

NEWS RELEASE

For Information Contact:

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

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Saskatoon Mini Rally for Public Education

SASKATOON – The Honourable Paul Merriman had close to 2,000 people outside his office today, as concerned citizens, parents, students and teachers gathered to have their voices heard about the underfunding crisis in public education. Minister Merriman is the MLA for Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland, a senior cabinet minister and member of the provincial Treasury Board. He holds an influential position and decision-making power regarding how government funds are allocated, and he is being called on to use his influence to encourage government to finally invest in the students of Saskatchewan.

In 2012-13, Saskatchewan had the highest per-student total public education spending in the country. Now, Saskatchewan students are funded at some of the lowest levels in Canada with per student funding at 8th place. In 2018-19, funding for K-12 operations represented over 13% of the total provincial budget. In 2023-24, that dropped to just 11%. This is despite the fact that student enrolment has increased by over 11% in the past 10 years.

“The incredible turnouts we have seen at our mini rallies so far should be a signal to government that people are fed up with their status quo of underfunding and budget cuts,” said Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation President Samantha Becotte. “If Minister Merriman listens

to what the people here are saying today, he might finally hear what parents and teachers already know: students deserve so much better. It is reprehensible that students in need across the province do not have access to critical services and resources while this government is celebrating a \$500 million surplus.”

Saskatoon parents Rachel Engler-Stringer and Peter Garden spoke at the rally, addressing an 18-month wait time for a consult with an educational psychologist for their son. As advocates for public education, they were initially against a private sector consult, but ultimately went that route as time was of the essence.

“As parents, we know that teachers are our allies. We see how hard they work and how they have our kids’ best interests at heart. The problems in the system that we see are not because of lazy teachers, they are because the system is deliberately underfunded year after year by our current government. That has to change.”

This was the third in a series of mini rallies being held throughout Saskatchewan this fall. Between the first two rallies in Moose Jaw and Humboldt, estimates placed the number of supporters at 1200 people. The fourth and final mini rally of this series will take place in:

[North Battleford](#) – November 4 at 1 p.m. outside the office of Minister Jeremy Cockrill.

Editor’s Note: Footage of the Saskatoon mini rally is available for media upon request.

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