



NEWS RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division Board releases draft budget

Feb. 3, 2020 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees is developing its budget for the 2020/21 school year. The WSD Board of Trustees is proposing a budget of \$421,221,700 which will mean a 1.44 percent increase on the property tax levy, or about \$21 a year on the average assessed home value of \$225,700 within WSD.

“This proposed budget potentially means no additions for 2020/2021, but more importantly, nothing would be removed from programs and services,” says Arlene Reid, Finance Committee Chair, WSD Board of Trustees. “Overall, this is a good news budget because we are able to meet the current needs of students with our existing funds, largely because of savings in utility costs due to the past few years of mild winters.” Reid says the small increase on the property tax levy will help to offset the point four percent reduction, or -\$763,048, in provincial funding, a result of lower enrolment this year.

Reid points out that in its annual search for cost saving measures, WSD autonomously chose to reduce travel expenses several years ago, long before that direction came from the Minister’s Office.

“We recognize that professional development opportunities are necessary to ensure we are providing good leadership, but we believe that through shared learning and online seminars, we can keep our travel costs to the low rate seen in the report released last week by the province.”

The Minister of Education has also directed school divisions to achieve a reduction in overall management by at least 15 percent. The WSD Board of Trustees is reviewing this directive and will seek further clarification from the minister regarding timelines and acceptable impacts on student learning. Similar to the reduction in travel expenses, WSD autonomously reduced its superintendent positions in 2015.

“WSD is a large organization with highly diverse student needs and supports. We are already operating on a very lean budget, nonetheless, we intend to continue delivering quality education that results in the continuous improvement we’ve reported in our Framework for Continuous Improvement,” said Reid. “We are committed to our students and ensuring they are successful in their learning careers.”

The public is invited to share their input on the draft budget by email, in writing or by registering to appear in person as a delegation to the Board of Trustee at a future meeting.

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 78 schools, 32,752 students and 4,587 full-time employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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