

NEWS RELEASE

For Information Contact:

Lynn Redl-Huntington
Manager, Communications
306-221-4209
lynn.redlhuntington@stf.sk.ca

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GTBC Walks Away From Bargaining Table; Sanctions Reinstated

SASKATOON – The Teachers' Bargaining Committee and Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee were scheduled to resume negotiations today at 5:30 p.m. This afternoon, the provincial government advised they would not be returning to continue negotiations. As such, an impasse has been reached and sanctions will be reinstated starting on Friday, February 16.

“The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee promised a renewed mandate when it came back to the bargaining table, but it was readily apparent that the mandate was extremely limited. They immediately began stalling tactics that undermined good faith negotiations. Instead of beginning Monday morning, the GTBC delayed until Monday afternoon, then pushed Tuesday’s start to 5:30 p.m., before eventually cancelling altogether. The GTBC promised a renewed mandate when it came back to the bargaining table, but it is unable to negotiate without directly consulting the Minister of Education,” Becotte says.

The government has since been in direct contact with the STF regarding a proposal that would occur outside of the bargaining process. The STF responded that all discussions must take place within the negotiation process. As Minister Cockrill has stated, and the STF agrees, the best deals are made at the table. The STF is willing to resume negotiations as soon as the GTBC has a legitimate mandate to negotiate on all items.

“Although government now openly acknowledges that there are complexity concerns in schools, it

refuses to make long-term commitments where it can be held accountable,” says Becotte. “Several other provinces – Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and B.C. – have language around class size and complexity in their collective agreements with teachers. This government has already included patient complexity and an innovation fund as part of its new agreement with the province’s doctors. Government has shown it can and will address these matters in contracts when it chooses.

“When will the Sask Party government listen to what parents, students and teachers have been telling them through provincewide job action and over 50,000 calls, letters and emails? It is clear that school boards require proper, sustainable funding to meet the diversity of needs in classrooms across the province. By working together, we can ensure students receive the education and supports they need to fulfill their potential,” Becotte says.

In addition to job action planned for Friday, families can expect sanctions to resume following the February school break. Job action will continue until government gives its bargaining committee the tools and authority needed to honestly engage on teachers’ issues and make progress toward a tentative agreement.

“Teachers understand that job action is a significant inconvenience to many families, but we appreciate the heartfelt and unwavering support we have received from all parts of the province. Parents and caregivers, students, businesses, community groups and individuals understand that an investment in education is an investment in the lives of children and youth and the prosperity of our province,” Becotte says.

Samantha Becotte will be available to speak to media:

Wednesday, February 14, at 10 a.m.

Media organizations are asked to [register](#) and will then receive a unique Zoom link on Wednesday morning for access to ask questions during the news conference.



BACKGROUND

Job Action on Friday, February 16:

One-Day Rotating Strikes

Members of the following local associations will participate in a one-day rotating strike. Demonstration sites will be across the street from Minister Cockrill's office in North Battleford and at Premier Moe's office in Shellbrook from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday, February 16.

- Prince Albert and Area Teachers' Association
 - Saskatchewan Rivers School Division
 - Prince Albert Catholic School Division
- Tri-West Teachers' Association
 - Living Sky School Division
 - Light of Christ School Division
 - Sakewew High School (North Battleford)
- Association locale des enseignantes et enseignants francsaskois (Conseil des écoles francsaskoises)
 - École St Isidore De Bellevue (Prince Albert)
 - École Valois (Prince Albert)
 - École Père Mercure (North Battleford)
- Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation
 - North Central Campus (Prince Albert)

Provincewide Withdrawal of Noon-Hour Supervision

The withdrawal of noon-hour supervision means teachers in all schools provincewide will not be available to supervise students who are eating lunch at school or taking part in noon-hour activities and teachers will leave the building during each school's designated lunch break period. Although teachers often provide lunch break supervision, it is done on a voluntary basis. The responsibility to provide the necessary level of supervision to ensure student safety is held by school divisions under *The Education Act, 1995*. School divisions will make parents and caregivers aware of any operational or schedule changes due to Friday's job action.

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