

Advanced Education-Regina

An external review that makes recommendations for the future of the First Nations University of Canada won't be ignored, Advanced Education, Employment and Labour Minister Rob Norris said Wednesday.

Norris obtained the approximately 60-page review, which was funded by the province, as well as an 11-page response from the First Nation University board of governors earlier this week.

"In broad strokes, yes, I'm pleased with the work," Norris said of the review, which addresses issues related to governance, administration and finances at the university.

As part of a one-time agreement to help the university address a financial crunch, the provincial government in October allocated \$1.6 million to the university, with \$500,000 contingent on the completion of work such as the strategic plan.

"This report is not going to be ignored and one of the reasons that we said that it needed to be on a very tight timeline is, obviously, we're going into the (provincial government) budget process here and I need to make informed recommendations to my colleagues," said Norris, who added that he's not suggesting any government funding for the university is at risk based on the outcome of the review.

"It's just to say I'm trying to ensure that I have a very solid understanding of what the report contains and the response from the institution."

As he entered a cabinet meeting at the legislature, Norris told reporters that he needs more time to review the report and the university's thoughts on it before he can comment in detail.

A recent censure of the university by the Canadian Association of University Teachers due to the group's concerns about governance of the institution stresses the significance of conducting the external review, Norris said.

CAUT has said the board of governors at the university needs to be smaller and depoliticized.

Source: Leader Post