

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

January 8, 2024

Conciliation Report on Teachers' Bargaining

SASKATOON – The Conciliation Board in bargaining between Saskatchewan teachers and the Government of Saskatchewan has finished their report. This report encapsulates five days of conciliation that took place between December 5 and 12, 2023. The neutral, third-party Conciliation Board has concluded that bargaining on a new provincial collective agreement for teachers remains at an impasse.

“We have great respect for the Conciliation Board and appreciate their work through this process,” says Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President, Samantha Becotte. “This report validates what we have been saying for months, which is that class size and complexity can be negotiated.”

In October, teachers held a vote that resulted in overwhelming support for job sanctions, should government continue their refusal to bargain on key issues. Teachers sought conciliation in hopes that a fair agreement could be reached and job sanctions could be avoided.

“Government refused to move from their opening positions or even entertain negotiating about critical learning and working conditions that impact students, teachers and parents – issues like class size and classroom violence,” Becotte says. “Our sincere hope is that government will read this report, take its recommendations, and return to the table with a mandate to negotiate before their intransigence impacts the school year.”

Earlier today, government announced funding for a pilot program for specialized support classrooms, in only eight urban elementary schools, meant to help school staff manage and de-escalate behavioural incidents.

“While this is an interesting start, this is far from a long-term commitment and many questions remain. We need a commitment from government through negotiations for sustained, long-term funding supports for all students in the province,” says Becotte. “All children in Saskatchewan have a right to a high-quality public education. A pilot in one percent of Saskatchewan schools is simply inadequate and it’s unfair to expect most kids and families to continue to wait for much-needed supports.”

There will be 48 hours’ notice given prior to any job sanctions being implemented as a result of the government’s continued refusal to bargain.

– 30 –