

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

ECOLE WILLIAM MCDONALD SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY

May 30, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to share some good news today about an important accessibility initiative being undertaken by school administrators in my constituency.

The Yellowknife Education District No. 1 has recently secured funding through the Access-4-All-Canada 150 Signature Initiative. The program provides funding to raise awareness and break down barriers for people living with disabilities. It does that by providing accessibility in our built environment -- it corrects or improves accessibility of infrastructure for persons with disabilities. It aims particularly at improving the accessibility of public places and spaces, such as schools, libraries, and playgrounds.

Applying under the fund, YK1 has been approved to receive \$26,800.00 for the installation of two barrier-free doors at the main entrance and into the lunch area at Ecole William McDonald School.

Access-4-All-Canada projects also help to highlight accessibility issues, thank local community leaders for their continued support, and celebrate communities' achievements in making Canada a more accessible and inclusive nation. For projects taking place in schools, there are lesson plans, activities, projects, handouts, and tools for teachers to help students understand disability, access, and inclusion.

The program was launched in the fall of 2016 by the Rick Hansen Foundation. Of course, Mr. Hansen is well known as a good friend of the Northwest Territories through his previous trips here. The Canada 150 element of the program is supported by the Government of Canada.

Construction will take place over the summer, and I look forward to attending the ribbon-cutting on these improvements this fall. I congratulate YK1 not only for securing these improvements but for taking this opportunity to expand student and public understanding through this model project. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.