

Second Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
Standing Committee
on
Public Accounts

Chairperson
Mr. Matt Wiebe
Constituency of Concordia

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Monday, June 19, 2017

TIME – 1 p.m.

LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia)

VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West)

ATTENDANCE – 11 QUORUM – 6

Members of the Committee present:

Messrs. Bindle, Helwer, Johnston, Ms. Klassen, Messrs. Lagassé, Maloway, Marcelino, Mrs. Mayer, Ms. Morley-Lecomte, Messrs. Smith, Wiebe

Substitutions:

*Mr. Lagassé for Mr. Michaleski
Mr. Smith for Mr. Yakimoski*

APPEARING:

*Mr. James Allum, MLA for Fort Garry-Riverview
Mr. Norm Ricard, Auditor General*

WITNESSES:

*Hon. Scott Fielding, Minister of Families
Mr. Jay Rodgers, Deputy Minister of Families*

MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Our December 2006 Report: Audit of the Child and Family Services Division Pre-Devolution Child in Care Processes and Practices, dated September 2012

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2015

Section 3–Special Audit: Society for Manitobans with Disabilities

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2017

Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program

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Mr. Chairperson: Good afternoon. Will the Standing Committee on Public Accounts please come to order.

This meeting has been called to consider the following reports: Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Our December 2006 Report: Audit of the Child and Family Services Division Pre-Devolution Child in Care Processes and Practices, dated September 2012; Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2015, section 3–Special audit: Society for Manitobans with Disabilities; and the Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2017, Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program.

Committee Substitutions

Mr. Chairperson: I'd like to inform the committee that under rule 104(2) the following membership substitutions have been made for this meeting: Mr. Lagassé for Mr. Michaleski, and Mr. Smith for Mr. Yakimoski.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Before we get started, then, are there any suggestions from the committee as to how long we would like to sit this afternoon?

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Chair, I would suggest we sit for an hour and then revisit at that time.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. Is it will of the committee to sit for an hour and revisit at that time if we'd like to extend that time? *[Agreed]*

Are there any suggestions as to the order in which we should consider the items on today's agenda?

Mr. Maloway: I would suggest we start with the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it agreement of the committee to start with the most recent report on the list, that is, the Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations on Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program, then move to section 3, Special audit, from May 2015, and then back to the

follow-up of the December 2006 report. Is that agreed—agreement of the committee? *[Agreed]*

At this time, I'd like to invite the deputy and the minister to the table. I see that you're already there, and I would ask you to introduce yourself and the staff that you have with you today. *[interjection]*

Mr.—sorry—Honourable Minister.

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): Scott Fielding, Minister of Families. *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: My apologies. Mr. Rodgers, I'm just going to recognize you, because you actually have a separate mic from the honourable minister. So we probably missed everything after the minister introduced himself. So I'll just ask you to reintroduce yourself and your staff.

Mr. Jay Rodgers (Deputy Minister of Families): I'm Jay Rodgers and I'm the—sound's okay?—Deputy Minister of Families. To my left is Jennifer Rattray, she's the assistant deputy minister for Community Programs and Corporate Services Division; Ms. Jill Perron is currently the acting assistant deputy minister for Child and Family Services; and Mr. Brian Brown, who is currently the acting assistant deputy minister for Administration and Finance in this department.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers.

Now I'd like to ask if the Auditor General, Mr. Ricard, has—wishes to make an opening statement.

Mr. Norm Ricard (Auditor General): I don't have an opening statement today, but I would like to introduce the staff that are with me today.

So, behind me are Sandra Cohen; she's the assistant auditor general responsible for performance audits. Beside her is Melissa Emslie; she's the audit principal who was responsible for our audit on the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program. And beside her is James Wright, who was a staff member at the time on the SMD audit and is now a principal in the performance audit area.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Ricard.

Does the deputy minister wish to make an opening statement?

Mr. Rodgers: Yes, and I have copies of the opening statement to be distributed.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Rodgers, you may proceed when you're ready.

Mr. Rodgers: Okay, I'll just wait for those to go around.

So I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide an opening statement. I've already introduced the staff that are with me, so I'll jump down.

The staff I introduced are the members of my executive team who are the senior officials responsible for the three program areas that are covered in the audit reports that we'll be talking about today. I'd like to thank all the committee members for being here as well.

I'm still relatively new to the Department of Families. I joined the department about seven months ago, and the department itself as currently configured has been in place for just over a year. I understand from the letter of invitation that the committee members are interested in learning more about the purpose and the scope of the programs that are within the responsibility of this department.

So, to begin then, I'd like to give an overview of the department's programs and services. Hopefully, this will help set the context for a more detailed discussion of how we have responded to the recommendations in the three reports.

So, within the Department of Families, we provide supports and protection to some of Manitoba's most vulnerable adults and children. The well-being of families, especially low-income families with children, is central to our mandate and purpose.

The scope of our programs is very broad. This department in Manitoba has, in fact, the most diverse programming among provincial and territorial social service ministries in the country. This resulted from an amalgamation of programs from three departments into one that occurred in 2016.

More specifically, Employment and Income Assistance, or EIA programs, and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation were added to the existing department's responsibility for child protection, for protecting vulnerable adults and children, Child and Family Services, service for children and adults living with disabilities, Early Learning and Child Care and Family Violence Prevention. So you can see the broad scope of the responsibility of this department.

Further, the broad range of programs and services provided enables the Department of Families to serve as a lead department to work collaboratively with community organizations on complex social policy files, such as poverty reduction and homelessness. The homelessness strategy and the poverty reduction strategy are—the lead department.

Also within my department is the Office of the Vulnerable Persons' Commissioner, the social services advisory board and the Disability Issues Office. As deputy minister, I am also the chair of the board of directors of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. And, in November of last year, my minister appointed me as director responsible for implementation of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

* (13:10)

I believe that by creating—establishing this department with such a very broad scope of responsibility, that a great opportunity has been created. Working effectively and horizontally across this department, we can bring a wide spectrum of key social programs and services under one roof to strengthen our service delivery and provide a more holistic wraparound approach to families that need support. My executive team has risen to this challenge, and our plans going forward, I think, truly represent a comprehensive and cohesive approach to service delivery that wouldn't be possible without that broad range of programs and services under one umbrella.

So I'd like to move and provide a bit more detail on each of the service divisions within the Department of Families. Under Manitoba's devolved system, staff in our Child and Family Services division work very closely with the four Child and Family Services authorities, the Child and Family Services agencies that are mandated by those authorities, residential and group care providers and community partners to deliver a wide range of early intervention, prevention, child protection, reunification and adoption services all across the province. These services strive to keep children safe and support their healthy development with a focus on family preservation whenever that's a possible alternative.

We are working in close collaboration with the federal government to improve outcomes for indigenous children and youth. And preventing children from coming into care, achieving more

timely reunifications of children when they do come into care with their families and communities—for example, through customary care—and creating more opportunities for children and youth to grow up with caregivers who have made a lifelong commitment to those children, these are the highest priorities within our plans to move forward and enhance the child and family services system in Manitoba.

The department supports the needs of Manitobans with disabilities so that they can participate more fully in their communities and in the economy. Our programs address challenges and barriers so that persons with disabilities can live inclusively in our society.

Recent improvements to our Community Living disABILITY Services through the Building on Abilities initiative will help ensure that adults who live with an intellectual disability receive the right supports within a flexible framework that allows services to be tailored to their unique assessed needs. This is an initiative the department's been working on now for a number of years and is continuing to implement.

We have also made some really important improvements to the case management system in our services to children with disabilities program so that those children and their families receive the level of supports required in a more timely way. As part of that work, the department helps to fund the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, or SMD, which is a family of non-profit organizations that assist adults and children with disabilities.

As I mentioned earlier, my department is also leading the implementation of Manitoba's accessibility legislation to mitigate or remove physical and systemic barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participating more fully in society. The legislation applies to the public, private and not-profit sectors. Regulatory standards have been introduced under the legislation for customer service. We're currently in the consultation phase for introducing a standard for employment, and then transportation information and communication and built environment standards will follow after that.

Moving to child care, high-quality, affordable and flexible early learning and child care is another important priority for this department. Parents rely on regulated, safe and secure child care so they can go to work, participate in the economy, attend school or attend job training. Improving access to quality child-care spaces is another key priority, and it gets a

focus in the multi-year learning–early learning and child-care strategy that we're currently developing.

Some of the new initiatives in our early learning and child-care strategy will be funded through multi-year investments from the federal government through a renewed partnership. Just last week, a new Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework was signed by all federal, provincial and territorial ministers, with the exception of Quebec and BC. We are looking forward to concluding negotiations with federal officials on a Manitoba action plan and a three-year bilateral funding agreement to access these federal funds, which should flow to Manitoba within the next few months.

Poverty reduction and income supports are also central concerns for the Department of Families. We're implementing new initiatives to reduce reliance on Employment and Income Assistance by providing more meaningful supports to assist Manitobans to re-enter the labour market. We've implemented some things already that are having some success.

It is also extremely important that low- and moderate-income Manitobans, including persons with specialized housing needs, refugees and new Canadians, have access to safe and affordable housing. We are developing a new Manitoba housing strategy that is building on a number of months of public consultations to make social and affordable housing sustainable over the long term and to support the improved outcomes we want to see for low-income households and the homeless population.

Working collaboratively with our community partners is key to providing affordable housing options that are sustainable into the future. The federal government is again a key funding partner in supporting our housing strategy through agreements such as the 2016 to '18 Canada-Manitoba social infrastructure fund agreement. This brought considerable dollars into Manitoba, and we are also actively engaged with the federal government in the develop of its new national housing strategy set to be released later this year.

In addressing these difficult and often interrelated social and economic challenges, we are guided by our government's commitment to make Manitoba the most improved province in Canada. That commitment includes taking a thoughtful and strategic approach to delivering high-quality public services. In this regard the Office of the Auditor

General plays an important role. We take their reports and recommendations very seriously and appreciate the Auditor General's guidance and interest in our programming.

The Child and Family Services Division report is on Pre-Devolution Child and In-Care Processes and Practices. The original report assessed the accountability and management framework for mandated agencies with respect to children in care. Twenty-six recommendations were directed to the department. Of those, the follow-up 2012 report noted that 14 were still in progress. We believe that, since then, another five have been resolved.

Interestingly enough, when this report was released in 2006, I was the director of child welfare at the time and actually wrote the very first response to this report. So 2017, it's another opportunity to look at it.

The actions we've taken in the CFS division improve–include improving our financial analysis and reporting requirements with the authorities, ensuring that child abuse convictions are conveyed to the registrar in a timely manner, developing and testing a new standardized child needs levelling tool for standardized rates, clarifying case management standards for updating Child and Family Services child-care plans, and implementing an electronic child maintenance billing system.

Within the department we have also strengthened our capacity to use the Child and Family Services Information System, or CFSIS, to get statistical and trend information that will inform our future plans.

Mr. Chairperson: If I could just–sorry to interrupt, Mr. Rodgers. We're just reaching the limit of the 10 minutes that's allotted for opening statements. I'm sure we'd like to have you finish your opening statement, so I'm going to just have to ask leave of the committee to allow for the deputy to finish his opening statement. *[Agreed]*

Please, Mr. Rodgers, continue.

Mr. Rodgers: Thank you.

I can also report that a very thorough quality assurance review of the First Nations and Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services was completed in 2015 by an external firm. The order of administration that was in place with the Southern First Nations Network of Care, formerly known as the Southern First Nations Child and Family Services

Authority, was terminated in January 2016. The staff in the Child and Family Services division worked very closely with the Southern First Nations network to achieve key improvements in governance, including: the recruitment and training of new board members and a complete revision of the organization's bylaws; operations—a review of the organization's human resource policies and practices was completed, as well as a strength in management and quality assurance capacity; and fiscal sustainability was also another important element that was looked at as part of lifting the order.

In addition, internal audit reviews were completed for the General Authority, Metis Authority and the Southern First Nations Network of Care, and I believe these were done between 2013 and 2015.

I can also tell you that I was the chief executive officer of the General Authority when the internal audit did their review, and it was a very, very, thorough review that made a number of recommendations that we responded to.

The second report under consideration today concerns the SMD. This report assessed SMD's administration costs, accountability for public funds and governance. A follow-up report in 2015 noted four work-in-progress recommendations remain for our department—be happy to talk about those later.

The recommendations dealt with comptroller-ship and accountability guidelines defining administrative costs that the department would fund, ensuring that SMD strategic plans were regularly documented and updated, and the need for the SMD to review its current policy manual to ensure it is complete and current.

I believe that significant progress has been made on implementing these recommendations since the last follow-up report.

As a department, we've taken a number of steps to more clearly establish the roles and responsibilities for financial and service oversight with external agencies such as the SMD. We have clarified and implemented a protocol for funding administrative costs and our staff continues to work with the SMD to support the development of their new strategic plan as well as assisting them to update their policies.

* (13:20)

The final Auditor General's report for discussion today is the Early Learning and Child Care Program report that was originally issued in 2013. As reported in the March 2017 follow-up report, 15 of the 25 recommendations are fully implemented, and there are currently 10 recommendations that are in progress, with significant progress being made on seven of those. I would note that within the 25 recommendations, given the way that they were worded, and many recommendations had (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) components, that there were actually 49 action items within those 25 recommendations, of which the department has completed 37. So just over 80 per cent of those action items have been addressed.

We have made improvements in relation to our strategic planning within the Early Learning and Child Care Program, family home provider licensing requirements and monitoring and enforcing activities in relation to provisional licences. For example, the department has updated licensing manuals for family child-care providers and child-care centres. The licensing manual for child-care centres will be released after the completion of a more recent initiative that is the government-wide reduced red tape review, as that work will affect the contents of that manual in terms of the regulations, guidelines and best practices.

We have also made significant progress in ensuring that operating grant calculations for early learning and child care are accurate and improving our Inclusion Support Program by assessing the needs of children with disabilities and matching those needs with inclusion support capabilities in child-care facilities.

Addressing many of the remaining early learning and child-care recommendations is dependent on our ability to upgrade and improve our information technology systems. In previous updates, you would've noted that some of the recommendations were difficult to implement because of limitations within the capacity of our information systems. We are encouraged and hopeful that the new funding agreement with the federal government will assist in this department making substantial upgrades to the capacity of our information system.

As our department—as a department, our implementation of the recommendations in the three reports has strengthened the services and supports that we provide. The reports have clearly helped shape practice and policy improvements and will

continue to influence how the department moves forward to improve the delivery of social services in Manitoba.

This concludes my opening statement. I hope the information was helpful, and I look forward to answering your questions and a productive discussion.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers.

Before we proceed further, I'd like to inform those who are new to the committee of the process that is undertaken with regards to outstanding questions. At the end of every meeting, the research officer reviews the Hansard for any outstanding questions that the witness commits to provide an answer for and will draft a questions-pending-response document to send to the deputy minister.

Upon receipt of the answers to those questions, the research officer then forwards the responses to every PAC member and to every other member recorded as having attended that meeting. At the next PAC meeting, the Chair tables the responses for the record.

Therefore, I'm pleased to table the responses provided by the Deputy Minister of Infrastructure to all the questions pending responses from the May 25th, 2017 meeting. These responses were previously forwarded to all members of this committee by the research officer.

Before we get into any questions this afternoon, I would like to remind members that questions of an administrative nature are to be placed to the deputy minister and that policy questions will not be entertained and are better left for another forum. However, if there is a question that borders on policy and the minister would like to answer that question, or the deputy minister would like to defer it to the minister to respond to, that is something that we would consider.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to ask the deputy, regarding page 11 of his opening statement, to expand on the list of IT limitations that he suggests in that opening statement.

Mr. Rodgers: The information system in the Early Learning and Child Care Program is quite dated. It doesn't have a strong capacity to do statistical

analysis. We have tried to supplement that in a number of ways by collecting stand-alone data on Excel spreadsheets where the limitations are also pretty significant. This has been a priority for the department for some time to look at what a new information system might look like. We've been working with our BTT folks to have this as a priority. It will take a significant investment of resources. I'm really encouraged by our discussions with the federal government who has clearly put an emphasis on much-improved data collection, and I believe that we'll be able to use some of the federal resources to do some significant upgrades so that we can collect some of the information that the Auditor General recommended we track better. There are some important items in here that we're just unable to track because of those limitations.

Mr. Maloway: So are there any applications from the current S.A.P. system that you have been using in this area?

Mr. Rodgers: S.A.P. would not relate to the recommendations made by the Auditor General. I've also been informed that the database, the information system we're currently using was developed in 2000, so it is quite dated.

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to ask the deputy, then, whether they've done any studies as far as what the other provinces are doing, as far as IT in this particular area.

Mr. Rodgers: The staff in the Early Learning and Child Care Program are frequently doing inter-jurisdictional scans. We are in the process in anticipation of having access to the federal resources to do an upgraded information system. Staff are in the process of gathering present-day information on what other provinces are doing. I can say, with some degree of confidence, that their systems are newer and have greater capacity than ours does right now.

Mr. Maloway: Well, so the—which province, then, seems to have the most modern updated system?

Mr. Rodgers: The systems across the country vary. My minister and I recently had the opportunity to visit officials in Saskatchewan and I think that Saskatchewan has an information system that—one that we could learn from.

Mr. Maloway: So is this an off-the-shelf system or is this a system that was written by the Saskatchewan people from the ground up?

Mr. Rodgers: I believe it was a custom built, but I can verify that for you.

Mr. Maloway: So would your intention be, then, to try to use their system, to buy it from them or to implement their system? I mean, you may be able to get it for free if it's—yes, go ahead.

Mr. Rodgers: We have started those discussions with Saskatchewan around actually a couple of different information systems that they use. To the extent that it would be directly importable into a Manitoba system we're not clear on yet exactly. I know that when you buy out-of-the-box solutions and if you have to customize them for your service system that it's going to collect data on, it becomes quite expensive, so sometimes a custom-built can be more cost effective. We're not far enough down the road to know that yet.

Mr. Maloway: And I'd like to also ask you whether this—these systems are developed in-house in other provinces. Or are they farmed out to the private sector?

Mr. Rodgers: I think it's a combination of both. We'll know more when we finish our inter-jurisdictional scan.

Mr. Maloway: Can you tell us, then, which provinces have an in-house system and whether it's a custom system or off-the-shelf?

Mr. Rodgers: We'll be able to. I can't tell you right now across the country.

Mr. Maloway: So when is all this going to happen? What's the time frame for this?

Mr. Rodgers: We hope to have the action plan and bilateral agreement finalized by the end of July with the federal government. Within that bilateral agreement will be—it will specify the extent to which we can use federal resources for data collection and administrative purposes.

In—over the course of the next few weeks we'll continue our work looking at other jurisdictions so that we'll have a better needs assessment of what we need to incorporate into the child-care information system, so I would think that work could proceed by—starting in the fall.

* (13:30)

Mr. Maloway: Well, is there not an S.A.P. module that could be used for this?

Mr. Rodgers: I don't believe S.A.P. offers a solution for the type of data that we want to collect. *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Maloway.

Mr. Maloway: So you've researched this, then, and you're—I mean, S.A.P. has all sorts of modules for all sorts of different areas, and if they don't have one, they could develop one if there was enough demand.

Has there been any inquiries made of S.A.P. on this issue?

Mr. Rodgers: We'll look at the potential of using S.A.P. as part of our work to see what systems might help us out. We can do that.

Mr. Maloway: So in your studies, then, of this issue, I take it you are looking into S.A.P., you're looking at other provinces to see what systems they're using, you're not decided yet whether you're going to have it done in-house or whether you're going to have somebody develop your own software or maybe farm it out to a private company—you're unclear about all that?

Mr. Fielding: Sure, yes, I'll just answer that if I could. Again, discussions are under way with the federal government. We need to sign a bilateral agreement. We don't know if the dollars will be a part of that. There is a review that's going on as—just as mentioned through the deputy minister, and so once we have all the information we'll try and make some good decisions on there. But we're not at the point where we can tell you, you know, one way or the other whether we're going to land out. We've got to do the review, we've got to do the due diligence on it, and that point, you know, once that's done, then we'll have a better sense to roll out or explain what process we're going to go after.

Mr. Maloway: So are there any private players in this system that have software developed that you can buy kind of off the shelf in some of these provinces? Like, is there any province out there that has an off-the-shelf system as opposed to one that was developed in-house?

Mr. Fielding: Once the review is done, you know, we'll—you know, we're not at that level yet. We're doing that review right now. So once we're able to get all the good information and do the due diligence required, we want to make sure that it's done right, and so we're going to take some time, not a lot of time, but a right amount of time, to make sure it's done right.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I want to welcome Mr. Rodgers back to the government. He understated his role over time, and so we welcome you back. Our gain is Marymound's loss, although I do want to compliment you on the fine work you did at that extraordinary institution. So welcome back.

I'm just going from your opening statement, and turning to page 6 here, and I think my friend from Elmwood touched on little bits of this, but I wonder if we could pursue it a bit more. In the—I guess the second paragraph there: Some of the new initiatives in our early learning and child-care strategy will be funded through multi-year investments from the federal government through a renewed partnership.

Could you help us to understand what renewed partnership means?

Mr. Rodgers: So the federal government, over the last decade or so, has really not been actively engaged with the provinces on social policy. They are back at the table on a number of fronts, one of them being early learning and child care, so signing off on the multilateral agreement specific to early learning and child care was quite a precedent for us to set, and they're making a long-term commitment to fund those services.

Mr. Allum: So, in fact, it's really not a renewed commitment; it's more like a new commitment from a federal government that was out of the game for about a decade during the Harper years, if I understood you correctly.

The new Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework signed by federal, provincial and territorial ministers—I'm pleased to see the provincial government signing on to some federal agreement here; well done, Minister—could you help us to understand the nature of that particular agreement? What exact dollars are on the table? What are those dollars for? What do you anticipate happening going forward? *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Fielding.

Mr. Fielding: You know, so a part of the process, the Province has signed on to the multi-year funding framework, that's a part of it. So the next stage is, as the deputy minister had indicated, the Province will be negotiating with the federal government in terms of dollars. We don't even know the exact dollars, but we believe it's somewhere in the 'neighbourage' of \$15 million a year. That's ongoing funding, so we think that's good.

The feds were involved, and I think prior to 2006 there was a—you know, you might have it—there was a federal commitment at that point too, and you're right, there hasn't been since this year. So, again, the processes and the timelines are we'd like to negotiate the bilateral agreement within the summer or summer months, and then we'd be rolling out the programs and policies surrounding that after the bilateral agreement is assigned later on in summer.

Mr. Allum: Thank you for that, Minister.

Does the agreement require matching dollars from the provincial government if you're going to collect, I think he said \$50 million, 5-0? A head nod will do, but—

An Honourable Member: Yes, \$15 million a year.

Mr. Allum: —\$50 million a year just—

An Honourable Member: One-five, 15.

Mr. Chairperson: So, just for clarification again, the purpose of Public Accounts is to ask questions directly of the deputy minister. I can understand that the minister has certain knowledge that maybe would be helpful for helping the committee understand that maybe the deputy doesn't have. But just to remind the committee that it is the deputy minister who should be answering the questions unless he is deferring the question to the minister, which is okay.

But, likewise, it is also okay for committee members to ask the minister directly. If you could just indicate, though, if you are asking the minister or the deputy minister directly, then I have a better sense of who I'm looking to, and if the deputy and minister can indicate, just throw up a hand or something, to let me know who I'm supposed to be recognizing, it makes the Chair's life a little bit easier.

Mr. Allum: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll try to be more precise.

I was asking Mr. Rodgers, but I'm always happy to hear from Minister Fielding too on these matters. I think these were statements—questions of fact and the nature of the administrative agreements between the Province and the feds.

So the question was: Is there a provision within this new federal arrangement that there would be matching provincial dollars to meet the federal commitment?

Mr. Rodgers: Matching dollars are not a requirement at the present time.

Mr. Allum: So, in theory, then, the department could implement this partnership using only federal dollars. Is there likely to be a provincial commitment, then, that would meet or come near to that federal commitment?

Mr. Rodgers: At this point, until we have the details of the bilateral agreement, I would agree that appears that we can use the federal funding without matching provincial dollars.

The action plan that we develop to use the new federal funding needs to be incorporated into our longer term strategy for Early Learning and Child Care, so it complements our provincial priorities and complements the plans that are currently under way in a way that will allow us to demonstrate back to the federal government how their funding has been specifically used.

Mr. Allum: So, if we look back to the report that we're here today to pass, you won't find the term, I don't think—I haven't read it so thoroughly as all that—you won't find the term universality in there. I think that's a relatively recent evolution of our thinking when it comes to child care. And universality, I think, as you know, is a big part of the Early Learning and Child Care Commission that was established and reported in 2015. Is universality a central commitment of the department's Manitoba action plan coming forward, or is universality less of a priority than it was just a few years ago?

Mr. Rodgers: So the introduction of the federal funding has—is important for us to now consider before we can finalize the longer term strategy. The government has made a number of commitments, a balanced approach to early learning and child care, and I think, as the strategy comes together, it's going to reflect that balanced approach.

* (13:40)

Mr. Allum: Well, thank you.

It's not clear, I guess, from your answer to my friend from Elmwood, that there's no timeline for the completion of this action plan, although forthcoming at some point.

Will the principles and recommendations of the early learning and child care commission be fundamental and the bedrock of that action plan, in your view, going forward?

Mr. Rodgers: That report and a number of other reports that have been produced are informing the development of our strategy.

Mr. Allum: One of the elements of that was the establishment of councils as a governant—part of the governance model.

Does the department foresee using those councils that were recommended in that report?

Mr. Rodgers: Still in the process of developing the plan.

Mr. Allum: Okay, we keep trying here.

The report also envisioned an expanded role from—the education system, and certainly the report contemplates a movement of the child-care file over to the Department of Education at some point. I'm not saying that would've happened in a different government, but the report contemplates that.

Would it be the department's view that education, broadly defined, is at the core of the department's vision going forward? Rather than seeing child care as simply as child minding, it's actually becomes a critical component of the educational continuum—would that be central to the department's plan going forward?

Mr. Rodgers: We are working in close collaboration with our colleagues in the Department of Education and Training on a number of fronts, including early learning and child care.

Our plan that is coming together is about more than just increased access to spaces; it's about building the capacity of this—of the sector. And I would say that creating a very positive learning experience for kids is a central part of that plan.

Mr. Allum: I thank you for that. I hope that it is, in fact. If we're following on some of the really fabulous work that's done in Quebec, as well, I think you'll note—know that there is a strong movement toward including child care within that educational continuum that I just referred to a few moments ago.

I think that we just need to get a few facts on the table here. How big is the waiting list for child care now? What was it a year ago? What is it now? What do you project it to be next year? And then it's probably worth asking whether the wait-list itself will be changed or evolved over time to become more precise than it otherwise would. So it's, what was the count? What is the count now? How has it improved or not improved? And then, will there be anticipated changes to how the wait-list is arranged?

Mr. Rodgers: So we've recently changed our process to make available to the public our child-care wait-list every month as opposed to every quarter. So we're doing it more often.

The April 2017 number was 16,878. I would note that that number includes parents who already have a daycare space who have put their name on the list because they want a different space. So the way the database is set up, it's difficult to distinguish between them. So this isn't all new parents with kids looking for daycare space. A good portion of it, we believe, is parents who already have a daycare space looking for a different one.

Mr. Allum: Sorry, Mr. Chair, I am trying to defer to my colleagues here. So, if he could just tell us what the wait-list was a year ago, two years ago, just so we have some context toward those numbers.

Floor Comment: Yes, we'll get that for you.

Mr. Allum: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: If I can just, because you—sorry, before you responded, I hadn't recognized you. So, just to get it on the record, Mr. Rodgers.

Mr. Rodgers: We can get that information for you.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Going back to questioning a little while ago, let's talk about the software systems you're—you've looked at and the reviews of them.

So, when you start to determine which one might be appropriate, or part of it, for Manitoba, will you be following proper tendering practices in going through that route?

Mr. Rodgers: Yes.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): So I just want to confirm. You're getting federal funding specifically for child-care spaces here in Manitoba? And you're spending that directly on child care? How much?

Mr. Rodgers: Yes. The minister mentioned our expectation is that, in the first three years, Manitoba will get about \$15 million each year for a three-year total of \$45 million. We're in the process of developing our action plan to access the federal money. It will be used for increasing spaces, but the federal government is also asking us that the federal money be used for—their language, not mine—new and innovative approaches to early learning and child care.

So it will be, again, complementary to the plan that we have been working on and will be more about—more than just about creating new spaces; it will be about building the capacity of the sector.

Ms. Klassen: So your government also gets \$34 million specifically for CFS kids according to the latest report. How much of that funding does not go into general revenue and goes directly for CFS kids?

Mr. Rodgers: Are you talking about the Children's Special Allowances?

Ms. Klassen: Yes.

Mr. Rodgers: At the present time, that money is recovered from agencies and goes into general revenue.

Ms. Klassen: Is there a goal to actually get that spent provincially on CFS kids as opposed to general revenue?

Mr. Fielding: So the special allowance, obviously, is something that we inherited from the previous administration in terms of the processes. It is a similar model that does take place in a number of the other western provinces. We have committed to review the child special allowance—a piece that are there. To be fair, the special allowance does help pay for things such as the maintenance dollars that can be part of it, that covers a whole variety of services for CFS. For CFS, we are spending upwards of \$500 million obviously on the care of kids in Child and Family Services in and itself.

Mr. Chairperson: Ms. Klassen. *[interjection]* Okay. Ms. Morley-Lecomte.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Can you tell me in what way are daycare facilities monitored?

Mr. Rodgers: So there is an annual licensing—relicensing process that is fairly detailed. And, throughout the 12-month period, there will be on-site visits by our child-care staff. Those are typically unannounced so that daycares don't have the ability to get ready for a visit.

Every visit now our staff are using a key standards checklist to review with the centres and homes, and they go through the checklist and leave a copy with the centre after they've done that. We're trying to, in an Excel database, keep track of compliance with standards, but it is cumbersome.

But—so there's the regular visits throughout the year and currently a fairly detailed process for relicensing.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: Okay. So, then, is there a different way to monitor the public versus the private daycares?

Mr. Rodgers: If they are licensed, they are all monitored the same way.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: Okay. So, then, has that changed from the previous policy that was in place on how the daycares would have been monitored, or is this just ongoing?

* (13:50)

Mr. Rodgers: One of the changes that we are making is to pilot a tiered licensing process. With the number of spaces increasing, we want to make sure we're using our staff time effectively to focus on those centres that have the most challenges.

So, beginning last April, we implemented a tiered licensing review process that has—will have four tiers of licensing so those centres that have no licensing issues and have had no concerns or orders for three years wouldn't go through the detailed relicensing every year. It would allow us to focus on, again, those centres where we have repeated instances of concerns.

So we are piloting that. We're doing it with 120 centres. We're in the process of that, and depending on the results of that pilot, we would be looking at rolling that out next year. So it would be a bit of a—and it was recommended in the Auditor General's report that we look at a risk-based approach to licensing and that's exactly what that pilot is helping us do.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: I just have one more question.

Does this—will this then lead to the numbers on the wait-list dropping? Do you foresee that as being the outcome?

Mr. Rodgers: Our hope would be, as we develop and implement our five-year plan and with the availability of the new funding, that we could have an impact on the wait-list.

Mr. Allum: Just a quick question for the Auditor General so that he's—feels included in this particular meeting today.

If I have this right, and you'll correct me if I don't, the original report was January 2013, first

follow-up in May 2015, second follow-up in May 2016. So far so good, I think. So does the—your office anticipate continuing to follow up or what will be the direction with respect to the Auditor General going forward when it comes to child care?

Mr. Ricard: So the final—the third and last follow-up that we did was dated March 2017. It's the one before us today so it's the third one.

The—what we then do at that point is turn it over to the Public Accounts Committee to decide if they wish to pursue certain recommendations directly to the department. We are—we have been encouraging the PAC to—for those recommendations that I—wishes to pursue with the department, to request action plans on what the department is planning to do and by when, and then have the opportunity to discuss that with the department at a later date.

For resourcing purposes, it's important that our—my office be able to bring an end to its follow-up so we have chosen—four, five years ago we moved to this model where we follow up the year after we issue the report for three consecutive years and then stop and put it in the hands of the Public Accounts Committee to decide how it wants to handle the remaining recommendations, which tend to be fewer—much fewer in number. And in this case in particular, you know, I think it's important to see there were 10 recommendations that were in progress, but seven of them where we judged that they had made significant progress in implementing them.

So in this report I would just identify that there are two recommendations, 3 and 10, that I would view as high-priority recommendations that are not yet—where significant progress, in our mind, has not yet been achieved. So I would be encouraging the Public Accounts Committee, in particular, to be looking at recommendations 3 and 10.

Mr. Allum: Just for the record, would you—could I ask the Auditor General just to articulate what recommendations 3 and 10 are?

Mr. Ricard: So recommendation 3 is dealing with the department improving publicly reported information on child care. And, in particular, it's recommendation 3(b) and (c) that are multi-phased recommendations. And it's in—3(b) is basically determining the most significant child-care standards and then reporting the province-wide level of facility compliance with those standards. And 3(c) being ensuring facility licences clearly communicate all

legislated standards not being met. And to us it's important that when you bring a child to a day-to-a child-care centre you know that all standards are being complied with or which ones aren't.

And recommendation 10 is that the department link the frequency of regular facility inspections and monitoring visits to underlying risk factors. The deputy spoke a little while ago about a risk-based inspection process—this is it—such as facility inspection history and licence type, and then ensure that all required visits are conducted, so it's doing the facility inspections based on a risk-based model.

Mr. Allum: So, just for the purposes of continuity, then, I think I would like to ask the deputy minister if he could just tell us again—I know he's touched on it already—about the recommendations that the Auditor General has identified here, that the—they would like to see you continue—that the government can proceed on, how you'll respond to recommendations 3 and 10.

Mr. Rodgers: If we could turn our attention to 3(b) and (c), I did talk a little about—a little bit about the new approach that we've implemented with having identified the key standards. I have a list of them.

For child-care centres, there are six, and there are five for homes that are all on a data collection sheet that are used for every visit. And so through that process we are tracking compliance with standards, and, again—so it looks like this, and it's in triplicate. So one copy is left with the centre, so they have clear information on which standards that they may not be fully complying with. If our staff will follow up with them to make sure that they are in compliance with those standards, the challenge we have in relation to the specific recommendation is we're struggling with finding an efficient way to report provincially on compliance and non-compliance with standards. We are using an Excel database that is cumbersome. We're looking at ways of exporting the data from the Excel database and do a—more of a statistical package so that we could produce some of those reports as an interim solution. So we'll be looking at that over the next—over the coming months to see if we can't start to get some province-wide reports as recommended by the Auditor General.

With respect to 3(a), again, this is a technology solution. I can say that the information on our current database, it would be challenging to get an accurate picture of wait times, again, part of the reason being because a number of families that are on the list

already have a daycare space. The wait times are affected by geographical area. So some areas of the province we know have higher need than others and coverage of spaces isn't as high, so wait times are going to be higher there than they might be in the city of Winnipeg, for example.

So all of those things affect wait times. This—when we do our needs assessment for what a new data system might look like, this will be one of our highest priorities, how do we collect that data so that we can accurately monitor wait times.

Mr. Allum: Thank you for that.

I—it's the historian in me that asks. Having read a lot of Hansard in my life, it helps to put answers from one and answers from another into the same kind of order, so that's why I asked you to review that. So I appreciate you doing that.

The government had initially made a strong commitment to home-based daycare, but it seems to me, based on what I've heard from you today and other announcements, that that is an evolving idea and, in fact, moving toward child-care centres as well. And I was pleased to read that child-care centres will be included in new schools that will be built—not for another couple of years, and under a model that we don't exactly agree with—but I'm pleased to see that that will be continuing.

Can you tell us how many new daycare spaces were created in 2016-17?

Mr. Rodgers: Nine hundred and four.

Mr. Allum: So, if you could break that down, how many of those were in home-based, and how many of those were in child-care centres?

Mr. Rodgers: We can get a specific breakdown for you.

Mr. Allum: Thank you for that. I appreciate that.

And then what, if any, capital dollars were spent by the government on building child-care spaces in '16-17?

* (14:00)

Mr. Rodgers: Yes, so the most recent announcement was for over \$6 million to support 15 community-based capital projects for about 740 new child-care spaces.

Mr. Allum: But for clarity's sake, that's for '17-18, going forward, not what was spent in '16-17?

Mr. Rodgers: The commitment was for \$6 million; it will take some time for those capital projects to be built.

Mr. Allum: Just as a final note, I just wanted to thank the deputy and Ms. Rattray, the assistant deputy, for their answers today.

Mr. Chairperson: Seeing no further questions on—
[interjection]

Seeing no further questions on this particular report, I'd now like to recommend that we move on to the Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations, 2015, section 3—Special audit: Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. But I see that we're coming up to the one hour that we had allotted the committee to complete its work, so I'd like to see if there's a will of the committee to consider sitting longer.

Mr. Maloway: I would suggest we sit for an extra 10 minutes to pass the reports.

Mr. Helwer: I'd recommend we sit for another hour, and, if we're done early, then we can rise. Otherwise, we're going to be revisiting every 10 minutes.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. All right. Is there agreement to sit for an hour unless the work of the committee is completed earlier? [Agreed]

All right. Now I'll open the floor for questions on section 3—Special audit: Society for Manitobans with Disabilities.

Mr. Allum: So what is the status of the implementation of the recommendations that were included in the report?

Mr. Rodgers: I just need to find a different package of information.

So there are four outstanding recommendations that are considered to be in progress. I think it would be our view that we have fully implemented two of the four. One of them was a recommendation that the department improve co-ordination between the three areas that monitor compliance and, specifically, clearly identify who is responsible to follow up on concerns. I think we've made a number of steps to do that. I think that not long after starting this position, I recognized that there was some duplication and overlap between various components of the department, in particular, the program area versus our Agency Accountability unit.

So we have created a couple of protocols. One of them is our Agency Accountability and Support Unit communication and procedure manual. What this does is it clearly sets out the responsibility and scope of work for that unit in doing financial reviews of agencies, so that isn't duplicated by work that the program area is doing.

We've created an Agency Accountability unit in the division that funds disability organizations and have recently hired a director to head up that unit with five professional staff. So they would be responsible for the—more of the quality assurance and support of agencies on the program side. So we've clarified that.

We have narrowed the mandate of the AASU somewhat by taking things like poverty reduction out of the responsibility of that unit so that they can focus more clearly on financial reviews and service purchase agreements with agencies.

So we've done a number of things and—to sort of sort out those responsibilities. If we were to conduct a broader review with an agency that had both program and financial components, we would create a team of program expertise and financial expertise.

We are working very collaboratively with agencies at the outset of any review in that we are drafting terms of reference, and we bring agencies in to work on those terms of reference before we launch any sort of review. And, as part of that preparatory process, we're clearly explaining to agencies the role of the financial versus the program staff in the department.

Mr. Allum: I thank you for that. That's very, very helpful.

Was the SMD, Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, required to develop a strategic plan, and has that been completed?

Mr. Rodgers: Staff within my department have been working with the SMD to create their strategic plan. They had made considerable progress with the SMD with the former CEO who retired in February of 2016, so that kind of brought that work to a temporary halt. They hired a new CEO in March 2017. We have been in regular contact with the new CEO since that time. The new CEO is of the view that he would like to have a broader look at the structure and organization of the SMD family of organizations as part of that strategic planning process, so the plan is not yet in place.

The new CEO has indicated he would hope to have this work done and the plan in place for the spring of 2018.

Mr. Allum: I thank you for that. I suppose it's probably worth it for the committee to hear from the Auditor General on—at this stage—what is the Auditor's response, or how does the Auditor view the progress the department has made on this particular report and what from the audit department—Auditor General's point of view, is left outstanding and needs to be addressed going forward?

Mr. Ricard: So this is another one of our reports that it underwent three follow-ups. This was the last one of that series, so it's May 2015.

As the deputy noted, there are four outstanding recommendations. He talked about the progress on one but not two, eight, and 13, so all I can report is the progress as at the date of our follow-up.

I must say, though, I am pleased to hear the deputy talk about the new CEO looking at the organization structure; when we did the audit, we found it complex, to say the least, and problematic. Certainly, some of our findings dealt with the governance issues that came out of the governance structure, so it's good to hear that it's potentially being looked at to resolve the problems that we had identified back then.

So, unless the deputy wanted to continue talking about the progress being made with recommendations two, eight, and 13, I have nothing really more to add. We're not planning on doing another follow-up. It's done. Again, it's one of those that I would suggest is in the hands of the Public Accounts Committee. If you're interested, when I go through the four, I identify two what I would call higher priority recommendations, and those were recommendation one that the deputy indicates is now implemented, and that was that the department improve co-ordination between the three areas to mark their compliance and, specifically, could identify who's responsible to follow-up on concerns, so I'm pleased to hear that significant progress has been made on that front.

The other one I would suggest is the other one the deputy talked about is on strategic planning, recommendation eight, and that was that the Alliance Board ensure that the strategic plans are regularly documented and updated.

So I think, again, it's important for any facility like that to have a strategic plan that is updated

periodically, so I would view those two as priority recommendations for the PAC to pursue.

Mr. Allum: So, if I understand the Auditor General correctly, he did touch on recommendation eight, but not on two and 13, so perhaps for the benefit of committee you could do so now.

Mr. Rodgers: Yes. So, on recommendation No. 2, my department has completed and implemented a document that clearly sets out what administrative costs will be funded by the department. It lists over 20 categories of administrative-type costs that will be funded in—not just the SMD, but agencies like the SMD; also sets out what doesn't qualify as an administrative cost and won't be funded through the department. So this document is now in place.

* (14:10)

Mr. Chairperson: I'm sorry to interrupt, Mr. Rodgers. Is that a document for tabling or that could be tabled for the committee?

Mr. Rodgers: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, I appreciate that.

Mr. Rodgers: We can table it for sure.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. So I'll just ask if the clerks can—and the page can assist in making copies just so that we have that in front of us. But please proceed otherwise.

Mr. Rodgers: Recommendation 13, again my staff have been in fairly regular contact with the new chief executive officer, around the development of standards. There's still more work to be done, but we believe that approximately 70 per cent of the SMD's policies have been updated and are currently online, and the CEO indicates that he would expect the rest to be reviewed and updated and online by the end of December of this year.

Mr. Chairperson: Any further questions? Seeing none, I'll suggest, then, that the committee move on to our final item for consideration this afternoon, which is the follow-up of December 2006 report with regards to devolution: Pre-Devolution Child in Care Processes and Practices, dated September 2012.

And I will open the floor to questions on that report.

Mr. Allum: So I think it would be useful for the committee to—and the deputy may well have touched on this already—but to provide us with sort of

the overall status of the implementation of the recommendations.

Mr. Rodgers: I believe on this report there are 14 of the recommendations that are still in progress, as of last report of which we feel we've addressed five, and five are ongoing.

Are there any in particular you'd like to focus on or?

Mr. Allum: No, I don't think so. It was just a matter of kind of getting a handle on just the overall picture to date. So it sounded to me, if I'd followed your math there, that there are maybe four or five that you weren't going to be acting on at all?

Mr. Rodgers: Four or five that are in progress.

Mr. Allum: So there were 14 in total? *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Rodgers.

Mr. Rodgers: Yes. Sorry, so I believe the way we would say is, of the 14, we feel five have been fully resolved. We feel there's another four or five that are resolved in a way that is ongoing work, and then another five that are still in progress that we have additional work to do.

Mr. Allum: I appreciate, thank you.

So maybe it would be beneficial, then, to—if you could just tell us about those that have yet to be acted on, and what the game plan is for those going forward.

Mr. Rodgers: So what I'll do is I'll maybe do a combination. I'll report on those that we feel are complete and ongoing as well as some that we're still working on.

So the Auditor General made a number of reports about strategic planning in the development of outcome measures. The division and department did complete a comprehensive strategic plan in 2014. We are in the process of updating that.

I can also tell you that the four authorities, as part of their work in responding to the Hughes inquiry, have developed a new strategic practice framework that will form part of that ongoing strategic plan. We have a list—developed a list of outcome measures that we will be tracking. I think it needs to be expanded on given the work done by the authorities.

So I think this is one where we've made considerable progress, but it's like strategic planning is a live process and goes on each year and requires

updating and things like that. So I would say that we have met the expectations laid out in the Auditor General's recommendation, but work is still continuing as this is an evolving process.

Mr. Allum: I appreciate that. Thank you. It's not easy over many years to tease all of these things apart, and so I appreciate you doing that.

One of the directions that we had—we, our government, had committed to was trying to adapt the customary-care model as much as possible, and a pilot project, as I know you're aware, had occurred at Sagkeeng First Nation. Will—is it the government's intention to expand the customary-care model to other parts of the province?

Mr. Fielding: Yes, the commitment that we made through the Throne Speech was to develop a comprehensive reform plan for the CFS system, I guess, if you will. And so we are currently working on that, and we anticipate making announcements of where we go in terms of any legislative changes plus also focuses of the department. So that is work that's almost done and will be reported on and announced fairly soon.

Mr. Allum: Thank you, I think, for that.

The Circle of Care project, the pilot project, generated a number of recommendations without committing the hand of where the government seems to be going. Did the government accept the recommendations that were—came from the Circle of Care project—pilot?

Mr. Rodgers: Yes, we are—the department has created a dedicated resource, which we have a staff person who over the last three to four months has been focusing her work on consultations with communities around customary care, how the pilot project has worked and any recommendations that come from community about how customary care can work in the future, including what legislation might look like. So she has recently provided me with a status report on her work. There'll be a phase 2 of consultation.

So we've tried to create some dedicated support for consulting with these communities and looking at pilots and their recommendations.

Mr. Allum: The report itself, when it was first done, of course, looked at devolution overall. Is the—still the government's commitment to continue on with devolution and what it might look like—and it's

probably for the minister—what it might look like in the future?

Mr. Fielding: Well, again, you know, without, you know, going into the policies that haven't been fully approved by government yet, I can't get into too many details, but I can say a number of things. We think that there's a number of priorities that we need to take. We need to look at early intervention. We looked at prevention type of models we think make some sense. You mentioned Circle of Care. There's also a model up in Nelson House I think that's been fairly successful that's part of it. So we see some areas that, you know, have been more effective as well.

We also see some focus, more focus, on permanence. I think I've talked in the House a little bit about that. You have a number of children that are permanent wards of Child and Family Services, you know; so the definition of that, of course, being in the system for two years and longer. So a number of our policies around that will—one of the areas we'll focus in on—that—getting parents back together with their children as well as creating permanent attachments. I just generally think that there is, through the CFS system over the years, you know, you'll have children that are going back and forth from foster care to foster care. So, if you can build the capacity, not just through legislation, but through focuses in terms of what you want to do for more permanence, it's a process that I think will make a difference for children through the CFS system.

So part of our funding will—part of our reforms will definitely focus on those particular areas. Not sure if that totally answers your question, but.

Ms. Klassen: Yes, I was just going to point out the—I'm losing my voice—but we all unanimously agreed to my resolution, and it was based on the Nisichawayasihk Nelson House Cree Nation model of apprehending the parents as opposed to apprehending the children. But you kind of answered

my question already, so I appreciate that we're still moving towards that goal.

* (14:20)

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. Seeing no further questions on this report, we'll move now to consideration of those reports.

Shall the Auditor General's report—sorry; now I'm going to go in chronological order starting with the oldest just to—the oldest report, just to confuse everyone, so start at the newest and end at the oldest and now the other way.

Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Our December 2006 Report: Audit of the Child and Family Services Division Pre-Devolution Child in Care Processes and Practices, dated September 2012—pass.

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of section 3—Special audit: Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, of the Auditor General's report—follow-up of recommendations, dated May 2015? *[Agreed]*

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program of the Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2017? *[Agreed]*

This concludes the business before us. Before we rise it would be appreciated if members would leave behind any unused copies of reports so that they may be collected and reused at the next meeting.

The hour being 2:22, what is the will of committee?

Some Honourable Members: Committee rise.

Mr. Chairperson: Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 2:21 p.m.

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