

NEWS RELEASE

For Information Contact:

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

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Saskatchewan Teachers Reject Tentative Agreement

SASKATOON – The majority of teachers in Saskatchewan have voted against a tentative Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Teachers' Bargaining Committee and Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee. In voting held Wednesday and Thursday, 55 percent of teachers opposed the agreement, with 88 percent of eligible voters casting a ballot.

"We take our direction from the membership, and members have spoken. The result of this vote is a message to government and the Saskatchewan School Boards Association that teachers need to see real changes to classroom complexity and compensation. In feedback from members, we heard clearly that their priorities haven't been adequately addressed," says Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President Samantha Becotte. "In the days leading up to this vote, I stressed that the fight for public education will continue, and our members will determine which forum that battle will take place in. The STF Executive and I will do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes, to get a deal done with the support of our collective to strengthen our profession and public education for current and future students."

This is the second offer teachers have rejected. On May 8 and 9, teachers voted on a final offer from government. Teachers overwhelmingly rejected the offer, with 90 percent of voters opposed. Following the

vote in early May, the two bargaining committees resumed negotiations. As a result of the progress made over the course of five days of informal and formal negotiations, both bargaining committees announced on May 17 that a tentative agreement had been reached. This agreement, which teachers have rejected, included an additional \$18 million per year towards classroom complexity and the inclusion of several references to provide greater transparency and teacher voice in the allocation of classroom support funding.

“I appreciate the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee’s willingness to bargain in good faith during the meetings that led us to the tentative deal. I expect that these productive negotiations will continue, and we can return to the table to chart a path towards an agreement that will meet the needs of Saskatchewan’s students and teachers without further interruptions to the school year,” says Becotte.

The Teachers’ Bargaining Committee has extended a verbal invitation for the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee to return to the negotiating table and a formal, written invitation will be sent tomorrow. If the government and the SSBA decline this invitation, or talks break down, 48 hours’ notice will be given prior to the resumption of job action. On May 16, the TBC and STF Executive received a new mandate from teachers to implement sanctions as they see fit. This mandate will be in effect until an agreement is reached, which may be beyond the current school year.

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PROVINCIAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TIMELINE

April 2023

- Rally for Public Education attracts estimated 3,500 people to the Legislative Building.

May 2023

- Bargaining begins with two days of meetings at the STF office.

June 2023

- TBC concludes presentation of the Proposals for Teachers' Collective Bargaining. GTBC delivers response and proposal presentation.

July 2023

- TBC expresses concern over lack of progress following third meeting.

August 11, 2023

- TBC decides to not proceed with bargaining August 14 and 15.

September 2023

- TBC formally responds to the government's billboard and digital ads, calling them outside of agreed-to principles of mutually respectful bargaining.

October 2023

- Teachers don #IAMSTF stickers during provincewide day of action.
- TBC declares negotiations impasse, files for conciliation.
- STF holds mini rallies on four consecutive Saturdays calling on government to provide adequate funding and support for publicly funded schools.
- TBC and STF Executive announce sanctions vote for October 24 and 25.
- Ninety-five percent of voters say "Yes" to the use of sanctions.

December 12, 2023

- Conciliation board declares impasse after listening to TBC and GTBC positions during five days of hearings.

January 2024

- Conciliation report supports STF position that class size and complexity can be addressed through bargaining.
- After 10 bargaining meetings and a failed conciliation, the STF announces sanctions will begin January 16 with a one-day provincewide strike.
- Teachers stage second one-day provincewide strike on January 22, followed by a series of rotating strikes.

February 2024

- STF accepts GTBC invitation to resume negotiations and suspends sanctions.
- GTBC leaves bargaining after less than a day of negotiations.
- STF announces resumption of sanctions, effective February 16.
- Sanctions expand to affect noon-hour supervision and extracurricular activities.

March 2024

- Government announces Multi-Year Funding Agreement with Saskatchewan School Boards Association. The deal provides minimum \$356.6 million per year for four years.
- Teachers hold three-day, provincewide withdrawal of extracurricular activities.
- STF calls on government to accept binding arbitration for the issue of class size and complexity.
- Thousands protest on budget day at the Legislative Building and around the province during one-day provincewide strike.

April 2024

- Teachers withdraw all voluntary services as part of indefinite work-to-rule beginning on April 8.
- On April 12, work-to-rule suspended ahead of return to bargaining table.
- After two days of negotiations TBC and STF Executive announce that the GTBC's "final offer" will be voted on by members.

May 2024

- During a vote held May 8 and 9, teachers overwhelmingly reject the government's final offer with 90 percent voting against the offer.
- On May 15 and 16, teachers vote to provide the STF Executive a renewed mandate to implement sanctions beyond June 30, if needed. Teachers voted 95 percent in favour of a renewed sanctions mandate.
- After four days of informal and formal negotiations, a tentative agreement is reached by the TBC and GTBC. A ratification vote is scheduled for May 29 and 30.