



# A Partnership in Name Only: How the Public Sector Subsidizes the P3 Model

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CANADIAN CENTRE  
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**By Simon Enoch**

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## **About the Author**

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## Introduction

Much of the debate around public-private-partnerships (P3) in Saskatchewan is often framed as “who should build our public infrastructure — public sector or private sector?” While this in itself is incorrect — both the public model and the P3 model use private contractors to construct the buildings in question, it also leaves much of the P3 model unexamined. We can see why it might be useful for governments to circumscribe the P3 debate to solely that of building construction, as much of the public — eager to see new hospitals or schools built — are often less concerned with *how* a new school or hospital is built and more concerned that it *is* built.<sup>1</sup> This is understandable, particularly as existing public infrastructure is often aging and in desperate need of replacement.

However, for P3 critics, the build itself is often the least controversial aspect of the model. As was mentioned, both the public build model and the P3 build model use the private sector for construction. It’s the other components of the P3 model that make it such a risky method to construct the public infrastructure we all rely upon. In Saskatchewan, the majority of P3s are often referred to by the acronym ‘DBFM,’ meaning that the P3 contractor “Designs, Builds, Finances, and Maintains” the project.<sup>2</sup> Of these, it is often the private finance component that comes in for the majority of criticism, as it guarantees that P3 projects will cost more to finance given that governments can borrow at lower rates of interest than the private sector.<sup>3</sup> However, less attention is often paid to the final component — maintain — even though it is this component that is the primary concern over the life of what are often thirty-year plus P3 contracts. Moreover, due to the strict confidentiality of these contracts, the public is often unaware of the myriad rules and restrictions that these contracts place on how these institutions will operate in the decades to come.<sup>4</sup>

The following report examines how the P3 model maintains some of the public institutions in Saskatchewan. Through interviews with public sector workers at P3 institutions throughout the province, we demonstrate that the P3 model is often wildly inefficient, creating layers of wasteful management and byzantine decision-making processes that often undermines the functioning of these institutions and the interests of the publics they serve. In what follows, we demonstrate how the P3 model serves to sow confusion about responsibilities and duties in these institutions, relies inordinately on public sector workers to remedy many of the deficiencies of the P3 contract and often fails in both design and function to promote the best interests of the publics they are supposed to serve.

## Who is in Control?

The Saskatchewan government is often keen to describe P3 builds as “publicly-owned,” but during the life of these contracts they are very much in private hands.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the P3 school reference guide provided to Saskatoon public school staff clearly states that employees should treat the P3 school “as you would a leased

### Current P3 Projects in Saskatchewan

#### Provincial (SaskBuilds)

- Meadows Swift Current Long-Term Care Centre
- 18 Elementary Schools (Regina, Saskatoon, Martensville, Warman)
- Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford
- Regina Bypass

#### Municipal

- Regina Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Saskatoon Civic Operations Centre
- Saskatoon North Commuter Parkway and Traffic Bridge Project

space.”<sup>6</sup> As we will see, much of how these institutions operate are dictated by the terms of the P3 contract and not necessarily the public interest. As we aim to show through our interviews with public sector employees who work in these institutions, these purportedly public buildings often do not operate in the best interest of the teachers, students, healthcare workers, patients and other publics who these institutions are supposed to serve. In fact, the P3 model often works at cross purposes with the people trying to ensure the day-to-day functioning of these public institutions.

Given that the length of these contracts for the maintenance of our public institutions stretch over thirty years, it is imperative that we fully understand the extent of the control we are giving up over these institutions over the life of these contracts. We interviewed 18 public sector employees at P3 institutions across the province to document their experience working in a P3 institution day-in, day-out. While we sometimes get a glimpse of the control we cede to the P3 contractor through select news stories, the public often does not know what the extent of the private contractors control over these buildings actually will be — especially during the all important decision-making process prior to the adoption of the P3 model. For a model that supposedly thrives on transparency, the extent of this control is often neglected or ill-understood. Through the experiences of the employees who work in these institutions, we aim to show the actual working of these contracts on the ground and how they impact the day-to-day operation of these institutions that we as the public rely on.

Advocates of the P3 model will argue that these thirty-year ‘performance’ contracts actually *increase* the control that the government exercises over the maintenance of these buildings.<sup>7</sup> While this might be true in the abstract, it is based on the ability of governments to anticipate every possible future contingency in a three-decades-long contract down to the tiniest minutiae of

daily operations, an almost impossible task for even the most competent of governments. As we will see, the reality is often much messier, as conflicts over which party is responsible for what under the terms of the contract a constant and unremitting source of waste, delay and tension.

## Our Method

We interviewed 18 public sector workers employed at various P3 institutions across the province. Interviews were conducted both as focus groups and through one-to-one conversations. Due to the possibility of employer retaliation, we have made every effort to conceal the identity of our interviewees by omitting any details in the transcripts that could identify the employee, specific place of employment or time of employment. The one exception is the North Battleford Saskatchewan Hospital. Due to the degree of media scrutiny the hospital has recently received, coupled with the fact that it is the only P3 institution of its kind in the province, it would be impossible to accurately describe the unique working conditions at the hospital without disclosing its identity. Therefore, we do make explicit reference to the hospital and its conditions of work, while concealing particular details that might reveal the identity of our informants.

Through our interviews, we encountered several recurring themes and concerns voiced by workers employed at P3 institutions. While some of these were particular to specific institutions, others appear to be universal to the P3 model in general. From these conversations, we have identified three broad sets of concerns of employees working at P3 institutions, although as we will see, many of these concerns are often interrelated to each other. These include 1) Confusion and uncertainty over duties and responsibilities regarding maintenance; 2) Inefficiencies and defective decision-making processes; and 3) Problems with the design and

build of the institution detrimentally affecting both workers and the public. We will consider each in turn.

## “Whose job is this?”

The most common and recurring theme we encountered in our interviews with workers was a pervasive sense of uncertainty and confusion over who was ultimately responsible for a certain task or job duty. As per the P3 contract, responsibilities for certain tasks are delegated to different parties. The “general rule of thumb” that multiple workers cited to us was that “the building and the outside is the responsibility of the P3 contractor,” while “equipment and furniture” was often the responsibility of the public sector. While this sounds simple enough, it certainly wasn’t in practice. While there is supposed to be a service request system in place to make these types of determinations, (see page 8) the experience of the workers we interviewed puts into question its overall effectiveness, with workers, public management and the P3 contractors and sub-contractors often at loggerheads over who is responsible. One worker best captured this general sense of confusion whenever they were called to service a P3 school.

“When I go into a school to [perform my duties], there’s lots of questions as to well is it my job, or their [P3 contractors] job? Nobody really knows for sure. Lots of back and forth ... and that often prevents us from just doing the job, whereas if I would have went into a regular [public] school, no ‘I fix it, I do the job, I get it done, I move on.’”

Similarly, another worker told us, “there’s a lot of gray area in these [P3] contracts, they have it written in the contract as such, and then all of a sudden, ‘Well, that’s not how it’s interpreted.’ Well, then how should it be interpreted? And then there is a fight on, as to who does what.”



Even for responsibilities that were clearly defined, often the extent of those responsibilities were an open question. Workers talked to us about shifting standards for things like cleaning and snow-removal, with the responsibilities of the public sector workers often changing based on the latest interpretation of the P3 contract.

Often these conflicts are not fully resolved even when the P3 contractor or sub-contractor are called in to make a determination. “Usually what happens is we end up passing the buck back and forth as to whose duties it is to fix this,” one worker explained, remarking that some of these fights over responsibility have been on-going since the P3 building opened. Even when there was a clear sense of responsibility, workers told us that they would often be asked to perform other needed repairs or tasks that might be outside the scope of their responsibilities, what they playfully called “while you’re here’s.” As was explained to us, when something goes wrong — often regardless of the responsibility — the “default call is for a public sector worker” who is usually on-site and/or familiar to staff and management.

As the above suggests, uncertainty over responsibilities does not appear to be a problem just among employees, but extends to management as well. Multiple workers told us that they were often instructed to conduct duties that were the responsibility of the P3 contractor by management, due to what our respondents perceived as either ignorance of the terms of the contract or because it was something that was wanted by

management to be done immediately. When we asked one group of workers how often they find themselves doing things that are technically the P3 contractors' job, the answer was a unanimous "all the time."

Yet, not even the P3 contractor appears immune to these conflicts, as workers relayed to us one incident where the P3 contractor and one of its own sub-contractors were locked in a fight over who was ultimately responsible for a repair at one of the P3 buildings, "they're all at each other's throats" one worker commented.

What these experiences reveal is that the terms of P3 contracts are not as clear-cut as governments often portray them. The above suggests that there is a lot more room for interpretation and disagreement, resulting in on-going conflicts that waste time and delay the resolution of problems. Moreover, this problem is not unique to Saskatchewan P3s, the Ontario Auditor-General has raised similar concerns over disputes over the interpretation of contracts at P3 hospitals in that province.<sup>8</sup> This raises the question of whether decades-long P3 contracts can ever fully anticipate all the minute vagaries of day-to-day operations and maintenance at a complex institution like a school or a hospital. Dexter Whitfield — Director of the European Services Strategy Unit — argues that "no matter how comprehensive they are, virtually all [P3] contracts are incomplete in practice, because they cannot predict future events and changing economic and social needs," including "changing levels of demand, revised public policy priorities, and technological and operational changes in service delivery."<sup>9</sup> Due to this, it may be that these types of conflicts over interpretation are inherent to a P3 — particularly given that each party has an economic incentive to ensure that the interpretation is in their favour — and that the resulting inefficiencies should be viewed as an inevitable consequence of adopting the model. Indeed, even P3 consultants agree that this will be the likely result of an incomplete contract:

"If you allow the private sector to sign up and price a set of responsibilities and then you let them off the hook because you're not keeping your eye on them, or because you didn't draft the contract right in the first place and you left some border room they can walk through, then shame on you," says Will Lipson, partner with KPMG. "That's not the private sector's fault. Of course he's not motivated to operate as efficiently as he should."<sup>10</sup>

If these contracts are not — and may never be — comprehensive enough to prevent "some border room they can walk through," and our conversations suggest they are not, governments should fully expect these types of inefficiencies to be part of the cost of maintaining and operating public infrastructure via the P3 model.

## **"Clean the inside of the doors, but not the outside."**

Despite the examples of inefficiency cited above, advocates of the P3 model regularly tout its superior efficiency, ascribed to the supposed inherent ability of the private sector to seek out innovations that the public sector simply cannot. According to SaskBuilds, "the partnership model allows private sector innovation and efficiency in all phases of the project. These result in a cost savings over projects delivered traditionally and high quality infrastructure for taxpayers."<sup>11</sup> And yet, our interviews with workers show the model to be wildly inefficient in certain respects, particularly in regards to day-to-day maintenance and operations. One worker explains:

"When I first started, my typical area of cleaning was in the stairwells and the back doors ... but I was told that I clean the inside of the door, not the outside, that's [the P3 contractor]."

This is despite the employee being at the door, with cleaning materials and equipment on site, hardly a model of efficiency. Another example that was regularly brought up by workers was trouble with snow removal at certain P3 schools. Under the terms of the P3 contract — and it appeared to vary depending on the location, public sector workers are responsible for snow removal a certain distance from the school building — usually a few metres — with the P3 contractor responsible for the remainder of the grounds. Workers spoke to us of instances where the P3 sub-contractor responsible for snow removal did not arrive until well after the school-day began, resulting in students arriving at school without proper snow removal, tracking snow through the halls, and “making more work for us,” turning a “one-hour job into a five hour job.” Others spoke to us of on-going conflicts with the P3 contractor over responsibility for snow removal in different areas of the school grounds, delaying snow clearing in those areas.

Incidents like these made some of our interviewees question whether the P3 contractor had any understanding of how a school actually operates. One worker commented, “[The P3 contractor] had no idea about what managing a school meant when they took this on. And it’s obvious, you see it all the time, snow removal is just one of them.” This informant relayed another example of what they believed was a general lack of care by the P3 contractor(s) that they were operating in a school environment:

“I had to tell [P3 contractors and sub-contractors working in the building], if you’re using any power tools, you put them away when you’re done, you don’t leave them out, you don’t leave them plugged in, this is a school ... There’s a saw — plugged in — school’s on!”

This worker lamented that with every new sub-contractor brought in to do a repair, it was almost a ritual to have to explain to them “this

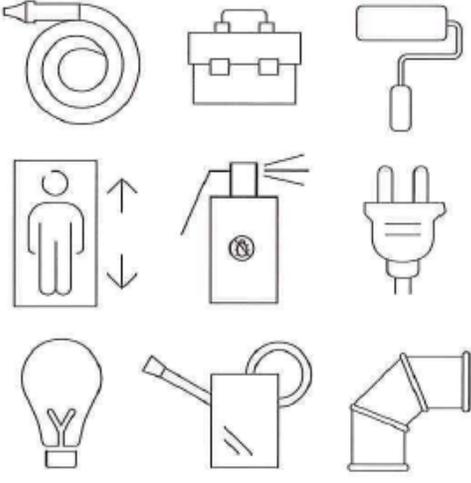
is how you do stuff in a school.” This penchant for public employees to have to act as unofficial monitors of the P3 contractor and the contract was a sentiment that many workers we interviewed expressed. One informant explained, “everybody has to be on their toes, watching everywhere.”

Workers believed that the primary cause of these inefficiencies and errors was the addition of multiple levels of bureaucracy and management that delayed and frustrated decision-making. As we mentioned with the service request system, workers were often sent to do jobs that were not their responsibility. Workers described the service request system as a “game of telephone” with requests passing through multiple layers of management, being re-interpreted and translated until the initial request became virtually unintelligible. Workers told us that protocol often required a representative from the P3 contractor to visit the building for the sole reason to verify that the service request submitted was “true” before ordering the repair.<sup>12</sup>

This convoluted system of decision-making appears to be the inevitable result of the detailed division of labour, responsibilities and management that the P3 model requires.<sup>13</sup> By its very nature, a P3 with its multiple parties responsible for different aspects of the project will require additional layers of management. This is ironic, given that a common assumption among P3 advocates is that the private sector can be more “efficient” because it can eschew the kinds of bureaucracy associated with the supposedly less efficient public sector.<sup>14</sup> Yet, our interviews suggest the P3 model may require more bureaucracy and administration than the traditional public model. Moreover, due to the need to monitor the terms of the contract, governments too are required to create new layers of management simply to ensure the private contractor is keeping up their end of the bargain. Governments need to devote staff and resources to collect data, monitor performance,

assess penalties, conduct audits and resolve disputes in order to keep the P3 contractor honest. Indeed, as was previously mentioned, public sector workers in these institutions feel that “monitoring” the contract is often an unofficial part of their daily duties. All of this

has a cost. Throughout the life of a P3 contract, Boardman, Siemiatycki and Vining estimate that the accumulation of these types of “transaction costs” can run as high as one to three percent of the overall project cost.<sup>15</sup> A rather expensive and sizeable bureaucracy created solely to administer the supposedly more efficient P3 model.



### Services We Provide

- > Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (ex. temperature)
- > Plumbing (ex. sinks, toilets)
- > Electrical (ex. lights, outlets)
- > Elevator availability issues
- > Utilities disruption
- > Roads, grounds, external site maintenance (ex. landscaping, snow removal, graffiti removal)
- > Pest control
- > Building equipment (ex. firefighting equipment)
- > Other repairs (ex. walls, doors, windows, locks, ceilings, floorings, signage)
- > Other general maintenance services

### Help Desk Workflow

Below is a simple workflow of the Help Desk process:

Service request submitted

↓

Help Desk agent dispatches the request

↓

User receives an email confirmation

↓

Technician attends to the request

↓

User is notified when work is completed

### Services Provided by Others

Please contact your immediate supervisor in regards to the following services:

- > Housekeeping
- > Security
- > Information Technology (IT)
- > Food Services

Excerpt from SNC Lavalin “Help Desk User Guide: Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford”

## **“Whoever designed this place never worked in a hospital.”**

One of the supposed advantages of the P3 model is because the P3 contractor is responsible for the design, build and maintenance of the building, it has an incentive to innovate to optimize the life of the building and reduce costs throughout the life-cycle of the project. SaskBuilds explains the incentive this way:

“Private companies that are responsible for overruns have a greater incentive to innovate at every stage: through design, financing, construction methodology, and in maintenance and operations if included. That innovation accounts for a good part of the overall savings and value to government and results in better products and services.”<sup>16</sup>

This was certainly not the experience of the workers we interviewed. If anything, the design and build of the P3 buildings they work at was often a constant source of stress, frustrating their ability to deliver services to the public. This sentiment was particularly acute with workers employed at the North Battleford Saskatchewan Hospital.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, workers relayed to us many of the design and construction flaws that would later be confirmed by the government and the media.<sup>18</sup> However, our interviews suggest that there are many more problems with the design and construction of the hospital than has been publicly reported. Some of these were deficiencies in the design of the building that frustrated the timely completion of duties. These included the inability to fit certain equipment through certain doors, requiring staff to descend to lower floors and re-ascend with their equipment in order to access certain areas of the building. Others cited equipment that could not be plugged into certain electrical outlets without tripping breakers, and doors that continually malfunctioned forcing employees to constantly

navigate new ways through the building in order to perform their duties.

However, more importantly, workers also relayed to us design and construction flaws that could potentially compromise employee and patient safety. Workers told us that due to a flaw in the water system, extremely hot water was entering the toilets, and that people were ‘burning their butts’ when they flushed. We also heard a lot about the flooding and water damage that has recently received so much media attention. While our interviewees made mention of the problems with the roof, they also informed us that the building was experiencing water damage from other sources. “There’s all sorts of water problems, busted pipes,” one informant told us. Another worker reported that every single shower unit in the building has to be replaced due to faulty valves that continually leak. The result of all this water damage and flooding is that patients in the hospital have to be constantly moved as wards are repaired and cleaned. When we asked what the impact of all this moving had on the patients, one informant described its effect:

“At the old hospital some of those patients have been on those units for years. You take someone who has a psychiatric problem and you’re moving them from ward to ward to ward. They already got moved from the old hospital to the new one, then from one unit to another. That can’t be good for someone with extreme psychiatric problems.”

Another informant explained that “some patients have been moved to four different wards already. I think it is very unsettling on their behaviour.” When we asked if they had seen an escalation in problematic behaviour in the new P3 hospital, one informant responded, “definitely, we never had problems like that in the old hospital.”

Beyond the flooding, our interviews revealed that the problems with the roof also has wider

impacts on patient and employee safety than have been reported in the media or admitted to by the government. Workers told us that debris from the original roof construction fell into the outside courtyard where patients regularly visit. Echoing the earlier complaints that P3 contractors often don't understand the unique circumstances of the buildings they operate in, one informant commented,

"They didn't think that this was a psychiatric hospital, so they were throwing pieces of metal off the roof, or off the siding ... onto the ground. So now we got metal that people could dig out and be used as a weapon ... So what they've been doing is having to go out with a metal detector and digging up metal out of these courtyards."

Another informant told us of patients turning nails and other construction material over to staff that they found in the courtyard, sparking ward searches to ensure none of this debris was making its way into the building. The workers also worried that the current roof replacement would only result in more debris falling into these courtyards. Citing these concerns, one informant concluded, "whoever designed this place, didn't work in a [psychiatric] hospital."

Taking stock of all these defects and deficiencies, there was an overwhelming consensus among the workers we interviewed that the hospital was opened before it was ready in order for the P3 contractor to avoid paying penalties for late completion. "They [the P3 contractor] wanted us in the building before a certain date because then they wouldn't be paying big fines," one informant argued. "They built that building, they rushed it, there is so much wrong with it, they are essentially rebuilding it," said another, adding "they would save more money if they plowed it to the ground." Despite the myriad problems specific to the Saskatchewan Psychiatric Hospital, this sentiment that the P3 buildings were "rushed" was shared by a large majority

of the workers we interviewed regardless of the institution.

Many workers spoke to us about the "deficiency list," an inventory of repairs or installations that needed to be resolved prior to the opening of a P3 building. Interviewees from multiple institutions said these lists were rarely fully resolved prior to the opening, with respondents citing a laundry list of unresolved repairs, damages and faulty installations long after the building was open to the public. One worker described it as getting the "keys to a brand new car, but the car doesn't run, and they spend a year putting things in and you can't drive it." Often it was left to the public sector to sort out. One informant told us that they spent "at least fifty percent" of their time resolving problems just in the P3 schools, "brand new schools" that were supposed to be "ready to

**Saskatchewan Health Authority** MEMO

DATE: 3/3/2020  
TO: All Staff & Patients  
FROM: Linda Shynkaruk  
RE: Water Issues

During a planned flush of our water system today, a couple of adverse events occurred resulting in the following items requiring your urgent attention and cooperation:

- 1.) Upgrade to a FULL Drinking Water Advisory – please DO NOT DRINK or ingest the water (this includes brushing teeth, washing fruit or vegetables with the water, etc.). When washing your hands, follow up with hand sanitizer. Patients who have open wounds/sores, are NOT to be bathed or showered. They MUST be given a bed bath.
- 2.) Alternate water supplies will continue to be provided.
- 3.) All traffic through the basement is restricted. ONLY THOSE ABSOLUTE, ESSENTIAL STAFF who have authorization from their Supervisor shall be allowed access to the basement. A temporary staff exit/entrance is available by WRY-C to the Greenhouse.
- 4.) Deliveries will be done through the main front entrance or as otherwise arranged.
- 5.) All patients' personal laundry shall be done on the nursing units by nursing staff until further notice.
- 6.) Please use clean linen only on an emergent/as needed basis until further notice.

I hope that we can all pull together and help each other out in our usual SHNB style.

Thanks everyone!

*Linda Shynkaruk*  
Linda Shynkaruk, Director  
Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford  
LS/llg

**Give pts cups of water to brush teeth! Thx.**

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Version: November 2017

Water problems continue to plague the Saskatchewan Hospital

roll,” rather than “servicing the schools that need the servicing because they are not new schools.” We were also told about how certain new equipment installed in buildings did not come with any requisite training, forcing public sector workers to figure out how to operate it and pass that knowledge onto other staff. The general consensus among the workers we interviewed is that these P3 buildings were in no way “ready to roll” when they opened, and that meeting the opening deadline took precedence over ensuring these buildings were free of problems.

The provincial government often describes the penalties built into P3 contracts as an incentive to ensure “on-time completion.”<sup>19</sup> However, the experience of the workers we interviewed suggest that these penalties could just as likely act as an incentive to deliver rushed and incomplete buildings. Whatever the reason, there is little doubt that in the minds of the workers, the majority of these P3 projects have been delivered in a less-than-complete state, often failing in both design and function to promote the best interests of the teachers, students, healthcare workers, patients and other publics who these institutions are supposed to serve.

## **“When something goes wrong they call us first.”**

Advocates of the P3 model like to talk about “risk” and the supposed ability of the P3 model to mitigate that risk. However, “risk” is often viewed as something unique to the public sector — cost over-runs, construction delays, re-designs, inefficiency — that the private sector can assuage through the power of the P3 contract.<sup>20</sup> The experience of the workers we interviewed should make us question this assumption that all the risk lies on the public side of the equation and none on the private side. As we have seen, there is a substantial amount of risk to adopting the P3 model that is rarely acknowledged and certainly

never factored into the costs of the P3 model. There is a cost to the confusion, inefficiency, bureaucracy and construction and design flaws that we outline in this report, only it is ultimately borne by the workers and the public, not the P3 contractor.

Indeed, what became evident as we listened to all of the problems and frustrations with the P3 model by the employees who work in them, is the extent to which public sector workers are constantly called upon to remedy the failures of the model. Due to the degree of confusion and uncertainty over responsibility, it is often the public sector worker who gets called upon to make the determination. Due to the inefficiency of the model and confusion over the contract, workers often complete duties that are the responsibility of the P3 contractor. Due to design and construction flaws, public sector workers have to work in environments that they believe compromise their health and safety. And on top of all of this, public sector workers are often tasked with the unofficial responsibility of monitoring the P3 contractor to keep them honest.

It seems to us that in a very real sense, the public sector is subsidizing the P3 model, insofar as it simply couldn’t function to the degree it does if it was not for the largely unrecognized work of the public sector. In this sense, the P3 model appears to take advantage of what public sector workers told us was their “emotional investment” in the schools, hospitals and communities within which they work. Because these workers don’t have a purely economic transactional relationship with the places they work — unlike the P3 contractor — they are more liable to “pick up the slack” and spend their time and resources to resolve problems in their workplace — regardless of the terms of the contract. It would certainly be a supreme irony if the P3 model — which has been consistently lauded as superior to the public sector — can only function due to the largesse of that very same public sector.

# Endnotes

- 1 D.C. Fraser (2015). "Future of P3s in Saskatchewan up for debate as Saskatchewan Federation of Labour presents petition." Regina *Leader-Post*. November 16. Available at: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/future-of-p3s-in-saskatchewan-an-ongoing-debate>
- 2 Saskatchewan's Public-Private Partnership Methodology Backgrounder. Available at: [www.saskatchewan.ca/~media/news%20release%20backgrounders/2015/aug/bg%20fc%20p3%20%20jusp%20aug2015.pdf](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/~media/news%20release%20backgrounders/2015/aug/bg%20fc%20p3%20%20jusp%20aug2015.pdf)
- 3 Anthony Boardman, Matti Siemiatycki and Aidan Vining (2016). "The theory and evidence concerning public-private-partnerships in Canada and elsewhere." University of Calgary School of Public Policy Research Papers. Vol.9, No. 12. Available at: <https://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/p3-boardman-siemiatycki-vining.pdf>
- 4 This is not to say these components are entirely immune from scrutiny, media reports regarding Regina P3 school rules limiting decorating in classrooms and prohibiting opening windows for a year did give the public a sense of how differently a P3 school operates than that of a traditional public school. See Alicia Bridges (2017). "Regina P3 school rules limit classroom decorating, prohibit opening of windows for 1 year." CBC News. September 2. Available at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/saskatchewan-p3-schools-rules-decorating-1.4273050>
- 5 It is often unclear what entity owns the building during the life of the P3 contract. For example, the 2017 Provincial Auditor report states "Under each agreement, the private sector partner builds, finances, and maintains the new elementary schools. The agreements have a combined cost of about \$731 million. The Ministry is responsible for overseeing the agreements. **The school divisions are to own the schools located in their division at the end of the agreement.**" Queries to both SaskBuilds and the Provincial Auditor for clarification went unanswered by the time of publication. See Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan (2017). Report of the Provincial Auditor to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Volume 2., 121. Available at: [https://auditor.sk.ca/pub/publications/public\\_reports/2017/Volume\\_2/CH%2021\\_Education\\_Construction%20P3.pdf](https://auditor.sk.ca/pub/publications/public_reports/2017/Volume_2/CH%2021_Education_Construction%20P3.pdf)
- 6 Saskatoon Public Schools (2017). *P3 School Reference Guide for Staff*.
- 7 For instance, see SaskBuilds, "P3 Perception and Reality." Available at: <http://www.saskbuilds.ca/alternative-financing/P3s.html#myth5>
- 8 Office of the Auditor-General of Ontario (2017). Annual Report. Vol. 1. 607-610. Available at: [http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en17/v1\\_311en17.pdf](http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en17/v1_311en17.pdf)
- 9 See Dexter Whitfield (2017). *PFI/PPP Buyouts, Bailouts, Terminations and Major Problem Contracts in UK*. European Services Strategy Unit Research Report No. 9., p. 10.
- 10 Dan Ovsey (2013). "Success of P3s lies in public sector's vigilance to hold private sector accountable." The Financial Post. May 28. Available at: <https://business.financialpost.com/productive-conversations/success-of-p3s-lies-in-public-sectors-vigilance-to-hold-private-sector-accountable>
- 11 SaskBuilds, "Frequently Asked Questions." Available at: <http://www.saskbuilds.ca/alternative-financing/FAQs.html>
- 12 Interviewees at one institution explained that under the terms of their P3 contract, the P3 contractor has to "assess" the service request within 24 hours or else face a fine.
- 13 Once again, this is not unique to Saskatchewan P3s, it's a feature of the P3 model that others have long observed. See Pam Edwards, Jean Shaoul, Anne Stafford & Lorna Arblaster. *Evaluating the operation of PFI in roads and hospitals*. (2004). Certified Accountants Educational Trust, 185-188.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 185.
- 15 Anthony Boardman, Matti Siemiatycki and Aidan Vining (2016). "The theory and evidence concerning public-private-partnerships in Canada and elsewhere." University of Calgary School of Public Policy Research Papers. Vol. 9, No. 12. Available at: <https://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/p3-boardman-siemiatycki-vining.pdf>
- 16 SaskBuilds, "Frequently Asked Questions." Available at: <http://www.saskbuilds.ca/alternative-financing/FAQs.html>
- 17 The Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford (SHNB) is a provincial psychiatric facility. The new 284-bed SHNB will have 188 beds replacing the existing 156-bed facility, and 96 secure beds for male and female offenders living with mental health issues. <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/new-health-care-facilities/saskatchewan-hospital-north-battleford-project#project-cost>
- 18 See Jason Warick (2019). "Sask. Hospital water contamination a symptom of larger problem, says NDP." CBC News. October 24. Available at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/sask-hospital-water-contamination-a-symptom-of-larger-problem-says-ndp-1.5334935> Angela Brown (2019). Meili questions when audit of new Sask Hospital will be complete." *Battlefords Now*. December 24. Available at: <https://battlefordsnow.com/2019/12/24/meili-questions-when-audit-of-new-sask-hospital-will-be-complete/>
- 19 Gord Wyant (2015). "P3 smart option." Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*. November 5. Available at: <https://thestarphenix.com/news/local-news/p3-smart-option>
- 20 John Cairns (2020). "Wyant responds on Sask. Hospital." *Battlefords News-Optimist*. January 23. Available at: <https://www.newsoptimist.ca/news/local-news/wyant-responds-on-sask-hospital-1.24059785>