

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Inclusive Schooling
Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Education, Culture and Employment—February 20, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I want to go back to this inclusive schooling amount. It was announced as additional funding in the budget address, and I guess what we are hearing now from the Minister is that, I guess on page 6 of the budget address, we are also going to direct an additional \$881,000 towards providing inclusive schooling funding for junior kindergarten students. Is this new funding that is to be added to the base, or is it lapsed funding from decreased enrolment in JK funding? What is this funding? I cannot find it in the business plan. I cannot find it in the main estimates. Where is it? Let's start with where it comes from, and then I would like to know where it shows up. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, the mains were printed before those decisions were made, and it is an internal reallocation. The Member did mention that there was a lower enrolment than we expected in junior kindergarten. I will just confirm that it is an internal reallocation to fund inclusive schooling for junior kindergarten. To get into the really specific details, I can go to Mr. Lovely to explain. I think he explained it earlier, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In a normal business planning year, if the enrolments had gone down, that funding would have been returned to the Department of Finance. Rather than return that money to the Department of Finance, it was reinvested into the education system under inclusive schooling. However, because of the timing of when the main estimates were printed and when that decision was made, it was unable to be reflected in the main estimates for 2018-2019, but, as we move forward into the next main estimates process, it will be reflected in the 2018-2019 revised main estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks to our ECE colleagues for that explanation. So, that \$881,000, is it entirely from this lapsed funding or is some of it an internal reallocation of contributions that go to the district education authorities? What is the proportion if it is mixed up? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can confirm with the Member that it is entirely from the lapse, the funding. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Mr. Chair. That is better than taking it out of, clawing it

out of, the DEA funding, so that is good news. So is this just a one-time allocation, or is it basically going to be added to the ongoing funding that is provided to the district education authorities? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is added to ongoing. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Okay. That is not what I think I heard last time from the Minister. Just to be crystal clear, this \$881,000 addition for inclusive schooling to presumably cover junior kindergarten students, that will be added to the ongoing funding that is provided to the District Education Authorities not just in 2018-2019, but in all future years. Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is ongoing funding from JK to 12, as I had mentioned earlier, and every year, it is going to change based on enrolments from school to school, authority to authority. I will ask my assistant deputy minister, Olin Lovely, to maybe get into a little bit more detail. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under inclusive schooling for this current fiscal year, it was only counting the number of students who were in kindergarten to grade 12. Because of this decision to include junior kindergarten students in the inclusive schooling formula, in the 2018-2019 school year, those students will be counted within that formula for inclusive schooling.

\$881,000 reflects the amount that is provided under inclusive schooling for the number of junior kindergarten students throughout the education system. If the number of junior kindergarten students increases, then the amount for inclusive schooling will go up. If it decreases, the amount for junior kindergarten will go down. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I understand that, but has this been the equivalent of actually changing the formulas that fund inclusive schooling to now include junior kindergarten students for all future years? Is that what this really amounts to? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and yes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, that was a long series of questions to get to the basic answer that the formulas are going to be changed. That's great for inclusive schooling.

I want to refresh the Minister and his staff's memories, then, about Tabled Document 423-18(2) on September 19, 2017. I have got extra copies here if the Minister and his staff need them, but this was a table that showed the formulas for funding schools where junior kindergarten was not included and then the shortfall if junior kindergarten students were included.

I have just heard now from the Minister that he is going to include junior kindergarten students for the inclusive schooling portion of those formulas. That is great news. What about the other portions that did not include junior kindergarten students, like administration, school consultants, counselling, secretaries, custodians, Aboriginal languages O and M, and Aboriginal languages assistance? Are those formulas going to be changed to include junior kindergarten students in 2018-2019? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are currently looking at the Aboriginal languages directive, and we are looking at possibly adding that moving forward. With all of the other ones, I believe they are going to stay the same, but we are including JK in those. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Once that directive is sorted out, one of the potential outcomes is to change the formula to include JK students? Is that what I am hearing from the Minister? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and yes, that is correct. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell us when that developmental review of the directive is going to be completed? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have an exact timeline, but I can let the Member know that probably within the next couple of months, probably before the next business planning cycle. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is helpful to know. The shortfall for the two formulas for Aboriginal languages are \$36,000, and the other one is \$267,000. I know that is based on enrolments as predicted for JK. Is the Minister then going to be bringing forward a supplementary appropriation if he wants to increase the funding for Aboriginal languages to include JK students? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we would have to get that directive done first, and like I said, it will probably be in the next couple of months.

Maybe my deputy minister can elaborate to that a little bit more. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly, your time has expired. Next is Mr. Beaulieu. Oh, I apologize. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Minister indicated, we are currently working through the directive. It is not clear at this point what resources would be required related to the directive, but as we work through it and that becomes clearer, we will examine options in terms of addressing those resource needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.