

Review of Aurora College Social Work Program

(Yellowknife, NT) October 9, 2018 - A report containing analysis and recommendations on Aurora College's Social Work Diploma Program reveals that the program could be transitioned into a degree program and offered in the polytechnic university recommended by the recent Aurora College Foundation Review.

A copy of the report (attached) was obtained through an access to information request filed by Julie Green, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Yellowknife Centre.

"The report provides comprehensive analysis and a roadmap for the advancement of this vital program offering," Green says. "The number of graduates from a BSW program will increase if students don't have to take third and fourth year-level courses in their first year, which is what happens now in the diploma program."

"The demand for social workers is strong and shows no sign of diminishing according to Education, Culture and Employment's 15-year forecast, with 158 new social workers needed by 2030," says Green. "Are we going to fill those with a revolving turn-over of southern hires, or are we going to continue training our own residents who know the realities of NWT life?"

The report enumerates the program's many strengths including the necessary context for northern social work practice. It provides a strong foundation for further improvement that would benefit other programs, such as nursing, on a cost-effective basis. "The remaining social work program instructors should be directed to create an implementation plan for the next school year based on the recommendations."

"The contract for the report was let a year after the College made the decision to cut the program yet the report says its purposes are to determine how well the program meets students' and employers' needs, and to develop recommendations to improve it," Green says. The report was undertaken independently from the Aurora College Foundational Review by Crowe MacKay in Yellowknife and delivered in April.

"It's clear that the decision to axe the program was not evidence based except on the basis of cost per graduate. The Executive Council pressured the College to cut program expenditures in order to pile up cash for capital projects."

"So once again, roads trump housing, roads trump hospitals, and roads trump education. When are we going to make investments in the NWT's people a priority?"

“I’m looking forward to the October session of the Legislative Assembly, when I hope to get a new decision from a new minister, in keeping with the many progressive recommendations of this report and of the Aurora College Foundational Review.”

For more information, please contact:

Julie Green

MLA Yellowknife Centre

P: 867-767-9143 ext. 12180 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784

E: julie_green@gov.nt.ca