

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **SIAST will accept mediator's agreement: Will SGEU?**

**September 8, 2011** – Today, SIAST once again confirmed it would agree to terms proposed by mediator Tom Hodges in an attempt to begin mediation with the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU) and work toward a new collective agreement with its Academic and Professional Services bargaining units.

"Due to public expressions from both parties that they are willing to continue mediation, Mr. Hodges has contacted SIAST in the interest of resuming discussions," says Dr. Robert G. McCulloch, president and CEO of SIAST. "This agreement again states SIAST and SGEU would not undertake any job action or lockouts during mediation, and we will absolutely agree to that."

The only differences to this agreement from the one SIAST signed earlier this week are a shortened timeframe for the mediator to deliver his recommendations, and additional wording that the parties agree to cease any and all strike or lockout activity during the mediation process. SIAST believes that these changes are beneficial to both parties.

Dr. McCulloch added that he hopes SGEU's statement today, that it is prepared to enter mediation this weekend, is not just a public relations ploy.

"I will take it at face value that SGEU is prepared to begin serious discussions and allow students to return to the classroom," Dr. McCulloch said. "I remain concerned due to its statement that a strike could continue next week."

"If SGEU is approaching this in good faith, it will sign the mediator's agreement."

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.

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Information about SIAST can be found at [www.goSIAST.com](http://www.goSIAST.com).