



September 11, 2020

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The Honourable Gord Wyant, Q.C., E.C.S., M.L.A.  
Minister of Education  
Room 361 Legislative Building  
REGINA SK S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Wyant:

I write to you today regarding the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner's Review Report 386-2019. In his report, the Commissioner found that none of the exemptions used by your Ministry as a rationale for withholding the value of deferred maintenance in Saskatchewan School Divisions were valid. As such, he recommended that the Ministry release the record at issue in its entirety.

I was disappointed to see comment in the media that your Ministry disagrees with the findings of the Commissioner and intends to continue to withhold these records. The Commissioner clearly found this position to be out of step with *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The condition of school infrastructure is of utmost importance during the COVID-19 pandemic, given the risks associated with poor ventilation and heating and cooling systems, among other issues. Your government should be aiming to be as transparent as possible around how spending decisions related to keeping kids safe in schools are being made. An integral part of this transparency is the ability for the public to scrutinize choices on how capital dollars are being allocated and whether they are being directed to the divisions with the greatest need. As such, I urgently request that you comply with the Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendation and release the records in full. Parents, teachers, and students have a right to know this information and your government should stop hiding these needed repairs from the public.

Further, I am calling on your government to respect the expertise, energy and public resources the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner devotes to investigations and reviews.

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It is long past time that Saskatchewan, like many other jurisdictions in Canada, empower the Information and Privacy Commissioner to make binding recommendations and give that office the ability to compel public bodies to release documents. The lack of transparency that is enabled by the gaps in the freedom of information framework in our province leaves Saskatchewan people with no meaningful way to access any of the answers they are looking for when it comes to your government's plans for further cuts to our kids' classrooms.

I look forward to your response to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla Beck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carla Beck, M.L.A.  
Regina Lakeview  
Official Opposition Education Critic