

NEWS RELEASE

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Mini Rally in Humboldt Makes Noise for Public Education

HUMBOLDT – Over 200 people gathered outside the constituency office of the Honourable Donna Harpauer on Saturday, October 21. Minister Harpauer is Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance, MLA for Humboldt-Watrous and President of the Treasury Board and holds significant influence over the government's finances and how the Saskatchewan people's tax dollars are spent. This mini rally called on her specifically to use that influence to address the underfunding crisis in public schools.

In a 2023 survey of Saskatchewan teachers, 96 percent of respondents said that the demands on the teaching profession have increased compared to five years ago, 87 percent said that the complexity of the classroom has increased in the last two years, and 61 percent of teacher respondents said their average class size increased by 5.6 students compared to two years ago. In spite of this, budget cuts and underfunding meant that Saskatchewan saw a decrease of 145 full-time equivalent educators from 2021-22 to 2022-23, while schools also experienced the highest student enrolment growth in 20 years.

"People from all walks of life are joining teachers and parents to tell this government, enough is enough," said Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President Samantha Becotte. "It has become

increasingly clear in our negotiations with the government that the Treasury Board holds the decision-making power, so we are bringing the pressure to them. We call on Minister Harpauer to finally do what's right for the children of Saskatchewan and provide the resources they need to be successful."

Lyndsay Gabriel was one of the parent speakers at today's rally, where she highlighted the challenges her four children have experienced in school, including lack of wheelchair accessibility, and reduced occupational therapy and speech language pathology visits. "The lack of professional supports in the schools is not because these professionals don't want to work with children, it is not because they don't care," Lyndsay said. "It is because the government has cut funding so that there are fewer professionals to support more students. There are also fewer EAs available in the schools to work with kids who might have a treatment plan in place by these support professionals. It has become an insurmountable challenge. There is simply not enough to go around."

This was the second in a series of mini rallies being held throughout Saskatchewan this fall. The first took place in Moose Jaw on October 14, with some estimates placing the number of attendants at nearly 1000 people. Upcoming rallies are planned for:

[Saskatoon](#) – October 28 at 1 p.m. outside the office of Minister Paul Merriman, and

[North Battleford](#) – November 4 at 1 p.m. outside the office of Minister Jeremy Cockrill.

Editor's Note: Footage of the Humboldt mini rally is available for media upon request.

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