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Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union

# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

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## **Government standing in the way of a deal for SIAST staff**

The future of post-secondary skills training in Saskatchewan remains uncertain because government decision-makers are standing in the way of new tentative agreements for SIAST staff, according to SGEU.

Members of SGEU's SIAST Professional Services and Academic bargaining units returned to work after a dispute in September, believing that a mediator's recommendations would lead to new tentative agreements.

But there has been no progress because "government is working behind-the-scenes to block further discussions between the union and SIAST management," according to Tracey Kurtenbach, chairperson of SGEU's SIAST Professional Services negotiating committee.

"There are key issues that remain unsettled. We can't even tell our members who will get wage increases as a result of market adjustments, and who won't," added Joyce Hobday, vice-chairperson of SGEU's SIAST Academic negotiating committee.

"We accepted the mediator's report because it clearly stated that the mediator would return to help resolve outstanding issues regarding implementing his recommendations," added Kurtenbach.

"But SIAST management is not honouring its obligation - agreed to in the mediator's report - to continue to work with the mediator to help settle unresolved issues," she added.

"SIAST management, taking direction from government officials, is refusing to meet with us, with or without the mediator," said Hobday.

SGEU members are holding noon-hour information picket lines at SIAST campuses in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert to highlight frustration with lack of progress.

“Government is jeopardizing the future of post-secondary education in Saskatchewan. We are asking citizens who care about the future of SIAST to tell Sask Party candidates in their constituencies to let the parties get back together to finish the job,” said Kurtenbach.

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