



The following is the opinion of Sandi Urban-Hall, spokesperson for the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee.

May 5, 2011

Dear Editor:

The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee has made a fair, reasonable and competitive offer to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation that if ratified would result in its members being the second highest paid teachers in the Western provinces. So we were very disappointed that instead of remaining at the bargaining table, the union walked away after demanding a 12 per cent increase in one year and has now launched strike action.

The bargaining committee has completed a comprehensive analysis of compensation in other jurisdictions, as well the supply of and demand for teachers in Saskatchewan. The results show that our teachers are being offered a fair and competitive deal and that there is no shortage of teachers in Saskatchewan.

The average 2009 starting salary for a teacher with a four year degree for the four Western Canadian provinces is \$47,635. With our fair, reasonable and competitive offer, a comparable teacher in Saskatchewan will earn more than \$49,000 by the end of the agreement. As it stands today, a comparable teacher in Saskatchewan earns \$46,419, which is \$1,000 more than the average of Canadian provinces.

After 15 years of service, the average 2009 salary for a teacher with a four year degree for the four Western Canadian provinces is \$73,929. With our fair, reasonable and competitive offer, a comparable teacher in Saskatchewan will earn over \$77,000 by the end of the agreement. As it stands today, a comparable teacher in Saskatchewan earns \$73,036, which is about \$3,000 more than the average of Canadian provinces.

The information being used by the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee to calculate how Saskatchewan teachers compare to the rest of Canada is based on data that was jointly accepted and used at the bargaining table. In fact, all of our data is posted online at www.skteacherbargaining.ca. And our data shows that, when you look at salaries for teachers from all other provinces, our teachers already out-earn the average Canadian teacher with a four year degree.

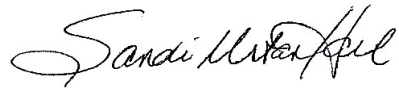
The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee is concerned that the strike day is costing our students valuable time in the classroom. Students and parents are encouraged to contact their school divisions to learn more about contingency plans in place to support them during strike action. Ensuring the safety and well being of students is the first and most important concern of all Saskatchewan boards of education.

We want the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation back at the bargaining table and students and teachers back in the classroom. If the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation returns to the table,

as we are urging the union to do, and teachers accept our offer, they will become the second highest paid teachers in Western Canada.

The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee is comprised of representatives from both the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan School Boards Association. The committee is responsible for representing the interests of both the publicly funded school system and the employer in bargaining negotiations with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee has successfully negotiated provincial collective agreements for teachers in Saskatchewan for more than 30 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandi Urban-Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Sandi Urban-Hall
Government Trustee Bargaining Committee