

SASKATCHEWAN

School Finance Branch

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

Legislation in Saskatchewan requires that appropriate educational services be provided to all students between the ages of six and 22 years of age, at no cost to their parents or guardians.

The 1998 estimated net expenditures of school divisions is \$966 million or approximately \$5,170 per pupil. The plant operation and maintenance cost of schools is \$115 million or approximately \$618 per pupil.

Boards of Education mainly receive money from three sources: Local revenue—property taxation; Provincial grants—the foundation formula; Tuition fees—other boards, Federal government and individuals.

Provincial funding for K–12 education in Saskatchewan is distributed through the Foundation Operating Grant formula. It is based on the principles of transparency, unconditionality, incentives for local boards to use resources efficiently and effectively, equalization, and a balance between stability and responsiveness.

The Foundation Operating Grant formula is not used to determine the total annual amount included in the provincial budget. Rather it is a formula for the distribution of a fixed amount established by the provincial government in the annual provincial budget.

In order for the formula to remain in balance, any increase in one category of recognized expenditure must be offset either by an equal increase in recognized revenues or by an equal reduction in other recognized expenditures.

Similarly, any adjustments which result in grant increases for one school division or group of school divisions can be made only by reducing grants to the other school divisions by an equivalent amount.

The largest component of recognized expenditures of a school division or conseil scolaire consists of amounts calculated on the basis of a basic rate per pupil enrolled. The rates represent the department's recognition for expenditures of an

educational program and reflect expenditures for administration, instruction, plant operation and maintenance, non-capital furniture and equipment, non-capital renovations and repairs, current interest expenses and bank charges and special events transportation. In addition to the basic program costs, recognized expenditures recognize the following costs: per pupil incremental costs associated with providing specialized educational services or comprehensive programs; costs associated with enrolment increases and decreases and special circumstances of rural school divisions such as sparsity, rural technology, small school factors; and other items of expenditure such as transportation, tuition fees, home based education, shared services, language programs, rentals, teacher secondments and sick leave, northern allowances and other recognized expenditures.

The 1998–1999 grant recognition for community schools is \$4.4 million. The department also recognizes an Indian and Metis Education Development program (IMED) of \$1.1 million. In 1989, legislation, regulations and policies were put in place to provide for regulation and registration of independent schools. Independent schools exist to provide an education from a philosophical perspective different from that of the public education system. Parents enroll their children in independent schools in order to achieve philosophical objectives that may not or cannot be satisfied within the public education system.

II. LOCAL SCHOOL REVENUE

Recognized local revenue is to be determined in accordance with the following:

The assessment to be used in the calculation of grants for a year is the amount determined jointly by the minister and the school division, but where the final equalized assessment differs from the estimated equalized assessment, the appropriate adjustment is to be added to or recovered from the subsequent year's grant.

Revenue from trailer fees and from grants in lieu of taxes and 0.67 of 1996 revenue from the business tax is to be converted to an equivalent assessment, and those assessments are to be added to the equalized assessment of the school division.

An amount equivalent to 6.7% of a school division's non-agricultural and non-residential assessment is to be added to the school division's assessment

Fee Revenue

Fee revenues received by a school division or conseil scolaire, other than a northern school division, from other school divisions, conseils scolaires, the conseil général, individuals, governments or institutions for the provision of educational services for pupils are recognized in the amount equal to the sum of:

(1) the application of the basic rate (see section under BASIC SUPPORT PROGRAM) to the actual number of pupils for whom educational services are provided; and

(2) the application of the incremental rates set out below to:

<u>Type of pupil</u>	<u>Rate per pupil enrolled</u>
High-cost disabled (level 1)	\$4,752
High-cost disabled (level 2)	7,088
Comprehensive	253

the actual number of high-cost disabled pupils, other than Special Needs Program Pupils, for whom educational services are provided; and

the actual number of pupils for whom comprehensive educational services are provided.

Fee revenues received by a northern school division from other school divisions, individuals, governments or institutions with respect to the provision of educational services for pupils are recognized in the amount equal to the product of:

(3) an amount equal to the amount determined above; and

(4) the northern factor set out below for the school division in which the pupil attends school.

<u>Northern School Division</u>	<u>Northern Factor</u>
Northern Lights	1.30
Creighton	1.32
Ile-a-la-Crosse	1.325

Other Recognized Revenues

The minister may recognize any revenues, in addition to those described above, that the minister considers appropriate.

In determining the recognized local revenue of a conseil scolaire for the purposes of an operating grant to that conseil scolaire, the minister shall recognize the revenues described in Fee Revenue, subject to any modifications that the minister considers necessary or appropriate, and may recognize any additional revenues that the minister considers appropriate.

III. TAX AND SPENDING LIMITS

Recognized Revenue

Recognized revenue is designed to reflect the relative local fiscal capacity of a school division. Assessment and the equalization factor are major variables in the determination of recognized local revenue.

Assessment

The assessment base used in the calculation of grants represents the measure of a school division's local fiscal capacity and is comprised of the accumulation of the following amounts: the taxable assessment from the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency; grants in lieu of taxes from federal and provincial agencies for exempt property from the property tax roll; and the Business Proxy

Equalization Factor

The equalization factor is a standard mill rate applied to the assessment of all school divisions for grant calculation purposes. The equalization factor (computational mill rate) for 1998 is 14.80 mills.

Analysis of Mill Rates

Mill rate percentage differences between the equalization factor and actual weighted average mill rates for 1998–1999 and the nine previous years are as follows:

Year	Equalization Factor Mill Rate	Percentage Change	Weighted Aver Mill Rate	Percentage Change	Percentage Difference
1988	50.00	–	59.3	–	18.6%
1989	53.00	6.0%	62.4	5.3%	17.7%
1990	56.00	5.7%	65.6	5.1%	17.1%
1991	59.00	5.4%	68.3	4.1%	15.8%
1992	62.00	5.1%	69.8	2.2%	12.6%
1993	63.40	2.3%	71.2	2.0%	12.3%
1994	65.20	2.8%	72.2	1.4%	10.7%
1995	66.40	1.8%	74.4	3.0%	12.0%
1996	68.40	3.1%	75.8	1.9%	10.8%
1997	14.67	–	17.2	–	17.1%
1998	14.80	0.9%	17.4	1.2%	17.4%

Note: Mill rates for 1997 and 1998 are not comparable to the equalization factor as for previous years, because these mill rates are inflated by the effect of the 0.83 agricultural factor. If the effective mill rates are estimated to be one mill lower than the actual, the difference between the equalization factor and the weighted provincial average is still 10%—11% in each year.

Impact of Reassessment

Reassessment Cap 1997. The department implemented a “cap” to mitigate the effects of reassessment by protecting school divisions from radical declines in grant funding and resulting substantial tax increases on property. The introduction of the cap limited the decline in 1997 grants to school divisions to no more than 25% as compared to their 1996 grant. The cap is to remain in effect for 1997, 1998 and 1999, and will be reevaluated at the end of the three years. The assessment cap implemented in 1997 affects 23 school divisions in 1998–1999 and adds \$6.6 million to their grant.

Agricultural Factor. To minimize shifts in tax incidence that resulted from reassessment, the agricultural factor (0.83) was established for agricultural assessment to limit an increase in taxes on agricultural land. As in 1997, the factor remains in place for 1998 at 0.83. The object of the agricultural factor (0.83) was to reduce the education tax burden on agricultural property within a school division relative to the tax load on all other classes of property within the same school division. The object was not to redistribute educational grants away from school divisions with little or no agricultural property to school divisions with substantial amounts of agricultural property. For this reason the agricultural factor was excluded in determining a school division's taxable assessment for purposes of determining recognized local revenue in the Foundation Operating Grant (FOG).

Treatment of Business Assessment in the Foundation Operating Grant Business tax proxy is a replacement of the business assessment prior to reassessment. Maintenance of business tax and assessment became optional in 1997. To ensure a consistent approach in the Foundation Operating Grant the department used a business assessment proxy for each school division based on business tax revenue from 1996. Beginning in 1998–1999, the business tax proxy is being phased out over a three year period and replaced with a business equivalent based on commercial and industrial assessment. In order to maintain the amount of recognized revenue generated by the business tax proxy in the Foundation Operating Grant calculation, the assessment of all properties classified as “commercial/industrial” will be increased by 20.7%. For 1998, the business equivalent is determined by adding two thirds of the old proxy to the 6.9% (one third of 20.7%) of the commercial and industrial property assessment.

IV. STATE/PROVINCIAL EARMARKED TAX REVENUE

In 1999, the province is providing \$397.5 million from general revenues to Saskatchewan school divisions.

V. BASIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

Nature of Program: Foundation Operation Grant. The objectives of the grant are to allow school systems to provide a desirable and realistic level and range of programs and services without an unduly high tax rate, enable school systems to retain full autonomy, and provide school systems protection from circumstances

beyond their control, such as major changes to enrolment levels or the assessment base.

Allocation Units: pupil enrollment.

Local Fiscal Capacity: The ability of a school division to raise revenue locally is measured by its local property tax assessment base multiplied by a provincially determined equalization factor. To the extent that a school division's local fiscal capacity is increasing, its grant will be lower, and vice versa.

How Formula Works: The formula takes into account both the costs of providing education services and the school division's relative ability to pay. The formula is as follows:

$$A - B = C$$

where:

- A = the school division's recognized expenditures
- B = the school division's recognized local revenues
- C = the operating grant to be allocated to the school division

The key element in determining the level of recognized expenditures is enrolment. The program provides recognition based on the enrolment multiplied by a basic per pupil rate. To the extent that enrolments increase, the level of expenditures recognized will increase. To the extent that enrolments decrease, the level of expenditure recognition will decline.

Provincial Share: Difference between the operating grant and the school division's recognized local revenues.

Local Share: Determined by local fiscal capacity.

Weighting Procedures: The basic rates recognize expenditures for administration, instruction, plant operation and maintenance, non-capital furniture and equipment, non-capital renovations and repairs, current interest expenses and bank charges and special events transportation.

The basic rates are calculated on a per pupil basis. Grant recognition under the basic program is unconditional. Basic program recognition is the Principal's

September Statistical Report times the appropriate basic rate. All pupils are grouped into kindergarten, elementary level, middle level, and secondary level.

The Basic Rates per Pupil Enrolled in 1998 are as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Regina and Saskatoon</u>	<u>Other Schools</u>
Kindergarten	1,658	1,776
Elementary	3,205	3,416
Middle years	3,436	3,662
Secondary	3,959	4,202

Recognized expenditures based on the per-pupil rates represent about 75.0% of the total recognized expenditure.

Adjustments for Special Factors:

Core Curriculum Implementation. Grant recognition of \$20.00 per pupil is allocated to all school divisions in 1998. Grant recognition under the core curriculum component of the recognized expenditures represents 0.4% of the total recognized expenditure amount.

Enrolment Decline. The enrolment decline factors are to assist school divisions having enrolment declines year after year. With the main emphasis of the foundation operating grant on the per pupil counts, school divisions having declining enrolments have difficulty adjusting expenditures to the change. The enrolment decline factors are to assist in making the adjustment to the smaller enrolments. Total expenditure recognition in 1998 is \$7.7 million or 0.9% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 80 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 1.0% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Enrolment Increase and Continuous Enrolment Increase. The enrolment increase and the continuous enrolment increase factors are to assist school divisions with increasing enrolment.

Enrolment Increase Factor. Where a school division has an enrolment increase in excess of 1% from September to March in the same school year or September to

September in two successive school years, the division may apply to the Department to have its operating grant recalculated.

Total expenditure recognition in 1998 is \$0.6 million, or less than 0.1% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 23 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 0.4% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Continuous Enrolment Increase Factor. In the continuous enrolment increase factor, the enrolment increase must be in excess of 1% for two consecutive years. The Department will recognize the 1% increase not previously recognized in the first year of two consecutive enrolment increases. The recognition amount for this factor is nil for 1998, as no school division has met the criteria for recognition.

Sparsity. The sparsity factor provides recognition for additional costs associated with delivering education services in school divisions with a relatively small student population scattered over a large area. Sparsity recognition is calculated by applying a percentage to the basic program recognition. The percentage is a sliding scale based on the degree of sparsity to a maximum of 2.53%. The rationale for the sparsity factor is that the cost of providing education services increases as the density of students in a school division decreases.

Total expenditure recognition in 1998 is \$4.2 million, or 0.5% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 56 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 1.2% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Small School. The small school factor provides recognition for non-city school divisions that operate schools in remote locations with low enrolments. There are two components to the calculation of this factor, enrolment and location. Where the number of students in a grade is less than 20, the enrolment component of the recognition is based on the difference of 20 and the actual enrolment to a maximum of 15. Actual recognition will vary from 0% to 100% of the enrolment component depending on the distance of the school to the nearest two schools.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$18.8 million, or 2.1% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 73 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 3.9% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Rural Technology. The rural technology factor provides recognition for the costs associated with providing an appropriate range of programs to secondary students in isolated high schools.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$4.7 million, or 0.5% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 60 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 1.0% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Comprehensive. The comprehensive factor recognizes costs associated with providing education services to students that attend comprehensive schools.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$2.8 million, or 0.3% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 15 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 0.7% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Northern Allowance. The Northern Allowance Factor recognizes the added costs associated with providing education services to students in the three northern school divisions. Recognition under this factor is calculated as a percentage of the recognized expenditures of the school division. The percentage is roughly 32% for each school division.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$7.2 million or 0.8% of the total recognized expenditure amount.

VI. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Factor

Funding in 1998–1999: \$68.6 million.

Percentage of Total Provincial Aid: Not reported.

The transportation factor recognizes school divisions for the additional costs associated with transporting students to school. Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$68.6 million, or 7.7% of the total recognized expenditure amount. There are two major categories of transportation, rural and other transportation.

Rural Transportation. Rural transportation recognition is based on a formula that uses recognized rates per pupil and per kilometer. Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$56.0 million or 6.3% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 75 school divisions receive some recognition. The recognized expenditure was 11.6% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

Other Transportation. Other transportation is calculated on actual cost, up to a recognized maximum rate. Other transportation, totaling \$12.6 million, includes urban transportation, special education transportation, payments to parents in lieu of transport, teacher transport in lieu of transporting students and board and room for students in lieu of transport.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$12.6 million or 1.4% of the total recognized expenditure amount. 91 school divisions receive some recognition. The recognized expenditure was 1.8% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount.

VII. SPECIAL EDUCATION

In Saskatchewan, all special education funding is conditional, that is school boards must have the special education services and programs in place before funding approval is recognized; for per pupil recognition, students must meet the designation criteria; and special education staff must meet the qualification requirements.

To access special education funding recognition, school boards submit the required special education data to the Regional Superintendent of Special Education by October 15. Those data form the basis of the grant recognition for the subsequent grant year.

Special Education recognition is provided in a variety of ways and represents recognized conditional funds for specific programs. The special programs include special needs program for low cost, learning disabled and emotionally disturbed pupils, and high cost special education funding. The incremental rates are in addition to the basic per pupil rates. Total recognition for 1998 is \$51.4 million or 5.8% of total recognized expenditure amount.

Special Education recognition is comprised of the following programs:

<u>Program Description</u>	<u>Recognized Expenditure (\$Million)</u>	<u>Percentage for of Total Special Education</u>
High Cost and Supplemental DDPF Program	18.3	35.6%
Special Needs Program	22.4	43.6%
Targeted Behavioral Program	8.4	16.3%
Technical Aides	0.6	1.2%
Fractional Funding	1.7	3.3%

VIII. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

N/A.

IX. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Funding recognition for the education of gifted learners is included in the Special Needs Program (SNP). The Special Needs Program (SNP) funding recognition is allocated to school divisions for programs and services provided to students identified with learning disabilities, speech/language disorders, mild and moderate forms to the designated disabilities and gifted learners. The SNP is based on the per capital enrollment in the school division. For every 200 students enrolled in the school division, one full-time equivalent (FTE) staff position in SNP is allocated. On a formula basis, this is considered to be 1 SNP unit. Where a school division does not staff up to the level of 1 staff per 200 students, the school division receives a pro-rated amount based on the actual staff employed. In order to receive the recognition, the school boards must employ the staff to work with the clientele population, including the gifted learners.

X. BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Funding in 1998–1999: \$6.2 million.

Percentage of Total Provincial Aid: 0.7%.

Language programs are offered as: a course of educational instruction conducted

in a language other than English and includes English as a second language, with respect to a school division, and as a course of educational instruction for English as a second language, with respect to a conseil scolaire. 1998 recognized expenditure amount is \$6.2 million or 0.7% of provincial recognized expenditures.

XI. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Funding is provided for preschool children in two specific areas:

Special Education

The legislation, Section 50(2) of The Education Act, regarding the provision of preschool education for children with disabilities is permissive.

Through the Designated Disabled Program, Saskatchewan Education recognizes the educational services school divisions provide to preschool-aged children who meet the criteria outlined in Section 49 of the *Regulations*, including children with visual disabilities, intellectual disabilities, chronic illness, multiple disabilities, deaf and hard of hearing, and orthopedic disabilities. Children with learning disabilities and social, emotional and behavioral disabilities are included in Section 49; however, children with severe social, emotional and behavioral problems are typically not identified for preschool programming. Recently, more school divisions have been becoming involved with preschool children with severe behavioral challenges.

Existing policy states that the school division or the Regional Superintendent Coordinator of Special Education may identify and place preschool students who meet the following criteria: the age of the child upon entry to the program must be no more than two years in advance of the school; division's kindergarten entry age or is three years of age or older but less than school age; the child meets the designation criteria defined in the *Regulations* (49).

When a board of education does not assume responsibility, the Regional Superintendent of Special Education may identify and place a preschool student.

Funding recognition begins upon the student's entry into the program. The program is center based, provides an appropriate educational experience and is of sufficient intensity and scope to warrant the level of funding. Instructional staff have training in early childhood education and additional training appropriate to

the disability of the child being served. The Regional Superintendent of Special Education can designate and place a preschool child with a disability with an agency that: is an association with a board of directors; is incorporated or continued under The Non-profit Corporations Act; and provides an approved educational service with personnel with special education teacher qualifications.

Students enrolled in authorized preschool programs are entitled to room, board and transportation allowances at recognized rates for school-aged children.

There are 205 preschool students with disabilities enrolled in preschool/early intervention programming in 1998–1999. In addition to the elementary base rate, special education programming/service is recognized at either the Level I (\$4,752) or Level II (\$7,088) rates of the Designated Disabled Program.

Prekindergarten in Community Schools. There are 31 designated Community Schools in four urban centers. Each pre-kindergarten receives \$48,346. This funding provides for a .5 program and funds a qualified teacher and a teacher assistant.

XII. OTHER CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS

N/A.

XIII. TEACHER RETIREMENT AND BENEFITS

Funding in 1998–1999: \$129.0 million (estimated).

Percentage of Total Provincial Aid: Not reported.

<u>Sub-Program</u>	<u>Est (\$ millions)</u>
Administration and Operations	1.1
Teachers' Pensions and Cost of Living Allowances (Statutory)	105.0
Teachers' Group Life Insurance (Statutory)	1.0
Teachers' Dental Plan	4.1
<u>Saskatchewan Teachers' Retirement Plan (Statutory)</u>	<u>17.8</u>

Teachers' Group Life Insurance Plan. Teachers pay 50% of the annual premium and the provincial government pays the remainder. The 1997–1998 annual premium was \$ 147.80 that provided \$107,000 for term life insurance plus

accidental death and dismemberment coverage. The premiums paid to the insurance carrier totaled \$ 2.4 million of which \$ 0.9 million was matched contributions provided by the Minister of Finance. The total insurance for all eligible Saskatchewan teachers was \$1.7 billion. There were 16,255 members insured during 1997–1996 and 24 death claims were paid.

Teachers’ Dental Plan. The provincial government is responsible for paying the entire cost of a dental plan for Saskatchewan Teachers. The Province of Saskatchewan appropriated \$4.9 million in 1997–1998. There were 34,215 dental claims processed in 1998 costing the Government of Saskatchewan \$3.7 million, \$1.9 million for teachers and \$1.8 million for their dependents.

Teachers’ Superannuation Plan (Old Plan). (For those who commenced teaching between July 1, 1930 to June 30, 1980.) The allowance payable to a teacher who retires under the Teachers’ Superannuation Plan is determined by applying a formula based on years of service and highest salaries earned during any five years of service. The total appropriated by the Province of Saskatchewan for superannuation allowances was \$ 105 million. Actual expenditures were \$ 92 million.

Allowances paid in 1997–1998 totaled \$174 million and were paid to 7,335 pensioners, 1,000 survivors and dependants and 491 disability recipients. From July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998 a total of 557 new allowances were granted.

New Allowances Granted in 1997–1998:

Retirements	436
Disability benefits	51
Survivor benefits	67
Dependent benefits	<u>3</u>
Total	557

Teachers’ Retirement Plan (New Plan). (For those who commenced teaching after July 1, 1980.) This pension plan is administered by the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation. The Federation is responsible for the assets and liabilities and the benefit formula. The provisions of the plan are similar to those described for the old plan described above. Since the plan is relatively junior there are currently only about a dozen retirements each year. This number will increase gradually until 2010 when plan members begin to reach 30 years. The Province of

Saskatchewan is responsible for paying matching contributions to both pension plans.

XIV. TECHNOLOGY

Funding in 1998–1999: \$4.7 million.

Percentage of Total Provincial Aid: Not reported.

Rural Technology Factor

The rural technology factor provides recognition for the costs associated with providing an appropriate range of programs to secondary students in isolated high schools.

The locational component provides 50% of funding at the minimum distance (15 km) up to 100 % at a distance of 50 km or more. High schools in smaller urban centers are eligible at 50% of the rate.

Total expenditure recognition for 1998 is \$4.7 million, or 0.5% of the total recognized expenditure amount.

60 school divisions receive some recognition. This recognized expenditure amount was 1.0% of these boards' total recognized expenditure amount. The 1999 grant also provided an additional, across the board, \$4 per pupil, which was added to the curriculum factor for distance learning and learning technology.

XV. CAPITAL OUTLAY AND DEBT SERVICE

Funding is allocated for major capital projects (over \$500,000 in cost) and emergency block projects. Major capital projects are funded over two or three years. Block projects are funded in the year of approval.

In 1992, the government formalized the joint-use policy and subsequently revised March 1998. The 1998 priority categories, in descending priority, are: life threatening health and safety; projects that resolve critical space shortages including instructional and program spaces; structural and systems failure not life threatening but shortening the life of the facility, and building restoration; non-

critical requests where other options exist; and requests not ranked due to doubt over submission.

To address the inequity between the high and low assessed boards the department introduced a Mill Factor in the Capital Funding Formula in 1993. The Mill Factor measures a board's ability to raise construction capital from their local tax base. The Mill Factor relates each division's assessment to the average provincial assessment in a logarithmic formula.

The further the division's assessment is from the provincial average, the greater the effect of the Mill Factor, either increasing the division's base share value for highly assessed school divisions or decreasing the board's base share value for those with less than average assessments.

XVI. STANDARDS/ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

None reported.

XVII. REWARDS/SANCTIONS

None reported.

XVIII. FUNDING FOR NON-TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

For 1997–1998, there were 47 registered independent schools with a total pupil enrolment of 3,533 and a teaching staff of 311. The schools are located in every educational region of the province. Data for the 1998–1999 school term are not available to date. Independent Schools represent a small minority of the school population in Saskatchewan (1.6%).

The Saskatchewan education system is based on the principle of a publicly-funded system designed to meet the needs of the vast majority of students, with provisions for parents to opt out for reasons of faith or conscientious belief. The regulatory system for independent schools is designed to reflect the fact that, under Canadian constitutional law, parents do have the right, for reasons of religion or conscientious belief, to educate their children outside the public education system. However, this parental right does not imply any legal obligation on the part of government to fund costs incurred by parents who

voluntarily choose to educate their children in this way. Those costs are the responsibility of the parents or of organizations with which they are associated.

XIX. AID TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

None reported.

XX. RECENT/PENDING LITIGATION

None reported.

XXI. SPECIAL TOPICS

None reported.