

**ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**

**QUESTION 748-18(2): BUSING FOR JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

**May 25, 2017**

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, information provided by the department indicates that busing for JK is not mandatory. Could I just confirm with the Minister that this information is correct? Thank you.

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

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know our discussions with education authorities, we did have those discussions that it's not mandatory and that education authorities have the discretion to reallocate some of the funding that the department provides to them to offset some of the costs that are associated with busing, so that will be up to the district education authorities as well as the education councils. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I'd like to ask the Minister why busing is mandatory for other grades, but it's not mandatory for JK.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** It's not mandatory for any grades. As I've mentioned, it is at the discretion of the education authorities and councils to decide if they are going to reallocate for busing to provide busing services to their students. It is not mandatory for any grades at this point. However, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that our department is committed and continues to work with education authorities to address the busing situation when it comes to junior kindergarten students.

**MS. GREEN:** We are talking about a great deal of money here in terms of busing in Yellowknife. We are talking about a combined total of \$500,000 for Yellowknife Catholic Schools and YK1. This is not a small portion of anyone's budget. What is the Minister going to do to offset that cost?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** I am not sure where the Member is getting her numbers from. We still have to wait and see how many junior kindergarten students, four-year-olds, are going into the school program, and then we can continue to work with the education authorities to find a solution and find ways that we can cover the costs once those numbers are established.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advise the Minister that the figures come from the school boards. That is where they come from. So what I cannot get my head around is, if this is a universal program, if JK is a universal program, how can the Minister opt out of paying for it? Thank you.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** In all respect, I believe the Member is mistaken. The

department is committed to covering those costs once we find those costs, and we are going to continue working with the education authorities and councils to get those exact numbers, and we will be committed to covering the cost when we get those exact figures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.