

AN OVERVIEW OF SASKATCHEWAN'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education has always been seen as a priority in Saskatchewan. When the province was first formed, land was set aside throughout the province to ensure that schools would be as accessible as possible to students. By the 1920's, Saskatchewan had nearly 5,000 school divisions in operation. The University of Saskatchewan was established in 1907, only two years after the province itself was formed.

Today, Saskatchewan's education system provides services to nearly one third of the province's population. The following are some important facts relating to the system:

- Nearly 200,000 students are in K-12 programs in over 800 schools;
- SIAST has four campuses and provides services to approximately 45,000 full-time and part-time students;
- Approximately 30,000 full and part-time students attend Saskatchewan's two universities;
- Saskatchewan's nine Regional Colleges provide adult basic education programs, and deliver university and SIAST credit courses throughout the province;
- Nearly 3,000 students attend private vocational schools in Saskatchewan;
- Over \$1 Billion are spent on education in Saskatchewan each year.

Several organizations and institutions play key roles in the province's education system. The following is an outline of these bodies and their respective roles within the system.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment is the department for which the Minister of Education has responsibility. The department provides a wide range of services to the K-12 and postsecondary education systems in the province, although it does not generally provide services directly to learners. The direct provision of educational services to learners in Saskatchewan is the responsibility of the province's educational institutions and their governing boards. As a result, both K-12 boards of education and the province's postsecondary institutions operate with a high degree of autonomy from the department.

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K-12 Services

Within this devolved system, the department's major services to K-12 institutions include:

- The calculation and provision of operating and capital grants for the delivery of school programs and services at the local level. Provincial grants account for approximately of 50% of all school board revenues.
- The establishment of provincial standards in such areas as curriculum and teacher certification.
- The development and distribution of curriculum materials used in schools.
- The provision of consultative services, as requested.
- The development and distribution of professional development, evaluative and research materials.
- The provision of certain regulatory and administrative services.

Postsecondary Services

In general, postsecondary institutions have a greater degree of autonomy from Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment than do school divisions. This is in part due to the fact that the department does not have responsibility for postsecondary curricula, with the exception of the apprenticeship and Adult Basic Education curricula. The department's major functions in relation to postsecondary institutions include:

- The calculation and provision of operating and capital grants and funding.
- The provision of certain regulatory and administrative services.
- The development and distribution of research, evaluative and other materials.
- The provision of consultative services, as requested.

K-12 School Divisions

- There are 115 public and separate school boards and divisions in Saskatchewan. Each board has from five to ten elected trustees.
- School boards are responsible for the provision of educational programs and services within their school division i.e. operation and management of schools, the establishment of instructional policies and programs, and the employment of teaching staff.
- Grants from the provincial government account for approximately 50% of school division revenues. The remainder is raised through local property taxes.
- Local Boards of Trustees are elected from within many school attendance areas to work with principals and teachers in specific schools on issues such as the maintenance of school property, the provision of programs and the organization of transportation for students.
- Nearly 200,000 students attend K-12 schools in Saskatchewan.

Other K-12 Schools

- Indian Bands operate approximately 70 schools on reserves located in Saskatchewan. These schools offer K-12 programs to over 10,000 students and operate completely independently of Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, although they do make use of certain provincial curriculum guides and other resources.
- Saskatchewan has over 50 independent schools, providing K-12 instruction to over 3,000 students. Eight "historic" independent and three alternative schools receive some funding from the province, however, the others do not. Schools receiving funding from the province must adhere, at a minimum, to the goals of the provincial curriculum. The curricula used in the others may not be inconsistent with the objectives of the provincial curriculum.
- Approximately 500 Saskatchewan students receive instruction through Home-Based schools.

Universities

- Each of Saskatchewan's two universities, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, are governed by a 12 member board of governors. The Lieutenant Governor in Council appoints six members of each board, with the remainder being elected by the members of convocation of each university.
- The universities receive approximately 80% of their funding from Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, with the rest coming from tuition fees, the sale of goods and services, and research and other contracts.
- Several colleges have entered into either affiliation or federation agreements with one of two universities. While these colleges are governed by independent boards, they are academically integrated with one of the two universities, which grant degrees on their behalf.
- Saskatchewan's universities provide a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs in the arts, sciences and in the professions.
- Approximately 30,000 full-time and part-time students attend the universities.

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)

- SIAST includes four institutes: Kelsey (Saskatoon), Palliser (Moose Jaw), Wascana (Regina) and Woodland (Prince Albert). SIAST was formed in 1987 by amalgamating the former technical institutes, the urban community colleges, the Advanced Technology Training Centre and the Meadow Lake Vocational Centre.
- SIAST is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.
- SIAST receives approximately 80% of its funding from the provincial government. The remainder is provided by the federal government, tuition fees, the sale of goods and services and training contracts.

- SIAST provides a wide range of skill training programs and academic upgrading programs.
- Over 45,000 full-time and part-time students attend SIAST. Approximately 10,000 of these students are in certificate and diploma programs. The remainder are in non-credit extension programs.
- The Dumont Technical Institute is currently being established as an independent Métis-managed postsecondary institution that offers skill training and academic upgrading programs. It will be affiliated with SIAST.

Regional Colleges

- Saskatchewan has nine Regional Colleges: Carlton Trail (Humboldt), Cumberland (Nipawin) Cypress Hills (Swift Current), North West (North Battleford), Northlands (La Ronge), Parkland (Melville), Prairie West (Biggar), Southeast (Weyburn) and the Lakeland College (Lloydminster). In addition, the Saskatchewan Indian Community College, also known as the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (Saskatoon), provides services for the Indian community in the province.
- The Regional Colleges receive approximately 65% of their funding from the provincial government. The remainder is provided by tuition fees, training contracts and the federal government.
- Each Regional College is governed by a board of governors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.
- The mandate of the colleges is to provide university and SIAST courses on an extension basis and to continue providing adult basic education, literacy training and career counselling.
- The Regional Colleges had nearly 4,000 registrations in 1991-92.

Apprenticeship Programs

- Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment is responsible for the provincial apprenticeship program, which includes 37 apprenticeable trades. Apprenticeship programs provide a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training.
- Trade Advisory Boards exist for each apprenticeship program. They consist of persons that work within that trade. A Provincial Apprenticeship Board governs the overall apprenticeship program.
- Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment provides curriculum and evaluation support for apprenticeship programs, while classroom instruction is provided by SIAST.
- The federal government funds a major portion of the in-school component of this training.

Private Vocational Schools

- Over 30 private vocational schools operate in Saskatchewan. They offer a range of courses on a for-profit basis in diverse areas such as barbering, computer programming, secretarial studies and other service occupations.
- Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment regulates these institutions but does not have any direct operating authority over them.
- Private Vocational Schools provided educational services to nearly 3,000 students in 1991-92.

Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC)

- EIC delivers federal training programs in Saskatchewan under the terms of the new Labour Force Development Agreement signed in August, 1991.
- Federal contributions to training program in Saskatchewan will amount to approximately \$226 million over the three years of this agreement, making the federal government a significant player in certain aspects of the province's education system.