

October 23, 2024

Marie Adèle Davis  
Executive Director  
Canadian Paediatric Society  
Email: [info@cps.ca](mailto:info@cps.ca)

Dear Marie Adèle Davis:

Thank you for submitting your questions to the Saskatchewan NDP. I am pleased to respond on behalf of our party.

**What will your party do to improve timely access to publicly funded mental health services for children and youth?**

School divisions have reported students' mental health getting worse and worse, and Scott Moe and the Sask. Party aren't taking this seriously. Not only is the public mental health care system in crisis, there aren't enough school psychologists to meet demand. Saskatchewan New Democrats are committed to making significant investments in healthcare and education – more than \$3 billion over four years. We're going to increase access to mental health supports, including counselling and early intervention. We'll also be partnering with school divisions to hire more education workers, including psychologists and counsellors. This will increase access to mental health services for children and youth.

**What will your party do to increase access to school-based developmental and educational supports (e.g. educational assistants, psychologists, speech-language pathologists)?**

Scott Moe is not investing in education. A decade ago, Saskatchewan had the highest per-student funding in Canada. Now we're in last place. The Sask. Party has forced school boards to make cuts year after year, and supports like these are among the first things to be cut. Saskatchewan New Democrats know that investing in our children is investing in our future. That's why we're putting \$2 billion into education – funding for teachers and educational assistants, funding for learning disability supports, and funding for EAL supports. We're committed to addressing classroom complexity so that every child gets the education they deserve.

**What will your party do to reduce rates of childhood poverty and food insecurity?**

Saskatchewan has some of the highest child poverty rates in Canada, and children account for 40% of all food bank users in this province. Families can't afford to put food on the table, and yet the Sask. Party claims our economy is doing fine. A Carla Beck government will take action to make life more affordable, including scrapping PST on groceries and children's clothing as well as getting families into

vacant social housing units. We're also going to create a school nutrition program so that every child will have access to a free, nutritious breakfast and lunch. Children learn better on a full stomach, and parents will be able to breathe easier when their dollar goes farther.

**How will your party uphold and protect the health and rights of transgender and gender-diverse children and youth?**

Last fall, the Sask. Party made the unconscionable decision to play politics with the lives and well-being of transgender and gender-diverse children and youth in this province by forcing through Bill 137. Saskatchewan New Democrats did everything in our power to stop the passage of this legislation, and we are committed to repealing it. In addition, our plan to improve access to school psychologists and counsellors will be particularly valuable to transgender and gender-diverse youth, given their elevated risk of mental health challenges.

Thank you for your thoughtful questions and for everything you and your members do to promote the health of children in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

Sincerely,



Mitch Bonokoski  
Director of Research and Policy