



2024 Report V1: Regina Public School Division’s Prekindergarten Program Could Reach More Students

The Division did not utilize 21% of its planned prekindergarten spaces

REGINA—June 5, 2024: In her *2024 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 5, Provincial Auditor, Tara Clemett, made seven recommendations to improve Regina Public School Division’s prekindergarten programming to help preschool-aged children learn successfully and develop academically.

Prekindergarten is an early childhood education program targeting three- and four-year-old children living in vulnerable circumstances and/or experiencing developmental delays with proven long-term benefits in academic, mental health, and social outcomes. A student’s acceptance into prekindergarten depends on their level of vulnerability and spaces available.

We found 149 of 708 prekindergarten spaces (21%) not utilized in 2023–24 with more than 70 students on prekindergarten waitlists at February 2024. Underutilized prekindergarten spaces mean fewer students benefit from the Division’s spending on prekindergarten programming and is an inefficient use of public funds. Further, the Division does not formally analyze its enrolment, which would help it assess whether its prekindergarten classrooms are appropriately located across Regina or barriers exist like transportation that need addressing.

“Centrally monitoring and analyzing its prekindergarten waitlists could improve utilization of Regina Public School Division’s prekindergarten spaces so more children benefit from this beneficial programming,” said Tara Clemett, “In addition, examining prekindergarten enrolment may identify barriers and inform possible mitigation strategies to allow more students to participate in prekindergarten.”

The audit found the Regina Public School Division also needs to:

- Determine and use adequate measures to assess and report on the performance and quality of its prekindergarten programming, such as monitoring of future student achievement for a cohort of prekindergarten students
 - Help teachers consistently conduct and track required family visits (i.e., twice each school year) for their prekindergarten students
 - Inform its prekindergarten teachers about its partnerships with outside agencies that could offer additional support or specialized services to students (e.g., KidsFirst Regina, Regina Early Childhood Intervention Program)
 - Formally assess prekindergarten classroom environments periodically against established expectations (e.g., physical classroom organization, natural light, child-sized furniture)
 - Improve reporting to senior management and its Board of Education to inform programming decisions (e.g., resource allocations)
- The Division offers pre-k in 24 schools attended by about 560 students
 - Spent \$2.85 million on pre-k programming in 2022–23
 - We found 75 students waiting for acceptance in pre-k across the Division’s schools with almost 70% (over 50 students) waiting at three specific schools (i.e., Arcola, Grant Road, Marion McVeety) at February 2024
 - The Division last relocated an existing pre-k classroom to another school in 2018–19
 - Each half-day program has up to 16 students, one teacher, and one teacher associate

The Division aligns its prekindergarten program with good practice by using qualified educators to teach a provincially established prekindergarten curriculum. Working to accept as many vulnerable children to participate in prekindergarten as possible will help provide more children with the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten and in learning in the primary grades.

The full Provincial Auditor’s *2024 Report – Volume 1* available online at auditor.sk.ca.

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