

NEWS RELEASE

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Teachers at Legislative Building on First Day of Spring Session

SASKATOON – Approximately 3,500 teachers on rotating strike took to the Legislative Building today, coinciding with the first day of the spring legislative session. These teachers are from Regina Public Schools, Regina Catholic Schools, Prairie South School Division, Holy Family Catholic School Division, South East Cornerstone School Division, as well as teachers from Conseil des écoles francsaskoises and the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre who work within those boundaries. Striking teachers unable to safely travel to Regina today due to inclement weather are taking part in alternative advocacy actions, including calling and emailing government to highlight the concerns of teachers.

“We are very grateful for the number of teachers and supporters who were able to make it to the Legislative Building this morning as MLAs returned for the spring session,” says Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation President Samantha Becotte. “I also thank the striking teachers and supporters who are spending the day contacting government officials from other locations, since they couldn’t get to Regina safely after the snowstorm. The level of support we’ve seen is a sign to teachers across the province that Saskatchewan people share our goal of achieving long-term funding commitments that will improve the classroom experience for students. And it is a clear signal to government that we are united, we are supported and we are not backing down.”

Escalating job action by teachers has come as the Government of Saskatchewan continues its refusal to bargain on learning and working conditions in schools. Today also marks the final day of a five-day countdown to further escalation. If government does not provide their bargaining committee a new mandate to bargain on issues such as class size and complexity, teachers will be withdrawing all extracurricular supports on March 5 and 6.

“Students, families and teachers are in this situation because this government simply will not listen,” says Becotte. “For years, they have not listened to parents, teachers, trustees and other experts in the education sector who have been raising alarm bells about underfunding. Today, we bring those concerns to their doorstep. Enough is enough.”

Everyone who supports the actions Saskatchewan teachers are taking on behalf of their students and schools can join www.tellthemtuesday.com and help tell MLAs, Minister of Education Jeremy Cockrill, Premier Scott Moe and elected school board trustees that Saskatchewan students deserve better from their publicly funded education system. Since the beginning of January, Saskatchewan residents have used this platform to send nearly 130,000 emails to these decision makers.

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Please note: Due to weather conditions, Samantha Becotte will not be in Regina today, as previously indicated. Members of the media can contact Lynn Redl-Huntington as noted above to arrange an interview.