



Saskatchewan Association of  
**RECREATION  
PROFESSIONALS**

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June 4, 2018

Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
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Saskatoon, SK S7K 5X2  
[larry.rosia@sakpolytech.ca](mailto:larry.rosia@sakpolytech.ca)

**ATTN: Dr. Larry S. Rosia, President & CEO of Saskatchewan Polytechnic**

Dear Sir:

This letter is being sent on behalf of the Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals (S.A.R.P.). S.A.R.P. represents educated recreation professional members that work in both health and municipal institutions/communities.

The mission of S.A.R.P. is: *We are a member driven organization committed to supporting and being the “voice” of professionals working in the field of recreation in Saskatchewan.*

With the above mission in mind, it is our intention to voice concerns on behalf of Recreation Professionals in our Association.

It has come to our attention that Saskatchewan Polytechnic has eliminated Recreation and Athletic Services for students, staff and alumni at all campuses, except Regina. As a provincial organization who understands the benefits of recreation services in all sectors of our community as well as athletics; we find this rather disconcerting, especially when Saskatchewan Polytechnic is home to two of the programs that educate students to administer and deliver the services that you are now discontinuing. This decision in fact “de-values” recreation, sport and fitness by one of the largest government organizations in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Polytechnic. The message being conveyed through this cut in recreation and athletics is not acceptable, and the Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals would respectfully request further explanation behind this decision, specifically:

- What research and data supports this decision?
- What specific programs and services will be cancelled?
- Who was consulted in the decision-making process?
- Were any Recreation Professionals consulted in this process?

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*Financial Assistance Provided By:*



- How did the Regina Campus align with the new Wellness Strategy, to have their Recreation Services continue, but the other campuses all closed?

Furthermore, closing Recreation Services without the new Wellness Strategy ready to roll puts students, staff and alumni at risk while you create a new strategy. In fact, there seems to be a “lack” of strategy behind this process. The addition of mental health support may be a step in the right direction but if recreation is eliminated are you gaining any ground? One of the benefits of recreation is the positive impact it has on mental health. In the new Wellness Strategy that will be rolled out in the upcoming Academic year there is no mention of Alumni having access to services which they had before. We have a lot of Recreation Saskatchewan Polytechnic graduates as Members and they are very disappointed with this recent decision. It not only affects them personally if they utilized these services, it is a slap in the face to everyone working in the Industry as these Professionals understand the positive impacts recreation has on individual and community well-being.

The timing of Thursday’s cuts is discouraging, as this is the first week of June is Recreation and Parks Month across Canada. With no notice for users to make an alternative fitness plan, they have literally been locked out of Saskatchewan Polytechnic’s recreation facilities. Saskatchewan Polytechnic, being one of the largest post-secondary Educators and Employers in the province, is cutting Recreation programs and services. In addition to Recreation and Parks Month, the Provincial Government has proclaimed June 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 as the first ever Recreation Professionals Week in Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic is laying off Recreation Professionals two weeks prior.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic currently offers two education programs based on Recreation, the Therapeutic Recreation Diploma program and the Recreation and Community Development Diploma program, what message are you sending these instructors, students and past graduates? While producing recreation graduates, you are cutting jobs from the recreation industry? Is recreation even supported by Saskatchewan Polytechnic? As obesity and inactivity rates rise, recreation gets cut? Quality of life for students decreases, benefits of Recreation lost.

The Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals request that the necessary actions be taken to suspend the current decision of cutting Recreation Services until an in-depth review/consultation is completed, and a new plan is created in consultation with the appropriate organizations. As the voice of Recreation Professionals in Saskatchewan, S.A.R.P. furthermore requests that our organization is included in this process.

Thank you for your time and consideration to what our Members regard as a very serious issue. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Nicole Walchuk  
Executive Director

cc      The Honourable Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan|  
Mark McLoughlin, Deputy Minister of Advanced Education  
Twyla MacDougall, Deputy Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Tobi Strohan, Associate Vice President – Student Services, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Anne Neufeld, Provost & VP – Academic, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Julian Tomlinson, Dean – School of Hospitality & Tourism, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Sandra Blevins, Dean – School of Health Sciences, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Vickie Clarke, Program Head – Recreation & Community Development Program, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Catharine Wirth, Program Head – Continuing Care Assistant Program and Therapeutic Recreation Program, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Dr. Harold Reimer, Dean – Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina  
Chad London, Dean – College of Kinesiology, University of Saskatchewan  
Kevin Gilroy, CEO – Sask Sport Inc.  
Todd Shafer, CEO – SPRA  
Cathie Kryzanowski, Executive Director – Active Saskatchewan  
Marnie Sinclair, Manager – Saskatchewan in motion  
Saskatchewan Polytechnic Student Association:  
    Carol Tetreault, General Manager  
    Tara Pejski, Advocacy Manager  
    Ashley Poole, Marketing Manager  
    Kevin Munson, Campus Manager – Saskatoon Campus  
    Adeyemi Williams, Campus Manager - Moose Jaw Campus  
    Nadine Robins, Campus Manager – Prince Albert Campus  
    Crystal Gellner, Campus Manager – Regina Campus  
    Michelle Kot, Student Advocate – South  
    Vanessa Hildebrand, Student Advocate – North

## **Sample of Comments from Saskatchewan Recreation Professionals:**

“The whole premise of sport and recreation is wholistic approach to physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well being. Man talk about missing the point we have been trying to make for the past sixty years since the Youth Agency back in the 60's people have been advocating this. Also closer to home, those boys who played for the Humboldt Broncos were fine young men BECAUSE of their involvement in sport. Sport creates strong community leaders and good contributing citizens. I am so disappointed.”

**Janet Schultz, Regina**

**Honourary Life Member of The Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals  
Retired, City of Regina and City of Saskatoon**

“Closing fitness centers will NOT make a positive contribution to wholistic health and wellbeing. While physical fitness and exercise may not tell the whole story, when it comes to wellness, they are highly significant. This is a decision that begs to be reversed.”

**Pat Katz, Saskatoon**

**Professional Educator, Motivational Speaker, Wellness Consultant Optimus Consulting**

“This decision is beyond disheartening when you think of all of the hard work and continuous trailblazing recreation professionals and recreation organizations have done to promote and ensure that those who live in our province have quality of life and opportunities that build community and individual strengths. This is truly a sad display of a knee jerk reaction to struggling budgets that will make a much worse outcome to those who attend these schools and who will enter into the real world after graduation from these institutes. As a huge advocate of recreation and leisure programs, I feel very disappointed in the group of individuals who have made this decision and will never understand the reasoning behind such a ridiculous change within our education system. So so sad.... looking forward to see S.A.R.P. step up and make this right! Will be behind you all the way!”

**Jasmine Jackman, Moose Jaw**

**Manager Hillcrest Golf and Country Club**

“The recent cuts at Saskatchewan Polytechnic sicken me. Those services were a huge part of my positive experiences while attending school there! I am glad that S.A.R.P. is speaking up for those affected. The fact that these services were cut with no plan in place for alternate supports is ridiculous.”

**Brenda Johnson, Saskatoon**

**Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, Parkridge Centre**

“The so called soft service of sport, culture and recreation, is really no longer a soft service, but one that is demanded by our citizens in the community as well as in institutions like Sk Poly.....we know that our health and wellness depend on our services....this is really an incredibly bad decision.”

**Shelley Thoen-Chaykoski, Foam Lake**

**Community Recreation Consultant**

**Chairperson of The Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals**