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NDP Stands with Families and Educators to Delay Bill 64

Treaty 1 Territory, Homeland of the Métis Nation, Winnipeg MB—The Manitoba NDP stood with parents and educators on Wednesday to announce they would use their legislative power to delay Bill 64 The Education Modernization Act, a bill which would cause chaos and cuts in schools as students struggle to recover from the pandemic.

"The further you get from the classroom the worse the decision making gets. Bill 64 is a power grab that takes control away from parents and educators and hands it to Mr. Pallister and his Cabinet—and that means more cuts to the classroom," said NDP Leader Wab Kinew. "Parents have so many questions about this bill and how it will impact their kids. We will delay Bill 64 so that families can have more time to learn about the PC's plan and fight back against their cuts."

Bill 64 repeals Manitoba's existing public education acts to completely restructure the province's public education system and introduces sweeping new powers to the Premier and his Cabinet. It overhauls Manitoba's public education funding model, interferes in collective bargaining units for educators and school staff, and lays the groundwork for deep service cuts and layoffs at schools.

"We believe Educators are the real experts when it comes to education, not Mr. Pallister and his cabinet," said Nello Altomare, NDP Education Critic. "Teachers, Educational Assistants and school staff are bracing for the chaos this bill will trigger—right in the middle of a pandemic. They've seen how this government has weakened public education in the last five years, and they know helping kids in the classroom just isn't a priority."

In March, the Manitoba NDP shared government documents which show the PC government cut provincial funding for Education in 2020/21 by \$4.2 million. It's the first real dollar cut to Manitoba schools in fifteen years and comes after chronic underfunding from this government, which forced schools to cut programs and reduce services for kids.

"I don't trust this government to make the right decisions when it comes to my children's education," said parent Trish Cooper. "Their one-size fits all plan won't meet the needs of kids in diverse communities throughout Winnipeg. Time after time they refuse to make the investments needed to support teachers and set kids up for success."