

**CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON NEW ST. FRANCES CREE BILINGUAL SCHOOL IN SASKATOON**

Construction is getting underway on a brand-new school to replace and relocate the St. Frances Cree Bilingual School. Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood MLA Lisa Lambert, on behalf of Minister of Education Dustin Duncan, was joined by representatives from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Tribal Council, along with students and staff from St. Frances, to celebrate the occasion with a land-blessing ceremony.

The Government is investing \$45.9 million into this innovative project.

“The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to embracing and implementing Indigenous knowledge systems, cultures, and languages within the education system,” MLA Lisa Lambert said on behalf of Education Minister Dustin Duncan. “This new school demonstrates our government’s efforts on the journey of reconciliation and will serve our community for many years to come.”

St. Frances Cree Bilingual School was established in 2007, and due to enrolment growth, has been offered at two separate locations as a temporary solution while this new school is being constructed. The new facility is expected to provide space for 600 Prekindergarten to Grade 9 students, along with 70 child care spaces. It will be located on the site of the former Sion Middle School, located at 2010 - 7<sup>th</sup> Street East in Saskatoon, and is estimated to be completed by Fall 2025.

“This is an exciting day for St. Frances Cree Bilingual School students, families, staff and the entire school division,” Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education Chair Diane Boyko said. “The new school will be a wonderful place of learning where students can discover their Indigenous history, culture, language, and identity. Our hope is that students will be excited about learning, develop a curiosity and passion to grow and develop as Indigenous children and youth, and continue that throughout their studies and careers. It will also serve as a hub of activity for the entire community and will stand as a tangible sign of our reconciliation journey.”

The Ministry of Education has worked in collaboration with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Saskatoon Tribal Council to ensure the needs of the students at St. Frances are being met in an inclusive manner. The three-storey school will include a research and learning greenhouse, an Elder’s teaching room, a medicines lab, and other unique programming space, as well as a Child and Family Wellness Centre.

"Through the partnership between the Government of Saskatchewan, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Tribal Council partnership in the creation of the St. Frances Cree

Bilingual School we are investing through identity, language and culture to improve the lives of First Nations people," Saskatoon Tribal Council Tribal Chief Mark Arcand said. "Truth and Reconciliation is the turning point when it comes to improving the lives of First Nations people."

Since 2008, the Government of Saskatchewan has committed approximately \$2.4 billion toward school infrastructure projects. These projects include 60 new schools and 30 major renovation projects with an additional five projects approved through the Minor Capital Renewal Program.

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