

# Written submission questions/answers from Tuesday November 3, 2009 Saskatchewan's Legislative Assembly regarding school closers, funding and educational assistants.

Complete questions/answers are available at

<http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/journals/Votes/26L3S/8%20--%20November%203,%202009%20--%20Votes.pdf>

These questions start at No. 148.

Mr. Yates, Deputy Opposition House Leader asked Mr. Krawetz, Minister of Education the following Questions regarding school closers, funding and educational assistants.

**Question:**

How many schools are being reviewed by school boards for possible closure or grade reduction in 2009/10?

**Answer:**

To date, five school divisions made motions for review for possible closure or grade reductions effective summer of 2010.

**Question:**

How many educational assistants were employed by Saskatchewan school divisions in 2008/09? (2) What is the estimate for 2009/10?

**Answer:**

(1) 3,478 educational assistants were employed by Saskatchewan school divisions in 2008/09.

(2) Within the *2009/2010 Funding Guide*, the provincial government recommends staffing ratios for student support services, including educational assistants, to school divisions. School divisions are responsible for determining appropriate programming, including supports and services, for all students. Staffing profiles are collected as of December 20, 2009, from school divisions and, as such, are not available at this time.

**Question:**

(1) How many schools are being reviewed by school boards for possible closure or grade discontinuance?

(2) Please name each school and indicate if it is full closure of grade discontinuance (and the grades affected) for each school.

**Answer:**

(1) To date, five schools are under review for possible closure or grade discontinuance.

(2)

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Grades</b>	
Rossville School (Coleville, SK)	K-7	Closure
Calder School	K-8	Closure
Ken Jenkins School	K-8	Closure
Shell Lake School	K-9	Closure
Abbey School	10-12	Grade Discontinuance

**Question:**

What is the difference between the number of educational assistants required under the provincial government's formula and the number employed by those school divisions who employ fewer educational assistants than required under provincial guidelines?

**Answer:**

No school division employs fewer educational assistants than recommended under the provincial government's recommended staffing ratios for student support services. Within the 2009/2010 *Funding Guide*, the provincial government recommends staffing ratios for student support services including the following professional and para-professional supports:

	<b>Recommended Ratio</b>
Superintendent(s) of Student Services/Special Education	~ 1 : 5000
Coordinator(s)/Consultants	~ 1 : 2000
Special Education Teachers	~ 1 : 175
Education/Teacher Assistants	~ 1 : 100
Psychologists	~ 1 : 1500
Physical Therapists	~ 1 : 6000
Occupational Therapists	~ 1 : 3000
Speech Language Pathologists	~ 1 : 1000
Counsellors	~ 1 : 1000
Social Workers	~ 1 : 1000
English as an Additional Language Specialists	~ 1 : 500

**Question:**

(1) How many school divisions received less provincial government funding for the 2009/10 school year than they had initially projected in their submissions to the Ministry of Education?

(2) Which school divisions?

(3) What was the amount of the shortfall in each instance?

**Answer:**

- (1) The 2009/10 funding allocations provided to school divisions on budget day were based on school divisions' 2008/2009 final budgets. Consultations between the ministry and each school division were then held in April and May 2009 to assess whether additional financial pressures existed. As a result of these consultations, 28 of the 29 provincial school divisions received funding increases over amount allocated on budget day. Funding to only one school division was reduced.
- (2) Saskatoon Public School Division.
- (3) \$3M due to an adjustment/correction in the school division's 2008/2009 budget.

**Question:** The October 21, 2009 Throne Speech states that nearly 300 million has been invested in schools over the last two years and that this has resulted in improvements to more than 230 schools. (1) Which schools have received this funding? (2) How much funding did each of these schools receive? (3) For what purpose was the money used?

**Answer:**

The government has approved funding for the following since November 2007:

- \$117.6M 2008/09 capital appropriation April 2008
- \$141.7M 2008/09 supplemental capital appropriation March 2008
- \$31.0M 2009/10 capital appropriation
- \$290.3M total capital appropriation

The attached spread sheet (not available) is current to October 27, 2009. Some 2009/10 capital has not yet been assigned to specific projects. The spreadsheet totals \$277.8M ministry share. There is \$12.5M left to assign to block projects for the 2009/10 fiscal year. In addition, \$13.1M was provided in March 2008 to meet final funding obligations for three major capital projects approved in 2004. Écoles canadienne francaise, Saskatoon – \$1.1M; Bethlehem High School, Saskatoon –\$7.3M; Tommy Douglas Collegiate, Saskatoon – \$4.7M. When these projects are included, the total funding provided by this government is \$303.4M during the past two years.

**Question:** Which school divisions currently employ fewer educational assistants than required under the provincial government's guidelines?

**Answer:** No school division employs fewer educational assistants than recommended under the provincial government's recommended staff ratios for student support services.

**Question:**

What is the difference between the number of educational assistants required under the provincial government's formula and the number employed by those school divisions who exceed the provincial guidelines?

**Answer:** All school divisions exceed the provincial government's recommended staff ratio for educational assistants. In 2008/09, there were 3,478 educational assistants employed by school divisions with 1,629 recommended. Within the *2009/2010 Funding Guide*, the provincial government recommends staffing ratios for student support services including the following professional and para-professional supports:

	<b>Recommended</b>
Superintendent(s) of Student Services/Special Education	~ 1 : 5000
Coordinator(s)/Consultants	~ 1 : 2000
Special Education Teachers	~ 1 : 175
Education/Teacher Assistants	~ 1 : 100
Psychologists	~ 1 : 1500
Physical Therapists	~ 1 : 6000
Occupational Therapists	~ 1 : 3000
Speech Language Pathologists	~ 1 : 1000
Counsellors	~ 1 : 1000
Social Workers	~ 1 : 1000
English as an Additional Language Specialists	~ 1 : 500

**Question:**

- (1) What is the provincial government's formula for determining the number of educational assistants required by each school division?
- (2) Which school divisions currently employ more educational assistants than required under the provincial government's formula?

**Answer:**

- (1) The provincial government recommends school division's employ 1.0 full-time equivalent educational assistant per 100 students enrolled in the school division. For example, it is recommended that a school division with 5,000 students employ 50 educational assistants.
- (2) All school divisions employ more educational assistants than recommended under the provincial government' formula.

**SUBMITTED BY, EARL BOOTH EWJC**