

# Saskatchewan 2020

Technical Report  
Denise Kouri, October, 2000

## Preface

What will tomorrow bring? What about next month, next year or the next decade? None of us can answer these questions with certainty. New ideas, migrating populations, shifting economic patterns and technological developments all imply change. The world is changing rapidly. We are not passive observers, however. We are participants in making the changes happen. The decisions that we make on an individual, community, provincial and national basis will play a large part in shaping the future.

This booklet outlines a number of present and future trends. The trends are based on information and reflections of individuals and organizations who are experts in their fields. This doesn't mean that the present trends will necessarily continue into the future or that predicted future trends will come to pass. Being advised about potential future scenarios will stimulate us to decide what we want our future to be and to use our energies, skills and resources to create that future. This booklet is intended to be a tool in that process.

## Note on Methodology

An exercise that examines trends and issues is at the same time future and past-oriented. We cannot envision the future without understanding the past.

We have selected three dozen simple statements describing projections and current trends about Saskatchewan and Canadian society. The statements are based on reviews of documents and statistics from many sources, from local to international. Each statement is accompanied by discussion. Although the amount of discussion varies, each trend typically includes (1) data to convey the trend (2) analysis of and different perspectives about the main ideas and (3) the implications of the issue for K-12 education.

The issues and ideas described in this document are not *facts* intended to close debate. Although we have tried to present data that are accurate and current, the inferences we have made and the implications we have drawn are open for discussion.

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## **I. Saskatchewan People**

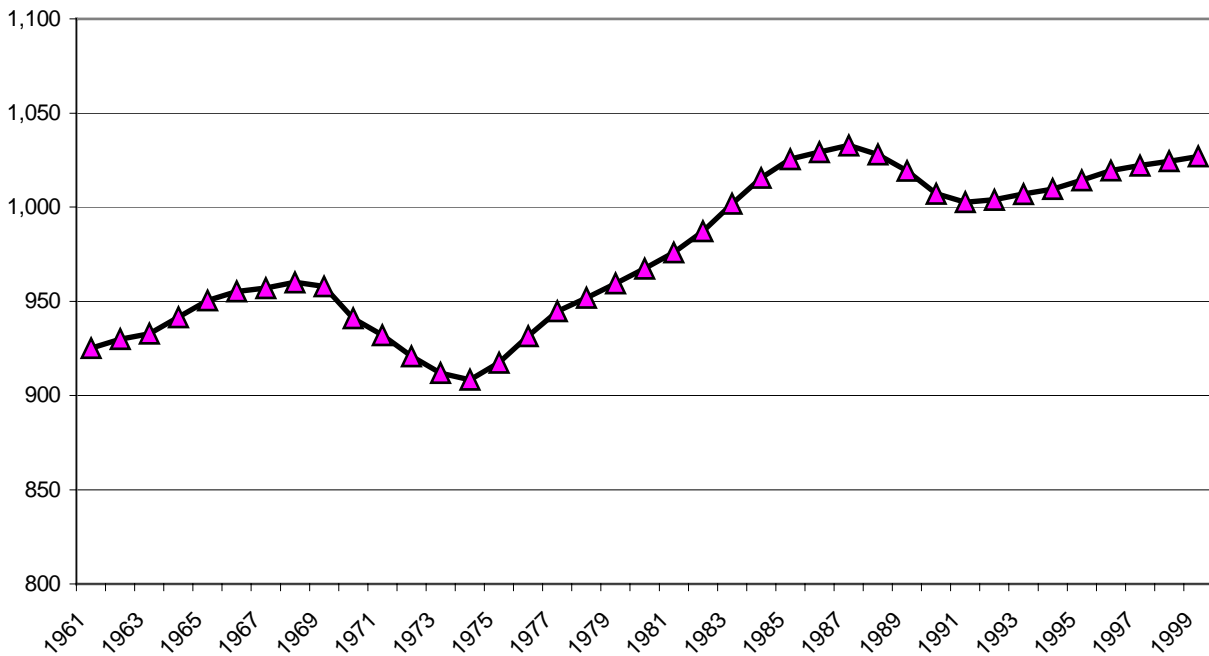
We begin with a focus on Saskatchewan people. The people are both the means and the ends for our vision. How many of us are there? How many can we expect there to be? Will we be healthy? How many children will we have? Where will we live?

In this section, we explore past population trends and the projected age distribution of the population over the next 20 years. We review trends in life expectancy and health. We explore the geographic distribution of the population and the growing Aboriginal population. We examine changing family patterns and the improving status of women.

## #1. Saskatchewan's population will continue to grow slowly.

Saskatchewan's population has remained stable in the 1990s, after dropping at the end of the 1980. In 1999, the population was 1,027,800.

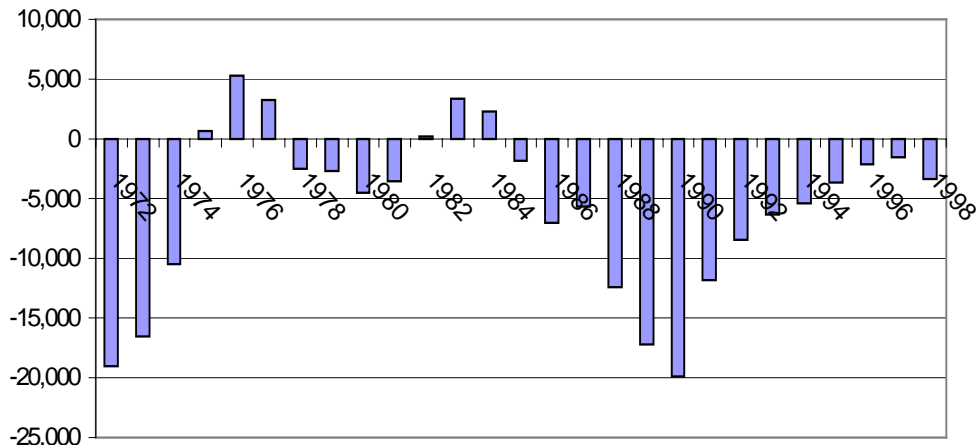
**FIGURE 1.1 SASKATCHEWAN POPULATION (000s), 1961-1999**



Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

Saskatchewan's population level is strongly affected by out-migration. In the late eighties and early nineties we experienced a large out-migration – in the 10-year period from 1986 to 1995 we lost a net total of 98,000 persons of all ages. In the last few years out-migration has declined.

**FIGURE 1.2 NET MIGRATION, SASKATCHEWAN, 1972-1998**

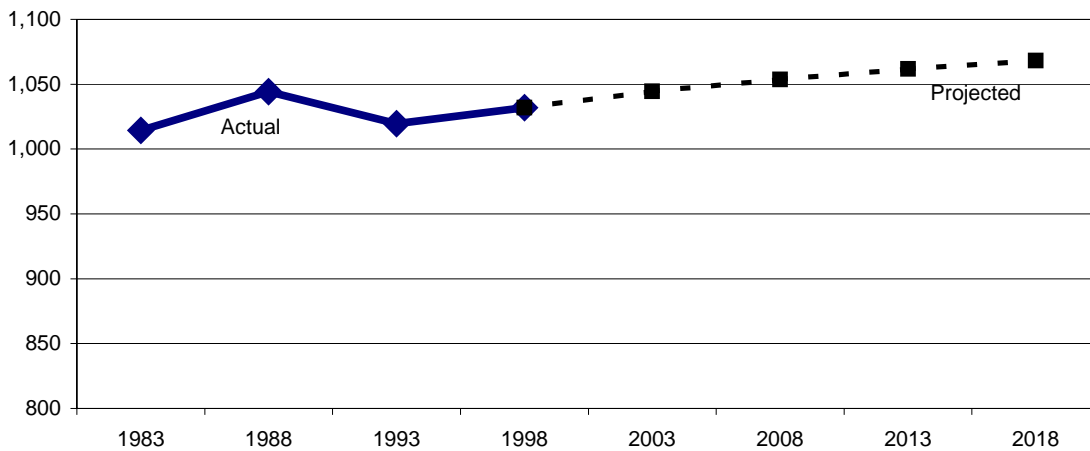


Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

Out-migration is largely due to difficult economic times. We know that most Saskatchewan residents continue to like living in this province and that Saskatchewan is considered one of the best places to live in Canada. In a public opinion poll in September 1998, 88% of Saskatchewan respondents thought it was a great place in which to live, work and do business, with over half (58%) the respondents strongly agreeing with this statement (Government of Saskatchewan, 1998.)

Looking to the future, population projections by Doug Elliott of Future Trends show Saskatchewan’s population growing by about 0.2% per year over the next 20 years, assuming that births, deaths and migration patterns will remain as they have been over the last five years. In 2018, the population is projected to be about 1,070,000 (Elliott, 2000).

**FIGURE 1.3 SASKATCHEWAN ACTUAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION (000s), 1983-2018**



Source: Elliott, 2000

The number of men and women has been and will remain roughly equal: in 2000 the population is estimated to be 50% women and by 2018 it is projected to be 51% women.

### Implications for education

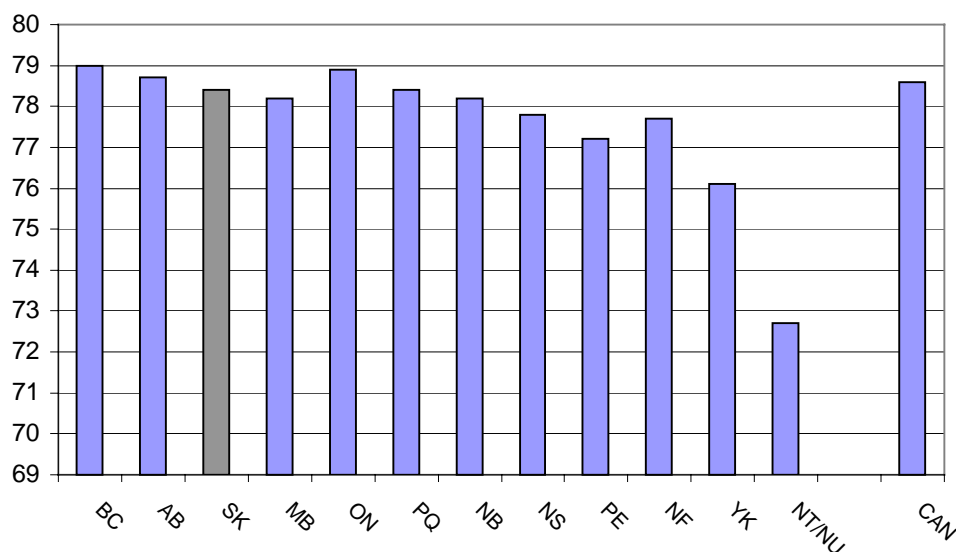
- ◆ There is reason for cautious optimism as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- ◆ However, the school system will need to adjust to the changing age composition and geographic distribution of the population.



## #2. Life expectancy will remain high.

Saskatchewan residents can expect to live a long time: life expectancy at birth was 78 years in 1996, the same as the Canadian rate. Women can expect to live 81 years and men 76.

**FIGURE 1.4 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH, PROVINCES AND CANADA, 1996**



Source: Health Canada *et al.*, 1999

However, although Saskatchewan's life expectancy is on par with the rest of Canada, other indicators of health status show us as being somewhat less healthy. For example, when asked to rate their own health, only 17 % of Saskatchewan residents considered themselves to be in excellent health, compared to 25% nationally. Saskatchewan's rate was lowest among all the provinces. (The 39% rating their health "very good" was on par with the national 38%.) Saskatchewan residents also reported slightly higher rates experiencing long-term limitations in their activities (22% of persons 12 years of age and older compared to 16% nationally). These figures are too recent and too few, however, to foresee whether they constitute a trend for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Health Canada *et al.*, 1999).

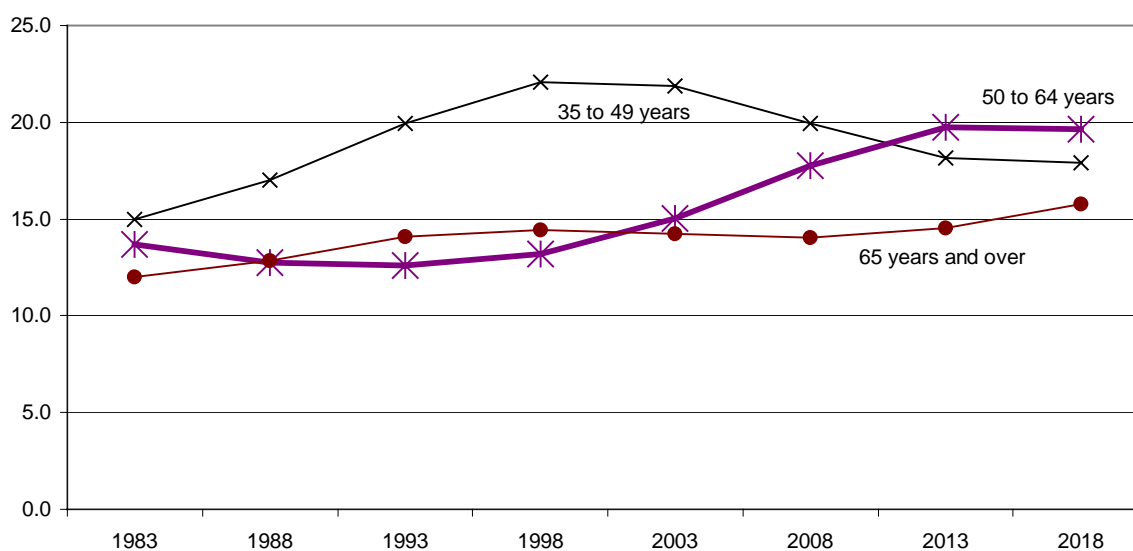
### Implications for Education

- A healthier population is a more energized society and therefore more likely to have interest in education, readiness to participate and willingness to support it.

### #3. Over the next twenty years, the mature adult population will increase the most.

Over the next 20 years, Saskatchewan will experience shifts in the age and geographic distribution of the population. The number of youth and young adults will be fewer and the number of mature adults and seniors will increase. However, the largest proportional increase will occur among the mature adult population. About 13% of the population in 1998, the 50-64 age group will increase to 20% of the population in 2018.

**FIGURE 1.5 ACTUAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION PERCENTAGE, 50-64 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1983-2018**



Source: Elliott, 2000

The increase in the 50 to 64 year-old population is positive. Mature adults tend to be stable. It is from this group that societal leaders are drawn. Both men and women will have more educational attainment and work experience and be in better health than those who preceded them in this age group. The challenge will be to take full advantage of this group's potential to increase the development of the province.

The changes in age composition that are evident here are not unique to Saskatchewan. Similar trends are occurring in the rest of Canada and indeed in other developed countries. There are four main contributors to the Saskatchewan trend, three of which are common to other places.

**The baby boom effect:** the large post WWII increase in births experienced in Europe and North America represented a relatively unique historical phenomenon, which was seen as positive because it coincided with a period of relative affluence for the populations involved. As the baby boomers have passed through the life cycle, their needs and contributions have reverberated throughout the economy and society, mostly because of their sheer numbers.

**Lower fertility rates:** Lower fertility rates are a positive consequence of more affluent societies combined with better social conditions for women. European and Canadian fertility rates have also decreased.<sup>+</sup>

**Increased life expectancy:** People live longer as a result of improved social and physical living environments and increased access to improved medical care. There is increasing evidence to show that the number of years people live without disability is also increasing.<sup>!</sup>

These three factors have led to the populations in developed countries going from very youthful populations about 20 years ago, to increasingly more mature and more senior ones. These trends are not negative trends.

There is a fourth factor operating in Saskatchewan, however, that has exacerbated this age composition trend: high out migration of people from Saskatchewan to other provinces, in particular from the young adult group.<sup>\*</sup>

## Implications for Education

- There will be a larger pool of educated citizens to act as trustees and advocates for the school system.
- There will be a larger pool of leaders with formal education to support our post-secondary institutions.
- There will be more demand for continuing adult education.

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<sup>+</sup> For more discussion of fertility, see Trend # 10: Women's status has improved significantly and Trend #8: The Aboriginal population will continue to increase and will be a higher proportion of the total population.

<sup>!</sup> See Trend #2: Life expectancy will remain high.

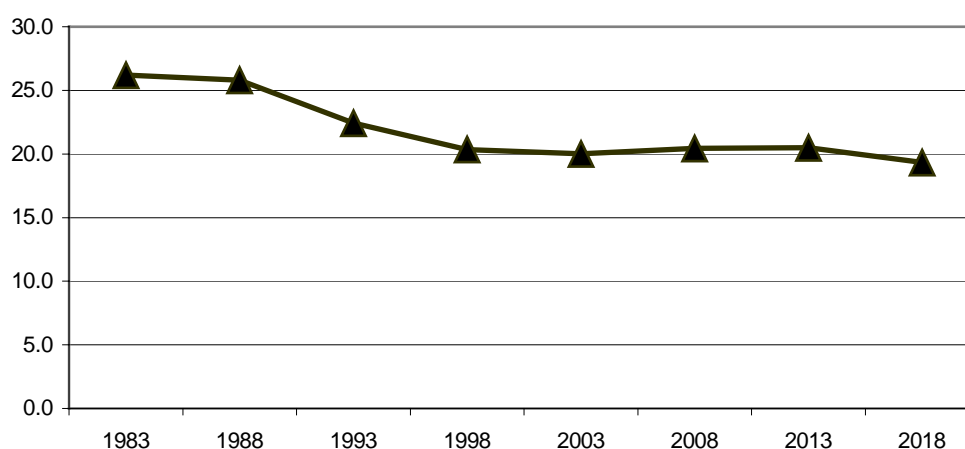
<sup>\*</sup> See Trend #4: The number of young adults will stabilize.

#### #4. The number of young adults will stabilize.

The Future Trends population projections assume that the out-migration rate of young adults will decrease in the next decade. This means that following the current dip, there will be a slight increase in this age group's population in the 2003-2013 decade (Elliott, 2000).

The Future Trends assumptions are based on an analysis of future labour market conditions, which indicate a labour shortage and a resulting incentive for youth to stay in the province.<sup>+</sup>

**FIGURE 1.6 ACTUAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION PERCENTAGE, 20-34 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1983-2018**



Source: Elliott, 2000

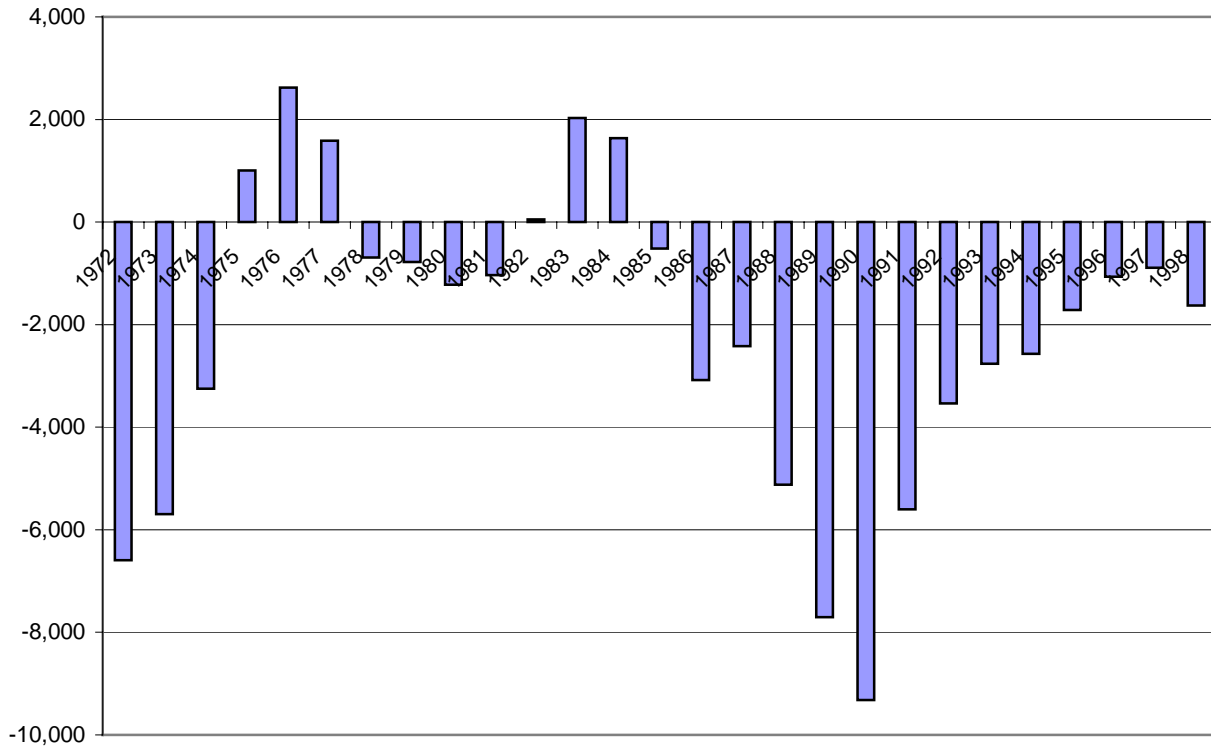
The young adult group – those in their twenties and early thirties – are an important force in a population. They represent the energy for the future. They are the most recently educated and most adaptable. They are also those most likely to be forming new families and households, contributing a great deal to growth in society.

This is also the most mobile group in the population. Statistics Canada analyst Kremarik tells us that Canadians between the ages of 25 and 34 in 1995 were most likely to have moved in the previous decade — 94% between 1985 and 1995. During those 10 years, many in this age group were attending or finishing school, starting their careers, getting married or entering conjugal relationships — all reasons that help explain the high occurrence of moves. Over half of these younger movers felt that their change of residence had made them better off (Kremarik, 1999).

In Saskatchewan, the 20-34 year age group represents about 20% of the population, but it represents about 40% of the out-migration. The out-migration from this age group has been a chronic problem for the province.

<sup>+</sup> See Trend #21: There has been stability in the overall size of the labour force, and there are expected to be shortages in the next decade.

FIGURE 1.7 NET MIGRATION 20 TO 34 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN , 1972-1998



Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

This partly explains why the population of the 20-34 year age group has been declining in Saskatchewan. However, Elliott’s recent projections assumed that the out-migration rate of young adults will lessen, because of the labour shortages he predicts. This means that following the current dip, there will be a slight increase in this age group’s population in the 2003-2013 decade.

### Implications for education

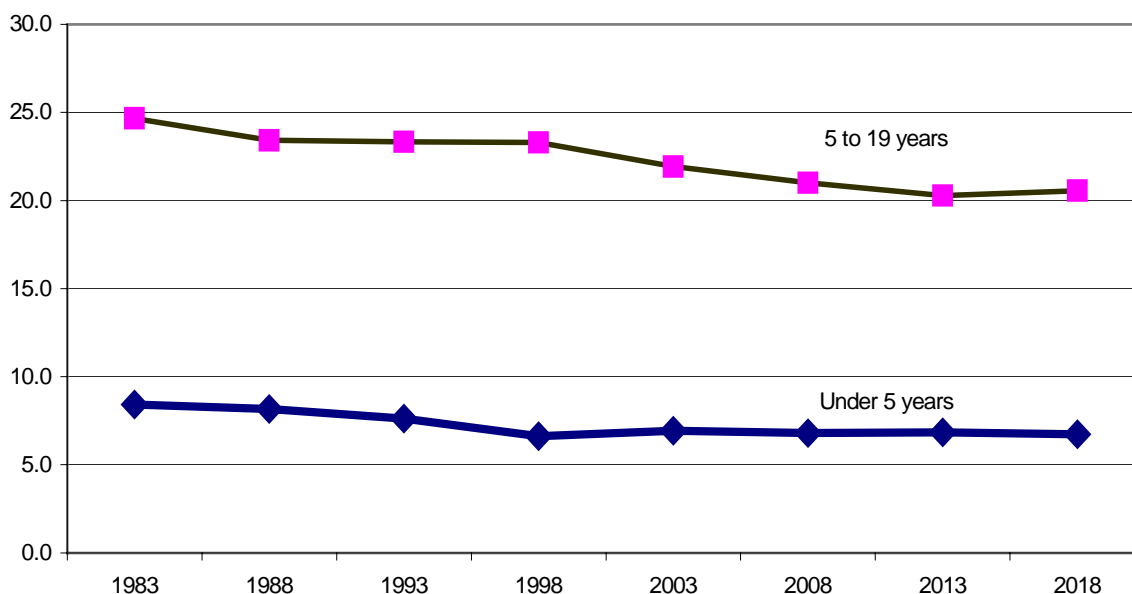
- Retaining this population in the province will provide a boost to our development.
- Post-secondary institutions should increase opportunities and incentives for young people adequate to retain them here for their education.
- High schools should encourage students to consider what opportunities there are in the province.
- Public and private sector agencies should work together to ensure there are adequate opportunities for young people to begin employment.

## #5. Preschoolers and school-aged youth will be fewer.

The number of persons under 20 has declined steadily over the past ten years. And although the preschool population will become more stable over the next 20 years, population projections show that the school age population will decrease. By 2018, the school age population is expected to decrease to 21% of the population from 23% in 1998 (Elliott, 2000).

Nevertheless this population will still represent about 220,000 people from 5 to 19 years of age, in need of education, in addition to the 72,000 preschoolers. The issue will be, however, the geographic distribution of the population. Some areas will have increases and others decreases.

**FIGURE 1.8 ACTUAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION PERCENTAGE, UNDER 20 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1983-2018**



Source: Elliott, 2000

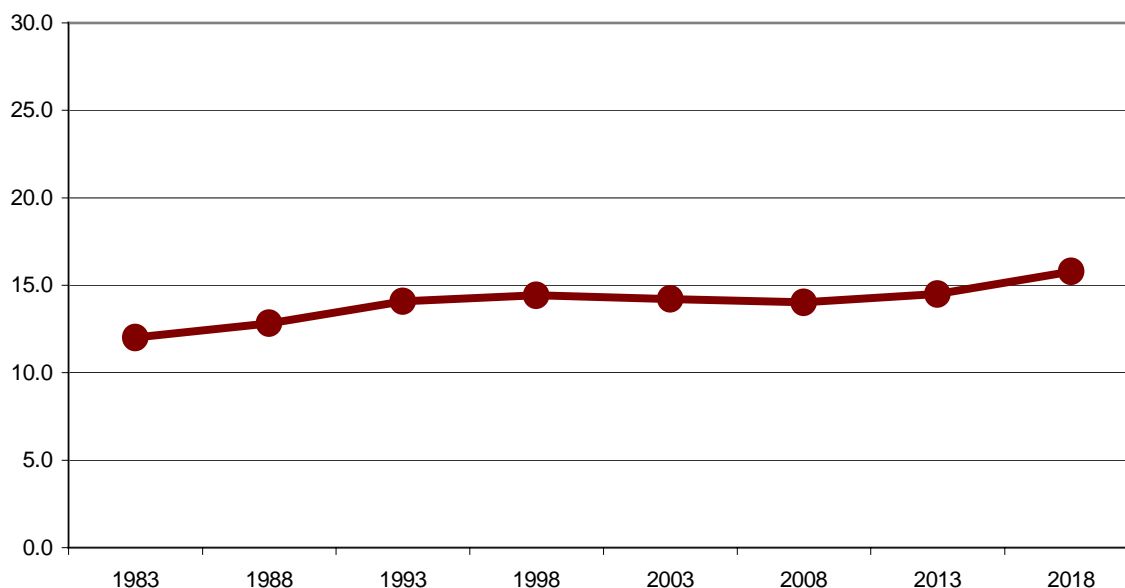
### Implications for education

- This trend has the most direct implications for education as it means that enrolments will decline overall.
- However, some schools will have increases and others will experience decreases. The decreases for the most part, especially those in the rural areas, are likely to be permanent. The increases may not be.
- Rural school divisions will require strategies that maximize flexibility and accommodate sparsity. More use of distance education will be required.
- There may be opportunities in some cases to have smaller class sizes and provide programs that require higher teacher-student ratios.

## #6. The number of seniors will increase slowly. They will live longer and be healthier for more years.

People live longer as a result of improved social and physical living environments and increased access to improved medical care. There is increasing evidence to show that the number of years people live without disability is also increasing. By 2018, the proportion of elderly is expected to reach 16% (Elliott, 2000).

FIGURE 1.9 ACTUAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION PERCENTAGE, 65 YEARS AND OVER, SASKATCHEWAN, 1983-2018



Source: Elliott, 2000

The distribution of elderly is not uniform in the province. The larger cities will continue to have the largest number of elderly persons. However, there are proportionately more elderly living in smaller centres and rural areas. This is because the younger adults in these communities have tended to move the larger centres or out of the province.

Because the number of elderly is expected to increase, and because they will live longer and be generally healthier, there will be more attention given in the future to the people in this age group, their social contribution, their social costs, and their quality of life. They will no longer be treated in one large group as “those 65 years and older.” Rather they will be thought about as either the “younger/healthier elderly” or the “frail elderly.” This is because each group will have different social needs.

In 1996, Saskatchewan had lower mortality rates for both cancer and heart disease (Health Canada *et al.*, 1999). That is a good sign for the health of the elderly. Our smoking prevalence was on par with the Canadian average. While any rate of smoking is still too high in health terms, we seem to be doing no worse than other areas. However, the proportion of people who are regular heavy drinkers is higher than the Canadian average, as is the proportion of persons

who are overweight. These latter two factors are known to be precursors to future health problems.

Studies of aging and health confirm that the most important factor for the mental and physical health of people as they age is to be active and interactive with others. Isolation is a strong contributor to ill-health.

### **Implications for education**

- School programs may want to integrate the elderly to increase their interaction with the young, and to help the young learn from the old.
- There will be increased need for adult education programs for this population and other ways for them to maintain social interaction.

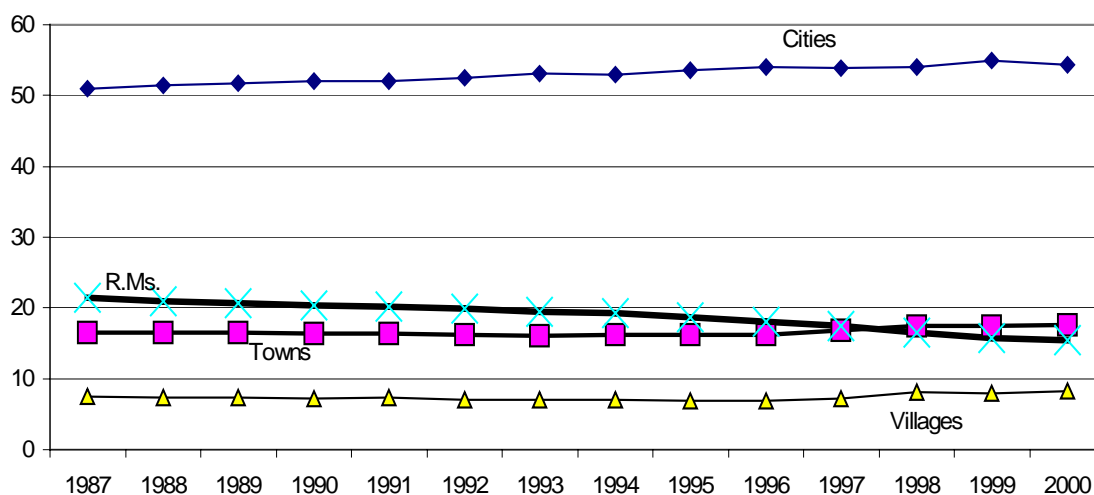


## #7. People are continuing to migrate to urban centres and particularly the largest towns and cities.

People are moving to a small number of large urban communities and particularly the largest towns and cities.

Intra-provincial migration is at least as important as out of province migration in terms of the effects it has on communities. The migration of people from rural and small urban areas to larger urban areas continues to be a major trend in this province. Indeed, it seems to be a trend that is increasing in scope over time and will likely continue to do so in the near and more distant future.

**FIGURE 1.10 POPULATION PERCENTAGE BY TYPE OF COMMUNITY, SASKATCHEWAN, 1987-2000**



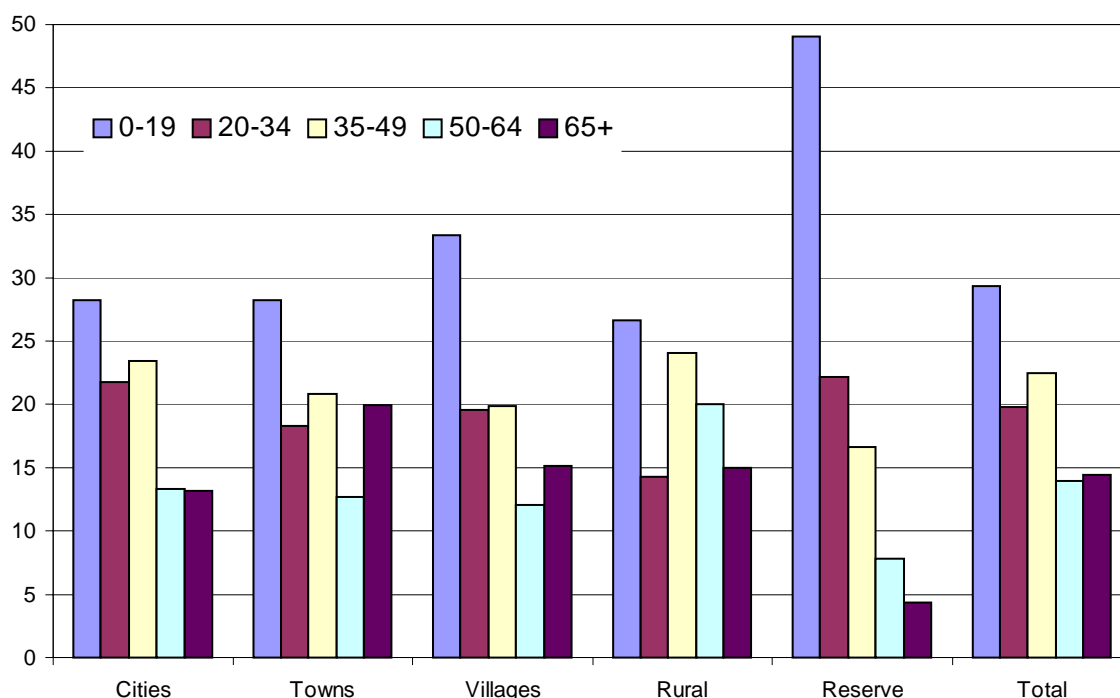
*Source: Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, 1999 and Saskatchewan Health, 2000*

The population in rural Saskatchewan is getting smaller. It is also getting relatively sparser. It is no longer a question of whether people leave, it is a question of where they go. Whereas some communities have a large and expanding or even booming population base, others have a small and shrinking or stagnant population base.

More importantly, a larger share of younger people is leaving. This trend has negative implications for community resources and school enrolments, because this age group is more likely to have incomes, energy and younger children.

However, the change in age distribution is not uniform. Although the average age for the population in some communities increases each year, the average age in others is either staying the same or decreasing.

FIGURE 1.11 POPULATION PERCENTAGE BY AGE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY, SASKATCHEWAN, 2000



Source: Saskatchewan Health, 2000

The Saskatchewan trend is different from the Canadian trend. At the national level, Canada's rural and small town population grew. Generally, the rural and small town population grew in retirement-destination communities and on the edge of the commuting zones of larger urban centres (Mendelson and Bollman, 1998). In Saskatchewan as well, there are rural communities close to larger urban areas that are growing for this reason.

### Implications for education

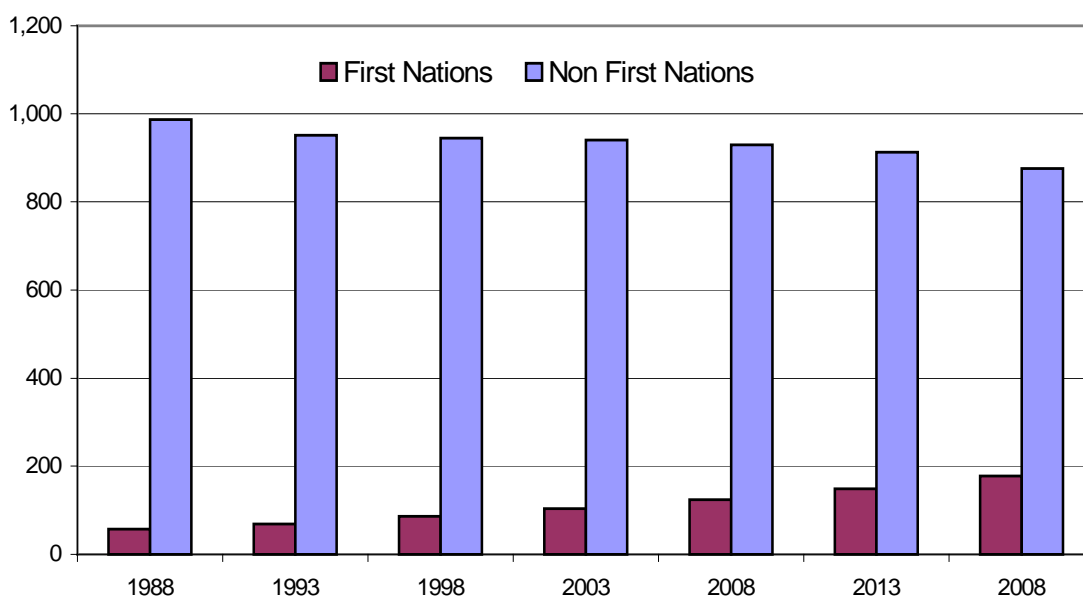
- Age distribution has significant implications for communities. The average age of the population and the distribution of various age groups have significant implications for the types and levels of services required, and the ability of local governments and agencies to provide those services in meeting the needs of various age groups.
- In smaller centres, schools will increasingly work with other public and private agencies in order to combine resources.
- Areas composed of mainly elderly residents may have difficulty sustaining tax loads. Strategies for redistribution of resources will be required.
- There are implications for the delivery of all human services in the province. The way services are delivered in any particular area will have to be adapt to the density of the population.
- Ensuing the future quality of life in rural Saskatchewan will be an important challenge.

## #8. The Aboriginal population will continue to increase and will be a higher proportion of the total population.

The Aboriginal population in Canada is increasing. Saskatchewan has the highest proportion of Aboriginal residents of the ten provinces. In the 1996 Census, 109,540 Saskatchewan people reported having Aboriginal identity, about 11% of the population. Of these, two-thirds identified themselves as First Nations and one-third as Metis (Statistics Canada, 1996).<sup>+</sup>

By 2020, the proportion of Registered First Nations residents is expected to rise to 20% of the population (Elliott, 2000). The Metis and other Aboriginal populations are in addition to this.

**FIGURE 1.12 FIRST NATION AND NON FIRST NATION POPULATION (000s), ACTUAL AND PROJECTED, SASKATCHEWAN, 1988-2018**



Source: Elliott, 2000

Aboriginal populations are not uniformly distributed across the province. They are heavily concentrated in the North, on reserves and in a few of the cities. Almost one-quarter of Aboriginal residents live in northern Saskatchewan, compared to three per cent of the total Saskatchewan population — 81% of the Northern population is Aboriginal (Furrie, 1998).<sup>!</sup>

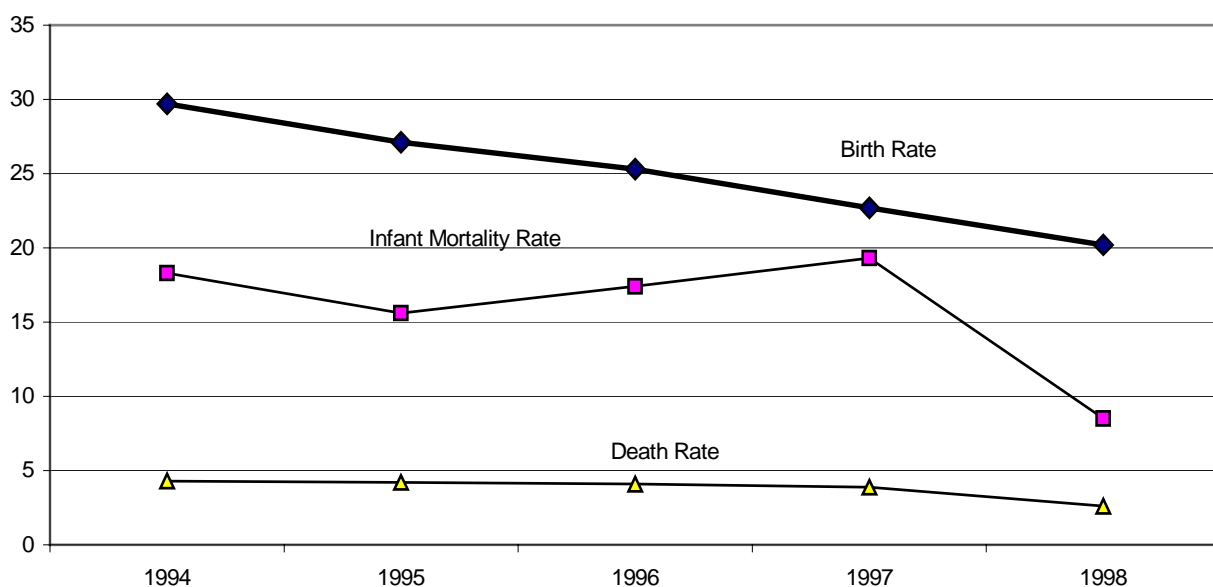
About half of First Nations people live on reserve. This is about one-third of the total Aboriginal population. Counting both Metis and First Nations, two-thirds of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan live in non-reserve communities. Of all the cities, Prince Albert has the highest percentage of Aboriginal people 25% and North Battleford is second at 14%.

<sup>+</sup> Customs tabulations from the 1996 Census, cited in Saskatchewan Women's Secretariat, 1999.

<sup>!</sup> Cited in Saskatchewan Women's Secretariat, 1999.

There have been significant improvements in the health status of the Aboriginal population over the last decades and in their social and political participation. The increasing Aboriginal population in recent decades is the result of a significant drop in a death rate that was tragically high. The question is whether these improvements will accelerate to the extent required to ensure a healthy population, both of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents.

**FIGURE 1.13 REGISTERED INDIAN BIRTH RATES, INFANT MORTALITY RATES, AND DEATH RATES\*, SASKATCHEWAN, 1994-1998**



*Source: Medical Services Branch, 2000*

Death, illness and injury rates among Aboriginal populations are still far higher than for the rest of the population. These are a result of the isolation, poverty, and poor social infrastructure and social cohesion that are in large part the legacy of colonial times.

Social policies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century attempted to counteract these trends. Beginning in the 1970s there were improved health, education and social services. These were followed by affirmative action policies in post-secondary education professional programs, such as education and law. However, in the last decades, there have also been changes in the political interaction with First Nations and Metis peoples. There have been legal actions over land, treaty and Aboriginal rights, and residential schools. The concept of these groups having their own forms of government has become part of the interaction.

Now the issues of development are being addressed to the First Nations and Metis governments as well as to the overall provincial and federal governments. These governments now have, if not the main, at least a shared responsibility for developing the social and political status of their populations.

\* The birth rate is the number of births per 1,000 persons; The infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births and the death rate is the number of deaths per 1,000 persons, unadjusted for age and sex.

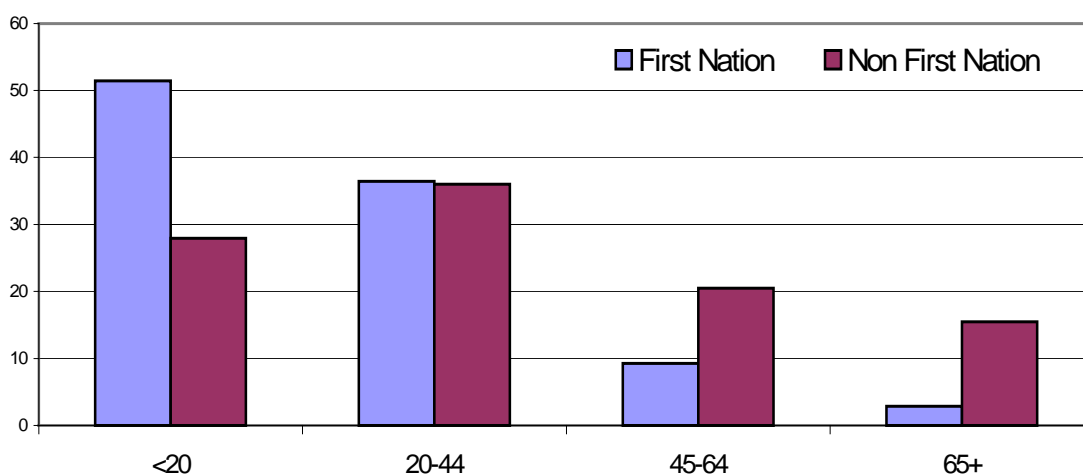
In other parts of Canada as well as Saskatchewan, Aboriginal residents experience serious social problems, such as family violence, substance abuse and youth crime. Aboriginal families are more likely to experience violence and abuse in their lives. Contributing factors include alcohol and substance abuse, poverty and learned patterns of behaviour. Many Aboriginal families and communities are caught in the grip of an intergenerational cycle of violence. Canadian Aboriginal incarceration rates are five to six times higher than those of the general population. Unemployment and illiteracy rates are twice the national average, and suicide rates among the young are four to five times those of other Canadians (CPI, 1996).

More than two-thirds of all children in care by Saskatchewan Social Services and over half the women who use shelters are Aboriginal. The large majority of fetal alcohol syndrome children are Aboriginal (Saskatchewan Women’s Secretariat, 1999).

Educational attainment is lower among Aboriginal population. Over half the Aboriginal population 15 years and over in Saskatchewan had not graduated from high school in 1996: 61% of men and 56% of women. This compares to 43% and 39% respectively for non-Aboriginal men and women (Statistics Canada, 1996).<sup>+</sup>

However, a positive note is that the graduation rates are increasing and educational attainment levels are improving. We reported above the increased life expectancy in spite of the still higher rates of health and social problems. And in particular, the size of the young Aboriginal population is increasing. In effect, the Aboriginal population is experiencing a baby boom twenty or more years after the rest of Canada. In Saskatchewan, over half of the First Nations population is under 20 years of age (Elliott, 2000)<sup>!</sup>

**FIGURE 1.14 POPULATION PERCENTAGE BY AGE, BY FIRST NATION AND NON FIRST NATION, SASKATCHEWAN, 1998**



Source: Elliott, 2000

<sup>+</sup> 1996 Census, cited in Saskatchewan Women’s Secretariat, 1999.

<sup>!</sup> from Saskatchewan Health Covered Population 1998 data.

The faster rate of growth and the youthfulness of the population are the effect of the higher birth rates of Aboriginal women, who bear more children on average than the general female population.

**TABLE 1.1 SASKATCHEWAN BIRTH RATE BY AGE OF MOTHER, 1991 TO 1995  
TOTAL POPULATION AND REGISTERED INDIANS**

| Age group | Births per 1000 women:<br>1991 to 1995 average |                   |
|-----------|--|-------------------|
|           | General  | Registered Indian |
| 15 to 19  | 45   | 147               |
| 20 to 24  | 106  | 201               |
| 25 to 29  | 135  | 127               |
| 30 to 34  | 81   | 68                |
| 35 to 39  | 25   | 29                |
| 40 to 44  | 4  | 7                 |
| 45 to 49  | 0  | 0                 |

*Source: Elliott, 2000*

Aboriginal women not only bear more children than other women, they have them younger. The rate of adolescent mothers is higher than the norm. The complex social situation of Aboriginal community has had mixed effects on the status of women. On the one hand Aboriginal women have not experienced the strides in gaining equity that have been made by other women in Canadian society, as witnessed by their higher likelihood of being victims of violent abuse and having poorer health outcomes. On the other hand, Aboriginal women are more likely than Aboriginal men to have graduated from high school, to have a university degree and to be enrolled in post-secondary educational institutions. However, the issues of gender equity are often considered to be irrelevant or lower priority by groups struggling to gain respect and make a place for themselves in the larger, more hostile, community.

One of the principal contributing factors to the dismal social indicators for Aboriginal people is poverty. The vast majority of First Nations communities in Canada have considerably lower standards of living than other regions. A Statistics Canada study in 1999 found that “the best-off First Nations communities compare only with the worst-off areas of non-Aboriginal Canada.” The study also noted, however, that there were substantial variations among Aboriginal communities depending on several geographic and socioeconomic factors. In Canada, the best-off First Nations communities are in Southern Ontario and British Columbia. Saskatchewan has no best-off First Nations communities. But those in Northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba are among the worst off (Statistics Canada, 1999).

One feature over the last decade has been the development of “inner city” pockets of Aboriginal communities, relatively deprived zones in the larger urban setting. The urban Aboriginal population tends to be young and highly mobile, adding to the lack of social cohesion in this population.

Lack of social cohesion is the other principal contributing factor to the poor social indicators for the Aboriginal population. Although poverty is an important determinant of health, it can be

compensated for if a community has strong interpersonal support and interaction. In the case of Aboriginal populations, the spirit of community was shattered. It is only now being rebuilt. The challenge will be to rebuild the spirit of community as a whole in the province including all the communities that live in it.

There are several issues important for the relationship of municipal governance and Aboriginal governance. More municipal governments should understand that Aboriginal issues are no longer, if they ever were, just the issues of the federal and provincial orders of government. Municipal governments should be responsive to their Aboriginal residents and to their neighbouring Aboriginal governments. By the same token, emerging Aboriginal governing bodies should be responsive to their neighbouring nonAboriginal governments. Both governments should engage in partnerships and activities that are mutually beneficial (Garcea, 2000).

## **Implications for Education**

- First Nations governments should continue to work to ensure that the educational needs of their members are met, so as to improve the educational attainment of Aboriginal youth.
- The leadership of provincial, local and First Nations educational institutions should work in partnership to ensure that the different systems are working together to ensure that all students' needs are being met.
- Over the last decades, the provincial government, the universities, the First Nations and Metis governments and educational institutions, the SSTA, the STF, and other social and education groups in Saskatchewan have developed many programs and materials for improving the:
  - status, education and numbers of Aboriginal professionals and practitioners in the school system
  - curriculum for both Aboriginal and nonAboriginal students about the contributions of the First Nations to Canada, and the importance of building positive, non-racialist relationships in Saskatchewan society
  - educational attainment of Aboriginal students

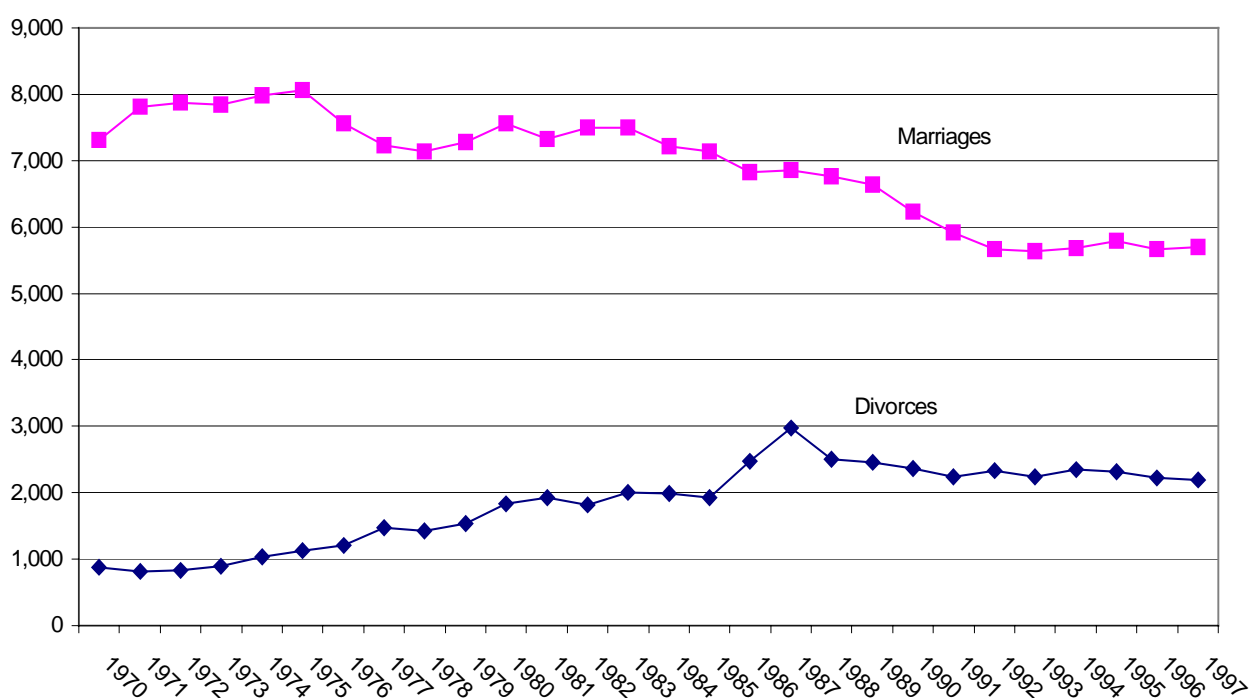
Schools should continue to implement, support and improve these programs, in order to improve the graduation rate of Aboriginal youth.

- Gender equity programs for Aboriginal students should address issues of creating equity within racialized communities. The issue of social cohesion should be addressed, in particular with regard to Aboriginal men.
- Education equity programs at the post-secondary institutions are crucial to ensuring that the young Aboriginal population is sufficiently educated and motivated to participate in building a positive future in Saskatchewan, for themselves and for others.
- Post-secondary institutions should continue to support programs for training of Aboriginal adults with an awareness that there will continue to be various forms of support needed for this population.

## #9. Family forms have become more diverse, but marriage and divorce patterns have stabilized.

Over the last four decades family structures in Saskatchewan have changed. Nevertheless, the two-parent, father-mother family still predominates. The number of people marrying declined over the last 20 years, but appears to have stabilized in the last decade. Similarly the divorce rate rose over the same period, which followed the liberalization of divorce in 1969, but it too seems to have stabilized in the 1990s and may even be declining. These are the same trends for Canada.

**FIGURE 1.15 MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES, SASKATCHEWAN, 1970-1997**



Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

However, there now exist additional forms of social arrangements and families have fewer children. Equality in marriage has increased. Legal changes over the last decades, such as the divorce act and the matrimonial property act have made marriage a more equal partnership. There are more families with two parents working. In addition, fathers are taking on a more interactive role in parenting.

However, there continue to be many one-parent families where the father is absent from the relationship, either in supporting the children or the mother. In 1996, about 21% of Saskatchewan families with children were single parent families, and over 85% of these were headed by women (Statistics Canada, 1996).



In the 1990s, there came increased legitimacy of same-sex marriages, for example in extension of family benefits. Although the numbers in Saskatchewan are not high, it is nevertheless an important change in family composition.

Where these trends will go in the future is not certain. Whatever the form of the family, however, the important indicator is the quality of life of its members.<sup>+</sup>

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ The child's home environment cannot be taken for granted. Schools increasingly will be required to take into account complex family forms in programs and content.
- ◆ There will be less emphasis on the form of family life, and more on the quality of life of children and parents.

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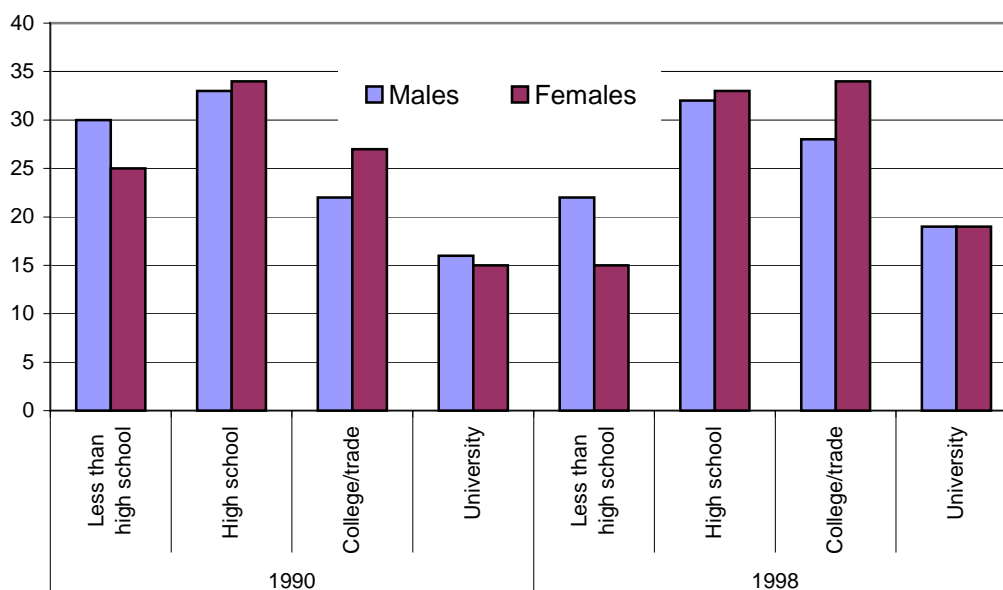
<sup>+</sup> See Trend #10: The status of women has improved significantly and Trend # 28: Increased understanding of the importance of children's development is having an impact.

## #10. The status of women has improved significantly.

One of the most important indicators of societal development is the status and participation of women in society. It is the foundation for fuller gender equity and societal development. Canada and Saskatchewan have made major strides in the last decades in improving the status of women.

Canadian and Saskatchewan women have one of the highest life expectancies in the world, at 81 years. Women have made major improvements in educational attainment, employment, income, marital and reproductive rights and political participation.<sup>+</sup>

**FIGURE 1.16 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%), MEN AND WOMEN, 25-54 YEARS  
SASKATCHEWAN 1990 AND 1998**



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996

There continue, however, to be inequitable gaps in status and participation between men and women in employment, income and in political participation. There are barriers that still prevail, confining women to roles and situations that are less than what their full potential would allow. The relatively lower participation of women in the emerging fields of high technology is an example.

There is a serious and continuing problem with domestic violence, an important indicator of equitable status. The trend here is difficult to track, because in past domestic violence was not reported to authorities. In fact it is a gain that wife abuse is now considered a crime to be taken seriously, and that an increasing number of women are reporting it.

<sup>+</sup>Also see Trend #22: The labour force has become more gender-equitable.

There are also gender inequities on the male side that need to be addressed. Many male deaths, illnesses and injuries, such as from accidents, suicides and occupational hazards, are related to gender roles. And the more uncertain place of younger men in the society and the economy is an issue that has emerged as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>+</sup>

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Educational institutions should practice gender equity in employment and other practices.
- ◆ Educational programs should foster gender equity among students and promote understanding and knowledge about gender relationships. This would include questions of how to better integrate the contribution of young men.

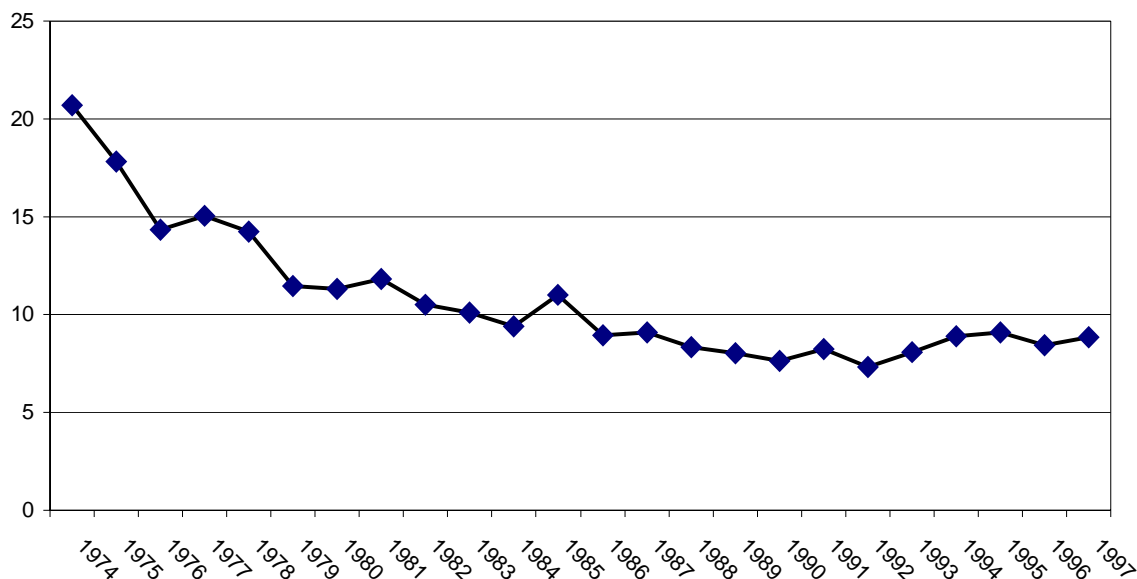
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<sup>+</sup> See Trend #8: The Aboriginal population will continue to increase and will be a higher proportion of the total population for discussion of some of the specific circumstances of Aboriginal women.

## #11. The historical decline in the Saskatchewan infant mortality rate may be slowing.

The infant mortality rate has been declining in Saskatchewan over the past several decades, as it has in Canada and in developed countries in general. However, the rate of decline has slowed (Statistics Canada, 1999). The infant mortality rate is an important indicator of the health status of a population. A high infant mortality rate can be a reflection of poor physical, social or economic factors, such as nutrition, poverty, education, or health care.

FIGURE 1.17 INFANT MORTALITY RATE<sup>†</sup>, SASKATCHEWAN 1974-1997



Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

The Saskatchewan infant mortality rate is the highest in Canada. The rate dropped a significant amount in the 11-year period between 1982 and 1992. However it is now unstable and may even be increasing. This pattern is similar to Manitoba and Alberta rates (Lix *et al.*, 2000).

Social and economic conditions play a significant role in infant mortality. In Saskatchewan as in the rest of Canada, rates for the Registered Indian population are significantly higher than for the rest of the population and there are differences in why they occur. Registered Indian infant deaths were more likely to occur among younger mothers, and a higher proportion of mothers are adolescents. Infants die at a relatively older age (older than one month) and relatively more deaths are due to sudden infant death syndrome, injuries, and conditions such as infectious and parasitic disease, or respiratory system problems. By contrast, other infants have older mothers, and are more likely to die in the early days of life, from conditions in the period of their birth, such as complications of the placenta, or birth asphyxia (Lix *et al.*, 2000).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>†</sup> The infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths (under 1 year of age) per 1,000 live births.

<sup>1</sup> See Trend #8: The Aboriginal population will continue to increase and will be a higher proportion of the total population for discussion of some of the specific circumstances of the Aboriginal population.

### **Implications for Education**

- ◆ It is important to teach young people in school about the importance of delaying pregnancy, about reproductive choice and about responsible sexuality.
- ◆ Fostering equitable and respectful gender attitudes is an important part of creating this result.
- ◆ It is important that programs for adolescents – females and males – be relevant to their frame of reference and to their ambivalent and difficult circumstances. This is especially true for Aboriginal adolescents.
- ◆ School-based programs for pregnant teens and for teen mothers have been successful mechanisms for helping to keep babies healthy and for delaying second pregnancies to teenage mothers.

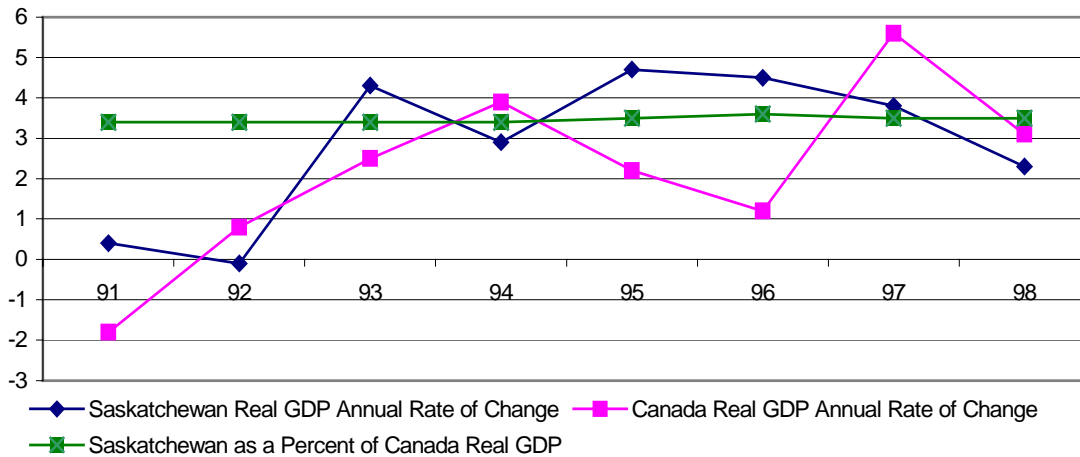
## **II. The Economy**

In this section, we look at jobs, income, agriculture and natural resources industries. We look at our educational attainment and skills. Will they provide us with continuing means to sustain ourselves? What will be the effect of technological changes? What are the global economic trends that are affecting our local economy? How will our governments' fiscal policies affect our future?

## #12. Saskatchewan’s gross domestic product will continue to grow at a slow rate.

Throughout most of the 1990s the Saskatchewan Gross Domestic Product was growing slowly – the average annual rate was 2.5%. The Canadian rate was 1.9%. Our GDP consistently contributed about 3.5% of the Canadian GDP throughout the decade (Figure 2.1)

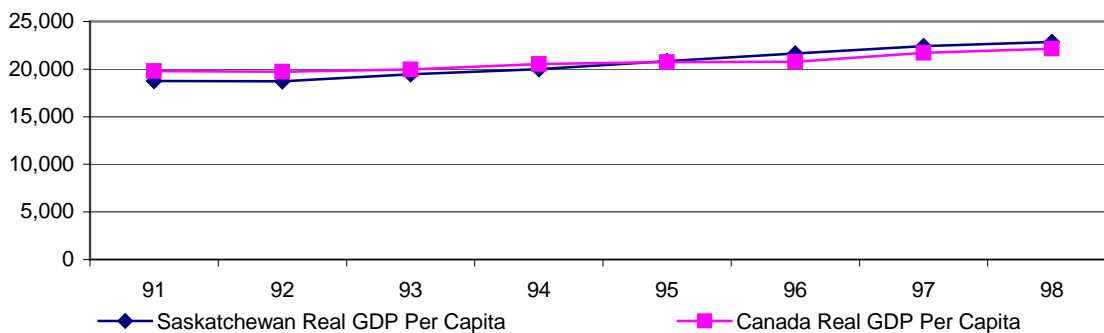
**FIGURE 2.1. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1991-1998**



Source: Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, 1999

GDP per person, adjusted for inflation, increased from \$18,758 to \$22,846 in 1998. Toward the late 1990s, Saskatchewan’s rate of real GDP per capita slightly surpassed Canada’s.

**FIGURE 2.2 REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1991-1998**



Source: Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, 1999

The Government of Saskatchewan's annual economic outlook prepared for its budget presented a slow growth but optimistic future scenario for the early 2000s.

**TABLE 2.1 SASKATCHEWAN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK TO 2004**

|                                       | 1999  | 2000  | 2001  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Real GDP (% Change)                   | 1.9   | 2.4   | 2.4   | 2.5   | 2.9   | 3.1   |
| Nominal GDP (% Change)                | 4.3   | 4.8   | 4.5   | 3.7   | 3.9   | 4     |
| Consumer Price Index (% Change)       | 1.8   | 2.3   | 1.7   | 1.7   | 1.9   | 2.4   |
| Employment Level (Thousands)          | 480.1 | 484.9 | 489.3 | 493.3 | 497.7 | 502.2 |
| Unemployment Rate (%)                 | 6.1   | 5.6   | 5.2   | 5     | 4.9   | 4.8   |
| Personal Income (% Change)            | 2.1   | 3.8   | 2.6   | 4.1   | 4.9   | 4.1   |
| Personal Disposable Income (% Change) | 2.2   | 4.5   | 3.5   | 4.7   | 5.3   | 4.3   |
| Retail Sales (% Change)               | 1.5   | 3.2   | 3     | 3.3   | 3.9   | 3.3   |

Source: Saskatchewan Finance, 2000

The Saskatchewan forecasts were based on predictions that there will be continued Canadian and U.S. economic growth, improved economic prospects overseas and higher commodity prices. Canadian economic growth is expected to average 3.1 per cent annually over the next five years.

**TABLE 2.2 UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK TO 2004**

|                                | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| U.S. Real GDP Growth (%)       | 4.1  | 3.6  | 3.1  | 2.8  | 3    | 3.3  |
| Canadian Real GDP Growth (%)   | 4.2  | 3.4  | 2.8  | 2.8  | 3.2  | 3.2  |
| Canadian Unemployment Rate (%) | 7.6  | 6.7  | 7.1  | 7.2  | 6.7  | 6.6  |
| Canadian Inflation Rate (%)    | 1.7  | 2.2  | 1.7  | 1.6  | 1.7  | 1.9  |

Source: Saskatchewan Finance, 2000

Because Saskatchewan's exports are dominated by crude oil, potash and grain products, the prices for these are important influences on the economy. In its 2000 forecasts, the Government of Saskatchewan assumed the U.S. dollar price for a barrel of West Texas Intermediate oil would average \$21.40 in 2000 and \$21.00 in 2001. They expected potash prices to average around \$195.00 per tonne over the period, well above the average price of about \$157.00 per tonne in the 1990s. Wheat prices, under pressure in the last few years, are expected to improve.

**TABLE 2.3 SASKATCHEWAN FINANCE PRICE FORECASTS FOR SELECTED COMMODITIES TO 2004**

|                                    | 1999   | 2000   | 2001   | 2002   | 2003   | 2004   |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| WTI Oil (U.S.\$/barrel)            | 19.24  | 21.4   | 21     | 21.34  | 21.7   | 22.11  |
| Potash (C\$/tonne)                 | 205.85 | 197.43 | 196.46 | 193.75 | 193.86 | 195.08 |
| Wheat (C\$/tonne at the farmgate)* | 111.1  | 140    | 154.1  | 155.63 | 157.25 | 156.87 |

\*Crop year basis (August to July)

Source: Saskatchewan Finance, 2000



One should never be too optimistic about Saskatchewan's economy – it is highly dependent on external and volatile commodity prices and its small economy does not allow it much room to withstand losses. Its nearness to Alberta makes comparisons to the more populous and wealthier province inevitable. On the other hand, in spite of these factors, the gross domestic product has been growing in a relatively stable way.<sup>+</sup>

### **Implications for Education**

- ◆ The continuing stability of the economy will have benefits for the whole society and has potential for the transfer of resources to support the education of citizens.

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<sup>+</sup> See the subsequent trends in this section for more detailed discussion of the changes within the economy.

### **#13. Saskatchewan's small economy will continue to struggle with global trends.**

An important trend that has increased its impact over the last decade is the drive to globalization — a set of economic agreements and relationships intended to increase the amount and importance of international trade. The purpose of globalization is to change trade regulation by increasing the responsibility and ability of international trade bodies and treaties to set trade rules and decreasing that of national and provincial bodies. The goal is to increase wealth by increasing trade.

The Saskatchewan economy is heavily reliant on exports and therefore strongly affected by globalization trends. The economy is vulnerable to international price fluctuations<sup>+</sup> and many of our resources rely on undependable export markets, such as in Asia. Saskatchewan also has relative lack of microenterprise. This creates a decreased ability to absorb excess labour created by increasingly large farms and other downsizing trends in the labour market.

However, there is little agreement about which of the effects of globalization are good and which are bad. Some suggest that globalization promises a new framework for progress and that increasing global integration will provide sufficient growth in the world economy to solve the problems of underdevelopment.

Others argue that it means production is divorced from national economies and governments will have less autonomy and ability to plan their economies and societal benefits.

#### **Implications for education**

- School programs will be called upon to include issues about globalization so that students develop knowledge and understanding about its effects.
- Educational institutions will be affected by international trade agreements in their ability to plan their programs over the long term.
- There could be a loss of control over the ability to plan and run a publicly funded and accountable education system

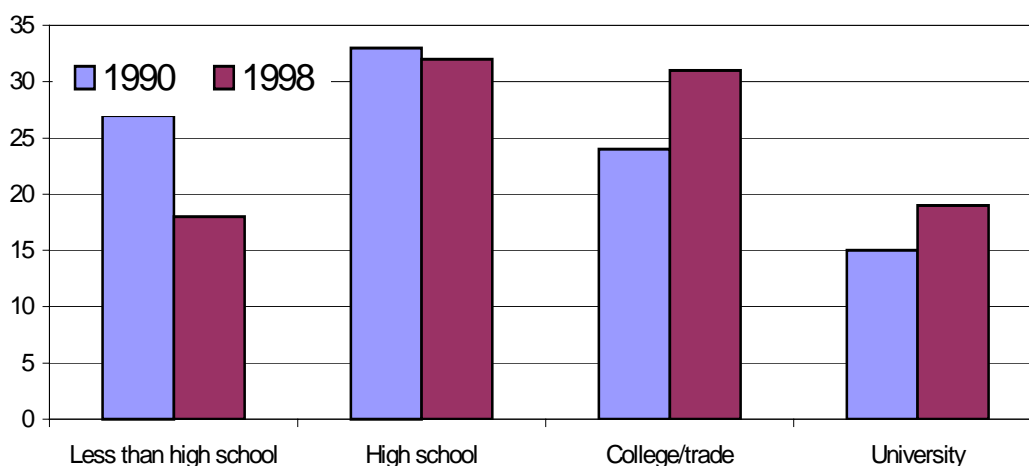
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<sup>+</sup> See Trend #12: Saskatchewan's gross domestic product will continue to grow at a slow rate.

## #14. Saskatchewan’s population is better educated than ever before.

The number of Saskatchewan people with university degrees is rising and the number with less than a high school education is shrinking. The proportion of both males and females without high school has decreased and that with college and university degrees has increased.

**FIGURE 2.3 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%), 25-54 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1990 AND 1998**



Source Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

The trend is somewhat stronger when we look only at those 25 to 29 years old. This indicates that the success rate is improving.

**TABLE 2.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY AGE, SASKATCHEWAN, 1990 AND 1998**

| Educational Attainment | 25-54 years, % |      | 25-29 years only, % |      |
|------------------------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|
|                        | 1990           | 1998 | 1990                | 1998 |
| Less than high school  | 27             | 18   | 19                  | 14   |
| High school            | 33             | 32   | 41                  | 33   |
| College/trade          | 24             | 31   | 26                  | 32   |
| University             | 15             | 19   | 15                  | 21   |

Source Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

Saskatchewan’s high school completion rate has increased slightly over the last decade and is higher than the Canadian average.

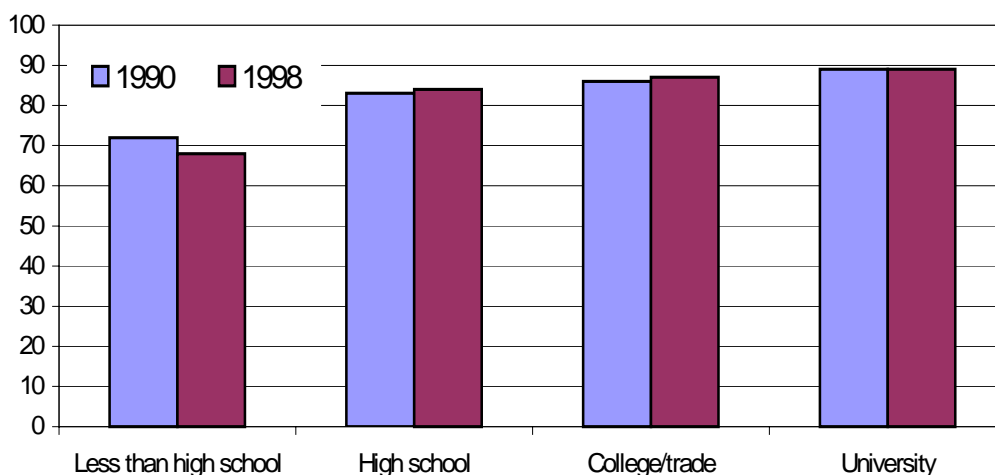
**TABLE 2.5 HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES, 19-20 YEARS, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1991 TO 1998**

| Year         | Saskatchewan, % | Canada, % |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1991 to 1994 | 83              | 79        |
| 1995 to 1998 | 84              | 81        |

Source Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

There is a strong relationship between level of education, employment and income. With each level of education attained, employment rates rise, while unemployment and involuntary part-time employment fall (Council of Ministers of Education, 2000). These differences increased in the 1990s.<sup>+</sup>

**FIGURE 2.4 EMPLOYMENT RATE (%) BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 25-54 YEARS SASKATCHEWAN, 1990 AND 1998**



Source Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

### Implications for Education

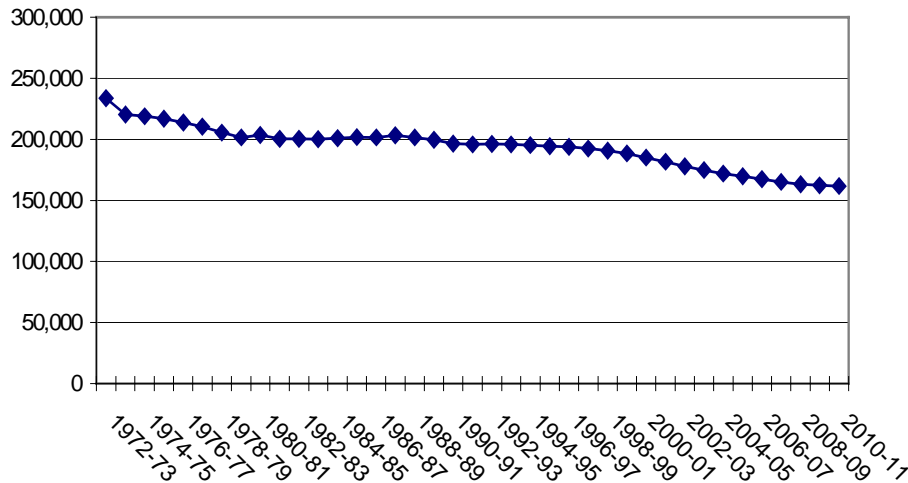
- ◆ Educators will be called upon to continue to improve their effectiveness and this will benefit the economy.

<sup>+</sup> See Trend #8: The Aboriginal population will continue to increase and will be a higher proportion of the total population for discussion of some of the specific circumstances of the Aboriginal population.

## #15. School enrolments will decline.

Saskatchewan school enrolments have been declining since the 1970s. In the following decades, due to the decreasing numbers of school-age youth, they will decline even further. Saskatchewan Education projections indicate that in 2010-11, enrolments will drop to 160,000 students.

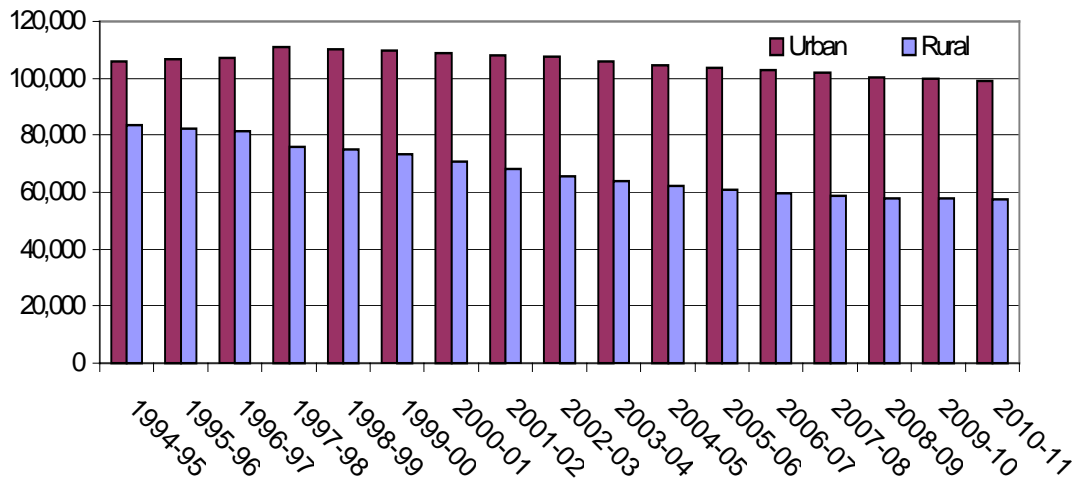
**FIGURE 2.5 K-12 SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, ACTUAL AND PROJECTED, IN PROVINCIALKY-FUNDED SCHOOLS SASKATCHEWAN, 1972-2011**



Source: Saskatchewan Education, 2000

However, the drop will be mainly in the rural areas.

**FIGURE 2.6 K-12 SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS, ACTUAL AND PROJECTED, URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1984-2011**



Source: Saskatchewan Education, 2000

## Implications for Education

- Enrolment declines will have serious implications for schools and staffing.
- Some schools will have increases and others will experience decreases. The decreases for the most part, especially those in the rural areas, are likely to be permanent.
- Rural school divisions will require strategies that maximize flexibility and accommodate sparsity. More distance learning may be required.
- There may be opportunities in some cases to have smaller class sizes and provide programs that require higher teacher-student ratios.

## #16. Many of Saskatchewan's educated people leave the province.

Although the overall educational level is increasing, many of Saskatchewan's young and educated people leave the province. For example, in 1995, of the 5,248 university graduates who had been Saskatchewan residents before enrolling in university, 688 left the province before graduation to study elsewhere (See table below). These departures were partially compensated by 560 students coming here to study. We nevertheless experienced a net loss of 2.4% of the original number. The post-graduation migration presented a more optimistic picture: 457 graduates left the province within two years of graduation, but 461 new graduates came from elsewhere.

The 1995 picture is brighter than that of 10 years previously, when 926 graduates left Saskatchewan within 2 years of graduating, and were not made up by the 451 who came from elsewhere. In 1986, Saskatchewan experienced a net loss of 12% of pre-enrolment resident graduates.

**TABLE 2.6 GRADUATES AND MIGRATION, SASKATCHEWAN, 1986 AND 1995**

|  | 1986   | 1995  |
|--|--------|-------|
| Graduates resident one year before enrolling           | 4,369  | 5,248 |
| Migrating out to study                                 | 478    | 688   |
| Migrating in to study                                  | 420    | 560   |
| Resident at graduation                                 | 4,310  | 5,120 |
| Net loss of graduates before graduation                | -59    | -128  |
|  | -1.4%  | -2.4% |
| Migrating out after graduation                         | 926    | 457   |
| Migrating in after graduation                          | 451    | 461   |
| Resident two years after graduation                    | 3,835  | 5,123 |
| Additional net loss/gain of graduates after graduation | -475   | 3     |
|  | -11.0% | 0.1%  |
| Total net loss of graduates                            | -534   | -125  |
|  | -12.2% | -2.4% |

Source: Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

These trends are partly confirmed in the table below which shows that in both 1990 and 1998, the proportion of university graduates aged 25 to 29 residing in Saskatchewan was lower than in Canada.

**TABLE 2.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%) 25 TO 29 YEAR AGE GROUP, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1990 AND 1998**

|                       | 1990         |        | 1998         |        |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|
|                       | Saskatchewan | Canada | Saskatchewan | Canada |
| Less than high school | 19           | 20     | 14           | 13     |
| High school only      | 41           | 36     | 33           | 29     |
| College/trade         | 26           | 27     | 32           | 32     |
| University            | 15           | 17     | 21           | 26     |

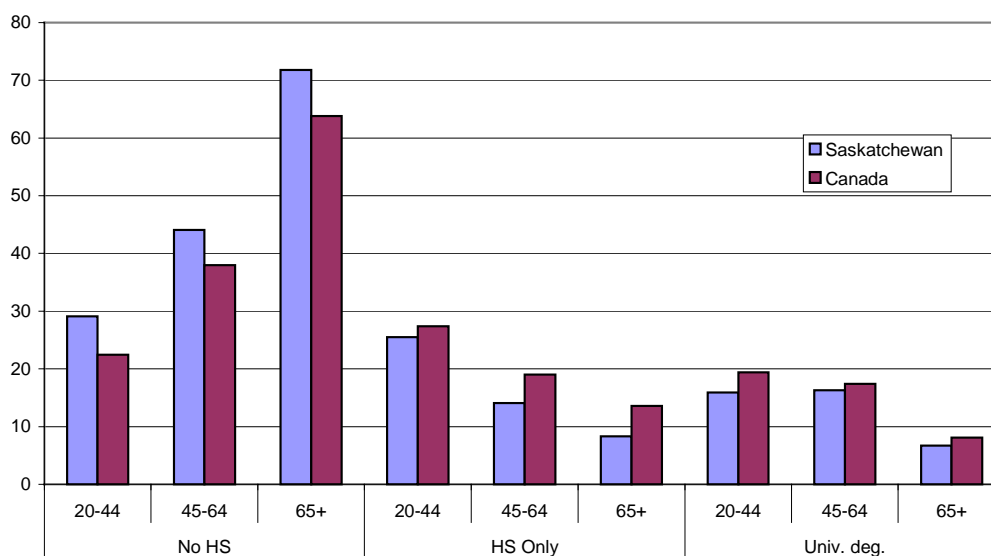
Source: Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

One improvement that did occur for young adults over the last period is that, once educated, they have increased likelihood of their finding a position closely related to their education. Statistics Canada’s National Graduates Survey, 1997 showed that the proportion increased from 53% to 56% between 1986 and 1995 for Saskatchewan university students, compared to from 48% to 53% for Canada as a whole (cited in Council of Ministers of Education, 2000).

However, the news was not good for trade-vocational and college students, whose likelihood of finding a job related to their field of study went from 63% to about 57% for Canada. In Saskatchewan the drop was from 64% to 61% for trade-vocational graduates and the figures stayed the same, at 66%, for college graduates.

Census data show that in spite of a higher high school completion rate in Saskatchewan, the education level of the population remains lower than the Canadian average for all adult age groups. This is an additional indication of the out-migration of those with higher education.

**FIGURE 2.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%) BY AGE, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1996**



Source: Council of Ministers of Education, 2000

This trend is exacerbated by the funding problems incurred by Saskatchewan’s universities, leading them to raise tuition. In Saskatchewan as in Canada, universities have relied more on private funds from tuition fees in recent years and less on public funding from governments (Little 1997, cited in Council of Ministers of Education, 2000). Canadian data show that there are rising debt levels among postsecondary graduates and a widening gap in participation between people from low and middle–high socio-economic backgrounds. This raises concerns about access to postsecondary education (Council of Ministers of Education, 2000).



Retaining young people involves several considerations, including the notion of treating them *fairly*. Canadian analyst Baldwin has cast this issue as one of intergenerational equity. He notes the popular attention that has been drawn to the financial problems that are seen as being passed on from older to younger generations, namely the public debt and maturing pension plans. Yet he argues that the big question for today's young -- like all young generations -- is whether they will inherit the real capacity to provide good living standards for themselves while taking care of older generations and any negative legacies left by prior generations<sup>+</sup> (Baldwin, 1998).

### Implications for education

- ◆ The implications are mostly for post secondary institutions, which need to do more to retain Saskatchewan high school graduates. They also need to attract students from elsewhere.
- ◆ In Saskatchewan generally, there is a need to create an attractive social and economic climate for young people to stay and others to come, in particular long-term, good-quality employment opportunities and a supportive social infrastructure
- ◆ Because many young people are hired by small employers who typically have less capacity to support skills training, either in-house or through purchase of services, the role of regional colleges is critical in responding to their needs. The presence of many small employers also has implications for colleges in maintaining contact with them and attempting to assess their collective needs to offer appropriate training programs and services.

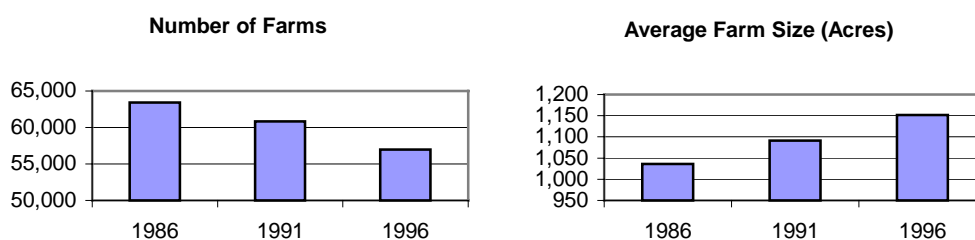
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<sup>+</sup> See Trend # #32: Intergenerational and other inequities require ongoing resolution for further discussion of intergenerational equity.

## #17. The number of farms is decreasing and farms are getting larger.

The number of farms is decreasing and farm size is getting larger. Between 1986 and 1996 the number of farms dropped from 63,431 to 56,995 (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, 1999). Average acreage increased by 100 acres per farm, to reach 1,152 in 1996. Therefore, in the 10-year period, an additional 2,000 farms grew to over 1,600 acres. These larger farms, 17% of the Saskatchewan total in 1986, represented 22% in 1996.

**FIGURE 2.8 NUMBER AND SIZE OF FARMS, SASKATCHEWAN, 1986-1996**



Source: Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, 1999

The market prices of many agricultural commodities, wheat in particular, have decreased in recent decades. There have been major changes in the modes of transportation for agricultural commodities and other materials (i.e., shift from railways to roadways, and shifts from some roadways to others); and in the location of commercial and industrial enterprises both in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors (e.g., elevators, industries, major department stores) (Garcea, 2000).

The increase in attention to producing commodities for export has speeded the development of larger corporate farms to increase efficiency, in production of hogs, for example, and to develop competitive advantage in international markets. At the same time, small producers are forced out of business.

The size of the agricultural labour force is diminishing. Agriculture lost almost 10,000 jobs over the ten-year period from 1988 to 1998 (Elliott, 2000). Loss of employment in agriculture was also a Canadian trend. However, the decline in Saskatchewan was more pronounced because grain farms have been more affected by consolidation.

### Implications for Education

- ◆ Decreasing farm size implies a decreased rural population, and decreased enrolments in rural areas.
- ◆ An increasingly sparse population will have a negative impact on the quality of rural life.
- ◆ Schools will be required to cope with the negative effects of increased sparsity on children's lives as well as the impact on funding.

## #18. The economy is somewhat more diversified, but primary resources remain important.

Agriculture remains Saskatchewan's largest employer, accounting for 15% of employment (this includes unpaid farm family workers, a declining category which included 6,300 persons in 1998.)

Saskatchewan's other primary industries — forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas — accounted for only 3.3% of employment in 1998. They did have employment increases over the 10-year period, although the increase of about 2,600 jobs did not compensate for the 10,000 lost to agriculture. The increases were counter to the national trend, because our mining industry is concentrated in commodities still in demand, i.e., potash, uranium, and coal rather than the hard rock and coal mines in other parts of Canada, and our forestry sector is concentrated in softwood, an emerging rather than declining commodity. (Elliott, 2000)

**TABLE 2.8 SASKATCHEWAN EMPLOYMENT IN 000'S BY INDUSTRY, 1988 AND 1998**

|   | 1988  |      | 1998  |      | Change<br>in #'s |
|---|-------|------|-------|------|------------------|
|   | #     | %    | #     | %    |                  |
| Agriculture                                     | 81.1  | 17.4 | 71.4  | 14.9 | -9.7             |
| Health Care and Social Assistance               | 46.8  | 10.1 | 52.6  | 11.0 | 5.8              |
| Retail Trade                                    | 58.8  | 12.7 | 52.4  | 10.9 | -6.4             |
| Educational Services                            | 30.1  | 6.5  | 35.6  | 7.4  | 5.5              |
| Manufacturing                                   | 25.8  | 5.6  | 31.3  | 6.5  | 5.5              |
| Accommodation and Food Services                 | 27.0  | 5.8  | 29.1  | 6.1  | 2.1              |
| Public Administration                           | 28.6  | 6.2  | 27.0  | 5.6  | -1.6             |
| Construction                                    | 27.0  | 5.8  | 23.6  | 4.9  | -3.4             |
| Other Personal Services                         | 25.1  | 5.4  | 23.1  | 4.8  | -2.0             |
| Transportation and Warehousing                  | 20.5  | 4.4  | 22.2  | 4.6  | 1.7              |
| Information, Culture and Recreation             | 18.0  | 3.9  | 20.3  | 4.2  | 2.3              |
| Finance and Insurance                           | 16.9  | 3.6  | 17.1  | 3.6  | 0.2              |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 11.8  | 2.5  | 17.1  | 3.6  | 5.3              |
| Wholesale Trade                                 | 16.2  | 3.5  | 16.8  | 3.5  | 0.6              |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas          | 13.1  | 2.8  | 15.7  | 3.3  | 2.6              |
| Management, Administrative and Other support    | 7.3   | 1.6  | 12.3  | 2.6  | 5.0              |
| Real Estate and Leasing                         | 6.3   | 1.4  | 7.7   | 1.6  | 1.4              |
| Utilities                                       | 4.3   | 0.9  | 3.5   | 0.7  | -0.8             |
| All   | 464.8 |      | 478.6 |      | 13.8             |

Source: Elliott, 2000

In general in Canada, job growth was slow in the 1990s. The trend of companies “downsizing”, “rationalizing”, relocating and centralizing became prevalent in the 1980s, and maintained itself as a norm throughout the 1990s. In Saskatchewan, the trend was accompanied by shifts of head offices from here to more populated provinces. However, in Canada as well as in Saskatchewan, much of the increased job destruction was located in the public services and consumer services. From 1987 to 1998, public sector employment in Saskatchewan was relatively flat. Government restraint led to a decline in public administration employment (loss of 1,600 jobs in 10 years).

However, there were increases in health care and social assistance (5,800) and in educational services (5,500), in other professional, scientific, and technical services (5,300) and in the management administrative, and other support services, which include computer and other consulting firms (5,000). Saskatchewan employment in education services increased more than the Canadian average over the period, but the other increases were proportionately fewer than the Canadian ones.

There were also employment increases in manufacturing from 1988 to 1998, (about 5,500 jobs in 10 years) and again, these increases were counter to the national trend. Saskatchewan has expanded its manufacturing sector significantly in the past decade, adding new pulp/paper mills, a major fertilizer plant, and two oil refineries as well as expanding its production of food, electronic, and machinery products. The total value of goods shipped from Saskatchewan manufacturers increased by 75% from 1988 to 1998. Manufacturing in Canada has grown as well but the free trade agreements have led to growth in subsectors that are capital intensive rather than labour intensive. Consequently employment has not grown as quickly as in Saskatchewan. Over the 10-year period, manufacturing employment went from 5.6% of the total to 6.5%.

Saskatchewan employment declined in construction and utilities (4,200 jobs lost in 10 years) even more so than the rest of Canada. These declines may be attributable to the stagnant population in the province, and to government restraints, more pronounced in Saskatchewan during the early 1990s than in other provinces. A significant portion of construction work (e.g. highways, institutional facilities) is funded by the public sector. There were also declines of 6,400 jobs in retail trade in Saskatchewan over the period (Elliott, 2000).

### **Implications for Education**

- ◆ Educational leaders will be necessary participants in developing an economy that sustains its residents.
- ◆ Saskatchewan will be required to build on its strength in the resources sector and to manage its resources wisely.

**#19. Communication will continue to proliferate as high technology becomes increasingly prevalent and more significant for information transfer.**

The “knowledge economy” is a much-used phrase. Although it has different meanings, a common one refers to the increasing use of high technology equipment for both workplace production and home use, and to the dramatic increase in communications created by the internet.

The telecommunications and computer services sector and the arts and culture sector (which is the main source for new content) underpin the information society in Canada. The output of these combined sectors has been estimated as 10% of the total Canadian economy, employing nearly 1.5 million people (Durand, 1996, cited in PRI, 1996).

In 1998, there were 4.3 million households in Canada (36% of all households) in which at least one member used computer communications regularly. This compared with 3.5 million households in 1997. Household members may access the internet from many locations: a child or teenager at school, a public library or a friend's house; a mother or father at work; a student at the university residence or perhaps at a cybercafe. People were just as likely to use the internet from home as from the workplace, with home-use showing the largest growth between 1997 and 1998. Furthermore, those who used the internet at home did so frequently: 95% more than once a week. Email was the most common use of the internet at home (Dickinson and Ellison, 1999).

Not surprisingly, high-income, well-educated households are more likely to use the internet, either at home or at work. Younger people are also more likely to use the internet than older people, in school or at home. And people from large urban centres are more likely to use it. However, use of the internet has increased in both urban and rural areas of Canada.

In Saskatchewan, in addition to the computer and internet applications, there is increasing public and private investment in high-technology research, such as in biotechnology. The belief is that the new technologies simultaneously require more sophisticated knowledge and produce more information to be communicated. Information is a form of “capital” which will generate new ideas and enterprises. The conclusion is that higher levels of education will be required in order to compete and participate in the knowledge economy. There are research parks in both universities, established to nurture research relationships and investment in these areas, with the goal of diversifying the economy. Employment in these sectors is intensely skill driven, and access to many of these jobs depends on advanced training in various applications of technology (OECD, 1996, cited in PRI, 1996).

Polls show that many Canadians are worried that their skills in using new technology are not sufficiently up to date and these worries seem to cut right across all demographic groups (Insight Canada Research Group, 1996, cited in PRI 1996). Even those who own computers express these worries, and the impression is that many Canadians feel they are being outpaced by technological developments. Researchers believe that the concept of adult basic skills now needs

to be adapted and broadened to include new extensions into the digital domain (OECD, 1992 and Lanham, 1995, cited in PRI, 1996).

Indeed, the linkage between employment and educational attainment is a strong one.<sup>+</sup> Those with higher levels of completed education are much more likely to be employed, a relationship that holds at each age group and for both genders. However, there may be limits to the returns on higher education. Research shows that in Canada through the 1980s and mid-1990s, the relative supply of highly educated workers increased in Canada at a rate that offset the increase in relative demand.

A 1999 conference about employment in the knowledge-based economy confirmed that the demand for highly skilled workers is increasing, but that both technical and "soft" skills are important components of the knowledge-based economy. Speakers at the conference, Lavoie and Roy, pointed out that there has been a significant increase in computer science activities and engineering occupations in Canada. These are at the heart of the process of technological change and have shown a growth rate higher than that for total employment. However, they also noted that applied and pure science actually accounts for a small share of the knowledge group of occupations. They argued that social sciences and humanities constitute half of the knowledge group (Lavoie and Roy, 1999). The conference also concluded that there is no generalized skills gap in Canada, but that the gap between the "knows" and "know-nots" is growing. Life-long learning will be an increasingly important approach to life skills development (Human Resources Development Canada, 1999).

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Higher technology and the internet are profoundly useful for learning and for societal development. Educational programs will be increasingly required to develop and incorporate them.
- ◆ Educators will be called upon to keep technology growth and requirements in perspective, and not exclude other important domains of human learning.
- ◆ A life-long learning will be an increasingly important approach to life skills development.

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<sup>+</sup> See Trend #14: Saskatchewan's population is better educated than ever before.

## **#20. There are proportionately fewer “regular” jobs.**

The percentage of part-time employment increased from 15% in 1976 to 23% by 1993. However, since then there has been an increase in full-time employment and a decline in part-time employment to the extent that part-time employment now accounts for 20% of employment. Relative to other provinces, a large proportion of Saskatchewan’s workers are in part-time employment (Elliott, 2000).

Saskatchewan also has a substantial number of persons who simultaneously hold more than one job. The proportion (9%) is almost double that of Canada (5%). Some of this is due to off-farm jobs, but not all of it can be attributed to that.

There is also an increasing proportion of persons who work more than 40 hours per week. The proportion of such persons is nearly 30%, relatively unchanged throughout the 1990s and similar to the proportion in the late 1970s before shorter work-weeks became common.

Stress and conflict are being widely experienced in the interaction of work and family life. Working parents feel anxiety that they do not spend enough time with their children, and those with living parents feel anxiety about not spending enough time with them. In addition, time off work is becoming the new work place incentive, compared to more money that dominated for decades. This is particularly so for higher income earners and for those with children (Goldfarb, 1996, cited in PRI, 1996).

For many people, work-time now dominates and excludes much else. For some, work-time dominates because of the demands of multiple low wage jobs, as is the case of the working poor. For others, work-time dominates because of professional requirements, and while the wages are high, free time is scarce. These stresses have increased the prevalence of flexible work hours in some occupations.

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Educators will be required to respond to the varying situations of children attending school, whose lives are affected by the stresses and work schedules of their parents.

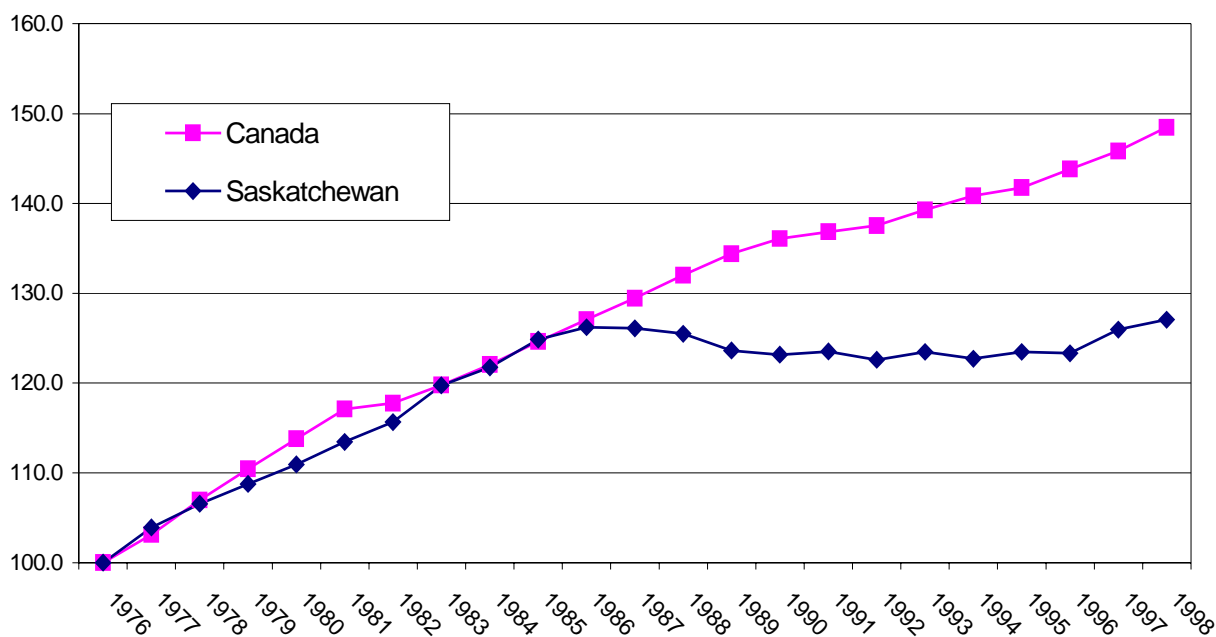
**#21. There has been stability in the overall size of the labour force, and there are expected to be shortages in the next decade.**

From 1976 to 1986, the Saskatchewan labour force grew significantly, from just over 400,000 to a peak of more than 500,000 in 1986. A period of decline followed and a low point was reached in 1992 at 491,000 persons (Elliott, 2000).

From 1976 to 1986, the growth in the Saskatchewan labour force was similar to that of Canada. That changed in 1986 when the labour force in Saskatchewan began to fall while continuing to increase nationally. Economic factors were the main contributor of the late eighties decline. Starting in 1986, the prices for virtually all of the goods produced in the Saskatchewan economy — oil, potash, wheat, lumber, and uranium — dropped significantly. Droughts in the late 1980s contributed to a series of bad crops.

Persons who were unable to find work left the province. In Saskatchewan the trend has been for out-migration to rise and fall to accommodate changes in the demand for employment.

**FIGURE 2.9 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION, SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA, 1976 – 1998**  
1976=100



Source: Elliott, 2000



There was a relatively slow recovery in the last half of the nineties. However, job growth remained slow throughout the decade. There was a lack of employment creation in general, and little full-time paid job creation in particular. Layoffs did not increase but hiring was suppressed. Participation rates fell, primarily among young students. There was more self-employment, however, and job stability was maintained.

Elliott argues that there will be a tight labour market in the next decade and skilled workers will be in short supply in the province. He attributes this mainly to the general aging of the population and to the declining participation rates for those near and past the retirement age of 65. He argues that participation rates among youth (15 to 24) will remain low because of high school and post-secondary attendance. However, the general increase in educational levels will enable an upward trend in participation rates. In addition, rates among women will approach those among men in corresponding age groups although a difference will remain for women in the child bearing age groups (Elliott, 2000).

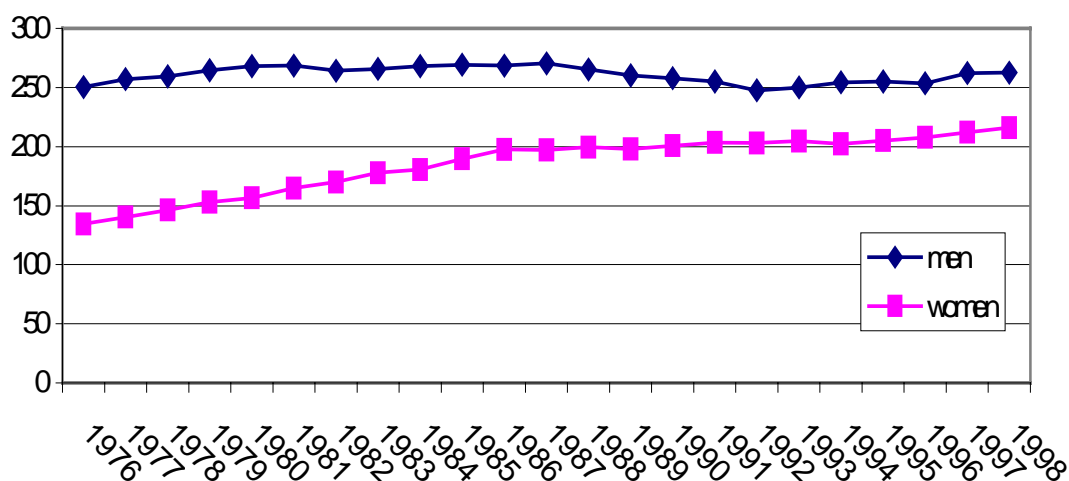
### **Implications for education**

- ◆ If the participation rates of youth increase and the proportion of young people in the province increase, this will have a positive effect on the longer-term population growth in the province.

## #22. The labour force has become more gender-equitable.

Although there has been stability in the overall size of the labour force, there have been changes in its composition. In particular, the last two decades have shown increasing employment rates among women relative to men.

FIGURE 2.10 EMPLOYMENT (000s) BY MEN AND WOMEN, SASKATCHEWAN 1976-1998



Source: Elliott, 2000

There have been major improvements in women's status over the last decades. The educational attainment of women rose significantly and there were significant improvements in labour market outcomes for women — earnings, employment, and unemployment. Between 1976 and 1997 female labour force members with a university degree were increasing at 7.6% per year, compared to 4.2% per men. The gap between men and women in those holding degrees disappeared by 1998.<sup>+</sup>

In 1996, Canadian statistics showed that there were 14% of men aged 25 to 29 years without high school, compared to 12% of women. Statistics show however, that older men have more education than women of the same age. There is therefore a wider range of educational attainment among men than among women.

Other changes in labour force composition include a shift from younger to older workers and an increase in the number of two-earner families. There are some indicators that young men may be those falling behind, particularly in relation to older men.

### Implications for education

- ◆ Scholls will be called upon to continue and improve efforts to be gender equitable.
- ◆ There may be a need for special programs focused on retaining certain groups of young men in school.

<sup>+</sup> See Trend #10: The status of women has improved significantly.

## #23. Families are experiencing inequalities in earned income.

In Canada, slow growth in real GDP per capita was reflected in the fact that there was little growth in family earnings. Median income from employment at the family level was flat in the 1980s and there was a marginal decline during the 1990s. Inequality among families also grew in all regions of Canada. There are two reasons for this. (1) There was a rise in lone-parent families; and (2) because women and men tend to marry those in the same income categories, this exacerbates the individual differences in income. (Wolfson and Murphy, 2000).

There were particularly negative effects for low-income families with children. The earnings of low-income families, especially those with children, have declined substantially since 1990. Through the 1980s and 1990s the source of income for low-income families with children displayed dramatic change: employment earnings declined and low-income families became much more dependent on social assistance. When transfers were cut back in the mid 1990s, the low-income rate increased significantly. The 1996 Survey of Consumer Finances shows that transfer payments to families in the lowest quintile fell by 3% (Statistics Canada, 1997). Higher earnings did not offset this reduction so that the average total income of these families also fell by about 3%.

Another feature of the workplace in the 1980s and 1990s is that the real earnings of workers fell. This is especially true of younger men, as there is an increasing earnings gap between younger and older men. This decline in wages occurred in both the more and less highly educated (Kapsalis *et al.*, 1999).

The Canadian Council on Social Development points out that poverty has been increasing dramatically among young families. In 1981, a young family (in which the oldest adult is under age 25) faced a 22 per cent chance of being poor; by 1997, this chance had more than doubled to 46 per cent (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2000).

For working-age households in general, the poverty rate increased by 6.3 percentage points between 1981 and 1997. By contrast, the poverty rate for senior citizens declined during this period.

Younger adults are parents of young children. Therefore, the decline in earnings of younger adults may create problems for their children, who are then more likely to grow up in poverty.

### Implications for education

- ◆ Many families will not have the resources to support their children's education as much as they would like, or should.
- ◆ School programs will be required to work with other sectors and with extra resources to meet the needs of poor children.

**#24. In rural areas, imbalances in the development of communities across the province will continue to grow.**

There is uneven development among Saskatchewan communities and different potential. Since 1987, employment has grown in only three of Saskatchewan's economic regions: Regina, Saskatoon, and the North. The decline is the smallest in the Southeast (average decline of 0.2% per year) and the largest in the East Central region (average decline of 0.9% per year). (Elliott, 2000).

Development opportunities are increasing only for a limited number of municipalities and communities, and they are decreasing for many others. Some Saskatchewan communities have large and expanding economic bases, others have small and shrinking or stagnant economic bases. These are related to the population imbalances among communities. The imbalances in economic and population bases create, in turn, major imbalances in the communities' organizational capacities and taxation abilities (Garcea, 2000).

These inequities in development opportunities are likely to compound the inequities in the levels of services in the various parts of the province. Whereas some residents and ratepayers in some municipalities will have higher taxes and lower services, those in other municipalities will have lower taxes and higher services.

In the last decade, regional restructuring to deal with these problems has been one of the challenges, particularly in rural areas. We have seen regionalization of health care and proposals to amalgamate school divisions and municipalities. Whether one perceives them as positive or negative, these strategies are intended to bring disparate resources together to create a larger and thereby more effective pool. However, the strategists have not succeeded in obtaining enough agreement among the residents about their benefits. There is a significant component of the rural community that has become increasingly distrustful. Rural communities continue to be discontented and community capacity is uneven.

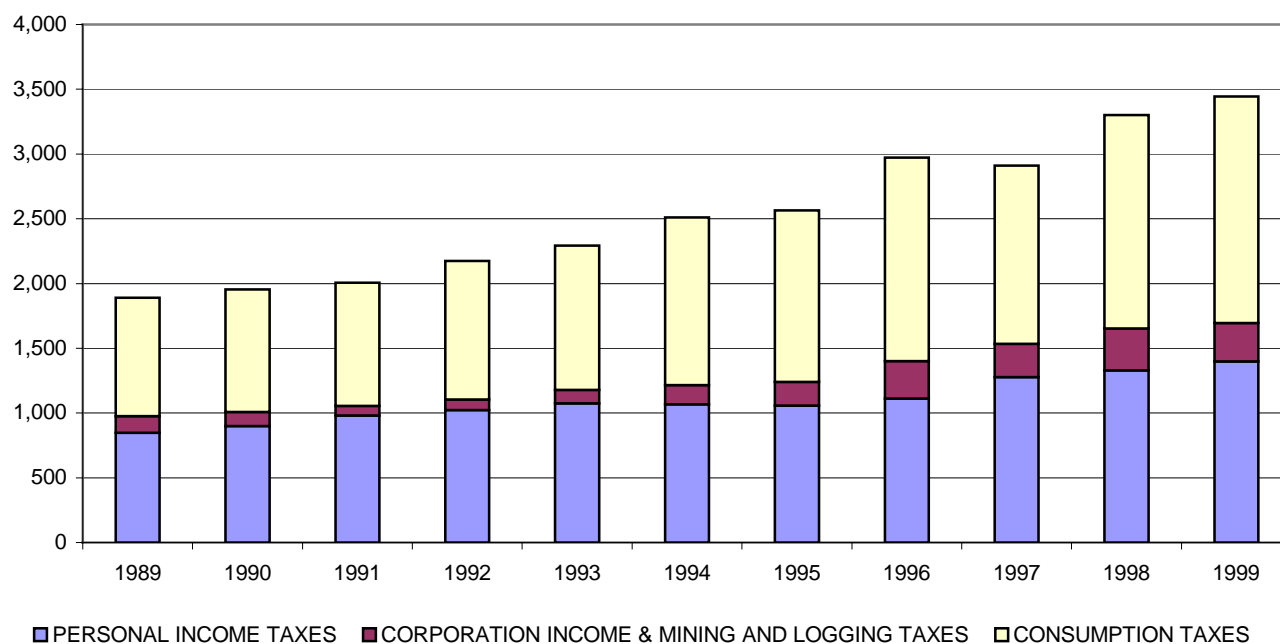
**Implications for education**

- ◆ Rural school divisions will be increasingly required to work with other sectors of their communities to enhance capacity.

## #25. Government revenues are increasingly their reliance on different forms of consumption tax.

The GST, the PST, and taxes on tobacco, gasoline and alcohol are the major consumption taxes. They have been joined in recent years by an increasing reliance on gaming as a form of government revenue. This shift is in large measure due to the increasingly vocal dissent against income tax.

**FIGURE 2.11 SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REVENUES FROM SELECTED TAXES, \$M, 1989-1999**



Source: Statistics Canada, 1999

At the national level, Canada's income tax system is relatively progressive compared to that of the United States. Canadians earning upper incomes do pay relatively more in income taxes. Provincially, Saskatchewan taxpayers pay more than Albertans. These comparisons have caused the income tax to become a target for upper income groups. The argument is that we need to reduce national taxes in order to prevent Canadians from fleeing to the US and reduce provincial taxes in order to prevent Saskatchewan residents from fleeing to Alberta. In response to such arguments, the Saskatchewan government first reduced the provincial sales tax by one percentage point in 1998, then two years later raised it again, in order to compensate for elimination of the flat tax.

Provincial government revenues have come to rely more on revenue from gaming. In 1999-2000, the revenue from liquor and gaming was \$624 million, over double that in 1991. Consumption taxes and gaming revenue place relatively more of the burden on lower income earners.

TABLE 2.9 PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE FROM LIQUOR AND GAMING

| Fiscal year ending<br>March 31 | Revenue<br>\$M |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1991                           | 297            |
| 1992                           | 293            |
| 1993                           | 291            |
| 1994                           | 327            |
| 1995                           | 431            |
| 1996                           | 473            |
| 1997                           | 511            |
| 1998                           | 569            |
| 1999                           | 597            |
| 2000                           | 624            |

Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan, 2000

In June 2000, a Statistics Canada study comparing United States and Canadian residents showed that the difference in incomes between the two countries was highest, and had increased the most since the 1980s, among the 20% of people in each country with the highest incomes. This was in part due to tax differences. However, the study also showed that over the same time period, the 25% of families at the lower end of the income distribution did better in Canada than those in the US, largely due to the way our transfer systems redistribute income (Wolfson and Murphy, 2000).

It is this value about redistribution that is coming under attack in Canada. The prevailing argument about how to increase social welfare is to allow high-income earners to maximize their incomes, and thereby increase economic growth. Nevertheless, polls show that a majority of Canadians support the social programs they have and when asked to choose, they consistently place income tax cuts at a lower priority behind maintenance of social programs. For example, in July 1999 and again in April 2000, only a minority of Saskatchewan respondents were of the opinion that the provincial government should have, in its preceding budget, frozen spending on services and used the money for substantial tax cuts (11% in 1999 and 23% in 2000) (Government of Saskatchewan, 1999 and 2000).

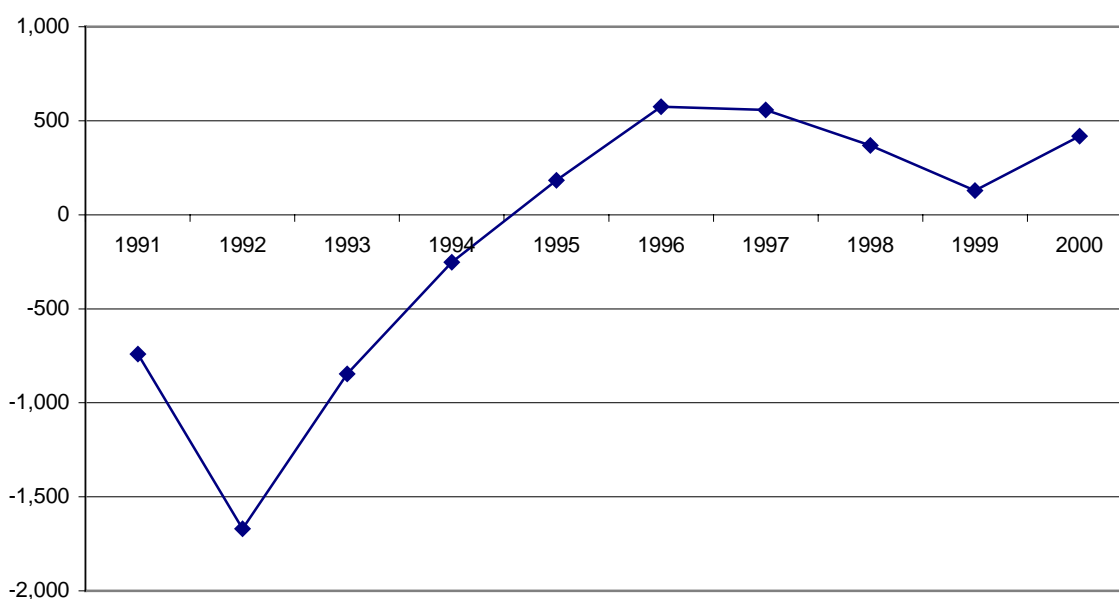
### Implications for education

- ◆ Schools and post-secondary institutions depend on tax revenues. They will be called upon to be clear and persuasive to the public about the benefits of public expenditures on education.

## #26. The fiscal crisis about debts and deficits that dominated the nineties has abated, but left an uncertain legacy.

Like many other provinces in Canada but even more so, Saskatchewan began the nineties with the legacy of a large debt and deficit. The change in government in 1991 accompanied new fiscal policies designed to restore the province's favorable budget balance and credit rating. The deficits changed to surpluses over the period.

FIGURE 2.12 PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN, ANNUAL SURPLUS AND DEFICIT, \$M, 1991-2000

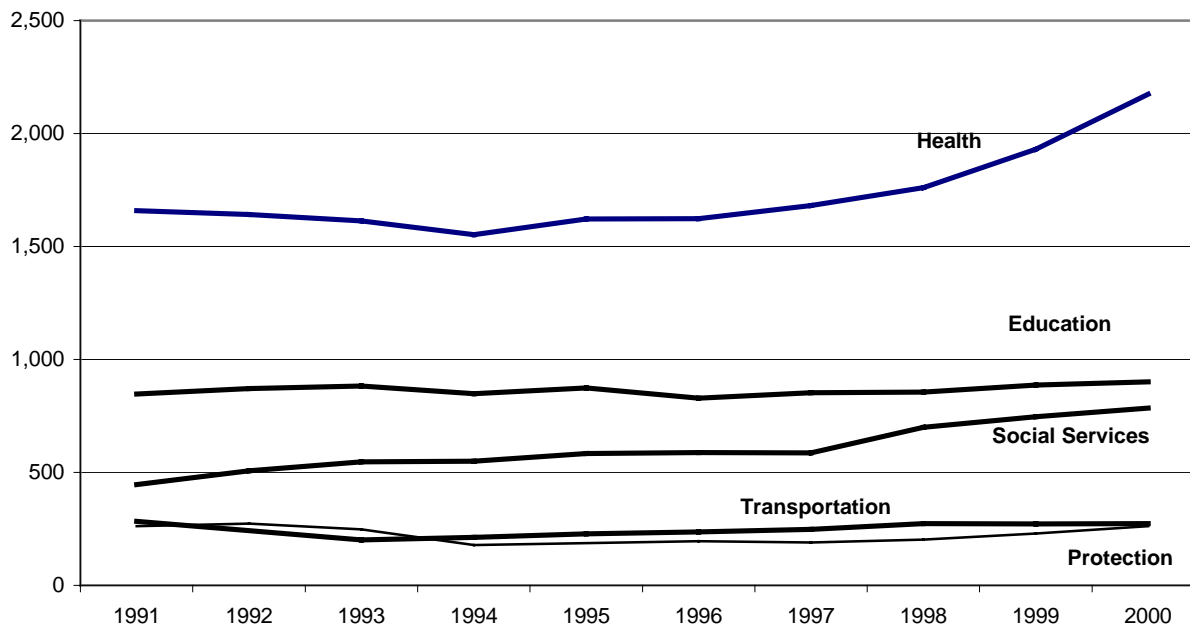


Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan, 2000

Public sector programs experienced a relative decline in the mid-nineties. Part of the decline was in absolute dollars, but the main part was due to flat allocations coping with inflation and some population growth. Provincial budget problems were exacerbated in the mid-nineties when the federal government decreased its transfers to the provinces for health, education and social services programs.

Nevertheless, in the late nineties, expenditures increased modestly. Health in particular received a large increase. Funding to education was flat for most of the decade. In the last year or two, there has been some increased attention to post-secondary education.

FIGURE 2.13 PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, \$M, SELECTED SECTORS, 1991-2000



Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan, 2000

The size of the public sector is a significant policy choice for Canadians. The prevailing attitude to government spending continues to be that it has a tendency to balloon and must be kept under control. Statistics Canada analyst Baldwin argues the importance of recognizing that progress in recent decades has involved both public and private initiatives. He points to the role of the public sector as a major direct source of employment opportunities in the post World War II period. It has been a particularly important source of good employment opportunities for women. The combination of publicly administered institutions and publicly financed private institutions have played central roles in the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Efforts to date on environmental protection have relied heavily on a combination of government regulatory, tax and spending measures. Taxes, transfers and labour market regulations have contributed to the preservation of social peace by limiting inequality. Finally, public initiatives have played an important role in contributing to the legacy inherited by younger generations (Baldwin, 1998).

### Implications for education

- ◆ An increasing allocation for education would be a boon to the future of the province.
- ◆ Educational institutions are public sector institutions. Addressing the problems of Saskatchewan requires strength in both private and public institutions. Educational institutions will be called upon to inform and educate the public about the fact that a strong public sector is necessary to future quality of life in Saskatchewan.



### III. Social Organization, Culture and Ideas

This final section discusses trends in Saskatchewan's social organization, culture and ideas. These trends indicate the potential for Saskatchewan people to influence the trends presented elsewhere in this paper.

Ideas have force. People are motivated by ideas and commitments. This makes it imperative to examine the important ideas prevailing in Saskatchewan and Canada. We might ask: Where do these ideas come from? Are they likely to be a force for change? For better or worse? Can we change or affect these ideas at all?

A society's culture encompasses both its prevailing ideas and the different means by which these ideas are developed. Culture is formed by debates, laws, mass media, schools, families, religious institutions, social organizations, community networks and many other ways people communicate with each other, both formal and informal.

The term *social organization* can refer to both an actual group of persons in association, and more generally to people interacting together over time to accomplish goals. Social organizations and the capacity to form social organization are resources for people to act together for change.

## **#27: We have more knowledge about human and social development.**

One of the striking features of the last half of the twentieth century was the explosion of knowledge about human and social development. There was new research in topics of education, physical and mental health, and social justice. Mass media and the public schools popularized many of these ideas. As a society, we now have more understanding about how equality, health, human security and human development affect each other.

In the health field for example, throughout the 1990s it has become widely accepted that health is more than the absence of disease. Health includes mental as well as physical aspects. We have also come to understand how much our social and economic conditions influence our health. These ideas are based on research from several disciplines examining the factors that influence health and became part of the reasoning for expanding our perception of health care to include mental and social aspects (Evans *et al.*, 1994). Examples are increased attention to home care programs and to better patient interaction by caregivers. In the 1990s health became a major popular topic, whether the discussion was about hospitals or about lifestyles that influence health.

One of the more far-reaching ideas that gained larger prevalence in the last half of the nineties, is how health is linked to social and economic well-being. People now die of very different things. But whatever people die of, poor people continue to die sooner. Life expectancy increases as the rate of unemployment decreases and the level of education increases. (Statistics Canada, 1999). Canadians with the lowest income are five times more likely than those from the highest income groups to report their health as only fair or poor two times more likely to have a long-term activity limitation and only one-third as likely to have dental insurance (Health Canada *et al.*, 1999).

The Canadian Council on Social Development (2000) reports that:

- ◆ Adults in low-income households (less than \$30,000 income) are 4.6 times more likely to report being in poor or only fair health compared to high-income adults (over \$60,000), and 2.2 times more likely than middle-income adults (\$30,000 to \$60,000). In fact, one-fifth of poor adults report being in poor or only fair health.
- ◆ Serious health problems that affect an adult's functioning such as vision, hearing, speech, mobility and cognition are 1.3 and 2.0 times more likely to be found in poor adults than in middle- and high-income adults respectively. Two-fifths of low-income adults have these health problems.
- ◆ Suffering from chronic health conditions such as asthma, high blood pressure, stomach ulcers and the effects of stroke is more prevalent in low-income adults. Whereas 55 per cent of low-income adults had two or more of these conditions, this was true for only 32 per cent of middle-income adults and 13 per cent of those with high incomes.
- ◆ The mental state of adults who responded to the Statistics Canada survey has been summed up in a mental health distress index. The results show that low-income adults are 2.4 times more likely to have a high distress score than are high-income adults, and 1.8 times more likely than are middle-income adults.

- ◆ Low-income adults are 1.3 times more likely to express low self-esteem compared to high-income adults. Esteem relates to whether a person feels they have a number of good qualities, are worth as much as others, have a positive attitude towards self, and whether they believe they are failures or not.

Perhaps the most important insight provided by population health research is that although increasing societal wealth is important to human health and development, these gains are limited if inequality is too large or persistent. Therefore, improving health for everyone depends on a society being equitable. This requires government services and programs to address questions of societal development in an integrated way.

Ideas such as these are reinforced by those in the international community linking human development and human rights. The United Nations (UN) and its Development Program, (UNDP), UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) have increased their visibility as advocates for such ideas. Examples include the UN celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UNDP's annual Development Report, publishing national measures of political equality, civic participation and income inequality.

A human rights approach helps to ensure that development is equitable: all citizens benefit, not just a few. Better understanding of what increases human development -- education, participation, peace, and equitable prosperity -- provides the means by which rights can be realized (UNDP, 2000)

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Education programs will be called upon to include curricula about the determinants of health, human development and human rights.
- ◆ School programs will be called upon to address inequities among the student body.

## #28. Increased knowledge of the importance of children's development is having an impact.

There is new evidence from neuroscience that the early years of development, particularly the first three years, are key to learning, behaviour and health throughout one's life. Nutrition, caring and nurturing directly affect the wiring of the pathways of the brain in the early period.

Nurturing in the early years has a decisive and long-lasting impact about how people develop, their capacity to learn, their behaviour and ability to regulate their emotions, and their risks for disease in later life. Conversely, negative experiences in the early years, including severe neglect or absence of appropriate stimulation, are likely to have decisive and sustained effects (McCain & Mustard, 1999).

The well-being of children is linked very closely to income:

- ◆ Poor children (family income less than \$20,000) are 1.3 times more likely to be growing up in substandard housing as are children from middle-income families (family income \$45,000), and 2.4 times as likely as are children from high-income families (income above \$80,000).
- ◆ Poor children are 1.9 times more likely to be living in neighbourhoods with lots of problems such as fighting, drug dealing and vandalism, than are children in middle-income families, and 2.4 times more likely than are children in high-income families.
- ◆ Poor children are 1.4 times more likely to engage in aggressive behaviour than are children in middle-income families or higher-income families.
- ◆ Poor children are 1.5 and 1.7 times as likely to be hyperactive than are children from middle- and high-income families, respectively.
- ◆ Poor children are more likely to exhibit delinquent behaviours compared to middle- and high-income families: 1.8 and 2.6 times respectively.
- ◆ Serious health problems that affect a child's functioning such as vision, hearing, speech, mobility and cognition are 1.7 and 2.6 times more likely to be found in poor children than in children from middle- and high-income families, respectively.
- ◆ Four- and five-year-old children from poor families are 2.2 and 4.5 times more likely to exhibit delayed development on vocabulary tests than are the children from middle- and high-income families. In fact, over one-third (36 per cent) of poor children are judged to have delayed language development.
- ◆ Children from poor families are 1.8 times as likely to be registered in special education classes than are children from middle- and high-income families. Children enrolled in special education classes are at higher risk for falling behind in school and dropping out before high school completion.
- ◆ Poor children are 1.3 times less likely to participate in organized sports than are children from middle-income families and 2.8 times less likely than are children from high-income families. Almost three-quarters (72 per cent) of poor children do not participate compared to only one-quarter of children from high-income families.
- ◆ Older teens aged 16 to 19 years are normally expected to be either in school or in a job. However, poor children are 2.5 and 4.4 times more likely to be engaged in neither activity (in a sense, they are "idle") compared to teens from middle- and higher-income families.

*Canadian Council for Social Development, 2000*

In summary, poor children tend to be less healthy, have less access to skill-building activities, have more destructive habits and behaviours, live more stressful lives, and are subject to more humiliation. They have less stable and less secure existences, and as a result are less likely to be secure as adults.

We also know more about the best ways to raise children. A 1995 Statistics Canada study found that about 20% of Canadian children aged 8 to 11 (173,000 children) displayed some form of inappropriately aggressive behaviour, known formally as conduct disorder. Boys were nearly twice as likely as girls to fall into this category: 26% versus 13%. There is increased research on better parenting and educational practice to deal with such aggressive behaviours. For example a study of children aged 8 to 11 identified the following poor parenting practices over a period of time, which were more likely to produce these behaviour patterns: often being annoyed with the child, or telling the child he or she is bad or not as good as others; raising one's voice when the child misbehaves, using physical punishment; and being inconsistent in discipline.<sup>1</sup> (Stevenson, 1999)

The evidence is clear that good early child development programs that involve parents or other primary caregivers of young children can greatly improve children's behaviour, learning and health in later life. Researchers have suggested that the high quality of intellectual stimulation provided in early childhood programs encourages both the growth and overall integration of the brain, and that the influence of early intellectual stimulation on brain development is lasting. The earlier in a child's life these programs begin, the better. These programs can benefit children and families from all socioeconomic groups in society. (McCain, and Mustard, 1999)

Recent research also shows that attending early childhood programs improves children's school performance. It is more effective than children remaining at home, or even than kindergarten alone. This is true regardless of the parental income or education.\* (Lipps & Yiptong-Avila, 1999).

The growing recognition of the importance of early childhood development will reinforce programs taking preventive action against domestic violence, crime, drug abuse and alcohol abuse.

## **Implications for education**

- ◆ Support for kindergarten and preschool programs will increase.

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<sup>1</sup> Factors other than parenting practices were the correlated cluster of lower socio-economic level, single motherhood, more children in the family, mother at home full-time, and the mother a teenager when the child was born.

\* Other factors which affected children's school performance was having being read to in early years, the mother having a higher level of education, and having a higher household income.

## #29. Civil society is emerging as a force for change.

In recent years, there has been a shift in perspective about institutions responsible for the well-being of Canadians. There has been debate about the proper role of government and other sectors of society.

There is increased understanding that democratic governments depend on a healthy *civil society* – the layer of non-governmental organizations and institutions in which citizens participate voluntarily for reasons related to advocacy, social service or advancement, education and recreation. The civil society forms a way in which citizens interact and organize themselves, establishing patterns and networks of interaction, and developing common societal ideas and values.

There is growing awareness that such interactions and networks are an asset to social and economic development (Putnam, 1993). Social cohesion and stronger support networks are produced. Social cohesion also facilitates learning, so long as communities are not closed. There is a growing body of thought reinforcing the idea that communities that are open to different and new views, and have effective ways to resolve social and political conflicts are more viable in the longer term (Flora, 1995, Kulig & Hansen, 1993).

Governments now engage more deliberately with civil society. Public education campaigns and community consultations are common. However, there is a growing cynicism about such methods. Better methods of engaging with community members will be required\* (Mendelsohn & McLean, 2000).

The voluntary or "third sector" is frequently cited as an alternative mechanism to foster a sense of community and social cohesion in Canada. Because governments reduced spending to the public sector, pressure has increased to broaden the role of the nonprofit sector and to give households, families and local communities more responsibility for the well-being of their members. This has led to a new emphasis on the work of the charitable and voluntary sector and the resources it needs to do that work. In Canada, almost a third of adults spend some time volunteering for charitable and voluntary organizations. In 1997, 31% of adults reported having volunteered for a charitable or community organization, donating an annual national median number of 66 hours. However, the top third accounted for more than 80% of total volunteer time, while the bottom third accounted for only 3%. Those who volunteered more than 66 hours were responsible for nearly 90% of total volunteer time in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2000).<sup>+</sup>

The one characteristic that sets the majority of volunteers apart and holds true across Canada is that of civic participation. Not only do active volunteers contribute their time to community and charitable organizations, they are also more likely than non-volunteers to be involved as members and participants in these organizations. Active volunteers are also more involved in charitable giving and in informal caring and helping.

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\* See Trend #34: Disaffection with existing political processes is leading to proposals for renewing democracy.

<sup>+</sup> Based on the Statistics Canada Survey of Volunteer Activity, 1997.

Surveys indicate that the middle-aged with middle-incomes spent the greatest number of hours volunteering. However, the 1995 Goldfarb Report showed a decline in volunteering between 1985 and 1995 and a downward trend was also evident in charitable donations among the middle-income group. This has led analysts to suggest that the volunteer sector may increasingly lack the human and financial resources to deal with the range of complex social issues likely to come its way (PRI, 1998).

In Saskatchewan, which has a history of cooperation, these trends are also being felt, and what is more, being felt differently across the province. The imbalances in economic and population bases in different communities will result in imbalances in their organizational capacities.

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ School boards and trustees form part of civil society. Their participation and partnership contribute to the fabric of society and will continue to be important.
- ◆ Trustees have a role as a force for change, by themselves and in combination with others.
- ◆ Educational institutions may be called upon to serve and educate volunteers.
- ◆ People doing volunteer community or development work may increasingly be considered to be doing *legitimate* work.
- ◆ The non-profit sector may be stretched very thin, and volunteer support to the school system will diminish.

### **#30. Wider commitment to sustainable development is having an economic impact.**

Over the last decades, environmental movements have risen throughout the world, including in Saskatchewan. In the 1990s the ideas and preferences of Europeans, for example, influenced markets of Canadian products – examples include worries about genetically modified food, desire for organic food, and concerns about protecting old growth forests.

In Saskatchewan, examples of tensions among residents include those around logging practices, mining of uranium, storage of nuclear waste, the threat of water supply contamination from large-scale hog production and the potential of the bio-technology industry.

The choice is often posed as one between (1) strategies promoting market-oriented investments with high environmental risk and high short-term economic return and (2) slower-growth and smaller-scale strategies which preserve and restore the Saskatchewan eco-system. Some argue that these choices can be reconciled by making the long-term job potential of smaller-scale strategies more evident, such as through resource management and eco-tourism and at the same time mitigating the negative effects of high-risk investments through environmental regulation. Both these measures would reduce the size of the *trade-off* between the two choices. However, others argue that the two paths are divergent and a public policy choice, in one direction or another, is required.

Saskatchewan's dependence on the natural environment will make this question one of the major dilemmas to be resolved in the next decades. Because youth are a strong component of the environmental movement, these trends are likely to become stronger rather than weaker.

#### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Educational programs in environmental and ecological studies would contribute to the economy, and increase the job market in Saskatchewan's tourist industry and in sustainable resource practices.
- ◆ Educational programs in environmental and ecological studies may become an incentive for young people in school.



### **#31. Shared values continue to be important to Canadians.**

Canadians feel that a shared value system is important (Angus Reid Report 1996, Environics; 1994, and Goldfarb, 1996, cited in Policy Research Initiative, Government of Canada, 1996)<sup>+</sup>. In 1991, the Government of Canada published a paper on "Shared Values: The Canadian Identity", summarizing the results of the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future. It identified the following shared values: freedom, democracy, the rule of law, federalism, a sense of justice, caring, compassion for others, responsibility to the greater community and to other individuals, equality, community rights, individual rights, diversity, inclusiveness and a supportive society.

In 1995, Canadian Policy Research Networks published a report called "Exploring Canadian Values: Foundations for Well-Being" which summarized the results of their research into "values that Canadians uphold with respect to health, education and social supports." Their research suggests that Canadian values in this arena have not changed dramatically over time but the expression of these values has changed. The core Canadian values which they identified included self-reliance, compassion leading to collective responsibility, investment (especially in children as the future generation), democracy, freedom, equality and fiscal responsibility (Peters, 1995).

However, some analysts have suggested there is a growing split between the decision making elite in Canada, who tend to emphasize economic-materialistic values, and the general public, who consider humanistic and idealistic values (freedom, a clean environment, a healthy population, integrity, individual human rights, safety and security) much more important (Ekos, 1995).

PRI analysts point out that traditional symbols of our society are becoming less relevant to many Canadians in the face of social and economic changes. No new sustaining symbols are taking their place. Polls done in 1994 and 1995 showed that "only two of 23 symbols presented to the Canadian public resonated with all segments: Medicare and the natural environment". (Environics, 1994, 1995.) "The health care system is now the most compelling symbol of Canada, followed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the flag, national parks and the national anthem." (Environics, 1996.)

Polling data from 1987 to the present consistently show that over 60% of Canadians believe our culture and identity should be reflected in our cultural products (Goldfarb, 1995), and a majority of Canadians (52%) say that the nation's culture should be protected from foreign influence (Environics, 1995). Despite increasing access to content from multiple sources, polling data indicate that the availability of high-quality Canadian cultural products is important to Canadians (Goldfarb, 1996).

English-speaking Canada already leads the Western world in consuming more foreign than domestic entertainment (Jeffrey, 1995). Citizens no longer receive a single or limited range of messages over uniform channels of distribution. Instead, they are being bombarded with 50-500

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<sup>+</sup> The discussion in this section is based on an analysis by Policy Research Initiative, Government of Canada. All references in this section were cited by the Policy Research Initiative.

television channels, innumerable specialty magazines and millions of Internet messages. Current media concentration within large (usually foreign) conglomerates could further narrow the avenues through which Canadians have traditionally expressed and reinforced their sense of identity.

On the other hand, the new information communications technologies will change the way people interact. The new technologies are interactive rather than one way. This increased flexibility in the production of cultural content creates the potential to develop new programs of cultural development and reinforce local cultures and build bridges (Soete, 1996).

The meaning of community is shifting. Communities of interest are taking on more importance as well as, and perhaps instead of, geographic communities.

There is ambivalence about the issue of identity. Most Canadians agree that cultural diversity makes Canada a stronger country. However, they also believe this vision of Canada must also include a commitment to an overall Canadian identity. (Ekos, 1996).

Identification with one's ethnic or gender group became prevalent in the 1980s as one expression of groups seeking to enhance their political and social participation. Identification with the group gives it strength and thereby empowers the individual member in relation to others. However, the *trade-off* is increased isolation from others and for society, increased fragmentation.

PRI analysts argue that Canadian society is becoming increasingly fragmented along identity lines. "Canadian society has always been characterized by fragmented or multiple loyalties, particularly at the regional level. This tendency appears to be increasing, with new and overlapping communities of interest not only being formed on the basis of political affiliations with provinces, regions or cities, but also around human dimensions such as family, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, or professional and leisure interests, such as the environment or the Internet."

In Saskatchewan, the expression of Aboriginal identity has been contentious. Strong identification as First Nations or Metis has provided these communities with self-esteem and empowerment. The challenge for Aboriginal communities will be to retain the positive aspects of identification while allowing themselves to express internal differences and to have meaningful interaction with others. The challenge for the non-Aboriginal community will be to understand the need that is met by identification, to appreciate the contribution of Aboriginal culture and to find ways for all residents to have a sense of belonging.

Implications for education

- ◆ Schools are one of the primary locations for the shaping and discussion of societal values. Topics of values and cultures are compelling issues for school programs and debate clubs. Thoughtful discussion of values will increasingly be required as part of the curriculum.
- ◆ The issues of identity will reflect themselves in educational programs and partnerships.

## **#32. Intergenerational and other inequities require ongoing resolution.**

Polls suggest that Canadians overall are becoming more individualistic, and that this trend troubles many of them (Environics, 1983, cited in PRI, 1996)<sup>+</sup>. However, the increasing incidence of hate crimes and hate propaganda (Department of Justice, 1995, Roberts, 1995) indicates that our image of Canada as a tolerant and inclusive society is coming under growing pressure (PRI, 1996).

There is unease about the future. In polls, 44% of Canadians think there is a good chance that they could lose their jobs, and 81% say that they are really worried that Canada is becoming a divided society of "haves" and "have nots". When asked to predict the unemployment rate in 10 years, Canadians believe that it will remain at current levels (close to 10%) well into the next century.

Concerns about job loss are not limited to the young and those in traditionally disadvantaged regions, such as the Atlantic provinces. Insecurities are now highest among those with incomes in the \$40,000 to \$60,000 range (Ekos, 1996). One in three Canadians say they would not be able to pay their bills for a period longer than a month if they were to lose their source of income (Goldfarb, 1996).

Income statistics support this growing unease. We described above the growing inequities in family incomes and the consequences for children. Data from the Survey of Consumer Finance show that the average earnings of Canadian youth have declined substantially between 1981 and 1993, with the gap between 17-24 year-olds and other age groups increasing. The percentage of households in Canada receiving social assistance rose from 7% to almost 11% between 1984 and 1993. The poverty rate for lone female parents was 60% in 1993 and that of their children was close to 65% (Department of Justice, 1996).

However, some argue that as important as those on the bottom who have lost faith in the system are those in the high income levels who have ceased to care about society -- in other words, those who have dropped out from the top (PRI, 1996). The decreasing social cohesiveness in the higher income group manifests itself in such things as calls for decreased transfer payments for the poor, user-pay regimes for government services, or reductions in social services that they can afford to buy privately but which the poor cannot.

“The political agenda supported by such social attitudes increases economic inequality, which has been shown to be damaging to economic growth rates (Osberg, 1995; Persson and Tabellini, 1994, mainly because low incomes leave families unable to invest adequately in their children's education, contributing to the creation of an economically dysfunctional class.” (PRI, 1996).

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<sup>+</sup> + The discussion in this section is based on an analysis by Policy Research Initiative, Government of Canada. All references in this section were cited by the Policy Research Initiative.

PRI analysts argue that the set of issues surrounding income disparities and diversity will be among the most complex and difficult challenges for public policy over the next decade. They recommend that a major research area to address in the next decade is the study of inequities among different groups.

Inequities among different generations may also begin to contribute to social tensions as the baby boom population retires. The young in some communities are growing disaffected with large proportions of wealthy retired people (Stevens, 1994). Many seniors will have accumulated considerable wealth by 2005. They may increasingly be viewed as a divisive influence and, as "an economically selfish voting block", concerned about their own pensions and personal security, but disengaged from the communities in which they live.

However, Canadian analyst Baldwin (2000) addresses the concerns expressed in recent years about the intergenerational fairness of public pensions. He argues that today's elderly live on incomes that are somewhat substandard by prevailing norms. Therefore, they do not seem to be making unreasonable claims on national income, even though they are the recipients of large net intergenerational transfers. He finds it striking that in so far as a particular generation is being singled out for disapproval in the discussion of intergenerational transfers, it is the baby boom and not today's elderly. Yet in fact the net intergenerational transfers to the baby boom will be much smaller than the transfers to the current cohort of elderly. Nevertheless, popular disapproval has not fallen on the current generation of older Canadians. Some analysts argue that this is partly because it is difficult for working age people to focus resentment on their parents and grandparents. But the lack of resentment might also reflect the fact that today's elderly left a positive legacy to the younger generations (Corak, 2000).

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ School divisions will be challenged to provide equitable resources and programs for all schools, no matter what socioeconomic class they include. There will be a need for affirmative support to the low income schools – and perhaps expansion of the Community School concept.
- ◆ Educational institutions may increasingly participate intersectorally in community development programs to reduce the level of poverty and inequality in communities.
- ◆ The value of conflict resolution skills may become more evident and be increasingly taught to students.
- ◆ Intergenerational equity will become a compelling topic to be addressed in school.

### **#33. The public realm is struggling to retain its ability to govern the economy.**

There is increased attention to the interdependence of economies. Globalization of trade combined with the increasing power and scope of communications technologies have the promise of a more "open society" where money, people, cultures and ideas move freely across national borders. Yet there is a countervailing awareness that these forces could diminish our ability to control our culture and our societies.

In July 2000, the world's international finance institutions prepared a paper for the G8 summit in Japan on poverty reduction in the world. The Global Poverty Report was a joint report of the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. In addition to discussing poverty, the report provides examples of evolving ideas about development and globalization. The financial institutions argue that globalization will increase the flow of investments, trade, and technology. However, they point out that these flows tend to concentrate in a few geographical areas and in a few countries within them. They also note that greater openness to a global economy increases risks and exposure to economic and financial shocks. Recent financial crises have highlighted the vulnerability of countries to sharp fluctuations in capital flows, and the negative impact on the poor. And they point out that greater global integration continues to increase the need for global public action to address threats to health, food security, environmental sustainability, and security.

These financial institutions argue that governments need to create an environment that stimulates growth and private sector development; ensures efficient public resource management; delivers basic services and infrastructure; and strengthens social cohesion. They specify that, especially in poorer countries, economic growth needs to be broad-based and labor absorbing, providing jobs and economic opportunities for self-employment.

They note, however, that this is a challenging task, because industries need to be internationally competitive as well. This requires diversified industrial and service sectors; the networking of enterprises of different sizes and a supportive policy framework. It also requires investments in human, physical, and financial capital, particularly for the poor. Investments include adequate schooling and skill development, secured nutrition, preventive health care, rural infrastructure and credit.

They point out that the more affluent increasingly tend to have an international outlook and less in common with the poorer parts of their own countries. They say governments must be responsive, and rediscover concepts of participation and inclusive development. And in turn, citizens must be increasingly able to contribute constructively to public debate and the decision-making process (African Development Bank *et al.*, 2000).

### **Implications for education**

- ◆ Educational institutions will be required to support the role of the public domain as an important way to enhance the development of our society.

### #34. Disaffection with existing political processes is leading to proposals for renewing democracy.

There is growing disaffection from traditional political processes. Data from Elections Canada indicate that voter turnout in federal elections has been steadily declining over the past 40 years or so, down from almost 80% in 1958 to less than 70% in the 1993 federal election (Ekos, 1995, cited in Policy Research Initiative, 1996).

In a recent poll conducted in 2000 by the Institute for Research on Public Policy, 74% of Canadians reported that they voted in the previous election. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, whose results were reported jointly, the proportion was exactly the same. However, although 41% of Canadians believed it was essential to vote in elections, only 32% of Saskatchewan/Manitoba respondents did. On the other hand, our residents were less likely to vote out of duty and more for the reason that they believed voting makes a difference (Table 3.1).

**TABLE 3.1 REASONS FOR VOTING**

| Do you vote mainly because you feel it is your duty or mainly because you feel that voting makes a difference? | All Canadians<br>% | Saskatchewan/Manitoba<br>% |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Duty   | 29.6               | 21.3                       |
| Voting makes a difference  | 53.4               | 60.0                       |
| Both   | 15.1               | 17.3                       |
| Don't know   | 1.9                | 1.3                        |
| Total  | 100                | 100                        |

*Source: Howe and Northrop, 2000*

Canadian opinions about democracy are ambivalent. People want more of it but they are not sure what methods are most effective. There is renewed attention to what strategies and policies produce the best democracy. The increased attention to plebiscites and of recall provisions is intended to obtain more direct participation. Deliberative polling on the other hand is intended to achieve better rather than more participation. It is a method designed to close the gap in the information base of the general public's opinion and that of the leadership, on any given issue. Proportional representation is proposed as an alternative to improve the responsiveness and flexibility of the existing system.

It is important to note that Canada as a whole is ranked among one of the best places to live. In 2000, the United Nations Human Development Report rated Canada as the best country to live among 174 nations. This is the seventh consecutive year that Canada received this ranking, which is based on income, health care, life expectancy and levels of education. It also assesses a country's relationship between human rights and development and policies to promote and respect democracy (UNDP, 2000).

#### Implications for education

- ◆ Civic education may take an increasing role in school curricula.



### **#35. The school role may evolve into being a centre for development.**

A recent Saskatchewan task force examined the role of the K-12 school and noted the challenge facing schools in meeting the increasingly diverse needs of youth and in meeting the increasingly complex public expectations for schools and schooling. There are calls from the public for higher accountability, as measured by student achievement on standardized tests in order to have comparability with other national and international results. There are calls for academic standards to be maintained, especially in “the three R's”. Yet schools are also held to high expectations about retention rates. There are calls for the schools to model equality, for individual classrooms to reflect the principle of equal citizenry, and for the goal of equality of outcomes rather than merely equality of opportunity. Finally, the Task Force notes, given the current restlessness of ratepayers, there is pressure for costs to be reduced (Tymchak, 2000).

The Task Force notes that to a considerable extent schools in Saskatchewan have already begun to evolve toward a model that, while carrying on with the fundamental educative function that schools have always had, also has programs that attempt to meet other basic needs of youth and their families, based in the school or at least linked to it. In the future they recommend that the school be treated as a centre for community development.

#### **Implications**

- ◆ In expanding its role to a centre of community development, the school will require new methods and approaches. It will also require additional resources.

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