



SIAST

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIAST wants to begin mediation, asks SGEU to suspend strike action

September 6, 2011 – SIAST president and CEO Dr. Robert G. McCulloch says SIAST is ready to begin the mediation process immediately once SGEU agrees not to strike while mediation is under way. SIAST was responding to an SGEU news release saying the union wanted to get the mediation process back on track.

"SIAST is ready to begin mediation, but we need an assurance that students and instructors can return to the classrooms where they belong, and that no further strike action will take place while mediation is under way," Dr. McCulloch said. "That's the only way the mediation process can work and is what was requested by the mediator last evening."

It is common practice during mediation for both parties to commit to an agreement that suspends strike or lockout action by either party. It is a sign to the mediator that both parties are serious about negotiating in good faith without distraction. SIAST made that commitment with the mediator. SGEU was unwilling to make such a commitment, and consequently the mediation process could not continue.

This afternoon SGEU issued a news release that falsely stated SIAST had left mediation.

"I want to set the record straight," Dr. McCulloch said. "SIAST came to the process in good faith; we were – and remain willing – to see this process through. In an effort to demonstrate willingness to begin the mediation process, very early this morning, the SIAST team signed a mediation agreement. We were extremely disappointed that the union did not reciprocate. "

Dr. McCulloch called on SGEU to end the uncertainty the strike is causing SIAST students.

"Right now, we have thousands of students who don't know if they are supposed to come to classes tomorrow, the next day or the day after that. SGEU can end that

uncertainty right now by suspending the strike, beginning mediation, and making the commitment not to strike while mediation is under way."

"Our desire is to conclude a new collective agreement as soon as possible," Dr. McCulloch said. "We are waiting to hear if the SGEU is willing to get serious about concluding an agreement or whether they will continue to delay the education of SIAST students."

SIAST has addressed many issues related to negotiations at www.campusupdate.ca. SIAST encourages students to visit this site often to learn more about key issues and for updates as new developments occur. In particular, students may wish to visit the Q&A page and the daily updates. Both will be updated on an ongoing basis.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. More than 15,000 students were enrolled in SIAST programs in the most recent academic year; additionally, the organization drew almost 25,000 individual course registrations. Through program and course registrations, SIAST served almost 26,000 distinct students with programs that touch every sector of the economy. SIAST operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

– 30 –

For more information, contact:

Colleen Gallant

SIAST Communications

306-659-3857

306-230-5874 (cell)

Information about SIAST can be found at www.goSIAST.com.