

December 2, 2022

The Honourable Jon Reyes, MLA
Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration
Room 156 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Reyes,

The Manitoba Teachers' Society represents 16,600 public school teachers across the province. As stewards of the public education system, we are deeply concerned about your government's proposed performance-based funding model (Tennessee model) for Manitoba post-secondary institutions.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is opposed to performance-based funding for public education. We are awaiting the unveiling of the new funding model for K-12 public education and are acutely aware that performance-based funding at the post-secondary level opens the door for similar approaches to funding for K-12 education.

There are policies and practices embedded in performance-based funding such as the reliance on standardized testing that contribute to the erosion of the public system.

Standardized tests are a poor judge of students' abilities and should never be used as a measure of teacher quality, as it does not consider other factors that are unique to each student, such as their mental health, family life or socioeconomic status.

Yet performance-based funding (merit pay) rewards teachers based on how well students perform. Merit pay falsely assumes that more pay will solve the problems that plague the public education system while ignoring the real problems like chronic underfunding, child poverty and working conditions.

Further, this approach has implications for teacher workload and challenges core understandings about the purpose of public education – to give all children free access to quality education and opportunities to realize their full potential.

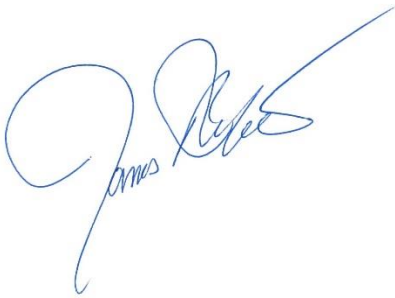
In the United States, performance-based funding was used as a gateway to fund charter schools. The Society opposes the establishment of charter schools in Manitoba, as it moves public funds

out of public education and lacks transparency and accountability. Charter schools receive public funding but are not accountable to the public or a school board.

We acknowledge the media reports that your government has paused plans to roll out the new funding formula for post-secondary institutions, however a pause is not the same as a promise to abandon the plan.

We are looking for confirmation that the move to performance-based funding for post-secondary institutions is off the table and that there is no likelihood of this model being imposed in the K-12 public education system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Bedford". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James Bedford
President

- c. Hon. Wayne Ewasko, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning
Zach Fleisher, Campaigns Coordinator, Manitoba Organization of Faculty Associations