

Autonomy legislation for Grenfell will be tabled when ready: King

BY DAVE BARTLETT

THE TELEGRAM

Liberal

education critic Roland Butler had questions in the House of Assembly Monday, about the province's plan to make Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, in Corner Brook, independent from Memorial University.

Butler said he's seen no legislation, which the province has been promising for at least a year.

He then asked if the province was reconsidering the idea.

Education Minister Darin King said the province was working through a process and his department is still discussing the matter with MUN and Grenfell.

King said when the legislation is ready it will be brought before the House.

Butler then said enrollment at Grenfell is down from 1,400 students in 2007 to less than 1,000, which may affect upper level classes.

He asked if that has played a part in the delay.

King said he's aware of the challenges, but said that's just one reason why the province is taking its time with the legislation.

Butler also referred to a briefing note from the department obtained through an access to information request. The threepage briefing note, dated Nov. 20 2008, has only four readable lines, with the rest blacked out.

One of the four reads "The long term financial implications of enhancing Grenfell's autonomy cannot be predicted as it will develop over time."

Butler asked if cost is an obstacle.

King replied that any investment outside the overpass is going to cost money and said he is aware of all the issues Butler brought forth.

He said all of these are being worked on by the schools and the department as part of the ongoing process.