

NEWS RELEASE

For Information Contact:

Courtney Forseth, MA
Managing Director, Public Relations and Communications
306-221-4209
courtney.forseth@stf.sk.ca

For Immediate Release:

May 2, 2023

SASK. GOVERNMENT STILL NOT LISTENING TO EDUCATION CONCERNS

SASKATOON – Despite Premier Moe's claims that those who are demanding better for Saskatchewan schools "have been heard," his comments and lack of action show the Saskatchewan government is still not listening to the demands and concerns of Saskatchewan residents.

"Our public education system is severely underfunded and requires an estimated \$400 million to restore funding back to 2012 levels when Saskatchewan led the country in per student funding," said Samantha Becotte, STF President. "Government's failure to fund this year's enrolment is just the latest in a long list of instances where the provincial government is ignoring students' needs."

Both Premier Moe and Education Minister Dustin Duncan continue to make a number of false or misleading claims. The STF is committed to sharing facts based on data.

Fact Check

- To suggest there have not been cuts is simply not true.
 - According to the Fraser Institute in 2012-13, Saskatchewan was first in per student funding. With this latest budget, [Saskatchewan is now 8th](#).
 - This has resulted in school divisions having no choice but to cut supports and services. From 2017-18 to 2021-22, cuts include:
 - 13.5 percent reduction in English as an Additional Language teachers.
 - 16.2 percent reduction in teacher counsellors.
 - 64.5 percent reduction in teacher librarians.
 - 5 percent reduction in teacher coordinators.

- There are 377 fewer teachers now than there were in 2020-21.
- According to Saskatoon Public Schools, total per student funding has been cut from \$10,036 to \$9,896 and the division is now facing a \$2.5 million shortfall.
- Teacher salaries are not the driver of increasing cost. Between 2016-22, the teacher salaries fell below the Consumer Price Index five out of seven years.
- The crisis in public education is not the result of an unusual and sudden immigration increase. The percentage of the provincial budget going to education continues to get smaller.
 - 13.5 percent in 2018-19
 - 11.3 percent in 2022-23
 - 10.9 percent in 2023-24

“The chronic underfunding is not isolated to urban areas or the result of recent increased immigration, and it is concerning to see the Minister frame this as an immigration issue,” said Becotte. “More than 3,500 people showed up at the Legislative Building on Saturday to make noise for education. Government either isn’t listening or is choosing not to. If government chooses to continue to ignore the crisis they’ve created in public education, we will only get louder and louder.”

Since Minister Duncan declined to attend the rally and hear from students, parents and teachers, and also has not spent time in a classroom to understand his portfolio and its challenges, the STF would be pleased to offer him an opportunity to hear directly from Saskatchewan’s teachers about the realities in schools.

– 30 –