

**ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE**

**QUESTION 657-18(2): JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

**February 28, 2017**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I am going to try to keep this quick. We had a briefing from the Minister of Education last week on junior kindergarten. There were still some unresolved issues around this full funding of junior kindergarten. Can the Minister tell this House and the public whether the inclusive schooling formula includes students who will be in junior kindergarten, yes or no? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, it doesn't. The inclusive schooling is a different part of funding that focuses on the needs of the children. With the implementation and rollout of junior kindergarten in the 2017-18 academic year, we feel that four-year-olds coming into the education system have the sufficient supports of all staff who will be in the school setting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I would like to thank the Minister for his short answer. Can the Minister tell this House and the public whether junior kindergarten students are included in the formula for Aboriginal language and culture funding for schools? Yes or no.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Once again, that is another part of funding that we provide through our programs. It is based on enrolment, so the ALCB funding will go up when enrolment in the schools go up. The majority of that funding actually goes to fund instructors who run cultural programs throughout the whole school and is available for all students. Our curriculum within junior kindergarten does have a cultural component, but the junior kindergarten program will also have access to all cultural programming and activity there. So that ALCB program is not directly linked to the funding with junior kindergarten.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I thank the Minister for his response. I think that was a no, but let's go on to busing. So can the Minister tell this House and the public: if the issue of increased costs for busing cannot be resolved, is he prepared to come forward to this House with a supplementary appropriation to make sure the school boards are not out? Yes or a no, Mr. Speaker, would be very helpful.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Currently, with the rollouts and the numbers that we're getting in with students who might be entering junior kindergarten, our funding formula for the schools will reflect what we have in contributions with the education authorities. Currently, our staff is working with the education boards and authorities to see how that funding is going to roll out. Busing is a topic in those discussions, and once we have a resolution and resolve how we're going to address that, we'll come back and we'll let the Member know.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I think that was a maybe.

---Laughter

We may have to pursue that further. So one last question: can the Minister confirm then that, when his department and he himself talks about full funding for junior kindergarten, that's really in reference to the current formulas which do not include junior kindergarten students? So full funding does not really include junior kindergarten students? Can the Minister say yes or no? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we did fully commit to fully funding junior kindergarten in the 2017-18 year, which does include junior kindergarten students, four-year-olds.