

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Aurora College Social Work/Teacher Education Programs
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MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Thanks for that. One of my favourite questions, too, is: what's the status now of the social work and teacher education program review for Aurora College? Those two were dropped several years ago, and I'm just wondering if they are ever going to get reinstated. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Those reviews are both being undertaken. There have been some delays due to COVID because of the fact that we needed to get people into the territory to review the programs. There has been some work virtually done, but I can get the Member more information about this, as well. We are not quite on schedule where we want it to be. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. This caused a lot of consternation in the last Assembly. As I could see, it was just a decision that seemed to be made by some of the senior management within the college to cut these two programs because they were told they had to cut their budget by 10 percent by Cabinet in the last Assembly. These were just the way to do it. While there might have been some issues with enrolment and completion by some of the students, the real issue was the failure to provide childcare and support to the students, who were mainly women. I'm hoping that those things are going to get considered in the review. Can the Minister give me some assurance that that's going to be looked at? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Sorry. Was the question whether the programs are going to be reviewed? If the Member could just repeat the question, I just lost him at the end there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member, will you repeat your question?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I'll try to keep it shorter. As I understand, most of the individuals who were enrolled in the two programs were women. There was some issue of completion. From what we heard from some of the students, the issue was not so much that the programs were not useful or that they were not graduating students, but it was the inability to provide childcare and support for the students so that they could actually complete the programs. Is that going to be a consideration in the review of whether these two programs should be reinstated, that we need to provide better supports for the students and childcare? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. I don't have the details of the review in front of me, but I can let everyone know that there were more than just a couple issues. That's why we undertook the foundational review of the college in the first place and why we are undertaking this effort to transform it into a polytechnic university. Of course, part of that transformation means reviewing programs at a standard that a university needs to. We are using a review that meets any international standards. The program is being reviewed to the standard it should be, and I can find out specifically if those elements are part of that. Thank you.