

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Early Childhood Education programs to be available in French

French agency brokers curriculum for delivery in Saskatchewan

January 15, 2005 – SIAST and le service Fransaskois de formation aux adultes (SEFFA) announced an agreement today that will see SIAST's Early Childhood Education curriculum delivered in French.

"We're very pleased to partner with SEFFA and to respond to the needs of Saskatchewan's French community," says Claude Naud, SIAST's vice president, programs. "French-speaking ECE students – and ultimately the children they care for – will be well served by this excellent program," he added.

The Early Childhood Development program is for francophones who have completed grade 12 or equivalent and who would like to enroll in a French program for this study area. SEFFA is expecting at least 10 registrations in Saskatchewan per year; it also has agreements to offer the program with other western provinces. This is already the case in the Yukon, with six students enrolled so far this year.

There are three French day cares in Saskatchewan, and French pre-school classes in several of the Division Scolaire Francophone schools. There are approximately 19,915 people in Saskatchewan whose first language is French.

"The agreement between SEFFA and SIAST and its relation to the early childhood education program is a result of intense negotiation," says Didier Kaba, assistant director of SEFFA. "For several years the francophones in the province have not had the opportunity to study in French," he added. "As a result of this agreement they now have the option of doing their studies in French with the same results as a student studying in English. Another significant element is that the francophone community will now have the qualified personnel to work in their education centers and pre-school classes."

The Service francsaskois de formation aux adultes (SEFFA), which is a branch of the Collège Mathieu Corporation, is a post-secondary college-level institution of instruction. It has as its mandate to ensure French language courses for the francophones of Saskatchewan. For its part, the SEFFA seeks to provide opportunity to study and develop the French language both culturally and within the French-Canadian heritage in the province.

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 12,000 students are registered in SIAST programs, which touch every sector of the economy; additionally, the organization draws almost 29,000 individual course registrations. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

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Additional information about SIAST can be found at www.siastr.sk.ca. For additional information about SEFFA, visit www.seffa.sk.ca.