thank you.

Sonny Gallant.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you very much Sam, for your passionate presentation. I just have a few questions.

In my previous role, I think you were one of the first individuals I met and it was wonderful to meet with you and there was some good programs.

But I do have a concern with a comment you made about 10 people and 51 out in the cold. Could you elaborate on that? Was it because there wasn't enough industry buy in or provincial or what happened there? Was there only so much allocation for 10 people?

Sam Sanderson: In our Team Construction Youth and Trades Program, we had allocated funding for 10 participants for the program. In that program we provide eight weeks classroom training and that's everything from safety and pertinent safety training, to multiple days of labs with Holland College in the trade sector at the Summerside Campus or the Georgetown campus, whatever may be available at the time. Then we team them up with industry professionals for many discussions and information sessions and then we bring them into the job portion of it. We take them out and work with our employers to find a 14-week position for those people to get them an entry level position and a step into the industry.

It was a funding issue; we only had so much funding for the 10 people. We weren't expecting 61. We were really surprised at the number. People are really becoming involved in and engaged in the prospects in construction looking for an avenue to get into that.

There are some issues and stipulations with the program; youth at risk or youth with barriers. It certainly created a little bit of a challenge, but overall, it was absolutely tremendous.

My thought process; maybe there's appetite sometime down the road to create a full-time facility where we could run this program year-round and take multiple intakes at a time and continually be putting these people out into the entry level positions, which, I've got 190 company members in the association, plus many people that are not members, are calling every day looking for people, every day. We don't shy away or turn away any non-members; we work with everybody in the industry. If there's a need and an opportunity there, we're working very closely – we have an HR advisor on staff that was funded through the Team Construction Program. He's working with our members at no cost for our members to do a match-up and try and find that next

great employee. Or, even that next employee.

Like I said, we've got about 300 positions right now that are looking to be filled by various companies around PEI and he's working very actively with every newcomer, the connectors, everybody that's available to work with to try and find people for these positions.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Sam.

I think you answered one of my questions about how many people in the industry were involved in it. What's your retention rate? So, if you had 10 go through this course, are they all still employed?

Sam Sanderson: All 10 are still employed, yes.

Mr. Gallant: So, it seems from our conversation that there is an interest in the trades; it's just to have the programs in place.

I understand from previously, Holland College did some help as far as, instead of taking people out of the workforce to go into the classroom, people have went to the job site to help train people. Is that correct? Would that be the right terminology?

Sam Sanderson: With Holland College?

Mr. Gallant: Yeah, or was it through your programs?

Sam Sanderson: No, we haven't done any –

Mr. Gallant: It hasn't been done?

Sam Sanderson: No, it hasn't. Not that I'm aware of; it doesn't ring a bell with me at the moment.

Mr. Gallant: I kind of thought – or maybe it was something that was being looked at.

Sam Sanderson: We were looking at the possibility of doing something like that as an association. As an industry, any way we can work with our members to possibly encourage and entice them some learning is a great thing. Getting back to that mentorship piece, I've had a lot of discussion with a committee that was set up

last year talking about mentorship and the opportunity about taking some people that maybe recently retired and stuff and bringing them back to a job site for 10 hours a week, or 20 hours a week, or even six hours a week with various companies to mentor those new people that are on the job site, saying you know; whatever it may be, if they're building an affordable housing unit there may be people there that are not as experienced and to be able to learn from somebody who's had 40 years in the field is very valuable. There is a lot of people leaving the industry that are taking a lot of knowledge with them, and that knowledge is not recoverable unless we find a way to maybe bring them back and encourage and entice.

It doesn't make any difference which area of the sector you're in – I know transportation, infrastructure and energy have brought back some people that have retired in the last few years to project-manage projects because they don't have a huge resource coming up behind them. So they're training the existing people they have, passing on their knowledge and stuff, it's a form of mentorship as well.

Anything you can do in that area is very powerful. We've got a huge gap between that 60 and 40. You walk around a job site today and there's a lot of people that are 55, looking at retiring in the next five to 10 years.

You'd be surprised how many people have been around – I know there's a few names that come to mind very quickly that they're some of the godfathers in the industry that have been around construction for 50 or 60 years that are still actively working on sites. The knowledge that they have is just unbelievable. The opportunity may be for them to share it in a different level would be tremendous.

Mr. Gallant: One more question and then I'll let someone else.

Sam, in perspective, what are we at this year in 2019, versus last year, as far as our construction industry? Is this one of the better times? Is it on par with last year? It seems, you've said it and we seem to hear that a lot, that the labour shortage is the biggest factor in this industry right now and

it must be pretty cumbersome from somebody to bid a job to build, let's say a 24 unit and doesn't have enough man power to do it or to get it done on time. That would be a hinder to his business of course and to everybody involved, correct?

Sam Sanderson: Yeah.

Mr. Gallant: Where would we be at? Are we in a better state or is it slowly getting more –

Sam Sanderson: Well 2018 was probably one of the biggest construction years we've ever had on Prince Edward Island. It was around \$342 million, I believe, went into the economy in Prince Edward Island from construction alone. The first quarter of 2019 seeing a 27% increase in building permits. So if that's any indication of what 2019 is going to end like, it's unbelievable.

Again, PEI is leading, it's the place to be and everybody wants to get involved in some way, shape, or form. The latest BuildForce Canada report in January of 2019 was kind of insinuating that the next 10 years in construction on Prince Edward Island is going to be pretty amazing. All indications are seeing a little change in new construction but what happens is, new construction drops a little bit, maintenance comes into play. There's no maintenance happening right now, nobody wants to repair anything when they can build something new.

We are looking at energy efficiency. There's a lot of really great programs out there regarding energy efficiency. The federal government is looking at having everything net zero by, I believe, 2050. Nothing started on that yet. There's a lot of work to transpire in Prince Edward Island.

Again, going back to the comment that I made about meeting with some private sector people in the last few weeks; the possibilities and the opportunities are going to be endless in PEI over the next 10 years. I don't know if we can handle it.

We've got some of the best in the country here on Prince Edward Island. We have Islanders that are eager and they will do anything and everything in their power to get the job done. They'll work nights, they'll

work weekends to get it done; they're very resilient people and a great workforce. Everybody's stressed, everybody's tired, everybody's working hard and kudos to everybody who is – right from our designers, consultants, to our labourers, our masons, our carpenters, electricians, plumbers, everybody is wide open and they're working hard and I foresee it over the next 10 years, it's going to continue to be a battle for sure.

As things increase, the labor issue becomes more prevalent. I believe there's some fairly aggressive plans in the near future for the province. We're potentially looking at some new schools, we're potentially looking at a new hospital, plus maintenance and things like that, and the private sector as well; there's big things happening.

Chair: Ernie.

Mr. Hudson: Thank you, Chair.

Certainly thank you Sam for coming in and presenting to us today and answering questions and certainly it's a challenge right across the province.

On the campaign trail last spring, one of the contractors I was speaking with up in West Prince area at that time was booking into the middle of the summer of 2021. It certainly gives that indication of what we are up against now and are going to be as time goes forward.

One of the things that you had mentioned, Sam, was with regard to mentorship and the big challenge that we have there and your comment about bringing retired trades people back in, whether it be for 10 or 15 hours a week, anything along that line.

We do have an aging population without a doubt.

Could you elaborate on that a bit, and just any programs – how could we, even as a government, help out in facilitating a mentorship program along that line?

Sam Sanderson: Well there are a couple of really great programs. I know Skill Planet of British Columbia and there's a group out of New Brunswick that have developed mentorship programs.

I'm actually just starting to research those myself to see where industry can be involved. But the basic concept is having something that's funded as an employer, maybe cost-shared or something to allow that person to come out to the jobsite or come out to maybe hold a meeting on the jobsite once a week or whatever.

It may work for the jobsite and for the companies to come out and maybe touch base a little bit on drawings and touch base a little bit on site management and areas that they may not be familiar with.

We look at one of the big needs is site supervisors and project managers, estimators is another category where there's a large need. Is that some of the younger people on the sites don't have that experience, they don't know what that experience entails or the next step. They're not really sure what the process is.

But by having somebody come and sit down with them and maybe walk them through while they're working, and talking and working alongside – side-by-side, you can get a lot of information with it with very little pressure in casual conversation and creating – maybe taking that person and saying: You know what, come on with me and let's do a safety report, let's do a walk around, let's do a site inspection. Let me show you how it's done. Let me show what you're looking for is a big part of it.

So I think – I'm not really sure what that model looks like. I plan on finding out a whole lot more about it in the very near future, but I think there's tremendous opportunity there.

Chair: Ernie.

Mr. Hudson: One of the things that you'd mentioned too, Sam, was with regard to PVI and certainly in the Prince County area, PCVHS, is there anything that – we're going to hear from Holland College here shortly – but anything that you would suggest to Holland College that we could all take away from the types of programs that PVI and PCVHS offered a number of years ago?

Sam Sanderson: Listen to industry, let industry be part of it; plain and simple.

Mr. Hudson: You'd also mentioned, Sam, that there are different things that we do have to look at here, whether its education starting elementary, junior high levels, but also with regard to immigration. I know that there used to be a program for ones coming into Canada to obtain their permanent residency, a skilled worker program. I would assume that's still in place.

Is it a program though – is it too cumbersome? Is it too slow of a process to get those skilled workers into the country, into the province and any suggestions that you would have – I know that's federal jurisdiction, but still I think it'd be interesting for us to hear that.

Sam Sanderson: Well I'm glad you asked that question.

This morning I did a presentation to our newcomers in trades group, and one of the biggest concerns that they had was they love PEI, they love Canada, they love the opportunity, but they're not getting the opportunity to get out to work.

A strong suggestion they had was: we need to do more, quicker, to open up the opportunities. We're talking about this program and they've only completed one day in a couple of hours in the classroom. They're tremendously excited about it because they see opportunity, they see engagement, they see a way to get out into the community to create that match between them and industry.

We have 10 people in the program; nine of those people in that program are very highly educated people with engineering, architectural project management backgrounds in construction. One is a certified international health and safety officer in the oil and gas industry offshore; tremendous skill set. He's been here for a while and has not had the opportunity to meet anybody or get involved in anything. He didn't elaborate too, too much, but he said a way to bridge that gap, they hear lots of seminars and lots of sessions on how to spend your money, how to invest your money, nobody's doing anything on; you know what, how do you get involved in the community, how do you get involved in an industry.

I made him a promise that I will do everything in my power to engage every newcomer, whether it be Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino or whatever, into the industry to create those opportunities. They want to work. They want to create opportunities; and they did state, all nine out of 10 of them stated that one of the reasons so many people are leaving is because there's nothing for them to do.

Chair: James.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Sam, again, thanks for your presentation. I know we keep talking about the shortage of workers in the trades, but is there a particular trade that's more problematic than others as far as people that are going in, or the demand for workers in a particular trade?

Sam Sanderson: Carpenters are probably the number one demand –

Mr. Aylward: The number one, okay.

Sam Sanderson: – by far.

Just to touch base on Ernie's comment there about talking to a couple of contractors up in the west end, I have two contractors in western PEI. Between the two contractors in itself, are looking for 80 people.

Mr. Aylward: Wow.

Sam Sanderson: Again, carpenters are the number one trade; electricians, plumbers. There's not a person within any of the union halls to fill any positions in electrical, plumbing or carpentry. Not one person. It's been that way for a couple of years now. There are a lot of companies that are trying to find those resources.

Mr. Aylward: So you said earlier if there's one thing that we can do, that is listen to industry.

Sam Sanderson: Yeah.

Mr. Aylward: Is industry itself taking a lead on any new initiatives as far as – Ernie was talking about the skilled workers, skilled labour immigration programs and things like that. I know from travelling the

Island, going to Linkletter's, MacDougall Steel Erectors and different companies like that, they brought in skilled workers, welders, fabricators from Vietnam, quite a few.

The boat building sector right now is huge, a huge demand for skilled fiberglass workers as well. One guy I know in particular from Miminegash, I think he's got 42 boats on order with significant deposits down.

Sam Sanderson: Right.

Mr. Aylward: And right now he's only able to turn out seven or eight boats a year because he doesn't have the manpower that he requires. So again, is there anything that industry is taking on or something that government can assist with?

Sam Sanderson: First, certainly one of the biggest issues is that, again, we didn't really get involved in this part of it because we had so many people coming, knocking on our door looking for a job.

It's only in the last couple of years that it really hit home and people started scrambling as to: Where am I getting these people, where are these people coming from? So I have many members that are looking at foreign workers, looking at different recruitment companies to try and recruit outside of Canada.

Language barrier seems to be about the number one issue, along with code recognition. What I mean by that is, a electrician may not be 100% certified to work in Canada that's worked in another part of the world. The codes are different, the processes are different; but they have a very great basic conception, so being able to retrain them or – not necessarily retrain – but to add the local or the national component to it is very achievable, and those opportunities are opening up more and more every day.

We're looking for new ways to get involved. I know as an association, we're not-for-profit. We rely 100% on our membership funding to do the day-to-day stuff. You know, our programming, all of our programming is based on government funding. We can't do it by ourselves. If we didn't have provincial and federal funding

for our Youth in Trades Programs, we wouldn't be providing it.

In the last few months, or six months to a year, industry are really starting to look at new ways to do things. They're looking to partner. They're looking to come on board. As early as last night, I was having this conversation in my driveway about 8:15 p.m. last night with one of my members. He was asking me: What way can we get involved as a company to create opportunity? Maybe do we have a family day on a Saturday and bring your kid to build a toolbox or build a birdhouse or something like that to try and create some knowledge and education and opportunity? That's certainly a really good spot.

We run into some roadblocks as a small province. We don't have the Romas. We don't have some of the big, big players in suppliers and stuff, so we have a tendency to lose out a little bit of that funding. I think that's going to change because PEI's a hot spot. People are starting to want to get involved. We just have to do it on a little smaller scale.

One thing I'm very adamant about is partnership. Do it together. I can't do it by myself. But you know what? All of us sitting around the table here can do a lot of really great things. We can be pretty powerful. We can create a lot of opportunities. So partnership is going to be the key, whether it be industry, government, private sector, industry/government or something like that, I'm not sure exactly what it's going to be, but I think there's a huge opportunity and huge appetite for it. I think that's our lifeblood moving forward, is creating those partnerships to come up with those great ideas that's going to encourage and entice people.

Mr. Aylward: It's even sort of alarming to hear on CBC radio this morning with regards to the shortage of Class 3 drivers in the agriculture sector, and how that's going to be a real problem this fall with the harvest season and things like that, and programs that could be put in place, or put back in place, to help get those people through their qualifications and their medicals and things like that.

Sam Sanderson: Yeah.

Mr. Aylward: Again, I want to thank you for coming in.

You know that I'm involved to a certain extent into the industry with my son as a carpenter, and he made the decision himself to go into this industry and went to school. I don't know if he's going to do his Red Seal or not. I hope he does at some point, but certainly the opportunities are there. There's not a week goes by that somebody's not calling him, trying to poach him, right? Or for side jobs and things like that, so – yeah, I think we do need to get into the schools and into the education system and let our youth know that this is a viable living, it's a viable career, and you can do well.

You mentioned earlier that the people in the industry are working six days a week. Well, behind me they're working 7 days a week because I hear them out there; and they are resilient, and they're passionate about making things happen, so I applaud the industry for that.

Sam Sanderson: Thank you, and just if you don't mind if I make a comment just on your comment there about your son not sure whether he's going to get his Red Seal in the immediate future, but there's a lot of people out there that are very highly skilled and have a lot of experience in the construction industry that have not gone to further their accreditation. We need to come up with ways as well to encourage them to go and continue their education and do their block releases and obtain their Red Seals in whatever designation they want to take.

I know myself; my youngest daughter just received her Red Seal three weeks ago in hairdressing. You know what? That's a pretty proud moment. It's pretty special as a parent to know that your child has gone as far as they can go in the education and in the trades. It's very valuable and we have to encourage employers as well to encourage their employees to move forward.

A lot of people are not encouraging them to move forward in that avenue because it's taking time away from the busyness of the industry. I can't afford to send somebody on block release for six weeks because I've got 10 weeks' worth of work to do within that six weeks. I can't afford to lose them. There should be, or hopefully some ways moving

forward, to change that and create more opportunity.

So, as an employee, do I want to leave the job site and draw unemployment for six weeks while I'm taking my block release? No. I'm losing money. Can I afford to lose that money?

So there needs to be some support there for both as well, a little more support. Again, that comes back to that partnership, let's work together to make it better. Create that opportunity and I think the sky's the limit.

Mr. Aylward: Thanks, Chair.

Chair: Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Thank you, Sam.

Lots of good stuff to say. I want to get back to one other thing you said earlier about the importance of a hand on experience and of course it's not really unique to the construction trade that the employers are called for experienced people and the young people that have just graduated that are calling they can't get experience because nobody wants to hire them because they don't have it.

What specifically in the construction industry can be done to set up opportunities for people that are coming out of school to get hands-on experience so they are employable?

Sam Sanderson: Based on a few conversations I've had with some employers across the province, with the industry being so busy, taking that time out to physically lead someone by the hand to do something is really difficult because it is taking them from greater tasks. I look at that mentorship portion, maybe that's where a mentor can come into play and work with two or three young people on the site and mentor them along to show them a little more. There are all kinds of opportunity with that mentorship aspect of it.

More practical training may be an option as well; can there be more practical training incorporated? We look at the whole affordable housing issue and the shortage of skilled trades. Maybe there's an avenue to work with a contractor to say: okay, I've got

10 students, I've got 10 young people that are interested in the trades. Can they help you frame? Can they be of some benefit on the job site to gain some valuable experience?

Again, it's creating opportunity and it's a learning curve for everybody if somebody is benefitting as having the extra people on site, the extra people on site are benefitting as well because they're gaining knowledge that they're not going to get from a laptop or a textbook.

Chair: Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Okay but might it not be a problem – I think you said yourself it would be a problem that it takes too much time to deal with these people. I'm just wondering if you see some kind of program that would be – mentors would be a good idea, but I know if you have a construction crew or like three people that are ready to frame houses day and night, they don't really want a new person on their job to slow them down or cost them money.

How do you get over that?

Sam Sanderson: That's where you include incentives. Part of our Youth in Trades Program is that we team them up with employers; we cover 50 % of their wages.

The end goal is to hope that they continue on employment after the 14 weeks.

Mr. Hammarlund: So which are the most successful programs, are there any successful programs out there, you mentioned one.

Sam Sanderson: Our program has been very successful. I can't elaborate on some of the other programs because I know very little about them.

I'm not sure if anyone is doing the same thing, or similar thing within the industry.

Mr. Hammarlund: So the problem is that trainees coming out – the training program expect to be employables, but they aren't really employable until they get on the job training, that's more or less the situation.

Sam Sanderson: They're certainly employable for sure but they needed that added encouragement and added structure with the hands on.

No matter who you are, or what training program you're willing to take, you're never fully skilled. You need that hands on experience to go with it, whether you're a hairdresser, or carpenter, or plumber, electrician, or a school bus driver, you can take all the training in the world. Until you actually get some experience in the field to increase your knowledge and participation within your chosen field.

Mr. Hammarlund: Yeah, so for instance, people coming out of school, they pretty much have to get paid minimum wage?

Sam Sanderson: No.

Mr. Hammarlund: No.

Sam Sanderson: I don't think there's anybody that I've heard tell of in the industry getting paid minimum wage.

Mr. Hammarlund: No, no, I'm saying you can't pay them any less, even though they slow down the job.

Sam Sanderson: Oh, no.

Mr. Hammarlund: Is that not a hindrance?

Sam Sanderson: That's where your incentives come in to play. You create your own (Indistinct)

Mr. Hammarlund: So incentive, it would be what's needed

Sam Sanderson: And there are some areas that an incentive may not be enough. If you've got a small company with three people, and they're go-getters and stuff, nothing may ever be satisfactory for them to bring somebody in to train.

You don't know that until you actually get in that position. Overall, there's huge appetite for people, I think, right now to help train people because they know the situation they're in. They know it's going to increase. I think there's more appetite, and we need that incentive as well.

Mr. Hammarlund: I have a few more questions. So are there any programs right now that actually – that you say are successful, including Holland College that we see there's more coming out, more carpenters, more electricians, more employable people. Is it going up?

Sam Sanderson: Right. You know, I know there's some private institutes outside of Prince Edward Island that do some trades training. I'm not 100% familiar with them, but I do know they're out there. You know, it's – I don't know, I can't answer anymore to that question, because I'm not really familiar with what's happening and the stuff.

Like I say, I can only comment on really what I'm involved here in on a regular basis. I think we need to change things around a little bit and, again, encourage more people to get into the trades.

We'll certainly allow more people to go through the program and more people to come out the other end, and with the basic knowledge to get to get to work in a few years is that they're going to be our skilled carpenters, our skilled electricians and things like that. We need to encourage and again, entice them to stay within the system, to go through their block releases and go after that Red Seal. I think that we have to do a lot of work there because I think the retention rate is pretty small compared to really what it should be.

Mr. Hammarlund: Well, I was curious getting back to newcomers, I know in the plumbing and electrical, you have to get a Red Seal to really do the work, although you can still work as a worker with licensed electricians, but particularly in the carpentry. Basically if you know how to do carpentry, you can go right on the crew.

What would be the hold-up in getting newcomers to do carpentry? Or for that matter, do we need to ask for more carpenters to immigrate to PEI because we have the jobs for them?

Sam Sanderson: I think anybody coming no matter what their trade is, is going to have a great knowledge and it's going to be increasing their knowledge to local rules and regulations and standards. I think that's

really going to be the key with newcomers. There's lots of very highly-skilled people looking to come to Canada, or have already come to Canada, that need that extra help to become certified. It's probably going to take a little bit longer; the simple fact is language being a barrier.

There's a gentleman not very long ago who's a very qualified, very skilled electrician, who's looking at challenging the Red Seal exam and language became a little bit of an issue because one English word had nine different meanings in his native tongue, and he was not allowed an interpreter during the exam.

That right there creates a huge challenge, when you're writing an exam, that one word has nine different meanings in your native tongue, you don't know what way to answer.

I do know there's a lot of discussion on the national level with qualification recognition and verification; looking at some other ways to maybe give the exam or have somebody present during the exam. They're really looking at that.

The simple fact is, is that we have so many newcomers looking to come into the trade sector and into the industry in Canada, so I think it's certainly something that's being looked at.

Again, we have to work with them. I think that's really the key is working with them, finding out what their needs are, and doing the best we can with them.

Mr. Hammarlund: All right, just one more question.

Does the construction association do anything with trying to get high school students hooked on a trade, like offering summer jobs for instance, or anything of that nature?

Sam Sanderson: Summer jobs and that; as far as the association goes, well you have to be 16 to work on a construction site on Prince Edward Island.

We haven't really done a whole lot in promoting that summer job aspect because you need certain qualifications. You got to

have certain safety training before you ever come onto a jobsite.

So if we're prepared to offer that training and that may be an avenue for the future, we are actually developing a program right now to start hitting the high schools in early fall with an education pamphlet and information about the trades.

We have some of our workers that are going to come with us, we have some newcomers, we have some females that are very heavily involved in the industry and stuff that are going to come and give us a hand to present to a few schools to let them know the opportunities in the industry.

Mr. Hammarlund: Great, thank you very much. Great.

Chair: Sonny.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Chair.

Once again, Sam, thank you very much for all you do and I just want to kind of come back, just for a comment. I have two sons that are in the trades. One is a carpenter and he has his own company, and he does have, of course, his Red Seal. He doesn't need it for his own company, but he has it.

Exposure is so important like we're saying here today. You go around to jobsites, and anyone that has; you don't see somebody swinging a hammer all day long. They have air guns, things get done quicker, they just need the people to do them.

And I mean I hear you; we need to work at exposure to get the students out to see. If it's, they go as a class on a jobsite. In the welding industry, as well, things have changed in that industry with all the new advancements and things.

Not that they were not good trades before, but they're not like they were before. It's a different trade, and the safety that's there and everything. Things are different, and maybe they just don't see that enough.

Thank you very much.

Sam Sanderson: I totally agree and education is really the key to it.

Things are changing every day, new products are so innovative and the processes are changing. We heard lots of stories and seen lots of our family members that came home after a hard day on a jobsite. Their back is gone, their knees are aching, and a lot of people were encouraged not to get into the trades.

Today it's all about working smarter, working harder using IT and using innovation today to build our buildings and create the processes and stuff, so that's a really vibrant part of it, is getting out and educating and bringing the communities together and creating those opportunities.

Again, we need to do that all as a group. We need to do it together.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: I have a question. I have a lot of questions, but I'm going to try to just put into one here.

This is kind of an education part for, myself, and maybe for others, but the Propel program put on by the Women's Network in order to engage women in the trades; does your association have anything to do with that program?

Sam Sanderson: Unfortunately, very little.

I am encouraging and trying to promote the opportunity for that program to get more involved with the association. We have the industry, and it's in my personal opinion, I think it would be beneficial to that program and maybe a few other programs to get more involved with the association.

Women are our number one resource in Canada in the trade sector. You heard me comment about my granddaughters earlier. I want to do anything and everything I can to encourage and entice women into the trades.

As an employer in my former role, I had women working for me. They were very valuable employees, very valuable. I encouraged them to do what they wanted to do and they work at their own pace and stuff like that and they were tremendously great employees.

So I think there's huge opportunity.

I've had the pleasure of working with many women in the industry over the years and they're very – like everybody – they're very valuable employees. I'm a firm believer on let's give people the opportunity.

And a little personal story; I'm not a very well educated person. I've got a Grade 10 education. I've gotten to where I'm at today by working hard and not being scared to put my best foot forward.

I think there's tremendous opportunity moving forward in that area. All we need to do is give people a chance, give them an opportunity to be successful and to succeed, to take a little bit of training. Let them be the masters of their own demise, but if we don't give them the opportunity, they're never going to have the ability to see something or try something.

Chair: Thank you for that.

It sounds as though kind of from what you've said and what I know, there doesn't seem to be much of a lack of interest, that program that you talked about having 10 spots and 61 people to fill them – the newcomers that you've spoken to.

And then we've got this flipside where we're saying we need to get into the education system and we need to encourage people to do these things.

So it sounds like we've kind of got two things in terms of, we do have lots of interest with a lack of maybe supports, programming, that sort of thing. And then on the flipside, we do need to encourage more people through schools.

In meeting, going back to the Women's Network, I met with them recently and they were talking about – I asked them what their dreams would be, to give me a dream list. They said one thing that they would love to do is to have a space in – they thought maybe a rural area might be good – a nice big space that had all of the equipment that might be needed specifically in this case for women who are looking to enter the trades to provide a space where they can test things out.

They may not have seen themselves in a position working in the trades, right? So to give them a space to kind of explore that, what it means for them, are they comfortable here, I think, is a great thing to promote, specifically, women in the trades.

But if we look – so the program that's happening in Lennox Island is another example of that where you're providing the space within a safe environment within a community that they're aware of or a community of people that they're comfortable with.

Do you see that as something that's valuable in moving forward in terms of giving people an opportunity to see is this really something that's a fit for me?

Because you're talking about people working their butts off, and I see that, I've got lots of trades' people in my family and they are indeed, I agree. I just imagine being in a position where you're kind of expected to do that or that's what you're doing and really hating it and what that does to the industry, too.

So providing spaces for people to try things out, do you see that as the good way –

Sam Sanderson: I do really. And Robert and Sonny can attest that's something that I've been working on kind of behind scenes for a little bit now. I'm very interested in creating something to that effect.

The comment that I made about partnerships and creating these working partnerships and coming together is very valuable. I have an industry. We've got people looking to get into an industry. We need to work together. If we're going to continue on with the separation, nothing's going to benefit.

I'm promoting – I want to promote the person under ability to do the jump. I don't care if you're male, female, transgender, red, black, green or white; let's promote the person on their ability to do the job. I personally think that's key. Let's give everybody a fair chance at it.

We talk about our Youth in Trades Program, these folks are potentially coming into one of three situations, so we have immediate

needs, we have short-term needs, and we have long-term needs.

So the Youth in Trades Program is helping to capture that immediate need of people; our short-term need is maybe two to five years down the road. You look at the educational piece getting into the elementary and junior high schools, that's our long term. If we don't start working on it now, all three of those are going to be in the same boat we're in right now in 10 years.

We all can't have everything; but if we come together, we can have a lot. That's my thought process. We're a small province. We all can't have this and we all can't have that. We can't have three or four different venues because nobody's winning. I've got 190 company members screaming for employees. I should have people coming to me that have these potential employees coming to me, sitting down with me saying: Where can we work together on this? Forgive me if I'm wrong, but that's my thought process.

My industry doesn't care if you're male, female, transgender, red, black, green or white. If you can do the job, we want you. So again, that's where those partnerships come into play. We've all got to work together.

Chair: Appreciate that.

There was one more thing I'm just going to say in kind of closing for myself, but when we talked about – oh, I forget the acronyms – but when we were talking about PVI and PCVH. I remember my dad when he graduated from there and hearing stories of other people, and there was always, for me, the sense of prestige, that that was a really reputable, awesome thing to graduate with these.

Then having been in the education system for so long, my perception was that that kind of changed. Because I had – I was teaching boys in rural PEI who were saying: I'm just going to go into the trades. There was almost this change in the way we talk about it, because it is a very noble profession. Do you notice that too? Is there this change in how we think about the trades?

Sam Sanderson: I think we certainly noticed it a number of years ago. We're starting to see things change a little bit because we're getting out there; we're giving people information on education.

When I first started at the association just over four years ago, the association did nothing in the media. The association did not work with our local governments. It did not get involved and really go after stuff. I'm not scared to talk to anybody any time and say what I think or what we need.

So it's created some tremendous partnerships which has created tremendous value. There's not much that happens in the industry that I don't get a call about, or do you want to comment on that. Creating this opportunity with our members, and for our members, has brought the industry definitely to the forefront. You look at \$340 million worth of economic value to PEI last year. That brings an industry to the forefront. You've got somebody talking about the industry and our needs and wants. We never had that five years ago or 10 years ago. It has a huge impact.

And again, it's that whole educational piece. We're getting out there and we're getting the information. This is what we need. These are what our wants are. If we don't get some help and some support in doing it, guess what? We're going to be in really big trouble.

Chair: Thank you.

Do we have any more questions?

Well, thank you very much.

Sam Sanderson: No problem, thank you.

Chair: This has been so informative, and will certainly drive some more discussion and hopefully more action.

Sam Sanderson: Well, that's what we hope, and we're here as an industry to partner and do what we can to promote opportunities for Islanders and make it a bigger, more prosperous industry and create more economic growth. Perfect.

Chair: Thank you for your time.

Sam Sanderson: Thank you very much.

Chair: Thank you.

I'm going to call for a two-minute recess so that our next presenters can get set up, if that's okay with everyone?

[Recess]

(Indistinct) meeting back to order, and welcome to Sandy MacDonald and Doug Currie from Holland College here to give us some more information.

Sandy MacDonald: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the invitation to be here and a chance to speak to some of my former colleagues.

I have about a dozen slides, and my apologies today: I know there are at least five ministers and former ministers in the room here, and my career as a deputy minister going up to Cabinet, there was always a limit on the number of slides you could put in, and certainly eight to 10 was the maximum, absolute; but I've got twelve here today, so I'll try to get through them as quick as I can.

But I'd like to start just quickly with an overview of the college: Most of you know about our 2,500 students in Charlottetown, Summerside, Georgetown and Alberton, but we also have 700 students in our LINC program, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada. They're all in Charlottetown here across three sites. We have another 700-750 adult education students who are studying for their GED, their GRE or their high school credits; they're in seven sites across PEI. And last, we have about 2,000 students in 11 sites in China, in our partner colleges in China.

So when you talk about students at Holland College, we have about 5,900 full-time people plus a significant number of part-timers. So it's not just the programs that you are familiar with. In your package, I've given you a deck of these slides as well, an overview of the programs at Holland College, and this is the program that we use as we're recruiting. You can see all kinds of information about our programs in there.

The slides today, the first four, I want to talk a little bit about the Atlantic Provinces labour market, because it affects directly to PEI's labour market. The rest of the slides would be about within our provincial labour market and Holland College's response to that, and I'll end with a number of projects that we're involved with, with industry and with other institutions and government, that give you some indication of how the public education system in the Atlantic region is changing, and especially here on PEI how it's changing. Then we'll take some questions, if that's okay with people.

First slide, and maybe a frightening slide, you look up here is the last six years the labour force declined by 31,000 across Atlantic Canada. These are Stats Canada numbers – this is Atlantic Provinces Economic Council. So we're down about 31,000 the last six years across the (Indistinct) Atlantic region. We're going to be down another 229,000 or 18% in the next ten years.

So what we heard today from Sam, we can writ large to a number of other industries across the province and across the region, so the news is not all that great in terms of hoping to grow our way out of this. It's a fairly significant challenge.

The second slide has to do with – this is a three-year projection, and this comes from Service Canada, Stats Canada; and what they're doing – and I'll show you PEI's in a minute – it gives us an estimate going back to 2017 of what will be needed in 2018, 2019 and 2020; so last year, this year and next year, just to give you the immediacy of it all. So what they were projecting two years ago, that 84,000 workers would be needed, 92% of these are because of attrition, 8% because of employment growth.

Now, this is averaged across the four Atlantic Provinces, so it's a little bit higher in terms of employment growth for PEI. We've got the highest employment growth in the region, and a little bit lower because of attrition. The problem here is that when we hear about labour shortages, what we're really seeing first is a people shortage and then later we'll look at the skill shortage.

What skills are needed – just jump ahead for a sec, would you, Doug, to the next one – because what skills they’re saying are required in the 2018-2019 period, that three-year period, this gives you some indication of some of the skills that are being required according to Statistics Canada across the Atlantic region.

So 8.7% is the labouring workers, and we heard a little about that with the previous presentation. About 27% of that would be intermediate workers who require high school or less than high school. So about 35 or 36% of the workers that would be required do not require anything more than high school training, and these are the people who do all the labour work, a lot of service work, and if you’re talking to industry, you’ll often hear these are the people they can’t find either.

About 33% are technical workers, so they require college; and the greatest need here, you heard from Sam, driven by both attrition and growth in construction, repair maintenance and related activities. About 21% are professional workers who require university, and about nine, 10% are management occupations.

Now, it’s interesting this last one here, management occupations. These are typically the employees who are the oldest and the ones that are most likely to retire, closest to retirement. We heard that from Sam that many in the construction industry are losing project managers, estimators. The people who have the knowledge within the industry are often the ones that are closer to retirement, so that makes your attrition problem a little more significant, because not only you’re losing more people, you’re losing more people who’ve got more experience and more skills. That’s a little bit of an alarming problem, too.

When we look at PEI, and this is – we’ll switch onto PEI for a minute here – again, this is Statistics Canada data. If you look at the 8,000 jobs last year, this year and next year that they estimate will be coming open on PEI, we’ve got about 2,600 of these are para-professional jobs. Those are typical ones that we would train at the college for.

Then there’s about another 2,305 are intermediate occupations, that’s high school

or less, and then the rest are smattered between management and professional and some less than high school. You heard this a minute ago: construction and retail sectors, truck drivers, heavy equipment operators, carpenters and food service occupations – because we’re getting a lot of calls about the college cooks who kind of supervise us – retail salespeople and supervisors as well there.

You’re seeing a lot of the people that are not particularly highly skilled that industry is calling for, but they have every bit of bang in the labour market when you can’t find them. So that’s the PEI forecast.

So where’s the growth by industry on PEI? Again, this is work force PEI, so this is Minister Trivers’ department, the labour force information. You look at 2017-2018 growth by industry, so what grew? Sales and services grew by about 0.9%; agriculture grew by about 0.9%; accommodation and food service by 0.7% year-over-year; construction by 0.4%, so even though we heard the dire need for workers in the construction industry, those other industries are having just as many challenges as the construction industry and what have you; trades/transport & equipment operator or related, 0.4%; and health – and I’ll talk a little bit more about health in a minute, knowing that we have the health minister in the room, and probably want to hear a little more about that.

This data is also from WorkPEI, the latest data they have as of January 2019. So they would estimate that the year that we’re in right now – this is a bit of a difference from the federal estimate, but it’s quite similar. So we would lose – PEI would lose about 2,000 workers through attrition this calendar year; and based on the 3-year average growth, we grow our labour market by a further 1,300.

What we’d be saying there is in the year 2019; we’d have 3,300 fulltime job openings across the province: 2000 through attrition, 1,300 through job growth. What’s a little alarming for us is that the May-December last year, when we look at the workforce or the WorkPEI data site, there would have been about 2,200 openings that were captured, so that many people looking for work or industry looking for workers: 60% of these would be new jobs, 44% of these

require some college or university or management training.

So we're getting split in the labour market. On one half, you have people who need college, university or other training; and the other half; you need people with high school or a little bit less. The labour shortages and the skills shortages are both captured in that particular dynamic.

Where do we get our labour force? K to 12, we graduate on average about 1,600 students per year. Many of these students, the majority of students would be going on to post-secondary: university, college, apprenticeship and other. We have UPEI graduating about 940. Many of these will be going on to grad school, some to other university programs, some into the labour market, especially those students who are in education, nursing, engineering, business, but not all of them.

We've got about 1,200 college graduates. Now, it used to be one time all these college graduates would go directly into industry. That's not the case anymore. We have about 150 arrangements with other college and universities across North America, so many will go to two plus twos, two one ones and various and sundry arrangements.

For example, our business students, many will go the two years at Holland College and then two years at UPEI and get two credentials for the price of one. Our bioscience technology students will go two years often with us and then off to UPEI. Many of our sport and leisure students – this is one of our bigger programs – they'll go off to UNB for the associate university degree that we offer with UNB in conjunction. So we're not getting the full magnitude of those 1,200 as you would even 10 years ago.

Interprovincial migration, we lose about 200. Many of our young people who are going into the labour market will go elsewhere. Now, the labour market across Canada directly affects Holland College. When things are booming in other parts of the country, our enrollments will often drop a bit, because the students would rather go into the trades, for example, take one year of welding here, and then go out west and do the apprenticeship model because you're

getting paid as you train. That decrease in what's happening in Alberta has kind of led to a bit of an increase for us.

But if you're an IT graduate coming from Holland College and you can make 15 or \$20,000 more a year in Montreal and you've got a student loan, you're probably likely to go there first. Or you make a little bit more in Halifax and Moncton. So we're in competition for these particular students with the other labour markets in the Atlantic region and with the labour markets in big cities in Montreal and in Quebec and Ontario.

Immigration we get – primary immigration about 900 (Indistinct) people a year for this model. Again, some of them coming here to work, going in the labour market and many aren't. Repatriation, we get about 100 a year coming back to PEI to work in the labour market which helps. Then we got the other group which are people who may have not been a labour market file maybe at home having kids, or haven't been able to access (Indistinct) or have been ill, or have just decided to go – they need to get a job, a part-time job, a full-time job.

The bottom line with this particular slide and set of data, is that if we need 3,300 new jobs a year and that's only going to increase as we go in the next decade, this is not enough to fill (Indistinct)

Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Can I just ask a short question?

The top line, or the 1,600 –

Sandy MacDonald: That's K-12. That's our grade –

Mr. Hammarlund: Grade 12, do they go into the labour market after – have you deducted (Indistinct)

Sandy MacDonald: Some of them will go into UPEI; will be the UPEI graduates and some will be the Holland College graduates. Some will go to other colleges and universities across the region, across the country.

Mr. Hammarlund: So there's really a much smaller portion of them.

Sandy MacDonald: That's right. A much smaller portion comes into the labour market directly; very few.

We would take another group out of there because a number of students who then come to us for adult education – we say we have about 750 a year on seven sites across the province – they will come in looking to improve their mark in their high school credits, be it chemistry, biology, English, math or physics. Getting into programs like – to Minister Aylward's point, nursing for example would be – and practical nursing would be two programs that are completely full at UPEI and at Holland College, so the entry level might be 85 in biology, the practical entry level though is you'd need 95 to get in.

Many students come back and say: What do I need to go to nursing at UPEI? We would see them in adult education. Or, students who want to go to the engineering school at UPEI, we've seen a significant increase in the number of physics and Grade 12 math students we see bringing their marks up and then trying to get into the engineering school.

So, many of these who come in in our labour force are not coming directly in, which of course, makes our problem a little bit more challenging.

That's our labour force entry. This particular slide – because we hear a lot of talk about skills. Now this data is just a little bit old, it's five years old, but it's consistent with every piece of data I've read in the last five years.

It looked at 100 companies across Canada that hired 330,000 people over the last two years; so between 2011 and 2013. I asked them: What are the skills that you're looking for as a major employer? At the very top of the list you'll see people skills or relationship building. You say to yourself, well that seems like a pretty simple skill to be able to acquire. What we're assuming from the technology onset and the automation is that as predictable work, routine work is eliminated by machinery,

that the interpersonal skill work will be even more important.

So, many of our employers – and it's to your question you asked the previous presenter (Indistinct) – many of our employers are not expecting our employees to have the full slate of technical skills when they're hired; so the full slate of carpentry skills or the full slate of IT skills. What they're hoping is that the young people coming in will have the capacity to learn, will be able to work in groups, will be able to manage their emotions and will be able to achieve their goals.

So what they're asking for in addition to the technical skills is that it's very important that these things like communication, problem solving, analytical leadership and people skills, in particular, are some of the skills that are in the highest demand across the country regardless of what program you're training. We've had to restructure our training to reflect this is what industry is actually calling for.

So, whether it's in IT, bio-science, nursing, business, it doesn't matter, this is what the employers are looking for.

I'll stop there just for a minute. I'd like to have a quick look at what our projected enrollments are at Holland College this year. I picked – these are essentially trades-related courses because I knew that we'd be talking about skills when we had Sam in front of us today.

What you have here is; on your left hand side you'll see the program in brackets, the length of the program, two years or one year. You have our target number there, so that's what we try to hit each year to make to balance our budget. The next column is our four-year average, so this is how many students we've had on average the last four years, so you can see some trends there.

The second last column is the projected list. The number of students we think we have enrolled.

Somebody mentioned it in the last presentation that lots of times, people will be working. And they'll be going back with full intentions of coming back to school and their employer will say: I got six months of

work here, Sandy, why don't you put off here going back to school, I'll pay a little bit more, and just stay and work because the productivity's important to us. Even though we have these people and they paid their confirmation fees, we may not get all of these people to come to the program in September.

The last number there is our waiting list and in brackets, you have the waiting list. So for construction technology, we have a waiting list of 14, 12 of those are international students; so in brackets we have our international students.

So that gives us some indication. We're less likely to get the international students on the waiting list because by this time they would have already selected another program at another school and we're hoping that we'll be able to bring some of those – of some of the carpentry students to 28 there we have confirmed don't show up, we'll pick from the 27 we have on the waiting list. Now, carpentry in particular, we heard Sam talk about the shortage of carpenters.

About eight or nine years ago, I believe, our target number for carpentry was 36. The problem with this is we could never fill the program and the young people were not finding employment. So it was probably near nine to 10 years ago we cut it down to 24. It's been 24 for the better part of the last decade.

If you just slip over to the next page, this gives you the number of graduates. So going back to 2014, in each program, and the last column there will be – I'll read this for you: Construction technology, our two-year program, so we would have graduated in the last four years, 13, 11, 7, 11 and eight and a year after they graduated, we surveyed those eight. Seven responded. Four living and working in PEI.

So from that, we're trying to get a feel for how many people are staying with us and how many people are living and working elsewhere in the Atlantic region or across the country.

So if you look at the carpentry for example, we graduated 22 in 2018. We surveyed the 22, 15 responded. All fifteen were here

working on PEI. We're pretty comfortable that our carpenters are staying on PEI.

If you go down to our plumbing/pipe fitting and this is an interesting subtrade here. We used to run this program separately, so there was a plumbing program and a pipe fitting program – piping and steam fitting, it was called and we could never get enough students to run either. I met with the staff a couple of years ago and it was actually both staff members sat down and came up with a model where this is now a single integrated program where you get two Red Seals when you complete your hours. And we have no trouble now hitting that number of 18.

The question we're worried about is how many of them when they are graduating are staying at PEI? Because last year, with 18, only eight responded to our survey, which means some of them are probably outside the province. Of those eight, four were here. We're concerned that that particular trade, the people are not staying and working here on PEI.

Now, it's important to recognize Holland College. We are the only community college in the country that cannot survive on the students from its own catchment area, because we're so small. So we have to, not only take students from outside the country, but also outside our province and many of those people often go back to the province of origin.

We would have 20% of our students right now, 22% are from outside Canada. Of the other 78%, probably half are from outside PEI. It's the nature of our business to be training people and having them not necessarily stay on PEI in most of our trades.

I just want to conclude and then hopefully we'll have some questions with the last slide, because I'll answer some of the questions that I heard during Sam's presentation. I'll start with Chairman Bernard's question before I go to this slide. What should we be doing differently?

The very premise of what we're doing in Holland College is based on this: For the past, let's say 50 years since the college was established in 1969, the relationship between ourselves and industry and government has

been a work in progress and it's worked quite well up to this point.

However, we now have the lowest unemployment rate since 1976. We can no longer continue to do things as we did. I don't think government can continue to do things as it did, and I don't think industry for sure, can continue to do things as it did.

You'll see from these projects and I'll just give you a brief two minute description for each one, some of the things we started to do in January of this year, which gives you some indication of what the future holds for our skill shortage on PEI.

The first one, entry level cook; there's been a problem with entry level cooks and line cooks on PEI going back 20 years. What we did in January working with the provincial group and Mr. Trivers' group and TIAPEI, is we looked at two restaurants that were idle for the winter here in Charlottetown. We selected 16 students, we trained them, we sent them out on their internship during Burger Love; brought them back in May and then all 16 went back to the labour market.

With very little cost in terms of overhead and capital, we were able to train these 16 students. That model and the graduation rate is much higher than any graduation rate they've ever had in that program before. That's a model that's being replicated right across the province.

We think we've come up with a model that will work with the shortage of line cooks; depends on where we want to put it. We could probably put one in Summerside and one on the North Shore, and run it every January, February, March, April and May, and that would probably give us a solution to our line cook program, we think. That one worked quite well.

To the apprenticeship; I think somebody talked about – maybe it was you, Sonny – talked about the apprenticeship model. If you're running Trout River Industries or Diversified Metal or one of those and it comes to the time you got a bunch of contracts, you've got a bunch of apprentices on your floor, they have to leave industry for six weeks, draw unemployment insurance, come to the college, study the knowledge competencies, and then that holds things up.

What we're doing with some help again, from the provincial government, from the federal government, it's a \$1.4 million project, we're putting the knowledge competencies, the things that apprentices come back to college for, we're putting those online.

So in the future, we started with the machinists and welding but we're going to expand that to all the trades, so if you're in the future, if you're working in industry, you won't have to leave for the six weeks and come to the college. You'll be able to go right on the factory floor, step aside, go into the classroom that they're going to create, do your knowledge competencies and come back.

So it's a much more efficient model, a much more productive model, and we think it will also help us increase the number of Red Seal completions across the province – which I think are problematic.

Quality assurance, food safety, manufacturing, that is a program with ourselves – Food Tech PEI, our government of PEI, and the food processing Skills Canada. So, we got a proposal that we just finished. We're going to be submitting it to ACOA and we're going to be working with the food processing Skills Canada national group to develop a blended model of training people to work in food processing, both in quality assurance and food safety right across the province. It's something that there's a significant shortage of and we know now with the increased emphasis on food manufacturing, that we have to do something that we haven't done yet.

The fourth one is kind of a unique one. We met with the PEI BioAlliance last year and we met with UPEI and what the PEI BioAlliance is telling us – this is where skilled shortage comes in – that more and more they're getting involved in advanced manufacturing and our students who are coming from UPEI or Holland College are lacking a little for the new advanced manufacturing, in terms of vaccines.

So we created a program where students who might go to chemistry their first two years at UPEI, when they come to the third year at UPEI, they come to the college and take the second year of our program, which

is intensive lab work, then they go back and take their last year of their BSc at UPEI and they graduate with both credentials and they're immediately, not only employable by industry, they're much more likely to get into grad school because they got this heavy skilled lab based component that we offer them from May, June and then our second year.

So that's a collaboration between ourselves, UPEI and BioAlliance. We've had significant support both from ACOA, as you should have put on there, and the province on that project as well.

The last one, and I'll stop here, is we have an initiative called the Transformative Skills Initiative. This is an initiative of the community colleges in all four Atlantic Provinces in both languages, so seven schools. What we're hoping to do is, we all generally speak and realize that we cannot continue to do as we did before.

We're all facing the same challenges, very similar challenges, significant skill shortages, significant labour shortages and we need to have a broader and deeper relationship with industry with support from government. What we're calling for here is that we would each do a project in each of our provinces, pick a section of the labour market that we'd want to specialize on—Minister Aylward is going help here in PEI – and we're going to look at what's the most efficient way to deliver these skill sets we want the kids to have that's not seven hours a day, five days a week, eight months a week, as we traditionally do.

It would be an innovative way to deliver skills across the seven schools and then the seven schools will share those programs with one another. It's unique. It's the first time it's done anywhere in the country and we're optimistic that we'll get full funding from the Future Skills Centre in Ottawa come September. We'll be submitting a letter September 16th. That should be September 19th, not September 16th; it's September 16th, 2019, thought I made that change. We'll share back from that sometime we think in December.

So I'll stop there. I know I was getting through, but I was hoping we would have time for a few questions.

Chair: Sonny.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you very much, gentlemen, for your presentation and happy 50th anniversary.

Sandy MacDonald: Thank you very much; appreciate that.

Mr. Gallant: Quite a milestone.

There's a lot of numbers here to absorb in a short period of time. But I just want to go back to the slide – I guess it would be 10 or 11 – with your waiting list and your projected numbers.

So is your waiting list – do people know that you can only take so many?

Sandy MacDonald: Yes, the programs at Holland College, what we set out, and you'll see that in the little booklet I gave you there, there's a minimum standard (Indistinct)

So your minimum standard for carpentry would be Grade 12 General Math. You look at – we would take the students who we feel have the best chance at succeeding.

So if you're a Grade 12 Academic Math and I have Grade 12 General Math, we would probably likely take the Minister Aylward (Indistinct) myself. So he'd say to me: You're waiting on the waiting list. Here's your spot at the waiting list and you're probably going to get in or probably you'll have to wait and see.

So with that carpentry waiting list, we have 27 and 10 of those are international students, so our waiting list is really 17. You're probably not going to have the ten on the waiting list. Of that 17, we'll have to determine how many will stay in the industry and work and not come and that will balance out. Probably three or four is usually the change.

Mr. Gallant: So would it be safe to say to increase your numbers, you would need more funding because you would need more staff? So to Mr. Sam's request, like, to get more people into your programs, you need more funding.

Sandy MacDonald: Typically what would happen, Sonny, in those cases, is industry will come to us and say, Sandy, like TIPEI did with the line cook, we have a skill shortage. Can you help us design something?

We would say, yes. We would talk to the department, the department would say, come down with a model, (Indistinct) similar model, and they say that makes sense and they would fund it.

So that's typically how it would go.

We would love to – matter of fact, we had a meeting scheduled with the Construction Association about six weeks ago, but there was an illness and they couldn't have it, so we're waiting to hear from them again.

Mr. Gallant: One other question with the Chair's indulgence. I know, I read the new rules that were here on our table when we sat down. Housing falls under health and social development, but it also touches education and economic growth.

I don't know if this is a fair question to ask at this time, but I'd just like to ask it.

Are you losing enrollment because of our housing crisis in this city?

Sandy MacDonald: I can't say yes to that, Sonny.

We have a waiting list that we had two residences and we have another number of houses. I think right now, our waiting list on our residences is somewhere between 15 and 20, so it's not unusual. And we have another of other houses we renovated and put beds in for students, so I think it's very tight.

I wouldn't say we're losing students right now, but I couldn't give you a firm confirmation of that answer probably until mid-October. But I would say the answer right now will be no.

Chair: Sonny.

Mr. Gallant: That's good for now.

Thank you, Chair.

Doug Currie: Chair, I just want to add something that – there's been a lot of conversation Sam touched upon, obviously, the importance of stakeholder relationships and partnerships.

One of the things that the college will be doing will be launching a strategic planning process this fall. We have the terms of reference have been out; we'll be identifying a partner to help lead that, so that will provide a significant opportunity for – whether it be Sam and the Construction Association.

We feel very strongly that industry needs to be a very, very strong voice in the direction. The last strategic plan at the college was done in 2011. It was a five-year plan. It's eight years out. So this strategic planning exercise will be critical for laying the framework for our future at Holland College.

Not only the Construction Association, the aerospace, cannabis industry, aquaculture, bioscience, health care, IT, these are all big stakeholder partners that we feel and we will be encouraging conversations and an opportunity for them to be part of that, plus as well, as both the federal and the provincial government here on Prince Edward Island.

So we'll be hoping that this blueprint will be shaped and designed by the voice that is part of the conversation and the process.

Sandy MacDonald: I just add one comment.

One of the things that we didn't talk about today or maybe we can talk about, is we talked a lot about it about the labour shortage. We've got fewer people, but what we probably should have a conversation about as well is the fact that we know the technology is impacting the labour market dramatically.

And how it impacts and to what degree it impacts is contingent on two things. If the work that you're involved in is fairly routine work and fairly impersonal work, it's likely to be automated in the next 10 or 15 years, at least partly. If your core skills as a worker, your literacy, numeracy, and you're familiar with technology is not well

developed, you're also likely to be a victim of automation in some way, shape, or form.

So even though this is about the shortage and the demographics, which is problematic, that's another thing that we have to turn on the dime with the college and our industry partners as well, so how are we going to deal with that challenge?

I don't believe that the way we're presently configured – I mean, the college, is conducive to what we need to do over the next five to 10 years.

Chair: James.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Just a couple of quick questions, and then I apologize, but I have to scoot. I've got another engagement at 3:30 p.m.

Is there preference given to Island students as far as the enrollment in (Indistinct) courses?

Sandy MacDonald: We typically, minister, make no difference between Island and non-Island.

But the vast majority of our students in our trades and technology programs are from the Island. And they're the ones who get their applications in first and they're typically the ones we're most familiar with.

Mr. Aylward: And then with the international students, highlighted on the waiting list side, is it similar to UPEI where international students would pay a higher tuition coming in?

Sandy MacDonald: Yes, they do. And they would pay the confirmation fee, but it's also highly likely that they've applied to two or three or four schools, so we're one, of maybe three or four that they've applied to.

So when you see them on the list there, that's certainly not money in the bank. If that were 27 international students, we'd be certainly worried about our tuitions. That's for sure.

Mr. Aylward: One last one. Now, Sam had talked and repeated the statement over and

over again, if there's one thing that we could do, it's listen to industry.

I know from past experience that Holland College did have, and I'm assuming you still have, advisory committees.

Sandy MacDonald: Every program has a program advisor committee. We meet with them twice a year.

Mr. Aylward: Okay. Perfect.

Sandy MacDonald: We do spend a lot of time listening to them, and we get a lot of good information from them. The stuff that we spend most of our time with minister is that they look at their curriculum and say: Is this what we need in industry? Is the kind of workers we want?

Mr. Aylward: Is this relevant?

Sandy MacDonald: We're hearing from them, it's not about the technology, and it's not about the skills. It's about the – you know, do they have good work habits?

So we get a call (Indistinct) it's never, give us your highest performing student or your highest marked student. They always ask us, give us your best student, which means they've got good work habits, can they get along with people, can they meet their goals?

They can actually teach – if you got a new technology, they'll teach the new technology. They want the person.

Doug Currie: So, minister, as I indicated, the strategic plan will open up a pretty extensive conversation with industry. But we're also going out; we're setting up separate conversations with industry to introduce the president and the two VPs.

The leadership team has changed significantly at the college. It's an opportunity for us to get out and to hear what industry is saying.

Our business is to be agile and responsive to their needs, but at the same time, how do we adapt and how do we build capacity in order to respond and shift because the landscape, from a lot of different perspectives, is shifting dramatically.

Sandy MacDonald: Minister, if I could build on that. One of the things we know we're going to see – pretty sure – that last project, if you could just turn to that last slide, that Atlantic project with the other colleges, is that our relationship with industry in the future in terms of training will be; right now we would have, if you were training somebody in bioscience, technology, or IT or even carpentry, you spend most of your time at the college and then you have a piece at the end where you go to industry and do your work, your internship, your co-op.

We know to get to the point, always asking them, about how do you know the people have the skills? The model will change in the future very quickly. It's going to be – you'll spend probably so much time per week in industry on a weekly basis, so you get a feel for the industry and be motivated when you come out.

Industry, in turn, will help us evaluate the student and we'll give them support to do that.

Right now, you have three silos kind of trying to work together; industry, government and college. It's going to be more this way. Horizontal integration, that's what we'll see in the future – in the very near future.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you very much for your presentation; very informative.

Chair: Do you have a question, Ernie?

Mr. Hudson: Thank you, Chair, and again, thank both of you for your presentation.

It's a question maybe I should have posed earlier when Sam was in the seat. But anyway, one of the things that was brought forward by Sam is just the importance of mentorship and that we are potentially losing that as we have ones retiring in our workforce and certainly in the construction industry.

We have programs that I'm aware of, for example, Career Bridges that is funded under VLMDA as again, as I understand, but that is more for an individual who's

transitioning potentially from one career to another.

I'm wondering, with workers in any occupation, they may have worked in that profession, that occupation, for 25, 30, 35 years; but for whatever reason, they may not feel comfortable in providing that type of mentorship role. I'm wondering if that is something that the college could, or would consider, looking into.

Doug Currie: Minister, great question. I mean, obviously, the college right now, we basically, I guess the way we approach it is that everything's on the table. We're certainly very interested. Right now we have our baby boomers that are approximately – the last baby boomer right now is about 57, 58 years of age. There is an entire population that is moving through our system, whether it be health care or labour market.

We are certainly – we've got an area at the college, we call it contract services. So we're having conversations now with various industry partners, DVA, looking at training opportunities, short courses, looking at mentorship opportunities for people that are shifting careers, people that are entering the work force. So that's an area that we see as a service that we can continue to develop and grow and specialize.

The other thing that is something that is very unique, and it's provided by the province, actually, it's eforce.ca. I personally have just recently learned about it. It's approximately about 150-160 courses that are free. The college is very much part of that relationship and we get the information out to people who are inquiring about courses. So we're certainly very interested.

I see it as a growth area for the college and as we talk to industry and talk to various stakeholder groups, hopefully we'll be able to continue to fine-tune what the growth and the priority needs are ourselves.

Sandy MacDonald: Minister, just to add to that as well, one of the challenges facing our labour market here is that many of our businesses are small and medium enterprise and cannot afford and do not have the use of professional HR practitioners, so we feel strongly that that's probably one of the most

glaring needs in the labour market as you've got a labour shortage.

You mentioned the boat builders group. We had a similar issue when I was deputy minister with the fish plant workers; and whether you pay them more or (Indistinct) – sometimes you can't pay them more and sometimes you can't change the working conditions, but what we can always do is look at using the latest HR innovations.

One of those would be the mentorship program, or where you got people who retire gradually over a five-year period, so we don't lose that knowledge competency and you match with them as you put your next person in with them over the last five years as they retire. You don't lose that knowledge. So that whole idea of having a professional HR practice for small and medium enterprise is one that we need to really fully explore.

Chair: Robert – and then you, Ole.

Mr. Mitchell: Thanks, Chair.

Thanks, gentlemen, for your presentation. A lot of information here, Sandy, and it's really good to see. I really want to thank you; in particular, for that retention slide that you have in there. I find that quite uplifting from my perspective to see the number that are coming out of your program staying on PEI; although I know the survey, they didn't all indicate back, but I'd put dollars to doughnuts that the ones that didn't respond –

Sandy MacDonald: That's the best –

Mr. Mitchell: – are here.

Sandy MacDonald: That's the best estimate we (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah, so this is really good to see. This is something that I've been wondering about, and I mentioned – asked Sam about repatriation, is there something that we should be doing more on that; but I think it looks like, at least, that most of our young Islanders are being trained and staying here. That's my perspective on it.

The one thing, though, that is very interesting, and I want to push you a little bit

more or ask you more questions on it, I think it's kind of basically – as a Red Seal holder myself who spent four years back in the eighties, you didn't do your block release on PEI, or I didn't. I had to go to New Brunswick for six to nine weeks over each year. So I think I heard you say that that block release is going to – it could be done online.

Sandy MacDonald: Yeah. This is a personal opinion: I don't think the present structure of the Red Seal is education-sound, because to have someone working on their skills and then take a six-week block and go out and do some school work in a classroom with us and then come back and do it again, I'd much prefer to see her integrated. I think if we have it online and blended you can do a lot of it on your own.

It's going to make it more efficient for the learner, so you can do it at their convenience, not at our convenience. They won't have to leave their work and draw employment insurance and take a 20-25% pay cut, and it's more productive for the employer. So we think a blended model would be much more efficient, Rob, at getting people through, and I think it's going to increase to improve the Red Seal completion rates as a whole.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah.

Sandy MacDonald: That's what the research is telling us.

Mr. Mitchell: I can see so many positives from that, so complimentaries on getting that done. I'm assuming you've talked to industry and I will now to say –

Sandy MacDonald: Industry is a partner in this.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah.

Sandy MacDonald: Industry is our partner on this.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah, well I mean, you know what? It's always such a negative impact if you got three or four of your workers have to go somewhere to school for six weeks and you get downtime. They can't even come back on the weekend and do work because they're off on unemployment.

Sandy MacDonald: That's right.

Mr. Mitchell: So that's another barrier that was always – I never really understood, but anyway, it was there, so anything that you're changing in that, I think that's very positive; and I think the employers will benefit equally as much as (Indistinct) on that one.

Sandy MacDonald: From what we're being told, employers are very thrilled. We're waiting to get the finished product. It takes a long time to get these things blended.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah.

Sandy MacDonald: And we don't just put them online: We need to support the learners, too, because some of them may not have well-developed math skills, for example, and you want to make sure they can get through that.

So far we're excited about it and we've put our own – so we have an added staff member, we've put our own staff members who teach our regular programming, in this case IT, to create the product, because they'll be doing a lot of this for a lot of the other programs as well. We started with welding and machinists, but hopefully over the next couple years we'll do all the trades (Indistinct) trades.

Mr. Mitchell: The only other – that last question, and I'll just leave it with this – the only thing is, obviously Holland College now has a presence all across the Island. You can go up to Alberton and see that beautiful building there. You can go anywhere and see all these other programs that you're doing. Is there any area of the Island that you don't feel you're servicing or covering or meeting the needs of any of the industry sectors or employment needs?

Sandy MacDonald: It's a good question. I think things are developing so quickly. Doug mentioned he and I have a meeting with industry groups.

We'll be meeting with the fisheries industry shortly. We're interested to see how they see what we're doing, because we do some work in the fishery, we've done some work in agriculture, but we probably should be doing more given the nature of the fishing industry

in PEI. I'd wait to answer questions to hear what they have to say –

Mr. Mitchell: Okay.

Sandy MacDonald: – how they see things; but by and large, I know we try to run as many programs as we can, some every second year through the Alberton campus. We run all our trades and programs through the Georgetown campus. We have our Slemon Park site. We're looking constantly at programs that we can add to the group, and some we have to cut because we can't find students. So that's a constant of the college is change; but so far we're not hearing that that's a problem, Robert, but our ears are open and we could hear that when we come (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: And I did say that was my last question, but just that last slide we have there where your new programs are there, good for you for developing programs that meet the needs today and I'm sure you've got some vision of some board that you got a few things on it that you're working on, so continue (Indistinct) –

Sandy MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: You got the man now to work on that stuff.

Sandy MacDonald: The VP is working on those types of things, and we do have that transformation project with the other seven colleges. For example, we know that New Brunswick is really ahead of the game in terms of cyber-security, so their work in cyber-security, we'll be able to access that work through this project.

Mr. Mitchell: Good.

Sandy MacDonald: Without having to develop it ourselves.

Mr. Mitchell: Wonderful, awesome, thanks.

Chair: Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Thank you.

First a question back to one of your graphs: you mentioned, I think, 0.4% growth rate in the construction or carpentry. That sounds almost as bad as the vacancy rate in

Charlottetown. Are they related? What exactly does that number mean?

Sandy MacDonald: This means the construction, the year-over-year. Now, this is from 17 to 18. The construction industry actually has been growing for several years.

Mr. Hammarlund: Yeah.

Sandy MacDonald: So if I took this back to 2012, you'd see a significant jump there. So it's holding steady, its growth rate across from here, and we're seeing more significant growth in the sales and service in the agricultural sides of things lately.

Mr. Hammarlund: So is –

Sandy MacDonald: It's a maintenance of a growth –

Mr. Hammarlund: Yeah.

Sandy MacDonald: – that if we go back, you would have seen the growth jump up back in 2012-13.

Mr. Hammarlund: So it's not a very – I mean, it's hard to believe it's only 4% when you look around Charlottetown.

Sandy MacDonald: Yeah, 0.4, yeah, but we –

Mr. Hammarlund: But is that because there just isn't the workers?

Sandy MacDonald: It's just – it's the increase started a number of years ago.

Mr. Hammarlund: Okay.

Sandy MacDonald: This only captures year-over-year.

Mr. Hammarlund: I see.

Sandy MacDonald: So it's gone up and it stayed up, is the way to put it.

Mr. Hammarlund: I have a few more questions. I know I have – I skimmed through your budget that you sent out, and it looks like your funding has basically decreased somewhat, a small amount?

Sandy MacDonald: The college, you mean?

Mr. Hammarlund: Yeah. That's what I –

Sandy MacDonald: No, no. Our –

Mr. Hammarlund: Maybe I just misread it but –

Sandy MacDonald: No, no. Our funding has increased –

Mr. Hammarlund: But I was going to –

Sandy MacDonald: – a little bit, yeah.

Mr. Hammarlund: Okay, okay.

Sandy MacDonald: And we had an excellent meeting with Minister Trivers, deputy minister MacLeod and her senior staff last Wednesday on our budget and looking at our adult education. We're pleased with how things have gone.

Mr. Hammarlund: That's great. Good to hear.

As you probably heard we passed this spring here the sustainability amendments – in 31 years we have to basically do buildings – have all our buildings at net zero. I just estimate it'll cost a couple of hundred dollars a year for the next 30 years. Is Holland College able to kind of redirect and create new jobs in the field (Indistinct) no doubt be required? Is that part of your plan?

Sandy MacDonald: It's not only part of our plan we're doing it now. We just last year did a number of our newer buildings over that were built in the last 10 years. We had our own students do a critical analysis of our CAST building which is a relatively new building and we found a significant number of savings, some of which we gave back to the program for finding them.

In terms of our bottom line, not only is it good for the environment, it's good for our bottom line if we could save as much money as we can. Our shift money that we got from the provincial government matched by the federal government, all of the projects we did across the college; all seven had a significant environmental component to them.

So when we renovated our restaurant, the culinary building down on the waterfront, all those windows that we put in there and all the wiring was all done with a green view. It's a very important file for us.

Chair: Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Well yeah, one more question.

I was really impressed to hear that the Holland Colleges' vast was reached to China and what have you, much more than I had imagined. Is there any way of using that presence to draw more workers to PEI?

Sandy MacDonald: Well it's interesting, we had just last Friday, I spoke to a group of high school students – we brought in a two plus one with a high school in China – Chinese students are coming here for Grade 12, so we're hoping to keep some of those people. Some of the students and staff come over from our 11 partnered schools and we go over there. So we send our staff over there and our staff come over here. I was there for two weeks in June, so it is a very vibrant dynamic relationship. It's a little bit cautious now because of our Canada's relationship with China as a whole, but we think it's done wonders for our own staff to get out and see how the other culture is. There's an idea that somehow we're going to teach China a lot of things. Well, we're learning as much, if not more, from the Chinese students and institutions and they're learning from us.

So we're always trying to bring more students to the college. Probably not as recruiting heavily as others in China because we already have our programs there.

Chair: Ole.

Mr. Hammarlund: Thank you.

Chair: Is everybody – does Holland College have a multi-year agreement with the government to ensure predictable funding?

Sandy MacDonald: No, we had several meetings with the previous government about our budget and we couldn't come to an agreement, but we had lots of good meetings.

This budget (Indistinct) we kind of agreed on what we'd do for this budget and then we're going to start negotiations again. So part of that was our meeting with the province with deputy minister MacLeod and her senior staff last Wednesday on our adult education budget and we'll continue those discussions on the overall budget. We'd love to get a multi-year agreement, but we're just negotiating now what we're – we're funded a little differently from UPEI and we're funded a little differently from the other college in the region so it's –

Doug Currie: In fairness, there was a spring election, budget was passed late. But we felt very good about the meeting that we had about looking at what our challenges are, what our long range vision is in respect to budgets and things like that. So, it was good.

Chair: Are you, as a college, satisfied with the current enrollment numbers in the trades?

Sandy MacDonald: Yea, it's an interesting question. Our job is to support industry. The thing that worries me most about, is not necessarily the number of trades, because we can increase those numbers; if government comes to us and says: Listen, we need more carpenters, can you train another 50 in a year? We can do that.

What concerns me a little bit more than that, Madam Chair, is that we've got a lot of people who are doing unskilled, or low skilled labour, who maybe just out of high school or a little less than high school. I think it's important for us as a college to figure out how to get them into the labour market too. So, I would say it's not just the trades; it's making sure that no one is left behind and that everyone has access to meaningful work. That's the thing that kind of keeps (Indistinct)

Chair: As a college, do you have the capacity to expand that so that you can incorporate –

Sandy MacDonald: Yes, in the past – if you go back to the past 20 years, there's been times in the labour market where there's been a significant shortage of early childhood care workers or resident care workers, or of carpenters in the past, or aero space workers, where the college said:

Okay, we'll put up a program and for the next two years we'll really ramp it up because we need it for some industry coming in. We can do that; we've done that in the past.

Doug Currie: Chair, can I just add – something that – and it just sort of ties into some many questions and this is a really important point and I wanted to make it before we left and Sam shared it over and over again. It's about that presence and that relationship with the public school system. It's about education, it's about awareness and we would totally agree. I think what the college has done is, we've been doing some work with intermediate level introductions to some programs, have we done all the intermediate schools across the province? No. So we're hoping to blow that wide open to get a stronger alignment between the college and the intermediate schools and the high schools with the public schools branch.

The thing that I would add to the elected officials in this Assembly and the policy makers, one of the things that I think is critically important – it's not just about trades and skills, it's about the implementation of a more robust, more trans-career development programming in Grade 7, 8 and 9. The career development council of Canada would say that the sweet spot for catching the attention of the youth and careers is Grade 5. That's based on evidence and research.

So, career development, if you look at career development in our public school system, it's very restricted and very limited in respect to what we're doing, but we would certainly be very interested in having conversations about that. I think that's where we really need to provide opportunities for students to really understand what it takes, the courses that are required over the Grade 7 to 12 duration of their careers in public education. We're starting to have those conversations with the public school branch, the ministry. It will be very much part of our strategic plan.

Career development is a critical link for our success as an institution tied back to the public school system and we've talked about that. We need to give the kids, just not a day at Holland College, we need to give them curriculum, but that's a bigger conversation

with the ministry, that's a bigger conversation with the PEITF, because that's another competing demand on the core time that's allotted in the public school system.

So, career development, I think, would be a critical investment by government.

Sandy MacDonald: Just related to that, is your question to Sam a little while ago about a safe place where people can practice their trades, can make mistakes. We have a very robust technology trades program in our high school system. So, 10 of our high schools across the province would have either three or four trades; carpentry almost always, automotive almost always, welding for sure. Those are labs that are not used on the weekends really, or at night.

It would be relatively straight forward to develop a quick and easy project to get some women, younger women interested in the trades to come in and have a female trades person teach them the ropes and have a basic trades exposure program. That could be designed and delivered fairly quick and fairly easy almost anywhere in the province. You do have those schools; they're all very well equipped, as well equipped as any school system in the country in terms of trades and technology.

Sometimes the equipment is better than what we have at the college. So that's a resource we could use as well.

Chair: That's a great point.

Doug Currie: We're open for business.

Chair: Does anybody else have any questions before we wrap up.

Well thank you so much for coming in.

Doug Currie: Thank you for the opportunity; it was great.

Sandy MacDonald: (Indistinct) but we wanted to make sure you had all the information that you could (Indistinct) that you needed.

Thanks again.

Chair: Thanks again.

We just have a few more things to get through on the agenda.

We're on number (4) now, the review of correspondence. I'm not aware of any correspondence? Okay.

So the next thing we've got, Ryan sent out an email with all of the priorities, and there were 14 priorities. He didn't get much of a response in there, so we are tasked with coming up with our priorities.

I'm going to suggest, see if everybody agrees to this for now since we're trying to do this now, if we were to choose five priorities now, together. Then that way – and not necessarily prioritize them as you know this one's most important than this one. That way in terms of scheduling, Ryan's able to contact people and if we were to choose let's say school food program as a priority, let's say the people weren't available to come in to talk to that, he would be able to schedule something else in that time frame.

Does that sound ok to everybody? If we were to choose five, not necessarily ranked?

Mr. Mitchell: Could we, based on timeliness, I guess. Like, to your point, school food program, timely, school is going back in.

George Coles Bursary, timely. Grade 3 assessments, timely. Re-establishing of school boards could be timely – and I know Mr. Gallant's, this is one of his big interests too, is the housing and the post-secondary, perhaps the needs that aren't being met there. They're all timely to a strict school season. Does that make any sense to you as far as first five items?

Chair: So base on timeliness? Does everyone –

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: I'm looking at a lot of these – we have 14, that's a lot; but not that we can't handle them all. I'm just looking at timeliness as far as prioritizing. So schools: post-secondary starting or public school system starting, so those things that are related to those fall starts, Grade 3 assessment, school food program, George

Coles Bursary. Could we tackle those, kind of, now?

Obviously rural Internet access is a big problem but it's not one that we're going to fix tomorrow. We could bump it out for a month, or two months, or whatever. I'm just using that as –

Chair: Ole, did you have something?

Mr. Hammarlund: Kind of one other way we discussed of dividing it up was to pick out of those five that Karla was suggested, that two was items that we all six agreed on, timely or not, and then that each party would pick their only – their highest priority in addition to that. That way we would end up with five priorities for now.

Chair: Robert.

Mr. Mitchell: Well and to your point, I think that's why the two presentations were here today. That was the one that I heard we all had commonalities with. The rest of these, not so much that we all agreed on when we presented them but, that's – that's the only reason why I'm saying timeliness in our school system, both private and post-secondary.

Chair: We may find if we maybe kind of go through these, we may find that that naturally happens, too.

So maybe we could just read through them and if we think that – how did you say that again? We vote on them. But if we went through and we all kind of agreed by hand that that would be a priority, was that –

Clerk Assistant: That's one way to do it. Essentially, however the committee wants to decide.

Chair: Sonny?

Mr. Gallant: Can we go back to the top five?

Chair: Yeah we thought five would be a good starting point for now, because we can't prioritize 14 – let's do it.

Okay, so the first thing, I'm just going to go in order by what Ryan has provided for us: the Grade 3 assessment, so looking at the

outcome, their impact on student outcomes and the rationale for suspending assessments.

By show of hands, does anyone think that should be priority? Okay so there are three of us, okay.

School food program? Four of us.

George Coles Bursary – I know, they're hard. Okay, so we've got two there, timely.

The process of re-establishing or looking at governance structures in terms of elected school boards. Oh, that was three. The coverage of marijuana in school curriculum.

And just as a little side note, I know, Ernie, you had responded to that. We had talked about it specifically in the meeting as what's in the curriculum and then you had suggested perhaps having Heather Keizer come in. Those would be kind of two different things.

So if we're looking at specifically – we were wanting to look at what's in the curriculum now and then perhaps look at moving forward.

Mr. Hudson: Well I guess –

Chair: Ernie.

Mr. Hudson: Yes, I'm sorry, Chair.

What I was looking at is the fact that, as we all know, marijuana was recently legalized. What implications may that have?

If I recall correctly – and certainly Robert and Sonny – I would assume Dr. Keizer has made statements of concern with regard to the impact, psychological impact, potentially of schizophrenia, for example, of early use or use over certain age time periods.

That's where I was coming from and just to have that educational component, obviously it's not going to be in there this year, but I think it is something that it is important to look at going forward.

And to me, she would be an excellent witness to bring forward, to provide the information as – or the rationale as to why this should be in the curriculum.

Chair: And in terms of that, I'm just trying to wrap my head around because I want to be clear what we're moving forward on.

Mr. Hudson: For sure.

Chair: I think what we had talked about originally was looking at what's in the curriculum. I would encourage us to stay on that path, just for now, because there have been – whenever marijuana was legalized, there were significant resources put into the school, and perhaps some of those things that she may speak to us about are in there.

So we may look at that as kind of the first piece, but she maybe someone to look if we don't feel the curriculum is covered well enough, maybe then that would be the second part, Ryan?

Mr. Hudson: Yes, excellent comment, Chair.

I think that that certainly is part and parcel of it for the committee. If it's one of the ones of five that are looked at for the committee to hear, what is actually in the curriculum in the system right now?

Chair: So, on that note – thank you, Ernie.

So if we were to look at what is covered for marijuana, cannabis in school curriculum, who would like to see that as a priority, the top five?

We've got one there.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Chair: I know, and it's really hard.

So the next one is career awareness and the two speakers here today had mentioned that, but looking at what is provided to students at a junior and high school level to make them more aware of their options, and even maybe younger.

So career awareness: Who would like to see that in our top five?

Well, I would like to be put in there, too. Two.

Social promotion: Benefits and drawbacks in terms of children moving to the next level

in schools? I'd like to see that as a priority. Got one there.

Mr. Hudson: I'm keeping count (Indistinct) I've got one to go.

Chair: And the next one on our list is early childhood education looking at wages and how to expand the improvement that has taken place. Two of us on there.

Psychoeducational assessments for schoolchildren looking at the wait times and learning disabilities: We've got three there.

Infrastructure programs: Eligibility for municipal governments, private sector and cost-sharing criteria. Zero. Not to say that these are not priorities, just trying to put – Ernie?

Mr. Hudson: I was supposed to be gone about 10 minutes ago or more. I have used up my five, so with that, thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Immigration: So the programs for newcomers where they're being delivered across PEI, general overview. Zero there.

The economic plan and involvement of partnership for growth: Yes, okay. Anybody like to see that as – there's two of us there.

And rural internet access: And then we had looked at housing. However, from this note, I'm understanding that's to be looked at in health and social development or –

Clerk Assistant: It is within their mandate.

Chair: Within their mandate.

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct) to me that's one of those across boundaries of probably tourism, education and others. I'm using the timely thing for post-secondary and housing issues.

As Sandy said, he may not be fully aware of the situation until sometime in mid-October. Whether, you know, students from PEI found housing in the Charlottetown area if that's where they're attending or out of country will have found.

I just see that as a timely one when we've dealt with that post-secondary issue in the past and as late as last spring as well, too. I just see it as potentially timely for this committee, even though, yes, housing can fit in several committees; doesn't mean that you can't have conversation from an education perspective.

Chair: Sonny?

Mr. Gallant: Well said, Mr. Mitchell. I feel the same.

It's a cross-committee thing. It does affect tourism. It does affect education and (Indistinct) know a little bit more in education but tourism. I don't know about the rest of committee members, but I've heard some concerns this year as far as tourism and I'd just like to see us deal with it from those two perspectives, because I feel it's timely as well.

Chair: So looking at housing through an education lens.

Yes, Robert.

Mr. Mitchell: I said I'll put my hand up for that one.

Chair: Are we able to do that? Or is that –

Clerk Assistant: Yes. Certainly the committee has an education and tourism focus right in its mandate. So if you want to bring a witness in who could perhaps discuss the pressure on the short-term housing market (Indistinct)

Mr. Gallant: Thank you.

Mr. Mitchell: I'll vote for that one.

Chair: Do you have a question, Ole?

Mr. Hammarlund: I just –

Chair: Sorry about that.

Mr. Hammarlund: Well, a comment.

Chair: Okay.

Mr. Hammarlund: I just agree with Robert that the housing is within our mandate in

terms of economic growth and education, very strongly a critical component of that.

Chair: Certainly is across all –

Mr. Hammarlund: Yes.

Chair: Yes, Sonny.

Mr. Gallant: For clarity, is there enough of us here to vote on this last one?

Clerk Assistant: (Indistinct) still have quorum.

An Hon. Member: Yes, we got three.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you.

Chair: So housing, who would like to see housing a priority? There's four of us.

So I think at this point, unless we're very clear on the top five, do you see –

Clerk Assistant: Well, Madam Chair, I would have the four for school food program and four for housing, and then three for Grade 3 assessments, elected school boards/governance, psychoeducational assessments.

And I think that would round out your five right there.

Chair: Yes. So are we okay as a committee, then, to make our first set of priorities Grade 3 assessments, school food program, the process of school governance structures, psychoeducational assessments and housing?

Yes, great. Okay.

Clerk Assistant: Can I just ask about witnesses?

Chair: Yes.

Clerk Assistant: Committee, in some of these cases, there were witnesses already suggested last time around like the department of education, and Grade 3 assessments, and some of these would also fall under the department of education, like the school food program.

So would the committee want to put the invitation out to the department of education to say we want people in to talk about these topics? Give us, you know, one day where you can do several, or two or three days where each specialized topic is addressed?

Chair: Sonny?

Mr. Gallant: I don't mean to dispute or cause any undue attention to something, but the process of re-establishing schools; I didn't think we had a clear count on that. And the George Coles – I kind of I put my hand up later.

But I just wonder did we have a clear count on establishing elected school boards because I had a question mark next to that. I didn't think too many people put their hands up for that.

Clerk Assistant: I have three.

Chair: I had three as well.

Mr. Gallant: Okay, thank you.

Thanks.

Mr. Mitchell: Just out of interest then how many (Indistinct) George Coles? Just out of interest.

Chair: Two.

Mr. Gallant: Two (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: To your point to your question that you asked, if we look at grade three assessments and school food program as agenda items for the next meeting, which obviously made the top five, there would be maybe a couple department people that could come in and address both of those at one meeting. To that same point, no matter, any of these 14, if we do bring witness in to talk about it and we're not comfortable with it, we still have enough information; we can recall those again and bring others in. It's not one and done I don't think, it's never been anyway.

I think you – if I had my druthers, that could be the agenda items for the next meeting and I'd reach out to probably the school board – or not the school board but the department. I don't know if there's a cross over in the

school board or not, somebody there will be able to define that. Does that sound like a reasonable –

Chair: Which one was that for?

Mr. Mitchell: I'm saying Grade 3 assessments and the school food program. Maybe one that we could do together, the same as kind of today. Does that work? Do you think that's a good plan?

Chair: I think that makes sense. Does everybody?

I might also add and I'm curious what everybody else thinks maybe about getting – I think Morgan Palmer's on maternity leave, I'm not sure who's replacing her but she was the one kind of working on how it might roll out.

Mr. Mitchell: What's her role? I don't know her.

Chair: She was the one partnering with the schools and coming up with the menus and how they might work.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah. Sure. Yeah, I don't know what expert would be the right expert. If it's one or 10, doesn't matter, like I'll hear them all.

Chair: I think that her, or whoever's in her role, I can't remember her name, it might be nice to hear from them.

Mr. Mitchell: Sure. Sure.

So is that your job, Ryan, to figure out who is the best?

Clerk Assistant: Well, if the committee has one specific person in mind, I take that as my direction to invite that person.

In the past, sometimes if we've had several topics like this that fall under one department, the committee would write to say the deputy minister and say: we want officials from your department to come in and address these subjects, and then the department will decide who is most appropriate.

But, again, if you have a specific person in mind –

Mr. Mitchell: I don't. I like Karla's suggestion that Morgan, if she's the one that kind of did the development, that she be one, but I like the idea of connecting with the deputy and saying who's the best person? I'm fine with that, too.

Clerk Assistant: My last question is: so housing with the lens on tourism education; any suggestions for witnesses in that area? I'm not sure – and I can update the committee. The Health and Social Development Committee is looking to bring in Minister Hudson and his officials to start with their work on housing.

Mr. Gallant: (Indistinct) on this committee, it would be best if somebody from tourism came in because that's the lens we're looking at, right?

Clerk Assistant: That would seem to line up with the mandate of the committee, yes.

Mr. Mitchell: I'm fine with that. I guess, you know, we could also – tourism may be able to answer this post-secondary part of it. I'm not sure, but I'd like to have that looked at as well somehow – post-secondary housing.

Chair: Yeah, I met with – as I'm sure many have – Emma Drake at UPEI, the student union.

Mr. Mitchell: She might be student union president there; she might be another good person.

Chair: She may be good to reach out to, either her herself, to come in, or she may have some idea –

Mr. Mitchell: That's a great idea, Karla. She'd be really; she'd be informed on that.

If we could have her maybe and the tourism representative on that particular – that might be – that might be one that maybe just needs a full meeting of its own, I'm not sure.

Clerk Assistant: Okay, department of tourism.

Chair: And maybe leave it if anybody thinks of something to email you, Ryan?

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah and Emma, good suggestion. I should have thought of that. She's a perfect choice for that. She may even reach out to Holland College president or something –

Chair: When we met, she talked about Holland College as well, so she would have kind of that lens.

Mr. Mitchell: Good choice.

Chair: Oh. Ole?

Mr. Hammarlund: Well, I have one question.

I still think housing is really important, but how do we coordinate with the housing efforts that's happening under housing and social development? How do we make sure – we don't waste our time. On the other hand, if we do hear something good here, we want to somehow pass it on?

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct)

Chair: Robert.

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct) that broad and huge if there's a little bit of crossover, but they're doing a whole different approach and we're doing two different approaches within one.

So I think it's all good. Even if there's a bit of overlap, it won't be entire repetition of work.

Mr. Hammarlund: Oh, yes. I wasn't too much (Indistinct) – I wasn't too much worried about wasting time as to make sure that the other group sharing and benefitted. I don't know what they – what you suggest would be the way to do that.

Chair: Robert.

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct)

Clerk Assistant: In terms of suggestions, the committee members, anyone can sit in on any committee meeting.

So if you wish to attend the meetings of the health and social development committee when they're looking at housing, you can do that. You can review the Hansard. We can

get you the materials that are presented before that committee to be shared with this committee if you wish.

The committee can also, you know, if this committee looks at housing from the tourism and post-secondary education perspective, can pass on its work to the other committee as well.

Mr. Mitchell: (Indistinct) a couple of meetings where we can have ideas rolling out. So, good.

Chair: So on number (6) the discussion of scheduling, we kind of mentioned it before.

Is everyone okay with not really putting a number beside the priorities, but just kind of basing it on availability of witnesses?

Sonny?

Mr. Gallant: (Indistinct) George Coles were, if we can't get somebody to come in two weeks' time on something else, maybe we can get somebody to come in and talk about George Coles, right?

Chair: Yes.

Mr. Mitchell: So as far as the tourism part, Ryan, just so I'm clear, are you going to ask the deputy of tourism to delegate or come? Is that what you're going to do?

Clerk Assistant: I would probably, without further direction; I would write to the deputy minister and say someone from that department.

Mr. Mitchell: That's the best. So do the deputy of tourism and education to identify, and maybe it's them that come. I don't know.

Clerk Assistant: You want the deputy –

Mr. Mitchell: No, (Indistinct) it's them that will choose to come. As long as you reach out to those two individuals, I think that will get you what you need.

Clerk Assistant: To be clear, if the committee were to write to the deputy for tourism, they'll most likely choose within their department, but it would be a separate letter to the deputy for education. Is that

what's proposed, too? The government, I understand –

Mr. Mitchell: So you're going to write to deputy of education to ask who to come for the school lunch program and Grade 3 assessments?

Clerk Assistant: Yes.

Mr. Mitchell: You're going to write to the minister of tourism to say we have questions on housing, tourism related or economic growth related within that sector. Who do you send? That's the plan, right?

Clerk Assistant: I think it would make sense to add elected school boards, and governance and psychoeducational assessments to the (Indistinct) letter to the deputy minister.

Mr. Mitchell: Oh, that's fine. Sure.

Clerk Assistant: If that's what you want.

Mr. Gallant: Then it's all covered, yes.

Chair: Would it be – now I don't know, but for school governance, I'm wondering if it would be –

An Hon. Member: For the school board?

Chair: – beneficial to have someone from home and school, like the president of the home and school association or – just a thought.

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, I think that'd be good.

Mr. Gallant: Yes, I agree.

Chair: Okay, are we good there? All right.

So is there any new business that anyone would like to bring up at this point?

Clerk Assistant: Can I just clarify the frequency of meetings?

Chair: Yes, yes, definitely.

Clerk Assistant: Does committee want to continue meeting on a weekly basis as witnesses are available? Will probably be just to give time for witnesses to prepare might be two weeks at the earliest before the

next ones could come in, but after that, pretty much every Tuesday afternoon.

Chair: That's good. Ole?

Mr. Hammarlund: Yeah, I think there was one – is it next Tuesday? Somebody – we already agreed we couldn't do it on that date? Or was that one of the past Tuesdays? We discussed a schedule. I think the next meeting was planned on September 12th or something like that, a little bit down the road.

Clerk Assistant: Yes, I think you are right, we were talking about scheduling this meeting that we had today and that next Tuesday wasn't good for a couple of members so they were talking about the next one.

So that should hopefully continue to be a good date.

Mr. Hammarlund: That will be it.

Chair: Okay, so anything else before we –
Ole?

Mr. Hammarlund: So September 12th?

Clerk Assistant: I think it's the 10th.

Mr. Hammarlund: Or whatever.

Chair: Whatever the following Tuesday is, based on the availability of witnesses.

Okay, can I ask for someone to move a motion to adjourn?

Mr. Hammarlund: I will

Chair: Ole Hammarlund.

Shall it carry? Carried.

The Committee adjourned