



Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Monday afternoon, October 27, 2025

Day 2

The Honourable Ric McIver, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 31st Legislature

Second Session

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Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)
Brar, Gurinder, Calgary-North East (NDP)
Brar, Gurtej Singh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)
Calahoo Stonehouse, Jodi, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
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United Conservative: 47

New Democrat: 38

Independent: 2

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Monday, October 27, 2025

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Hon. members, let us pray.

Prayers

The Speaker: Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our King and his government, to Members of the Legislative Assembly, and to all in positions of responsibility the guidance of Your spirit. May they never lead the province wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideals but, laying aside all private interests and prejudices, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all. Amen.

Hon. members, as is our custom, we pay tribute to members and former members of this Assembly who have passed away since we last met.

Mr. Alexander Duncan McEachern

The Speaker: Alex McEachern was elected as the Alberta New Democratic Party Member for Edmonton-Kingsway in 1986, serving two terms until 1993. He was chief opposition whip for four years, from 1989 to 1993. Born in the Peace River district, Mr. McEachern grew up helping on the family farm. He worked in various trades before earning a bachelor of education in 1965 and a bachelor of arts and mathematics in 1972, both from the University of Alberta. His teaching career took him to England and Australia, and he spent 14 years teaching in Edmonton prior to his election.

A long-time member of the Alberta New Democratic Party, Mr. McEachern served as provincial party treasurer from 1976 to 1983 and chaired the party's education policy committee. He ran for office with a simple message: we must plan carefully if the future is to fulfill its promise. After his legislative service he remained actively involved in public service and political life, earning such honours as the Alberta centennial medal in 2005 and the Queen Elizabeth II platinum jubilee medal in 2022.

Alex McEachern passed away in August of 2025 at the age of 85. In a moment of silent prayer I ask you to remember Alex McEachern as you may have known him. Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him. Amen.

Hon. members, it being the first sitting day of the week, we will now be led in the singing of our national anthem by Michael Peters. I invite all to participate in the official language of their choice.

Hon. Members:

O Canada, our home and native land!
True patriot love in all of us command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker: The Legislative Assembly is grateful to be situated on Treaty 6 territory. This land has been the traditional region of the Métis people of Alberta, the Inuit, and ancestral territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, Iroquois, and Nakota Sioux

people. The recognition of our history on this land is an act of reconciliation, and we honour those who walk with us. We also acknowledge that the province of Alberta also exists within treaties 4, 7, 8, and 10 territories and the Métis Nation of Alberta.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: Hon. members, seated in my gallery today are good friends of Alex McEachern, former member Ray Martin and his wife, Evelyn David. Ray Martin was a prominent Alberta politician who led the Alberta New Democratic Party from 1984 to 1994 and served as Leader of the Official Opposition from 1984 to 1993. He represented Edmonton-Norwood and later Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview as an MLA, and he also served as an Edmonton public school board trustee. I ask that they both please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

I'm pleased to introduce to you the hon. Nick Milliken, former member of this Assembly and former Minister of Mental Health and Addiction. I invite you to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Michael Peters joined the LAO's visitor services in 2022, standing as a tour guide and now serving as a public services assistant. He credits his musical talent to his grandmother, who taught him piano in grade 3, and has since performed in various choirs and bands, including the University of Saskatchewan's wind orchestra. Michael, please rise and receive the thanks of the Assembly.

I am pleased to introduce to you another former colleague of mine from a lifetime before this, former Calgary city council alderman John Mar and his daughter, Olivia. John was elected twice to city council and served from 2007 to 2013. I invite you both to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Hon. members, as many members are aware, this past summer saw many upgrades completed in this Legislature Chamber. Some of these changes are visible, such as the new members' microphones and refinished desktops, but much of the work that was completed was to the hidden cabling and infrastructure located behind the scenes that most of us will never see. This work started shortly after the Assembly adjourned in May and was completed only a few weeks ago. Some members of the hard-working team that completed this work have joined us today. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I ask them to stand as I call their names: Roly Paradis from Showtech, Stan Konig from Showtech, Nathan Paradis from Showtech, Amanda Robinson from Showtech, Chris Hicks from Showtech, Shaneil Prasad from VWMason, Cole Haaf from Sapphire integration, Brandon Erbacker from Sapphire integration, Val Rutherford from the LAO, and Ian Trace from the LAO. Thank you.

The Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services.

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Jung-Suk Ryu, president and CEO of the National accessArts Centre. The National accessArts Centre is Canada's largest and leading disability art organization, empowering artists with disabilities to create, train, and showcase their work. I would ask that Jung-Suk rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise today and introduce three teachers who are here visiting for today's Assembly: David Bellinger, Jacob Fencott, and Bailey Troccoli-Hughes. I ask that they rise and receive the very warm welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

The Speaker: St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you two teachers, James Grondin, a public school teacher, and from St. Albert another one, Karlee Hren, teacher at Ellerslie campus and vice-president of communications for ATA local 37. Finally, high school student Owen Colwell: he's from Sturgeon county. I ask them all to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Edmonton-North West.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you a number of CUPE I believe mostly education assistants: Lily Zhang, Wendy Herman, Mandy Lamoureux, Rachelle Morgado, and Chrissy Nickel. They stand here in solidarity with the teachers.

The Speaker: Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have three guests here representing CUPE: Jackie Roe, Rachel Roe, and Samantha Poudrier. I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Calgary-Buffalo.

Member Ceci: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Member for Edmonton-Glenora it's my privilege to introduce teachers Morgan Fewer, Lee Hrycun, Daniel Pietraszewski, Marc Swerda, Kim St. André, and Lori Hill, and student Raven Hill. Please stand up and receive the warm recognition of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Calgary-Klein.

Member Tejada: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you five individuals who are impacted by everything education: Hardeep, D'Javon, Zaremba Cameron, all teachers; Brandi, a parent; Kevin. If you could all please rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

The Speaker: Camrose.

Ms Lovely: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to introduce to you and through you four teachers from my Camrose constituency: Chelsea, Kelsie, Kyle, and Katherine. Would you please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Chamber. Alberta remains committed to recognizing the work teachers do to support the growth and education of our youth.

The Speaker: Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Ms Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise and introduce to you and through you a number of teachers and their supporters as well as two new elected trustees. We have Linda, Nickela, Chantel, Jessica, Carmen, Janet, Margaret, Dylan, Charlotte, Berlin, Kara, Rebecca, Norma, Christine, and Liam. If they could all please stand up and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

The Speaker: Calgary-Acadia.

Member Batten: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce through you and to you some amazing teachers and some students who have come today. Geraldine Rothwell, Shane Kermode, Shannon Galloway, Megan Zaremba, Sarah Wilson, Christina Leung, Jared MacLeod, Katherine Leeb: wonderful teachers. And some students: Quin Bergman, Carly Vos, Charlie and Katrina Cardinal. Please rise to receive the welcome from the Assembly.

Member Irwin: I'm honoured to introduce some incredible teachers today. Four teachers from Highlands school, Erin Langager, Fiona Burns, Stephanie Johnson, and Meryl Roberts; teachers from Belvedere elementary, Michelle Facette and Kim Vickruck; Shannon Dunsmuir with Black Gold in Leduc; and Jody Hancock-Conner from école Westlock elementary. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House. We stand with teachers.

The Speaker: The Minister of Children and Family Services.

Mr. Turton: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly some good friends of mine, Tim Schindel and Rick Hamilton with Leading Influence. We had a great conversation over breakfast this morning about the incredible work that they're doing to help support elected officials throughout the entire province of Alberta. Please rise and accept the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Haji: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly Linda Lindsay – Linda is a school board trustee elect, and she won 70 per cent of the votes – Audrey-Anne Orr, who is a teacher, and Owen Holloway, a teacher in my constituency. I ask all of them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Members' Statements

The Speaker: Calgary-Lougheed.

Oil and Gas Production

Mr. Bouchard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This province has been built by oil and gas. On this side of the House we're proud of the innovation, the commitment, and hard work that has gone into pulling the most responsibly produced energy in the world out of the ground. I cannot say the same for the opposition. Our oil will continue to drive not just Alberta's economy but Canada's for decades to come. Most reputable forecasters now push global energy growth to 2040 and beyond. This demand will not fall off a cliff afterwards, especially with more than 6,000 uses for bitumen beyond combustion. Beyond uses, it's about what our oil can do for us. It builds our hospitals, our schools, our roads, employs hundreds of thousands of Albertans, and lifts First Nations out of poverty. We have a goal of doubling our production.

The problem is the nine bad laws installed by the Trudeau government, which have been cheered by the Alberta NDP and were designed to keep our oil in the ground. Those laws are still there. They have chased away tens of billions of dollars in investment in energy infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. Industry has stated time and time again: the only reason there is no business case is because of these unconstitutional laws. The Trans Mountain pipeline expansion has proven the demand for our oil with record exports, but it will soon be at capacity.

Our Premier, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and Minister of Indigenous Relations have announced that we will do the preliminary work to prove the business case and the positive impacts of a pipeline to Canada's northwest coast. It will then be up to private industry in partnership with Indigenous communities to build the pipeline. This pipeline can turn Canada into an energy superpower, and we are proud to lead the way, Mr. Speaker.

Support for Teachers

Ms Wright: Mr. Speaker, many folks know that I'm a teacher. So were my mom, grandmother, and great-grandfather. I didn't become a teacher just because of them, though. I became one because of Miss Riddell, Mr. Muir, and Miss Schiller, too. Teaching is an act of hope. Every September teachers open their doors and see the promise of public education and what it can mean for students, families, and our future. With nothing more than a raised eyebrow and a teacher voice, rooms full of kids are quiet, dollar-store supplies become science, and tough days can turn around.

This is a profession grounded in reality, and right now reality is sounding alarms: overflowing classrooms, not enough textbooks or desks, curriculum rolled out without resources, more testing, teachers leaving, not enough subs, and students, especially those who need more, slipping through cracks. For years teachers have told truth to a government that blames instead of believes, that funds attack ads instead of classrooms. Government should applaud teachers for MacGyvering their way through chronic underfunding, but instead we hear about irreparable harm. Yet it is this UCP government that's done the harm, cutting per student funding by thousands, slashing PUF, laying off EAs, and now refusing to track class sizes and calling teachers' demands unreasonable one day yet confusing the next.

Teachers' asks are clear: smaller classes, wages that keep pace with inflation, and real supports for complexity. Because they're teachers, they've even made a plan. Teachers deserve fairness and respect, but this government doesn't bargain in good faith. It chases its own predetermined outcome. Instead of negotiating, the UCP tables back-to-work legislation, threatening rights instead of upholding them. Those are their choices. Ours are different: to stand with teachers, students, and families every single step of the way. Solidarity.

EpiPen Availability

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak on an issue that affects thousands of Albertans and their families, one that is both deeply personal and urgent to me. I'm proud to have introduced and seen the passage of Bill 201, a vital piece of legislation that ensures every school in Alberta stocks epinephrine auto-injectors.

1:50

This legislation mandates that schools have policies to reduce risks, train staff, and respond quickly in emergencies. It also requires school boards to develop anaphylaxis policies, provide regular training, and create care plans for students with severe allergies. Most importantly, it allows staff to administer epinephrine in emergencies even without prior consent. These steps can truly save lives.

Building on this foundation, I was equally proud to support Motion 518, which calls for a government review to expand access to epinephrine auto-injectors to school buses, businesses, fire departments, and emergency services. I want to thank the Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services for her ongoing

support of this initiative. Severe allergic reactions can happen suddenly and without warning, making wider access to these life-saving devices essential for protecting our communities.

Sadly, a recent tragedy in British Columbia reminds us of just how urgent the issue remains. A young person suffered a severe allergic reaction while away from home and without access to an EpiPen. Despite immediate efforts to call emergency services and provide care, the reaction proved fatal. This heartbreaking event has left a family and a community in mourning. My deepest sympathies go out to all those affected by the loss. This tragedy is a painful reminder of the daily risks faced by people that have life-threatening allergies. No family should ever have to endure such a loss. It strengthens my resolve to continue advocating for stronger policies and increase awareness and expand access to life-saving medication. There's more work to be done, and I remain committed to work alongside my colleagues, health professionals, and communities to ensure that no family faces such a loss ever again.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: Hon. members, the first question, the first question they've ever asked in this House, goes to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

School Class Sizes

Mr. Nenshi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great and humbling honour to rise for the very first time in this Chamber, and for my first question, well, we'll start easy. Teachers have been ringing the alarm bell about class size and complexity for years, yet this government did not include these conversations in any of their negotiations with teachers and, in fact, explicitly excluded them from their mediation offer. The simple question is: does the Premier now believe that class size and complexity are a problem in public education, and when did she come to this realization?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see the opposition leader. I'm sure when we were both 20 years old, when we shared a class that was moderated by Peter Loughheed, we never expected to be standing across from each other.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we know that class sizes are a problem. That's why today we have announced that we are going to be establishing a complexity and class size task force with members of trustees, superintendents, also teachers, education assistants, and others who can help us go through and find the classes that are oversized and overly complex so that we can develop targeted solutions in order to be able to address it.

Mr. Nenshi: You know, Mr. Speaker, this government loves its task forces, but we don't need a task force on this. We just need to understand what's happening and listen to teachers. I could go on forever, and I probably will later today, about what we've heard from teachers. The elementary school teacher in southeast Calgary, who has three students who require being within arm's length of a grown-up at all times plus 42 other students in a grade 4 classroom with no EAs: yet for years the government wouldn't even talk about class size, and indeed this government stopped reporting on it. Why hasn't the Premier acted long before now?

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We need to report on class sizes in a different way because the Auditor General found that the \$2 billion spent by that government actually didn't result in any

meaningful reduction in class sizes. They went up from 18.4 average class size to 20.4. So we're going to go through, and we're going to be systematic. We're going to look at the 158 schools that are overpopulated, get down to the individual classroom, look at the individual classroom complexity, and we're going to work with the school boards to assign the teachers and education assistants they need.

Mr. Nenshi: Well, the new way of reporting on class size is pretty easy. I'll save you the task force: report on class size, and don't hide the information.

Parents across this province are worried. They're worried that their kids aren't getting the best public education in Canada, let alone in the world. They're worried that with huge class sizes, an ideological curriculum, more complexity, and unsafe schools, our kids are falling further and further behind. So rather than pretend that this is a new issue, we need to act. Why has the Premier abandoned Peter Lougheed's dream of Alberta having the best public education system in the world?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We just announced this morning that we will be reporting on class sizes, so we have an area of agreement with the Leader of the Opposition on day one. That's very promising.

I should also say that when I came in, I looked at where we were at with the amount of money being spent on education, with some of the changes that had been made, and we have made a number of changes that have increased funding 33 per cent since '21-22. That is more than inflation, more than student population growth, and we're going to do a lot more, Mr. Speaker, with this new agreement that we're going to have with the teachers.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition for the second set of questions.

Support for Public Education

Mr. Nenshi: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. You know, I've just been thinking that you and I have known one another for some two decades, and I'm not sure we would have imagined this either.

The Speaker: Hon. member, you're new here. One should never bring the Speaker into debate, even in the friendliest, kindest sort of way. Okay? Please start again.

Mr. Nenshi: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm really thrilled to hear from the Premier – this is a new thing – that she has actually committed to fixing some of her government's own mistakes. Now, I just want to read the Premier a simple quote here, and the quote is, "We need to phase out every government-run, union-controlled public school." That's a pretty shocking thing for anyone to say, and I'm curious if the Premier agrees with that quotation.

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we're sharing quotes, I guess I can quote from the letter from the hon. member to hon. Jason Copping when he was minister of labour and immigration. One of the things he announced was that although this would be an extraordinary measure, council believes that targeted and time-limited action on the issue of freezing wages and opening up and violating collective bargaining is in the interests of the city of

Calgary. I would say that we don't support that kind of union-busting language.

Mr. Nenshi: The Premier is a remarkable deflector. I know that this is question period, not answer period, but let's try this again. When the Premier wrote those words herself, she'd already been a schoolboard trustee, fired; she'd already been the leader of the opposition, crossed the floor, lost her nomination meeting; and she was at that time a well-known media commentator, fired later. She wasn't naïve. She wasn't new to this. She wrote those words just a couple years before she jumped back into politics. Does she still believe that public education should be defunded and destroyed?

The Speaker: The Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ninety-three per cent of all parents choose to send their kids to a local public or Catholic or francophone school. We, unlike the member opposite, actually support all education choices. I know that he and his party want to defund independent schools, which would mean limiting the options for those of Sikh faith, of Muslim faith, of Jewish faith, of Christian faith. We also have a number of schools that support kids with special needs like Renfrew Academy. I guess the member opposite would like us to shut down Renfrew Academy as well. That's pretty remarkable. We don't support that.

Mr. Nenshi: That answer indicates that indeed the Premier doesn't believe in public education. Let's give her one more chance to correct the record. If Albertans can't trust what the Premier wrote before, how can they trust what she says today? Under the Premier's watch, public education funding has fallen to the lowest per capita in the nation. Meanwhile the Premier has written that 95 per cent of public school graduates receive "no capacity to think." In 2018 Alberta students ranked in the top five in the world in reading and science and math, before this government. Does the Premier still believe this?

2:00

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, I imagine we're going to play this parlour game of me quoting the member opposite and him quoting me, because he also has a very long history in public life and probably some things that he wouldn't defend now that he's got a new party banner of orange rather than purple, that he's been running under over the last number of years.

This government stands on its action: \$8.6 billion for new school construction, 130 new schools by 2030. We are going to be giving up to a 17 per cent pay increase to teachers. Three thousand new teachers, 3,000 new education assistants: that's the record of this government.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition for the third set of questions.

Mr. Nenshi: Oh, Mr. Speaker, I'm not afraid of my record. I will put my record up against this government's record every day and three times on Sundays.

Collective Bargaining with Teachers

Mr. Nenshi: Speaking of their record, teachers signalled very openly more than two years ago that they needed to negotiate class sizes and complexity to come to a deal. The government ignored them. When teachers overwhelmingly rejected the deal in the spring, the government had all summer to come up with a counter-offer. Instead, they took summer vacation. They sent the teachers

back the same deal with the COVID results. Why did the Premier engineer this strike?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A shame about that burst water pipe in Calgary that was ignored for years under the member opposite's leadership when it could have been addressed. I'm looking forward to sharing conversations about previous records.

When it comes to the issue of classroom complexity and classroom size, the member opposite . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Members, we heard the question just fine. Let's hear the answer as well.

Ms Smith: The member opposite well knows that we are the funding partner in education and we give dollars to local school boards, 61 of them, so that they can make their own choices about whether they need to hire teachers or education assistants or make some other choices in how they spend their dollars getting the professionals that they need. What we have heard from school boards is that they do not want to be hemmed in on . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Nenshi: The Premier will go on and on about things that happened long after I was mayor, things that happened before I was mayor, but in reality she needs to defend her own record and apologize for her own mistakes, and one of those mistakes was on this deal. Everything we're about to go through today was completely avoidable. The government had two years to make a reasonable offer to teachers. Instead, they made the same offer, threw in a free COVID shot. Honestly, what did they think was going to happen? It's very clear they engineered this strike, so why did the Premier want the teachers to go on . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member has it exactly opposite. The ATA leadership: we came to an agreement at the table. They took it to their members. They came to an agreement a second time with enhancements to it, a \$300 million enhancement to hire 3,000 more teachers, hire 1,500 more education assistants. They were the ones who threw in the COVID shot, and we happily agreed to that. If that's not what teachers wanted, that's on the ATA leadership. What we have been asking from the beginning is for the ATA leadership to tell us what it is the teachers want and come to the table in good faith. We had hoped that that would happen through mediation. It didn't.

Mr. Nenshi: The teachers have been exceedingly clear on what they're looking for. They've even made infographics for the government to better understand them. This government refuses to accept responsibility for anything. Former Conservative education minister David King said on Friday, "the current government is abandoning democracy." In the throne speech the government called itself "the freest jurisdiction in Canada," but the government clearly doesn't believe in the Charter right to collective bargaining. So could the Premier please spell out for us today in the House which rights she'll defend and which ones she'll trample?

Ms Smith: Well, I don't know if David King is the person that the member opposite ought to be quoting since he wanted to end the Catholic Charter right, constitutional right to education, which we support because we support all educational options, Mr. Speaker.

As I had mentioned, we have put a deal on the table that will hire 3,000 more teachers, 1,500 more education assistants. One of the issues that, of course, we face is that we've got to target our support to individual classrooms. I'd encourage the member opposite to watch the video that Kris Sims just did with a teacher. She's got four classes with 31 kids in them. One of them has 16 kids who are coded or ELL. That's the classroom we need to fix.

Education Funding

Ms Pancholi: Mr. Speaker, Alberta parents want their kids back in the classroom, but they want those classroom conditions to be far better than they are now, with smaller class sizes and more supports. Instead, the UCP has spent the past three weeks refusing to talk about those very things. So, Alberta parents, it turns out the UCP locked your kids out of school for nothing. They're forcing teachers and your kids back to the same conditions that got us here in the first place. Will the minister of education explain to parents why in three weeks he couldn't come up with a single new offer to teachers to improve the classroom conditions that his government created?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to take the opportunity to inform Albertans that we hear their concerns when it comes to increased challenges in our classrooms and, more importantly, that we're going to work to address them and solve those issues. We've put an offer on the table. [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members, I'm about – I don't know – three metres away from that hon. member, and I can't really hear clearly what he's saying. I certainly heard the question fine. Let's hear the answer.

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, we'll be hiring 3,000 additional teachers and 1,500 EAs to help improve conditions in our classroom. As well, we're moving forward with the largest school capital build in Alberta history that will build and renovate 130 new schools. We will get the job done that they expect.

Ms Pancholi: Well, Mr. Speaker, you can forgive Albertans for not believing a word that comes out of the mouths of the most untrustworthy government in Alberta's history. The stories are everywhere – over 40 students in junior high and high school classes, 34 kids in kindergarten and grade 1 classes, 88 elementary students with support needs sharing six EAs, kids learning in the hallways without desks – but the minister of education has the nerve to say that class sizes don't matter. What an insult to Alberta parents, teachers, and students. Will the minister apologize for telling Albertans that kids learn just as well in hallways as they do in classrooms?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, that's a ridiculous comment. I never suggested that students are best positioned to learn in hallways. I'm sure the member will apologize. If the member cared to take a moment and look at the research with respect to class sizes, the member would know that class size limits are only effective in the K to 3 cohort when they're able to be below a 15-student level. That's the scientific information and research that exists today that's been widely recognized. That being said, we will be hiring additional teachers, we will be hiring more EAs because our students deserve the very best.

Ms Pancholi: It sounds like the minister once again said that class sizes don't matter. The funny thing about funding the education system properly so there are enough teachers and EAs to support all students: well, that's just the UCP's responsibility as government.

That's their actual job. Teachers shouldn't have to bargain for the UCP to do their job. Parents shouldn't have to rally on the steps of the Legislature to get the UCP to do their job. Students shouldn't have to miss school or be threatened by the Premier's staff to get the UCP to do their job. Will the minister of education admit that the reason his own constituents want to recall him from the Legislature is because he and his colleagues are not doing their jobs?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to have the opportunity to talk about the \$8.6 billion initiative that we've brought forward to build and modernize 130 new schools. I'm proud to talk about our changes to the funding formula, where we moved from a three-year weighted moving average to a two-year adjusted model that our school divisions were asking for. I'm happy to report that we're hiring more teachers, more EAs as our school divisions have asked for, and I'm proud to report that we'll be taking a deep dive into the issue of aggression and complexity in our classrooms because students deserve it and teachers should not be harassed for doing their job.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we haven't been here for a little while. Just a really quick reminder that we're past question 4. No preamble on the supplementary questions from now on.

With that happy news, the hon. Member for Calgary-Beddington.

2:10 Collective Bargaining with Teachers (continued)

Ms Chapman: This government prides itself on choosing to spend below population growth and inflation. When it comes to education, the result of that choice is the lowest funding per student in the country, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of support for complex learners. The latest offer to teachers includes a hiring rate more focused on keeping costs down than easing pressures in our classroom. To the minister: why did the UCP government go into negotiations with a predetermined position and zero intention to bargain in good faith with teachers?

The Speaker: The hon. Finance minister and President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. I think any time that you're bargaining from the position of the government of Alberta, you not only want to bargain in good faith, but you want fair deals, reasonable deals. I don't think anybody in this Chamber wants to see the good people of Alberta's public service in any way get an unfair deal. We don't want labour issues. We don't want retention and recruitment issues. We know that there's a certain level of pay that is required. We know where we compete for that labour. Look at the Ontario west average. This is what we try to do, come to a reasonable place.

Ms Chapman: Given that in the most recent budget the minister of education promised funding to hire 4,000 teachers, education assistants, and support staff over three years and given that in the most recent round of negotiation with teachers it's almost the exact same number as what was tabled in the budget, to the minister: since the offer to teachers is strikingly similar to what was already suggested in the budget, why has this government never been interested in bargaining in good faith with teachers?

The Speaker: The hon. Finance minister.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said before, we want to bargain in good faith with everybody. But I am glad that member brought forward some of the great things that were in Budget '25.

Even under extreme fiscal pressure and challenge for the province a lot of, you know, dedicated, scarce resources were put towards education even then. Four point four per cent population growth is a challenge for the province across the entire landscape: health care, our social safety net, and education. Knowing all that, much of that went into education, and now we're promising more.

Ms Chapman: Given that when it comes to those education assistants, the minister's offer works out to .7 of an EA per school, which will need to be divided among a dozen or more classrooms, given that works out to about 20 minutes of support per classroom per day, to the minister of education: is 20 minutes of an EA's time really the government's best suggestion to address classroom complexity, or is this just another sign that the UCP never intended to bargain in good faith with teachers?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, of course the member opposite is making some really general and wild assumptions about how the government would allocate teachers, how the government would allocate EAs. They're just assuming that there would be an equal distribution. As the Premier has noted, we want to make sure that we're able to look precisely at schools and classrooms that need additional assistance and we're able to direct resources to those classrooms where students need the additional help. That's going to be our approach because we firmly believe that every child should receive the support that they need.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 2:13.

West Coast Pipeline Proposal

Mr. Wiebe: Mr. Speaker, there's never been a bigger need for our ethically produced oil. We have \$9 trillion worth under our feet, and even Justin Trudeau once admitted that we would be stupid to leave it untouched. Then he put up a fortress of bad laws to keep it in the ground. However, Canadians from coast to coast to coast are onboard with building a pipeline to Canada's northwest coast. To the Minister of Energy and Minerals: what are we doing to get this done?

The Speaker: The hon. energy minister.

Mr. Jean: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. It's an exciting time, indeed. The need for a new pipeline to Canada's northwest coast has never been bigger and the challenges have never been higher, but we're going to get it done. We're acting as a proponent to develop and submit a formal application for a project of national significance to the federal major projects office. This is going to be a world-class pipeline to the coast that will turn us into a superpower. There's no question that private industry will sit down with our Indigenous friends right across the country and the two provinces and get this done.

The Speaker: Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indigenous peoples have previously been left out of important discussions. Given that their concerns about water and traditional ways of life have often been unaddressed, for the benefit of all members of this House can the Minister of Indigenous Relations please explain what steps are being taken to ensure their voices are being included and represented in conversations regarding the potential northwest coast pipeline?

The Speaker: The Minister of Indigenous Relations.

Mrs. Sawhney: Thank you to the hon. member for that question, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently attended the Nation2Nation forum in Kitimat, B.C., where I had the privilege of meeting leaders from multiple communities and beginning what I hope will be lasting relationships. In these conversations they emphasized the need for transparency and trust. Moving forward, I intend to ensure that these communities are meaningfully engaged and that their concerns are heard so that they directly benefit from economic opportunities.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for the answer. Given that all of these great impacts to Canada's economy are pushing us to energy superpower status and the pipeline's potential to drive investment to much-needed economic reconciliation to First Nations communities and given that 72 per cent of Canadians and 77 per cent of Albertans see the importance of new pipelines in Canada's economic future – we continue to struggle to be heard by Ottawa and B.C. – to the Minister of Energy and Minerals: what is the business case for this pipeline?

The Speaker: The hon. energy minister.

Mr. Jean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, there's no question. The business case is there. Trans Mountain proved that in just a few short months. Since the day TMX became operational, we've pumped out record levels of oil, and it's the most responsibly produced oil on the planet. Asia is, quite frankly, the biggest benefactor, but all around the world they want our heavy oil. They know it makes 6,000 products. They know it's ethically produced. We're committed to doubling our production. The challenge is that there are nine bad laws from the previous Prime Minister, and we're hoping this Prime Minister does something better, because he chased billions away in investment. We're getting billions back.

Support for Students during Teachers' Strike

Member Miyashiro: During the ongoing teachers' strike this government's only plan for parents was grade-inappropriate homework curricula. The government expected parents and families to teach it to kids for weeks rather than do their job and get a deal done with the teachers. Many parents in Lethbridge have told me that this UCP government failed them and their kids. Why has the minister of education failed to get a deal at the bargaining table with teachers?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, I was very happy that the hard-working individuals at Alberta education were able to put together some helpful resources to assist parents during this time of uncertainty. Our priority always is and will remain with our children to ensure that our children are not put in the middle of this labour disruption. That's why we created the parent tool kit, so that students can continue with their learning progression. Of course, student academic learning is significantly disrupted by the strike, and we want to do everything we can to mitigate that.

Member Miyashiro: Given that this government has all but admitted this entire strategy was preplanned and given that this government relentlessly attacked teachers in expensive ads and that, as the minister just said, they tasked their staff to build this curriculum, will the minister tell Albertans how much this government spent developing this homework curricula, and will he

admit that this waste of money would have been way better spent invested in public education?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm very disappointed to hear that the NDP believes that supporting students' academic progression is a waste of money. Students are... [interjections] They laugh about it. On this side we don't laugh about it. Our students deserve better. They deserve to be in the classroom. They deserve to be moving forward with their learning, to be with their friends and not be in the middle of this labour dispute. That's why our government is bringing forward the Back to School Act, so that our students can continue their learning and their support. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Member Miyashiro: Given that the UCP ran attack ads, blamed teachers, never took accountability for their failures in public education and given that parents feel abandoned by this government and are suffering from strain and financial loss due to this strike and given that voters in Calgary-Bow have filed a recall petition against the minister, something he himself once championed as totally fair, will the minister admit he's abandoned parents, students, and teachers and failed to do his job?

2:20

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, which one is it, Mr. Speaker? They don't want children to receive support through the tool kit, and then they complain that we've provided it. It can't be both ways. Our priority is to ensure that students are supported in the best possible way. The best possible way for students to be supported is to be back in school. They need to be back in school with their friends, with their teachers, learning, improving their social development, improving their mental health capabilities. Those are our priorities, and we will make sure we get the job done.

The Speaker: Hon. members, it's now the turn of Calgary-Currie.

Education Funding (continued)

Member Eremenko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The misinformation campaign continues from this government, attacking teachers and funded by taxpayer dollars. It's shameful. Despite the minister's attempt to discredit the Teachers' Association or to claim that class sizes don't matter, parents are not buying it. The waiting lists, hours-long bus ride, the lotteries for the community school, and the overflow to the overflow is damning. Does the minister think his government's spin will convince parents that the calamity facing our education system was all just a fever dream?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, there's no spin. I'm happy to talk at length about the work that this government is doing. If you want to hear spin, of course, just listen to the member who's talking about attack ads. I've certainly never seen any. I'm not sure what the member opposite is referring to.

When it comes to our record, Mr. Speaker, we are investing \$8.6 billion to build and renovate 130 new schools. When they were in government, they didn't make such an effort. In addition, we're funding to support our complex classrooms. We're funding to hire more teachers and more EAs. We will get the job done. I'm not sure how you want to spin an \$8.6 billion commitment to build and renovate schools, but I'm sure they'll find some creative way to do it.

Member Eremenko: Given that this strike is a testament that our education system is at a breaking point and teachers have clearly

had enough and given that parents desperately want their kids back in the classroom but only if it's safe and conducive to their mental health and learning success and given that many teachers are parents, too, whose salaries have not kept up with the soaring cost of living, does the minister agree with this side of the aisle that investing in our kids, this province's . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members, we heard the last answer; we'd like to hear this question. That member has the floor. Thank you.

Member Eremenko: Does the minister agree with this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that investing in our kids, this province's future, is worth it? Will he make the clarification between commitment and action?

Mr. Nicolaides: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. We will invest \$8.6 billion to build and renovate 130 new schools. We will invest more to hire more teachers. We will invest more to hire more EAs. We will invest more to improve classroom complexity. We will invest more to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. We'll invest more to support refugee students. We'll invest more to support students with English as an additional language.

An Hon. Member: When?

Mr. Nicolaides: I hear the member saying: when? Mr. Speaker, we already did so much of that in Budget '25, but there is more and more to come.

Member Eremenko: Mr. Speaker, I've heard of 52 kids in a math 10 class, so many students in a chem 20 class that it's a fire hazard, and affordable lunch programs ending because the cafeteria has become a classroom. Given that this is not what parents expect for their kids, especially not in this province, one that is so blessed with the abundant natural resources and prosperity and opportunity that we offer to all residents, my question to the minister is simple. How did the UCP government let it get so bad?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, as we know, when the members were in office, they drove people out of the province. They scared Albertans away. In fact, they even told them to go find work in other provinces. That's the record of the NDP. However, since our government has taken office, we've restarted the economy, and we've made Alberta a place of opportunity again. In fact, in just the last four years the student population has increased by 91,000 students. These are unprecedented levels. We recognize that, and we're taking the steps necessary to ensure that every student receives a world-class education.

The Speaker: We're not doing bad, but let's respect whoever is speaking at the time, please.

Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Municipal Governance and Funding

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canada has an infrastructure problem. Across the nation infrastructure like overpasses and water systems are becoming increasing concerns. The systems are aging and becoming susceptible to failure. The Bearspaw South Feeder Main in Calgary was over 50 years old and built under less stringent conditions when it collapsed. Many rural towns are looking at these types of investments that they just cannot afford. Ponoka is anticipating \$40 million just to rejuvenate sewage. Sundre is looking at \$28 million for infrastructure problem projections. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: how will our government address these issues of increasing costs?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Williams: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for his question. First of all, I want to thank every single councillor that got elected, mayors and reeves for putting their name forward, and all those who ran who didn't. It's an important part of community building in the recent election that we saw last Monday.

Now, to the member's question, of course we want to work with our municipal partners, whether that be RMA, AB Munis, mid-sized towns, mid-sized villages, mid-sized cities. These are all important bodies that we plan to work with. They have an important job to do. It's not our job, Mr. Speaker; they need to make sure that core services are provided, and anything that works to that end I am happy to work with them on. They are important key providers of services, and the province is their partner.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister. Given that many towns are surrounded by counties that are fiscally sound with tax bases supported by industries like agriculture and energy and given that counties are not financially supporting towns despite the services and other benefits townships provide to surrounding counties, to the same minister. There are specialized municipalities, most recently Lac La Biche, that enjoy their amalgamation and appear to be more stable now. Is this something that this government would support?

Mr. Williams: Mr. Speaker, members opposite might not appreciate how important this question is for sustainable municipalities in rural Alberta, but it is a key question for us. I'm open to any policy solution, whether it be new forms of finding infrastructure revenue from the feds or from private equity or talking about any way that we make ourselves more viable, like we've seen in Lac La Biche and in Strathcona county and, of course, Wood Buffalo as well. The member knows well. I'm open to anything that makes sure that we have sustainable municipalities for another century to come because these municipalities are the economic beating heart of our province across rural Alberta, and their sustainability is Alberta's growth.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that I believe in lean and efficient government that allocates spending towards front-line services that Albertans need and given that municipalities are an extension of our provincial jurisdiction and recognizing that specialized municipalities, like Wood Buffalo, demonstrate the efficiency of regional governments, again to the Minister of Municipal Affairs: if regional governments lead to smaller government, less administration, and more funds for front-line services and infrastructure, why doesn't the government simply legislate these regional governments?

Mr. Williams: Mr. Speaker, we already have within the MGA the ability for municipalities to choose to amalgamate where it makes sense for them, to find common resources and pull them together so that we can see rural and urban communities living in the same area where that town, that hamlet, or that village is the economic centre with main street for the entire community of the surrounding county. I am open to conversation with any municipality that says that they want to look at this path going forward.

Mr. Speaker, the viability of our rural municipalities and our small towns across rural Alberta is so key to this Alberta government. We believe as Conservatives that the path forward is

a strong rural Alberta with investment happening across this province in every single corner. We'll partner with them to that end.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Collective Bargaining with Teachers (continued)

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've met numerous former – former – Conservative voters while door-knocking this weekend. They angrily told me that teachers have the right to strike and that legislating teachers back to work destroys the fair negotiating process they expect any government to abide by. They also confirm that they will be voting NDP in the next election, which begs the question: why is this government willing to abandon their own supporters instead of recognizing that all Albertans believe governments must treat teachers with the respect they deserve?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure why the members opposite are cheering about a situation where our students have been out of school for three weeks, losing out on their academics, losing out on their social connections, and weakening their mental health. That's not a situation to be cheering about. This is a serious situation. Our government puts children first, and it will prioritize their best interests, which is precisely why we brought forward Bill 2, the Back to School Act, to make sure students are where they belong.

2:30

Mr. Dach: Mr. Speaker, given that on October 24 ATA president Jason Schilling said that teachers have bargained in good faith, bringing forward thoughtful, practical proposals to address the serious issues facing Alberta's classrooms, and given that every teacher wants this government to address class size and complexity and wants to reach an agreement through the collective bargaining process, to the minister: why has this government shut down negotiations and refused to address complexity, class size, and the severe underfunding of public education?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, we take concerns about classroom size very seriously. As I mentioned a moment ago, in the past four years alone we've seen a student population increase of 91,000. A lot of that happened in 2023 and afterwards. There's no question that that's an unprecedented growth in the number of students, and that's why we're taking action. As I've mentioned time and time again, we're working to build and modernize 130 new schools to make sure that these students have the spaces that they need, as well to provide additional funding and supports.

Mr. Dach: Mr. Speaker, given that I've had teachers in tears in my office, frustrated with this government's refusal to address classroom conditions, which have deteriorated, and people are questioning the quality of Alberta's public education system and given that not one teacher I've met with has focused their attention on their paycheque but, rather, on the classroom conditions that they wish to improve and given that Albertans used to boast about having the best education system in the world, why has this UCP government been intent on wrecking Alberta's world-class public education system?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, just rhetoric, of course, that we hear from the NDP, which is unfortunate.

We have 91,000 students that have joined our education system over the past four years, including a 34 per cent increase in the number of refugee students, including a significant increase in the

number of students with English as an additional language. Mr. Speaker, in Budget '23 we created for the first time ever the classroom complexity grant because we recognized these challenges and we wanted to give school boards dedicated funding so that they could meet the needs of students. We've increased that funding in this budget alone by over 20 per cent, and we'll continue to do more.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Supports for Veterans

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The brave men and women who wear Canada's uniform in service to our country deserve more than just gratitude; they deserve security, dignity, and respect. However, many veterans face homelessness when they return to civilian life. Can the Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services please outline tools currently available to support homeless veterans and explain how the navigation centres are helping connect these individuals with housing, mental health services, and social programs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As part of our \$9 billion investment that we're making in housing right now, we've carved out certain line items specifically for veterans and those who have served us, largely because of the hon. member's advocacy. We've also made sure that the navigation centre, which has helped 15,000 individuals receive 85,000 different services, something that the NDP tried to block, forcing them into encampments instead – we make sure that we target anybody who has been a veteran to make sure that we know who they are when they come into the navigation centre, and we connect them fully with the federal government and the provinces to make sure they get every service that they're entitled to.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that after their service some veterans find themselves facing the justice system and given that their experiences are often shaped by the trauma and sacrifices required in their duty and they require specialized supports, can the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services please explain what is being done to support veterans navigating the justice system and how veterans entering incarceration are made aware of the supports available to them?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier and minister of public safety.

Mr. Ellis: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. Of course, coming from a military family myself, I know the challenges and sacrifices that members of the Canadian Armed Forces make. The government has taken many steps to provide veterans who enter into the justice system with the support that they need, working on a questionnaire for the standardized remand screening checklist so we can better identify veterans. We're already working closely with our friends at the veterans' food bank and connecting them with organizations such as Homes for Heroes and other great organizations. This government does support veterans.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Mr. Wright: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker and to the minister. Given that following their service, members of the Canadian Armed Forces may face challenges transferring their unique skills and experiences to the civilian workforce and given that our government is committed to standing behind our veterans, just as they have stood for us, can the Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services please share how our government is helping members of the Canadian Armed Forces gain and maintain fulfilling employment once their time in uniform comes to a close?

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, Alberta's government is investing an unprecedented \$185 million . . .

An Hon. Member: Point of order.

The Speaker: Noted. Okay.

Mr. Nixon: . . . in the workforce and bringing in programs to help individuals find work in our province. Just recently because of the hon. member's, again, tireless advocacy for our veteran community inside Alberta, we just announced \$1.2 million to go to Prospect Human Services, that helps special forces as well as police departments and others who have been first responders be able to find work as they transition into new work. We continue to invest unprecedentedly in that space, and we're going to keep doing it because we know how important it is.

The Speaker: The point of order was noted at 2:36.

Education Funding (continued)

Ms Hayter: As a public education assistant I've seen just how hard teachers work to give students the best possible chance to thrive. Teachers deserve respect, support, and fair funding, not constant attacks and added burdens. Holly, a teacher from Calgary-Edgemont, wrote to me, saying: teachers have been doing this for years, but as numbers and needs rise, we are standing up to say it isn't sustainable; the human cost is too much. When will the government stop attacking the very people holding our classrooms together?

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, regretfully, just more rhetoric from the NDP. Our government recognizes that 91,000 students have joined our education system in the last four years, many with increasingly complex needs. We're taking action to address that. In Budget '25 we provided \$55 million through the classroom complexity grant to help our school divisions hire the specialized staff that they need, to recruit, and to support our students in the best way. As well, we're also building additional schools and other supports to make sure our students have everything they need.

Ms Hayter: Given that Kasia, a Hawkwood parent, wrote, "Alberta is an economic driver of this country; it's time we acted like it and started leading again, starting with how we fund our schools," and given that Lisa, a parent in Edgemont, wrote, "Public education is not a luxury; it is the foundation of strong and equitable society. If we fail to fund it properly, we are hurting Alberta's economy and the next generation of leaders," will the Premier stop treating education as an expense to cut and start recognizing it as the most important investment in Alberta's future?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, first and foremost, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the member opposite recognizes that Alberta is an economic driver. Under their government, though, unfortunately, that wasn't the case as they drove away billions of dollars of investment and

told Albertans to go to B.C. Now, I don't know why they would tell anyone to go to B.C. Alberta is the best place in the world to be, and that's what our government firmly believes. We believe in supporting public education as well, which is why we've committed to building and renovating 130 schools. That's why we've committed almost \$10 billion to fund public education, including increased supports to help students with complex needs. That's our record.

Ms Hayter: Given that Alberta's classrooms are more complex than ever and given that Katharina, a grade 10 student from Calgary-Edgemont, wrote, "My class size used to be 20 to 25 kids; now there are sometimes more than 40, and students like me cannot get the help we need," when will the government stop denying what every parent, teacher, and student can see, that overcrowded, underresourced classrooms are failing Alberta students?

2:40

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, respectfully, I'm not sure what the member is talking about. We agree with the concerns that the member has said. I've talked at length about increasing . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members, I'm sure you have a lot to say. There's a room in the back to say it. Or we can listen to the person that has the floor.

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, I've said on numerous occasions just today, in fact, and throughout the weeks and months that indeed our classrooms are becoming more complex. Indeed, we are seeing a record number of students enrolling in our education system. Indeed, class sizes are increasing. I mentioned a moment ago: 91,000 students in just four years. We recognize these concerns, and we're taking action to address them.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

School Nutrition Programs

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government loves to tell us how Alberta is the wealthiest province in Canada, yet nearly 200,000 children live in poverty. This is an increase year over year since this government was elected six years ago. Daily life has become so expensive that families are being forced to make impossible decisions about putting food on the table or a roof over their heads. Many are choosing to miss meals altogether. Children are going without food. But there is a solution, breakfast programs in schools. Does the minister agree that at least the government can do this to ensure that every child in every classroom . . .

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Nicolaides: Mr. Speaker, we have a very strong and robust school nutrition program. We provide a significant amount of funding to our school divisions to help them find the best possible partnerships and the best possible organizations within their respective communities to support the nutritional needs of students. It goes without saying that no student can learn on an empty stomach, and that's precisely why we've continued to provide support through the school nutrition program, so that students have that support so that they can focus on their learning.

The Speaker: Edmonton-Manning.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that nearly 40 per cent of children live in food insecure households and given that the

number of food bank visits has risen over 90 per cent in the last five years and given that poor nutrition seriously affects a child's education, health, and future and given that the current government has not expanded on the program that was initially piloted in 2016 under the Notley government, I will ask the minister again: will this minister commit to every child in every classroom in every school having a healthy breakfast in the morning? Yes or no?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I noted, of course students can't learn on an empty stomach, and we're proud to support nutritional programming. As I mentioned, I think the best way for this to be delivered is to provide funding to our school divisions. There are a lot of very unique partnerships that they can create in their local communities, different organizations in different parts of the province, so a flexible approach, I think, works best here, and that's what we continue to support. We want to make sure that students have their nutritional needs met so that they can meet their academic needs as well.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that this government only provides breakfast to 7 per cent of Alberta students and given that the federal government is investing \$42 million into Alberta for this exact purpose and given that Alberta has the highest food insecurity in the country and given that the UCP government is only providing the same amount of funding that was provided under the NDP government yet child poverty has increased, can the minister promise today to use 100 per cent of the federal dollars for every child in Alberta schools for the nutrition program that's being transferred?

Mr. Nicolaides: Yeah, Mr. Speaker, we are working with the federal government, who have provided supports to many of the provinces, including Alberta, to strengthen and support school nutrition. We're working with them and finding the best possible way to allocate these dollars to support students in most need. That's something that we'll continue to do because we absolutely believe in the importance of students having their nutritional needs met, and we'll continue to work with the federal government and our school divisions to ensure that we achieve that goal.

The Speaker: Hon. members, in 30 seconds we will continue with Members' Statements. Please move as expeditiously and quietly as you can.

That was expeditious, and that was quiet.

Hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Standing Order 27 to move that the Assembly proceed immediately to Orders of the Day.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the Government House Leader has moved a motion under Standing Order 27 that the Assembly proceed immediately to Orders of the Day. This type of motion is known as a superseding motion, which may be moved without notice and may interrupt the current business.

Based on Assembly records the procedure has been long part of our standing orders and is used to bypass routine proceedings to move directly to Orders of the Day. While the procedure is not common, it is within our standing orders; again, Standing Order 27, of which you all have a copy. I refer members to pages 548 and 549 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition in particular, the following passage.

If the motion is adopted during Routine Proceedings, the item of Routine Proceedings then before the House (and all further items under Routine Proceedings) and requests for emergency debates are superseded and stood over until the next sitting and the House moves immediately to Orders of the Day. No point of order may be entertained once the Speaker has put the question to the House.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2) a motion under Standing Order 27 is not debatable.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 2:47 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Smith
Dreeshen	McDougall	Stephan
Dyck	Nally	Turton
Ellis	Neudorf	van Dijken
Fir	Nicolaides	Wiebe
Getson	Nixon	Williams
Horner	Petrovic	Wilson
Hunter	Pitt	Wright, J.
Jean	Rowswell	Yao
Johnson	Sawhney	Yaseen

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals:	For – 45	Against – 37
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[Motion carried]

Orders of the Day

Government Motions

- Mr. Schow moved:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly resolve into Committee of the Whole, when called, to consider certain bills on the Order Paper.

The Speaker: Is there any debate? The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Ms Gray: May I check if it is a debatable motion, Mr. Speaker? I would love to.

The Speaker: It's not, which is why I shouldn't have asked that question.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 2 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:06 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao
Jean	Rowswell	Yaseen
Johnson	Sawhney	

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals: For – 44 Against – 37

[Government Motion 2 carried]

Evening Sitings

4. Mr. Schow moved:
Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 4(1) and for the duration of the 2025 fall sitting of the Second Session of the 31st Legislature the Assembly shall meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings for consideration of government business unless the Government House Leader notifies the Assembly that there shall be no evening sitting that day by providing notice under Notices of Motions in the daily Routine or at any time prior to 6 p.m.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 4 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:25 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	Nally	Turton
Dyck	Neudorf	van Dijken
Ellis	Nicolaides	Wiebe
Fir	Nixon	Williams
Getson	Petrovic	Wilson
Horner	Pitt	Wright, J.
Hunter	Rowswell	Yao
Jean	Sawhney	Yaseen
Johnson		

3:40

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals: For – 43 Against – 37

[Government Motion 4 carried]

5. Mr. Schow moved:
Be it resolved that
(a) pursuant to Standing Order 77(2), Bill 2, Back to School Act, may be advanced two or more stages in one day, and
(b) if Bill 2, Back to School Act, has not yet been introduced, then immediately following the passage of this motion, the Assembly shall revert to Introduction of Bills for the introduction of Bill 2, Back to School Act.

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ensuring that Albertans are able to receive a quality education, and we are making every effort to get kids back in the classroom. This motion will assist in this goal and allow us to ensure that we move as quickly as possible on this urgent matter.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Government Motion 5.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion to adjourn debate carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:44 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
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Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao
Jean	Rowswell	Yaseen
Johnson	Sawhney	

4:00

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals: For – 44 Against – 37

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Time Allocation on Government Motion 5

6. Mr. Schow moved:

Be it resolved that when further consideration of Government Motion 5 is resumed, not more than one hour shall be allotted to any further consideration of the motion, at which time every question necessary for the disposal of the motion shall be put forthwith.

The Speaker: On Government Motion 6, the hon. Member for Edmonton-North West.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with great interest to debate this motion. The irony is not lost on me that we're debating around time allocations when this UCP government has wasted so much time where we could have had a teachers agreement here in the last couple of years.

There was plenty of time. We knew this was going to happen. We knew when the different stages were going to go along the way. We could have built a foundation where we could have counted the class sizes so we could actually know how many kids we had in the classes and what we could do about that to adjust it. We could have looked to see where there were funding deficiencies with kids with special needs and other areas of our education system. Instead, this government chose to squander that time and now is putting in and forcing through this Bill 2 and all of the time allocations that go with that.

I find it shameful, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure that each of the UCP members have heard the same things that we've been hearing in our constituencies in regard to this teachers strike. People are behind

the teachers, they're behind public education, and they're behind making an investment in our children for now and in the future.

For us to allocate time or even to be debating this Bill 2, which is coming up, is, I would say, an abdication of the responsibility that this government has to actually do their job. There are more than 700,000 students that are not in school because of the choices this UCP government made around public education here in the province. They manufactured this crisis. It didn't just fall out of the sky. They chose to make it happen in this way to force a confrontation at the expense of our children's education.

We can do so much better. We know that all you have to do is listen to your constituents. I can see in the eyes of each of the members across the way, Mr. Speaker, that they're hearing the information from their constituents loud and clear, and they're very sheepish about what they're doing here now. They know that what they're doing goes against the best interests of the children in their constituencies and the best interests of what their constituents want for their families.

When we put in something like a time allocation, we are simply limiting the debate that can take place. After wasting two years, here we are with these final few minutes and hours where we can possibly make a recommendation. Well, Mr. Speaker, we can still make the right decision and make the right recommendation, which is to vote and to fund for the sake of our students, not for political games but, rather, for the benefit of all of our kids in Alberta for now and in the future.

The minister talks about 91,000 new students showing up in the province like that's an excuse to underperform. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is the responsibility. Those 91,000 students are the ones that you're meant to look for and accommodate for. If they come in with more special needs or with language difficulties, then you build a structure that you can educate them with. You don't simply cut them off at the knees and suggest that, oh, well, we can't afford this. We can always afford to educate our students. We compromise in other areas. We make sacrifices to make sure that our students, our children are funded properly and they get the education and the leg up that they deserve.

I find it difficult, you know, to look at the situation now, but I still think that we have time to be able to turn this around. We all know what the right thing is to do, and I would suggest that we have the means and the mechanism and the will to actually do so.

Thank you.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 6 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:08 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao

Jean Johnson	Rowswell Sawhney	Yaseen
Against the motion:		
Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		
Totals:	For – 44	Against – 37

[Government Motion 6 carried]

5. Mr. Schow moved:

Be it resolved that

- (a) pursuant to Standing Order 77(2), Bill 2, Back to School Act, may be advanced two or more stages in one day, and
- (b) if Bill 2, Back to School Act, has not yet been introduced, then immediately following the passage of this motion, the Assembly shall revert to Introduction of Bills for the introduction of Bill 2, Back to School Act.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Schow]

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Schow: I'm all set.

The Speaker: Okay.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can't say, unfortunately, that I am pleased to rise to speak to Government Motion 5 because Government Motion 5 is an unprecedented violation of the democratic rights of the people of this province. The motion allows the government to introduce and pass a bill in one day. It is something that we have never seen before in this Legislature or across this country.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, that the rules of the House normally prevent this is because the bill hasn't been introduced yet. We haven't seen it. And not just us; the public hasn't seen it. The teachers, who will be subject to this bill, haven't seen it. The children and the parents who will be affected by this bill: no one has seen it.

This government will introduce a bill, and it will pass it within a matter of hours under this motion. As a result, no one will have time to read it. That is what Government Motion 5 is intended to do. It's intended to prevent people from reading the bill, from thinking about the bill, from talking about the bill, from writing to their representatives – that's all of us in this House – about the bill. This motion doesn't just violate the rights of the members on our side and our constituents; it violates the rights of the constituents of the private members on the other side, who have a right to take forward the questions of their constituents, just as we do, and question the government about them.

In the normal course a bill would be introduced on one day. People would have time to read it. People in the public would have time to seek legal advice or determine if their interests had been affected and write in to their representatives. I mean, that is the basics of representative democracy, which is exactly what is being violated by this motion.

Now, the government is going to claim that this is an emergency, that it's an emergency that requires this bill to come forward right away. There are some things about this subject matter that are an emergency, Mr. Speaker. Our classroom conditions, the conditions in which my daughter and children across this province learn: those are an emergency. Our kids being out of school because this government couldn't be bothered to bargain in good faith: that for many people is an emergency. But is this bill an emergency? Absolutely not.

The government has had weeks, months even, knowing that this was coming, during which they could have simply bargained in good faith. They could have simply come forward with genuine proposals, proposals that address the concerns that teachers, parents, students have been very, very clear that they have. They have chosen not to do that. They have chosen to advance the same claim over and over again. This is not an emergency, Mr. Speaker. This government is like that co-worker that doesn't bother to do their part of the project and then comes screaming forward, demanding everyone else's assistance. This government could have done their work. They could have bargained in good faith. They chose not to.

4:30

At this moment we don't even know what exactly is in the bill because it hasn't been introduced, but we do know some things that could be in the bill because we have seen back-to-work legislation before. Our best case scenario is arbitration, which the government could have done ages ago, right? We didn't have to undergo this strike. If the government wanted to move to arbitration, they could have done that before now. They chose not to.

Other things that could be in this bill: there could be legislated terms. They could have the same terms that have been rejected resoundingly by teachers over and over and over again. They could be the same offer again. And let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, because the government loves to throw out numbers, right? But I have a philosophy degree, so I am well versed in how people use numbers to obfuscate the truth. Three thousand teachers: that's one per school or fewer. Anyone who's been into a school could tell you that that is wildly insufficient. Fifteen hundred EAs: that is fewer than one per school.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the lack of support for complexity in schools, I think it's worth describing what it is that we're talking about. I have heard from a constituent who was a principal in another riding that they have one EA in their entire school. It's an elementary school. There are hundreds of children in that school, and one of those children requires a tube feed, so they basically require constant care from the EA. That means that the other, you know, hundreds of students in that school – no one gets any support. Not one other child gets support because the only support that is there is occupied full-time, and it's not the fault of this student. This government has a responsibility to educate all of the students. They have a responsibility to provide supports at a level that are sufficient to support all of the diverse learners that are in our school system.

This wasn't always the case. It has been dwindling over time, and the government is going to tell you that this was a surprise. It absolutely wasn't. Yes, there has been immigration to this province, immigration, I might add, that this government encouraged. Does

everyone remember the Alberta Is Calling campaign? Apparently we're calling, but we don't want you to answer. It doesn't make any sense. Birth rates in the province have been increasing. We knew the population was going up. None of this was a surprise, so the complete failure of this government to address it is them simply choosing not to do their jobs.

In these classrooms that are overcrowded increasingly and that lack EA support, kids' learning is absolutely being affected. Without a shadow of a doubt children's learning is being affected, and Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that that changes the trajectory of a life. The intervention that occurs with a child in elementary school can change the trajectory of their entire life. It can mean that they don't wind up in the justice system, in the correctional system. It could mean that they don't wind up needing government benefits, that they are instead able to be gainfully employed and to participate and contribute to our society. A little bit of money invested now saves so much more – saves so much more – down the road.

It also impacts the safety of our children, because children who have learning difficulties, who have behavioural difficulties aren't being supported. There are no EAs to support them, so they are placed in a classroom where they literally cannot access the material. Their right to learn is being completely violated. Those children may act out, and there is no one there to help them with that, which puts the safety of every other student in that classroom potentially in danger, not to mention the safety of the first student.

These are the conditions that our government has allowed to fester, the conditions that they are refusing to address with this legislation. They could put those terms, those original terms, the terms that have been rejected over and over again, directly into that legislation. This is a pretty big problem. It does nothing, really, to address the issues teachers have raised. They could go so far as to do what they have threatened to do in the media, which is to say use the notwithstanding clause. Mr. Speaker, that would be a huge problem. If this government is willing to violate the rights of so many of its citizens in this instance, what is to stop them from doing it in additional instances? This is how fascism progresses. They start by violating the rights of one group and then another and then another and then another.

How far does it go? We don't know. The right being protected in this case is the right of people to come together and bargain collectively for their interests. It is a right that has been protected in our Charter, that has been opined upon by the Supreme Court. The collective bargaining system we have here in Alberta is designed to protect labour peace, so a strike and a lockout can only occur at certain times. Normally we're under the collective agreement. In those times employees can't strike. They are only permitted to strike at certain times when there is no collective agreement in place. When the government starts violating the rights of teachers or any other group to bargain collectively in that way – labour peace is maintained because both sides have a system.

That is the point of systems of law and justice, to make sure that people use the system, that rather than going out and doing whatever they want and creating whatever chaos and advocating in whatever way occurs in the moment, they abide by the system. The teachers, in this case, have abided by the system, but this government, it seems, will not. When a government begins to violate their own system of laws, the system of laws of which they are a part, whatever chaos ensues from the public: in my opinion, they have invited it. Systems exist for a reason. Rights exist for a reason.

Another part of this worth discussing is the idea of representative democracy. It isn't just the Official Opposition or even the private members on the government side who don't get to read this bill; it's a lot of people out there in the public who are interested parties. Believe me, if my inbox and, I think, the inboxes of my colleagues and probably the members on the other side, too, are any indication,

there are a lot of interested people in the public. There are a lot of people who would like to hear what the outcome is, and those are the people whose rights are being violated. It is not just us here in this House. We represent people. We represent people who have a right to have an opinion on what their government is doing in a democracy, but this government doesn't want to hear it. They don't want to hear from parents. They don't want to hear from teachers. They don't want to hear from students. I mean, this is, I would say, Mr. Speaker, completely typical of everything that is wrong with this government. This is absolutely a feature and not a bug.

4:40

This government absolutely could have negotiated in faith. They could have recalled the Legislature early, and they could have had a fulsome debate on this legislation. Why now? Why suddenly is it an emergency today? Well, if we knew it was going to be an emergency today, you could have introduced it last week. They could have allowed people the time to write in to their representatives, to have those opinions, to engage in democracy, but they didn't, because they didn't want to. They don't want to hear what people think of them.

Instead, a smear campaign against teachers. Instead, pretending that they don't know what the problem is. This is like the actions of a young child pretending that they didn't know what the rule was when they broke it. The teachers have been clear over and over and over again about what it is that they want, but this government spent months pretending it couldn't hear them. It's like sticking your fingers in your ears.

Member Ceci: They've done that before.

Ms Ganley: Oh, yeah. They have done that before. Earplugs.

Let's talk a little bit about money, which is arguably the impetus for this. Setting aside for the moment the fact that a well-educated population is a driver of the economy, which generates revenue, or the fact that a dollar invested in education saves, on the worst measure, \$4 in other services, health care, justice, benefits later, setting that aside for the moment, let's consider some other spending priorities of this government: \$80 million on Tylenol that we'll have to throw out, plus how much more to store it? Hundreds of millions of dollars to have their own police force: how much could that buy in the education system if that money were simply reinvested in the priorities of Albertans instead of the priorities of this UCP government?

Mr. Speaker, this motion is a violation. It is a violation of the rights of my constituents, and I object. I object on behalf of many of my colleagues as well because we will not all have the opportunity to do so on the record. We will not all be able to read the hundreds of e-mails that we have received – thousands, really, at this point – into the record, e-mails of parents telling us about their children's classroom conditions, e-mails from students themselves.

High school students have been coming forward. They've been advocating. We saw it, Mr. Speaker, at this government's set of town halls, wherein the chair of the committee, the UCP chair, threatened to spank a student for stating their opinion. The reason that this is so problematic is because this is a government that is trying to ignore the people they represent. That offends me. I think it should offend all of us. I think in particular it should offend the private members on the UCP side, because it is their constituents' rights that will also not be represented. It is the hundreds of e-mails I know they are getting from their constituents that they will not be able to bring forward to the government. This is a sad day.

I hope that the members of the government side will hear my call and they will vote against this unprecedented violation of

democratic rights, but if they do not, we are likely to see this bill move forward and violate the rights of Albertans. I would urge every Albertan to watch what is happening here because it could be your rights next.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Member Irwin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to Government Motion 5, which, for those watching at home, so very many of you, means that this government will ram through their legislation, their Bill 2, the so-called Back to School Act, in record time, which means no time for fulsome debate, no time for everyone at home to understand what this bill really does.

I want to start by addressing the very people impacted most by this egregious abuse of power by this government, and that's the students. I see you. I know how hard it's been – or perhaps I should say that we can't ever know exactly how hard this has been for all of you, but we're so grateful to all of you who have shared your stories with us. We're grateful to the students who have organized, who have rallied, including this morning in the rain just outside those doors. I see you; we all see you.

To the teachers, the many we see in red in the gallery and the thousands and thousands watching at home: you've made a sacrifice to do this, a tremendous sacrifice, one that you should never have been asked to make, but you've done it, and we're so grateful to all of you. You took the risk to go on strike with so much uncertainty, and you did it for kids, so thank you.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

And to the parents: you've taken on so much. I've heard from so many of you. We've heard from so many of you about how much of a burden this has been, but it was a burden that you were willing to help shoulder for all of us, so thank you.

But to all of us in this Chamber, we're called to this place to serve, in theory. We want the best for kids. Yes, I know I'm not a parent, but I was a teacher, and I was a school administrator, and I'm someone who, as our leader often says, owes a whole lot to public education. I had a wonderful education growing up in Barrhead, Alberta. Then I had the opportunity to teach in Bawlf, Alberta, and Forestburg and then work for Alberta education for years. I'm someone who cares deeply about students, as we all should.

But this government's actions today show that not a single person on that side of the House is really here for students, the same students for so many of whom their educational journeys have been very much fraught with learning conditions that don't meet their needs. The kids in school today experienced the COVID years – right? – especially kids in high school. I see a lot of my colleagues nodding their heads; we've all heard those stories. We've all heard the stories of out-of-control class sizes, so many of those stories. Just ask those students.

I've spent so much of my time lately out supporting teachers as we all have on this side of the House, talking to teachers, hearing from teachers, from parents, from students. They all want kids to be back in class – they absolutely do – but they want a fair deal for teachers. They want caps on class sizes. They want education funding that is reasonable, that is fair. It's unacceptable, and in fact it should be incredibly shocking to everyone in this Chamber that Alberta remains the lowest funded per capita in the country for students. That's not the Alberta advantage.

4:50

I was in high school, I was in grade 12 the last time that teachers went on strike. Striking isn't something that teachers do in Alberta,

right? That was 23 years ago. Teachers did this, as I said, at a very, very personal cost. They did this because this is about more than a fight for higher wages, so much more, so much more despite the spin from this Premier and this government.

This fight is truly about students and about future generations of students. It's about what we value as a province. It's about public – public – education, a foundational pillar of what makes our province great. Now, as we see from this motion from the government, it's become about the future of democracy in our province as well. By limiting debate, as this government has chosen to do, not only do we not get to have a fulsome discussion about what's in this bill, but we as elected MLAs don't get a chance to speak to this bill when we have collectively received hundreds of thousands of pieces of feedback on this bill.

If we are sent to this Chamber to honour our constituents' voices, then we must be allowed the chance to speak. If this Premier and this education minister and this government are so confident, if they're so proud of their legislation, then let us debate it. Let us speak. I know I can't play the new card anymore; I've been here for six years. I shouldn't be surprised by this government that has limited debate in so many opportunities, but to rush through as they're doing today is truly unprecedented.

I want, like all of my colleagues do, so desperately to share the words of teachers and parents and students in our ridings and across the province – I won't get the chance to do that in bill debate, so I'll do a little bit now – like Jackie from my riding, a teacher with over 20 years of experience and a parent of school-aged children who has always believed in the power of public education to shape lives and communities. I want to share her words.

She says: "Last year was without exaggeration one of the most difficult years of my career, on par with my very first year of teaching, which was only challenging due to inexperience. I taught a kindergarten class of 25 students. Among them were two children on the autism spectrum, another whose brother's severe autism had shaped his own behaviour into one of limited speech and frequent aggression, a student with profound receptive language delays who could not follow classroom routines, and a child who joined mid-year while experiencing severe trauma, manifesting in aggression and an inability to engage in learning independently. This level of need concentrated in a single classroom is not just unsustainable; it is wrong."

She says that it is unfair to the students, to their families, and to the educators who are expected to manage these complex dynamics without adequate support. She says: "I say this with the deepest frustration and sadness. Last year was the first time I seriously considered leaving the profession altogether. I know that losing experienced teachers like myself would be a tremendous loss to the system, but I no longer feel like the system values or supports us."

She goes on to say: "We know that change will not happen overnight, but we need to see a commitment to meaningful, sustained investment in education. We need smaller class sizes, more support for students with complex needs, and a government that listens to and respects the professionals who dedicate their lives to teaching."

She urges this government to advocate for immediate long-term improvements to the education system. She says that our children deserve better, our teachers deserve better, and our province's future depends on it. Jackie's words are not hyperbolic; they are the truth. We hear you, Jackie, and on this side of the House we agree and we are listening, but I can't say the same for that side of the House.

Let me just take a moment quickly to share some of the words from folks who do not have NDP MLAs, who have not been heard by their UCP MLAs, like Kara from Grande Prairie. She's a lifelong

conservative. She's calling on the UCP to get their priorities straight and properly fund education. Or Jessica from West Yellowhead: she shared the story of her daughter, a bright student who has not been offered the education opportunities she deserves because of limited resources at her school. She's having to reconsider her career goals because of a lack of opportunities. How is any of that acceptable? Or a mom from Drayton Valley-Devon, who implores us all to think about why we are sitting where we are. She's urging those government members to remember who they are representing and to stand up and demand better.

Like that mom we want desperately for the government to do the right thing today. It's not too late to pause. It's not too late to go back to the table and to do the right thing. Respect workers' rights. Respect teachers. Respect the Legislative Assembly. Respect our right to speak on behalf of constituents. By threatening to use the notwithstanding clause and by limiting debate so sharply as they're doing right now, they are showing that they are absolutely not interested in doing what's best for kids, what's best for teachers, and what's best for our province.

I really want to implore you all to think about what you're doing in this moment. Is this the legacy that you want to leave? Is this how you want to be remembered?

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, I'd ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

Member Irwin: Absolutely.

Is this how the government members want to be remembered? Is this the legacy that they want to leave? I don't think so. You have an opportunity today to do the right thing.

And you, Albertans, you have an opportunity, too. If they don't change course, you have an opportunity to show them the door in the next election because you deserve so much better. You all deserve so much better, and better is possible, Alberta.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Motion 5. What it does is that it gives the government the ability to ram through their bill from multiple stages in one day. On top of that, this motion is now further time allocated. We cannot speak more than one hour on this motion.

There is lots at stake here. Just yesterday I hosted a town hall in my riding of Calgary-Bhullar-McCall. I heard directly from students, from parents, and from teachers. A number of things were shared that are specific to the northeast quadrant, schools in my riding. All of our schools in the northeast quadrant are operating at capacity. The CBE put out a list of overflow schools. Not one of them is in the northeast, which means that many of the kids from the northeast are being bused to other quadrants for hours. That certainly adversely impacts their learning outcomes.

They talked about overcrowded classrooms. That's not just the northeast; that's across this province. Parents have shared that their kids are jammed in classrooms with 30, 35, 45 students. Kids are put into split-grade classrooms, where one teacher is responsible for teaching kids in different grades. In one school the kids' library is in the hallway. Their cafeteria has been turned into a class. Those are the stories that were shared there.

Then over the summer our caucus hosted a number of town halls. The leader hosted a number of town halls, and I happened to be at a few of them. At one town hall in Airdrie a teacher shared some remarks, and I do want to share those remarks with all of you. She said, and I quote:

For six years the UCP government has treated teachers and public education with disrespect. It began with taking away control of our pensions and then our own discipline process. Neither was replaced with something better. They created a weighted moving average to fund education while stopping the collection of class size data. This has led to the underfunding of education, with crowded and complex classrooms as the norm. The UCP has removed teachers from the curriculum writing process. We are now saddled with a curriculum that is often developmentally inappropriate, conceptually inaccurate, and excessively dense. Other jurisdictions in Canada, as well as international schools, are no longer interested in using the Alberta curriculum. Most recently we have seen the ridiculous book bans and, more egregiously, the attacks on our LGBTQ2S-plus students as well as our female students who just want to play school sports without having to prove they are female.

If the NDP forms the next government, my great hope is that you have a real solution to show that you respect public education, our teachers, our students, and our school communities and have the ability to restore Alberta's status as having one of the best public education systems in the world.

Those are the words of educational professionals who are dealing with complex classrooms without supports, who are dealing with overcrowded classrooms, who are dealing with an education system which has the lowest per student funding in the entire country.

5:00

The government has not yet introduced Bill 2. We have not seen the contents of the bill, and here we are asked to debate a motion about that bill, which has yet to be introduced, that that bill needs to be passed in a day. What's the urgency here? As my colleague said, the government had two years to deal with this issue. But the government engineered this crisis. The government is to blame for this crisis. They didn't act timely. They could have brought the Legislature back if there was some urgency; they didn't do that either. Now they're asking us to pass this motion in this House so that they can pass a bill that they said they'd put on the Order Paper, the Back to School Act.

Since we have not seen the bill, we have just heard rumours from here and there of what could be in the bill. If the government wanted to go down the arbitration route, they didn't need to bring the legislation. They could have done that without legislation. Since they are bringing in legislation, as the name suggests, they're forcing teachers back to work. Whatever route they take, whether they invoke the notwithstanding clause or not, this bill will have profound implications for teachers, for students, for parents.

There are 700,000-plus students in our education system. These are 700,000 families, give or take, that will be impacted by this. Our jurisprudence is clear that section 2(d) of the Charter, the freedom of association, protects three fundamental rights. It protects the right of employees to form and join associations. Second, it affirms the right to meaningful collective bargaining. And third, it affirms that the right to strike is a meaningful part of that process. That was talked about in the Supreme Court's decision on health services and support facilities subsector association in British Columbia, 2007. And in 2015 the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, a Saskatchewan case, pronounced that striking is also an essential and meaningful part of a collective bargaining agreement.

What teachers have been doing: they have been exercising their constitutional Charter rights to stand up for their rights, to stand up for better public education, to stand up against overcrowded classrooms, to stand up for better supports for complex-needs students, to stand up for supports such as English language support, particularly relevant in my riding, those supports. Instead of taking these concerns seriously, the government is choosing to legislate

them back to work and without sharing that bill with us. The government wants us to let them pass this bill through in one day. That is heavy handed. That is unprecedented, and session just started.

The government could have done better. There is still time that the government could do better. Many of my colleagues referred to e-mails to different MLAs. Certainly there are e-mails where even government members are also CCed. They're receiving the exact same e-mails, and those e-mails are coming from parents. Those e-mails are even coming from students. Everyone in this province except for this government at this point in time is standing with teachers, is standing for public education. The government is clearly offside.

Through you, Madam Speaker, those on government benches, private members: I think they need to reflect on it. They are also elected by their constituents, many of whom are parents, many of whom have kids in the school system. Those constituents expect them to represent them. I'm not going to prejudge. You never know; some government members may grow some spine and vote against it. But I would suggest that they need to think about their responsibility to their constituents. They need to think about their responsibility to the students living in those constituencies. They need to stand up to this government walking roughshod on the constitutional rights of teachers and against the erosion of public education under this government's watch.

I urge all members of this House to vote against this motion. Let's get to the bill, look at the bill. Let's have conversations and then decide how that bill should be voted upon. Better yet, the government pulls this bill back and gets to the negotiating table, gives the respect to teachers that they deserve, and negotiates with them in good faith.

I think those excuses that the government doesn't have money are also not very sound because the government has money for all kinds of other things. The government has money to waste hundreds of millions of dollars on a failed privatization experience with DynaLife. They have money to throw on Turkish Tylenol, which was not used in this province by anyone. They have money, and they are under investigation for doling out dollars to chartered surgical facilities. Prior to that they spent \$1.3 billion on a pipeline to nowhere. They do have money. It's just that they don't have the political will, or they don't like public education.

One more time I will urge all members of this House to vote against this motion. Stand with teachers. Stand with students. Stand with parents.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

5:10

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to oppose Government Motion 5. For anyone who is just tuning in – and I understand that tens of thousands of Albertans are actually watching the live stream of the Assembly feed right now, which is probably a provincial record. Of course, under that kind of scrutiny I'm going to be absolutely as careful with my words as I usually am when I get up to speak in this House.

I just want to make sure that everybody who's watching these proceedings today understands exactly what we are discussing when we are discussing this motion. My friends from Calgary and Edmonton both have talked about a lot of the procedural ins and outs of the House, and that's not what people should be focusing on. What people should be focusing on is the fact that by the end of today, if this government motion passes, the teachers in the gallery

and watching on the live stream will be forced back to work within a day's time under exactly the same kind of pay and classroom conditions that caused them to walk out in the first place.

This government is bringing forward this motion so that rather than fixing the problems the teachers have been shouting loudly about for years, with those problems landing on deaf ears, the government is just going to use the legislative hammer to slap a Band-Aid on the system, hope that it doesn't break further, and ask these teachers to do even more with less. That is completely unfair. That's why our colleagues are standing to oppose this motion, because it continues to degrade educational conditions for our students and our working conditions for our teachers.

My colleagues have already talked at length about a lot of the issues that the teachers today are facing. Rather than reiterate that point, I just want to remind everybody watching today about what teachers have been through since 2019, when this government was elected. Then Premier Kenney ran on a platform promise of shredding the curriculum that our government had put into development, and they accused the teachers, hundreds of teachers that we had consulted with in the development of that new curriculum, of being Marxist activists who are going to social engineer our children. That was the first of many attacks on the members of the teaching profession that this government was going to launch.

So they threw out that curriculum, which all of the teachers that I talked to were incredibly excited about implementing, and then brought in a new curriculum that was developed by a bunch of wackos from the United States with no input from any of the teachers here in Alberta. In fact, the government wouldn't even tell us who was involved with the development of that curriculum. It was foisted upon the teachers out of the blue with absolutely no supports for implementation. That's one of the first things that this government did when they were elected in 2019.

Then they took away the teachers' pension plan, the governance of the teachers' pension plan. They said: "You know what? We can't trust teachers to manage their own pension plan," even though they had done so for decades with absolutely no issues. "We need to take that money for ourselves because teachers cannot be trusted." They did that without any consultation of teachers. No regard for the well-being of the people who dedicate their lives to educating the students of the province, to make sure that they could ensure that they have a retirement that's dignified.

Then came COVID. The government walked out to a microphone one night and said: we are shutting schools down, and oh, by the way, you better be ready on Monday to go to online learning. No warning, no preparation. I am so grateful that the teachers went overboard making sure that their online learning was as good as it could be in as little time as possible. But not one dollar from the provincial government was spent to provide those supports.

Then as a result of COVID keeping students out of classrooms for months and months, we know that our students lost a lot of their education. They fell behind, and the government threw a few million dollars into the education budget last year to help teachers catch up their students who had learning losses. What a slap in the face. Teachers were asking for support for their students who had suffered learning losses as a result of COVID, and they got nothing, Madam Speaker.

That's not to mention a bunch of other ancillary services that help provide good learning conditions for our students. There were transportation cuts in many of our school boards. There has been the loss of PUF funding, EAs, speech therapists. All of those other people who have been put into classrooms to support our students have slowly been taken away by this government. It's no wonder that teachers have finally said that enough is enough and they stood

up and asserted their rights to go on strike to fight for better education for our students and better working conditions for themselves. I applaud them for doing that, Madam Speaker.

Yes. One final indignity that the teachers had to suffer, before I move on to my next point, Madam Speaker. It was in the last Legislature that the government brought forward legislation that removed the Alberta Teachers' Association's ability to govern itself and transferred that to a new college. The reasoning that the government used to make that move was that they suggested that teachers were protecting a bunch of pedophiles within their ranks and they didn't want to be subject to rules of – I'm sorry.

Ms Sigurdson: Regulatory.

Mr. Schmidt: Regulatory rules.

How terrible is that? We've been told time and again from this government: you cannot trust teachers; they don't know what they're talking about when it comes to curriculum; they don't know what they're talking about when it comes to their pensions; and, oh, by the way, there are a bunch of pedophiles protecting each other from justice. Absolutely shameful. The people that we send our children to every day for care and education are nothing but a bunch of closeted Marxist pedophiles in this government's telling of the education story of this province.

Now, I want to move on to the second point which is important to me, and I know that it's important to teachers, but many people are really reluctant to talk about it because they are focused on the kids. But this is still very important, Madam Speaker, and that is the issue of wages. We are afraid that this government when it tables Bill 2 will impose a deal that will see teachers get a 3 per cent increase every year for the next four years, which isn't enough to keep up with inflation, and that is not fair. Teachers do valuable work and they deserve to be compensated fairly for it. God bless all of the teachers who say, you know, "It's not about the money," but at some point after going so long without a raise, it does become about the money.

I have a friend of mine who is an educational instructor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. He said that the average lifespan of a teacher entering Alberta's classrooms is five years, that once they've graduated from university and they've taught in the classroom for five years, they've had enough and they walk away from the profession, never to do it again. Part of the reason is because their pay sucks so badly. We cannot afford to underpay teachers if we want to continue to deliver the best education in this country the way we have for decades and decades. Teachers deserve a fair wage.

5:20

Now, the government says: we can't possibly afford it. But they've revealed, through the student supports that they unveiled when the strike happened, how much they are actually willing to pay. They said: if you have a student who is under 12, we will pay you \$30 a day to off-set the child care costs that are incurred. Well, Madam Speaker, just a little quick, back-of-the-envelope math here. Thirty dollars a day times 30 students in a classroom, give or take, if you're lucky, is \$900 a day that the government is willing to pay to look after our kids.

I'm sure all of the teachers in the gallery and on live stream would be more than happy to accept \$900 a day to go to work every day, and they're not even asking for a small fraction of that. They want a fair wage. The government obviously has the money to do it. They just don't want any of that money to end up in teachers' pockets. Whose pockets do they want that money to end up in, Madam Speaker? Well, it's quite clear from this government's past

behaviour who they want to pay more, and that's all of the executives in every agency, board, and commission.

You know, tomorrow we're going to be at Public Accounts, and we're going to discuss the CEO of the Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation's salary, which went up by \$36,000 last year alone. That's a 15 per cent pay hike in one year. That person earns the salary to put three teachers with 10 years' experience into classrooms. If you're an executive at an agency, board, or commission, the government is willing to open up the spending taps. The sky is the limit for their wages. But ask for more than 3 per cent to teach our kids and ensure a prosperous future for our province: "Oh, 3 per cent. That sounds like a lot. I don't think we could possibly afford that."

It's absolutely shameful. It's not like teachers don't have a rising cost of living like the rest of us. I'm sure that – well, I remember my teachers in high school. They drank, I'm sure, the staff at my school – no, they didn't drink. I do know my English teacher drank that also. They single-handedly kept the economy of Colombia going by how much coffee they drank. If you've gone to the grocery store to purchase a tin of coffee these days, you know that it's gone up by over 30 per cent. Not to mention the cost of beef, which is up almost 20 per cent. Milk, eggs, bread: it's all gone up way more than 3 per cent. Let's not forget about the cost of auto insurance and the cost of electricity and the cost of heat. All of these costs, that the government has refused to take action on, are borne by teachers just like everybody else. All they're asking for is a wage that helps them keep up with the cost of living, and the government won't do the dignity of even giving them that.

What's going to happen? How are our students going to fare under this new deal if it does in fact pass today like we expect it to? Teachers are going to be doing more with less. A lot of them are going to quit because they can't afford to do it anymore. They'll find other work. Our students will deal with people who are stressed out, burned out, and who can't handle it anymore. They deserve better. This government could do the right thing today by voting down this motion and going back to the bargaining table and giving teachers a fair deal. That's always been an option for them. They just refused to take it.

I sincerely hope that all members of this House vote against this motion and urge the government to go back to the bargaining table. Listen to the teachers. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, pursuant to Government Motion 6, agreed to earlier this afternoon, one hour of debate has now been completed, and I am required to put to the Assembly all necessary questions to dispose of Government Motion 5.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 5 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:25 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lundy	Stephan
Dreeschen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe

Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao
Jean	Rowswell	Yaseen
Johnson	Sawhney	

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals:	For – 44	Against – 37
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[Government Motion 5 carried]

Introduction of Bills

Bill 2

Back to School Act

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of Bill 2, the Back to School Act.

This legislation will provide teachers with a fair agreement based on the last mutually accepted offer between TEBA and the ATA and ensure no further irreparable harm is done to Alberta students through labour action. The ongoing strike has deeply disrupted learning and caused lasting harm to our kids' education and futures.

After 18 months of bargaining and two rejected agreements recommended by ATA leadership, it's clear a negotiated settlement is no longer possible. This legislation ensures that no further harm is done to Alberta students and there is an immediate end to the strike. It also invokes the notwithstanding clause to help ensure stability for the school system moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of Bill 2, the Back to School Act.

[Disturbance in the gallery]

The Speaker: Order.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion for first reading carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:45 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawyer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Schow
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schulz
Bouchard	Long	Sigurdson, R.J.
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao
Jean	Rowswell	Yaseen
Johnson	Sawhney	

6:00

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Eremenko	Miyashiro
Arcand-Paul	Ganley	Nenshi
Batten	Goehring	Pancholi
Boparai	Gray	Renaud
Brar, Gurinder	Guthrie	Sabir
Brar, Gurtej	Haji	Schmidt
Calahoo Stonehouse	Hayter	Shepherd
Ceci	Ip	Sigurdson, L.
Chapman	Irwin	Sinclair
Dach	Kasawski	Sweet
Eggen	Kayande	Tejada
Ellingson	Metz	Wright, P.
Elmeligi		

Totals:	For – 44	Against – 37
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[Motion carried; Bill 2 read a first time]

The Speaker: Hon. members, it's now after 6 o'clock. The House stands adjourned until 7:30 this evening.

[The Assembly adjourned at 6:02 p.m.]

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