

NEWS RELEASE

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Government Data Proves Supports for Students Are Woefully Insufficient

SASKATOON – Newly released data from the Ministry of Education paints a bleak picture of the supports, including teachers, that are available for the province's growing student population. An analysis of the Government's Education Sector Staffing Profile, posted online yesterday, and its 2023-24 Provincial K-12 Enrolment Summary shows:

- The number of teachers is not keeping pace with the number of students, despite the addition of 218 full-time equivalent teachers this school year.
 - Since 2016-17 the student population has grown by 15,875 students or 8.8 percent. Yet, FTE teachers only increased by 0.1 percent.
 - In 2023-24, Saskatchewan has just 10 more FTE regular classroom teachers than we did in 2016-17, but 15,875 more students.
- A further overall decrease of professionals, including counsellors, psychologists and speech-language pathologists. Saskatchewan lost six specialists from these fields from 2022-23 to 2023-24. Within this group:
 - The decline of counsellors was 14.4 FTE or 7.7 percent.
 - The number of specialists who are also certified teachers decreased from 112 in 2022-2023 to 95 in 2023-24, or 15.5 percent.

- English as an additional language teachers saw an increase from 124 to 142, or 14 percent; however, we are unable to conduct an analysis as government has not released statistics on the number of EAL students since 2018-19, despite repeated requests.
 - Teacher and student experiences report that the number of EAL teachers is still significantly lower than what is needed to meet students' needs.

“This further validates what teachers, students and parents are saying about the reality of today’s classrooms. Students deserve better than this,” says Samantha Becotte, STF President. “Short-changing tomorrow’s workforce is extremely short-sighted, but Government can choose to fix these issues. It starts by addressing class size and complexity and guaranteeing long-term, sustainable education funding.”

The bleak picture painted by student enrolment and staffing numbers is further compounded by a changing student population. Not only is the number of teachers and specialists falling far behind student enrolment growth, the number of students with intensive needs has grown by more than 38 percent over a 10-year period (2007-08 to 2018-19).

“The Sask Party Government caused this problem by cutting per student funding so severely that Saskatchewan dropped from first to eighth place in the country,” said Becotte. “We know each community is different and requires unique solutions but without proper funding, school boards aren’t able to address these problems. This is why we want funding for class size and complexity included in our new agreement. This would give assurance that government will provide the funding and accountability that school boards will direct towards classroom supports and students’ needs. If they are committed to addressing these issues, they should have no problem including it in an agreement.”

The STF continues to urge all parents, students, businesses and community members to contact their MLA, the Minister of Education, Premier Moe and their locally elected school board trustees and ask them to return to the table and engage in real negotiations.

Data STF used in its analysis can be found in the [Education Sector Staffing Profile](#) and the [2023-24 Provincial K-12 Enrolment Summary](#).