



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee Invites STF Back To Table

The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee met Friday and they issued a formal invitation to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), asking the union back to the bargaining table. The STF has accepted this invitation.

"The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee has been prepared to bargain at any time," Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee spokesperson Sandi Urban-Hall said. "We are pleased that the union has indicated a willingness to join us back at the table."

When determining offers of compensation, the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee does a thorough analysis of compensation packages for teachers from all other provinces as well as supply and demand pressures. Additional information on compensation can be found at www.skteacherbargaining.ca.

"Supply and demand pressures have a significant impact on offers of compensation," Urban-Hall said. "We want to know that we can recruit and retain teachers. Unlike some other public service professions, we are not experiencing, nor are we expecting to see, any kind of teacher shortages. A large percentage of recent graduates with teaching degrees are having a really hard time finding work all across Canada. And we know that we also have other provinces, including Alberta, laying teachers off, which makes it much easier for us to recruit and retain here in Saskatchewan. And our proposed wage increase will ensure our ability to attract and retain."

While yearly fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index do not drive offers of compensation, in recent years teachers have seen greater increases in salary than increases to the cost of living.

"We do not want to erode the purchasing power of teachers," Urban-Hall said. "Teachers have actually seen their salaries exceed the cost of living by a considerable margin over the last 15 years. But keeping pace with the cost of living is not unlike the view you take when investing in your retirement – it's not how your investments do in each individual year but how they do over the long haul."

Since 1997 the cost of living measured by CPI has gone up 33.1%. While teacher pay increases have not matched changes in the Consumer Price Index each and every year, during this same time period teacher salaries have gone up by 59.5% at the bottom of the scale and 53.2% at the top.

"We have made an offer to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation that, if ratified, would make Saskatchewan teachers among the highest paid in Canadian provinces," Urban-Hall said. "It's time to get back to the table to successfully negotiate a provincial collective agreement for teachers."

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.

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