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GOVERNMENT MEETING THE CHALLENGE FOR SASKATCHEWAN STUDENTS

Province Maintains Elected School Boards

The Government of Saskatchewan today released the final report from the Advisory Panel on Education Governance Renewal. The government is accepting the findings in the report, including:

- Keeping elected boards;
- No major school division boundary changes;
- Keeping the focus on the Education Sector Strategic Plan;
- Making legislative changes to clarify roles within the sector and create efficiencies; and
- Improving engagement with First Nations and Métis residents.

There was strong support during the consultations for locally elected trustees and for maintaining the current public school division boundaries. There was also a clear message heard to control spending in the education sector. Therefore, the government plans to introduce amendments to *The Education Act* that will create a framework for shared services like procurement, transportation, payroll, and salary range for school division administrators and elected trustees.

“The message was clear and we have listened to that message,” Deputy Premier and Education Minister Don Morgan said. “Local education decisions will continue to be made by local, elected school boards.”

The K-12 Education Governance Advisory Panel Review is now available online on the provincial government website, www.saskatchewan.ca.

Saskatchewan’s 28 school divisions will receive \$1.86 billion in school operating funding, which includes revenue collected from the education property tax. This is down \$22.0 million from 2016-17 and represents a 1.2 per cent reduction year-over-year.

“Investing in quality education for our students continues to be a top priority for our government,” Morgan said. “Declining resource revenues meant we had to take steps to control spending in every area of government, including education.”

Overall, the 2017-18 Budget provides \$2.02 billion for Education, a 6.7 per cent decrease in funding compared to last year. Much of the decrease is due to a \$262 million reduction in funds required to construct the 18 new schools in Regina, Saskatoon, Warman and Martensville, which are scheduled for completion in 2017.



“Even with the reduction this year, our government has more than doubled education funding compared to 10 years ago. While we had to make some difficult decisions to reduce the deficit, we are confident that school divisions can manage modest reductions with a limited impact on the classroom and front line supports.”

Specific areas of investment include:

- Continued investment of \$119.1 million for capital projects to complete 21 new schools and one major renovation that will open this fall. This includes:
 - \$43.2 million for preventative maintenance and renewal (PMR) and emergent funding, an increase of \$5.2 million or 13.7 per cent;
 - \$21.8 million to complete four major capital projects including three new schools in Regina (Sacred Heart, École Connaught and Scott Collegiate in the Mâdawêyatitân Centre) and a major expansion and renovation of St. Brieux School;
 - \$2.0 million in design funding for two new projects (consolidation and replacement of schools in Rosthern and Weyburn);
 - \$2.8 million for the purchase of seven new relocatable units;
 - \$48.3 million to complete the 18 joint-use schools, down \$262.3 million over last year; and
 - \$1.0 million for school facility audits.
- \$55.8 million for child care funding. 889 new spaces will be created, including 810 spaces at the 18 new joint-use schools in Saskatoon, Regina, Warman and Martensville, bringing the total number of new spaces created in the past 10 years to more than 6,000; and
- \$3.5 million in operating funding for northern and regional libraries, a reduction of \$4.8 million.

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