

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

SOUTH DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Thursday, December 10, 2020

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Committee members were informed that at the Inaugural meeting of the Board held on September 14, 2020, Trustee Jamie Dumont was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Chris Broughton was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee. Trustee Dumont and Trustee Broughton welcomed everyone to the first South District Advisory Committee meeting for the 2020/2021 school year.

2. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

The parent representative from École River Heights volunteered to Chair the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Committee members approved the Agenda of December 10, 2020, as distributed.

4. WSD 2021/2022 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Committee members received an overview on the Budget Consultation for the 2021/2022 school year.

Committee members were informed that the Budget is developed based on the WSD Strategic Plan that aligns with the vision to be engaged, confident, inspired and successful learners. The Committee members were informed that the budget includes:

- Students being provided a comprehensive education with equitable access and diverse opportunities and programs.
- Learning Outcomes to further improve schools attendance and achievements, Addressing Barriers to Learning developing initiatives and innovative approaches to address needs and accessibility of students.
- Employing qualified caring and competent staff who are dedicated to the vision, purpose and values of Winnipeg School Division.
- Practicing sustainable development addressing environmental social and economic issues.
- Building relationships with our community by communicating and collaborating with a variety of organizations. Managing tax dollars responsibly to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

Committee members were informed that the Board is committed to obtaining feedback from school communities, parent councils, residents and staff groups for the 2021/2022 budget. The District Advisory meetings will provide parent representatives with an opportunity to share feedback, ideas and questions with the trustees in their local area.

Committee members were informed that this year, the members of the Board are interested in receiving feedback on the following areas:

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- Does your school have the resources it requires to fulfil its educational mandate? If not, what additional resources are needed?
- What is the most important issue for your school?
- Would the parent council favour an increase in property taxes if required to support programming?

Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that Covid-19 has made the 2021 budget more challenging than previous years. Committee members were informed that provincial funding is based on student enrollment and with many students being homeschooled through the pandemic it is anticipated that funding will decrease. Committee members were informed that it is possible the province will use alternate measures to determine the level of provincial funding for school boards.

A parent representative commented that there is an increased demand on the school wifi due to more use of online learning. Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that a motion will be brought forward to the Board of Trustees in the new year to obtain new electronics and resources for schools, including obtaining an analysis and gathering feedback from the parents and community.

A parent representative commented that the pandemic has resulted in economic hardship for many families and the need for assistance programs such as breakfast programs may be more of a necessity. Trustee Broughton agreed that it is important for schools to be able to maintain and ideally expand nutrition programs.

In a response to an enquiry from a parent representative regarding the funding from the Federal Government to assist with staffing and technology issues that are currently a problem for many schools, Trustee Broughton provided information regarding the Provincial and Federal funding that is available and how those funds could be accessed by schools. Committee members were informed that in the spring last year, the province required all school divisions to review their budgets and implement cost saving measures by reducing administration. Committee members were informed that this year, the province is requiring school boards to spend their entire budget for the year before the additional Provincial and Federal funding would be made available. All school boards are responsible for tracking covid specific expenditures and if a school board is in a deficit the province will evaluate whether or not it will be eligible for additional funds. WSD has currently spent approximately one million dollars on technology and continues to ask schools what additional needs are required, for example hand-washing stations. Committee members were informed that the challenge is less about the budget and more about the shortage of technology available.

In response to an enquiry regarding educational assistants, Committee members were informed that WSD has been trying to recruit and hire more staff, however, there is a shortage of staff available including substitute teachers and support staff. Committee members were informed these challenges will continue into the next budget year, including maintaining our current staffing levels.

In response to an enquiry regarding budgetary consideration for ventilation and hvac systems, Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that capital projects are funded through the province. In order to prevent the spread of illness, hospital grade ventilation systems would need to be installed in all schools. Committee members were informed the Board of Trustees can advocate for these changes, but ultimately it is up to the province.

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In response to an enquiry regarding amalgamation of school boards, Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that the Province has not released the K-12 report, therefore, the budget will be based on existing programs and services.

In response to an enquiry regarding the by-election Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that it is anticipated that the by-election will be held in the spring of 2021. Trustee Dumont informed Committee members that although Trustees are elected to certain wards, trustees serve all the schools in WSD.

In response to whether parents would support an increase in property taxes by two percent to support school programming, a parent representative indicated that their Parent Council was not in favour of any increases to property tax and that the rate of increase needs to be capped at a lower more reasonable amount. Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that without the increase to property tax there would need to be significant reductions made to the budget and would result in reductions to staffing levels assuming none of the other variables change. Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees is very open to hearing alternate ideas on how to achieve reducing the budget without increasing property tax.

In response to an enquiry, Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that a Vice-Principal position, which is in accordance with the Winnipeg Teacher's Association Collective agreement, is based on student enrollment and other variables which is determined on a school by school basis.

Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that unfortunately the province does not release provincial funding until late January/ February and school boards are required to submit their budget to the province by March 15, 2021.

Trustee Broughton informed Committee members that budget information will be posted on the WSD website in January/February. The Board of Trustees is looking for assistance from the parents and the community on suggestions to improve the budget process.

5. RENAMING OF CECIL RHODES SCHOOL

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees approved a motion on October 5, 2020, that the administration begin a consultation process to engage students, parents/guardians and members of the community on the interest of renaming of Cecil Rhodes School and that the results of the consultation be provided to the Board of Trustees no later than March 15th, 2021.

Trustee Chen informed Committee members the request to review the name of Cecil Rhodes School was in response to a petition with 1,700 signatures requesting that the Board of Trustees consider a name change. Trustee Chen informed Committee members that while the history of Cecil Rhodes includes an acknowledgement of business contributions and achievements, he is also known for his involvement and support in politics which upheld segregationist policies against non-white citizens of South Africa.

Committee members were informed that the administration is in the process of obtaining feedback from a variety of stakeholders. The consultation process will include current students attending Cecil Rhodes School as well as former students. The students will receive the history of Cecil Rhodes and have an opportunity to discuss the name of the school and share different perspectives.

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The administration will also be consulting with staff, parents, and the community to obtain feedback. The WSD website will provide an opportunity for people to complete a survey and provide feedback.

The Committee was also informed that the administration will establish a Cecil Rhodes School Renaming Committee consisting of the Superintendent of Education Services, two parents, two students, the principal and the Director of Buildings, based on the results of the school and community feedback. Trustee Dumont encouraged parent representatives to discuss this matter with their respective parent councils and submit feedback to the Board for consideration.

Committee Members supported the renaming of Cecil Rhodes School and agreed to provide formal feedback to the Board.

6. SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees received presentations, petitions and correspondence from individuals requesting the removal of SRO's in schools mainly due to their role, and interactions with students.

As a result, the Board of Trustees approved a motion that the School Resource Officer Program (SRO) be referred to the Finance/Personnel Committee for discussion. On November 16, 2020, the Board of Trustees gave direction to the administration to develop a comprehensive consultation process to evaluate the SRO program.

Committee members were informed that the administration is in the process of developing a survey to obtain feedback from students, staff and parents/guardians. A third party will be retained to consult with WSD community members and organizations to collect and compile feedback on the SRO Program.

In response to an enquiry, Committee members were informed that concerns were brought forward from a variety of individuals representing our Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities who felt that the program could be making students feel less safe in schools. Committee members were informed the goal of the program is to build healthy relationships in the community.

In response to an enquiry, Trustee Dumont informed Committee members that the purpose of the SRO in schools is to build relationships and act as support for administration if there is a situation. Committee members were informed that the program was evaluated previously, but due to the recent concerns from the community, the administration is conducting a more thorough evaluation.

In response to an enquiry regarding the mandate of the SRO's, the Director of Student Services informed Committee members that the mandate of the SRO's is to build relationships with students and the community, deliver presentations to staff and students, and to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Committee members were informed that SRO's receive training through the Winnipeg Police Service. Committee members were informed the SRO's are also invited to participate in professional development through WSD which provides training on mental health issues and suicide prevention, etc.

In response to an enquiry, the Director of Student Services informed Committee members that the Winnipeg Police Service strives to hire SRO's to reflect the community they serve.

In response to an enquiry regarding the survey, Director of Student Services informed Committee members that the survey will be translated in various languages.

7. COVID-19

The parent representative from Riverview School requested that Covid-19 be added to the agenda for discussion.

In response to an enquiry, Trustee Dumont informed Committee members that administration recognizes the diversity across WSD and each school was requested to determine best measures to continue remote learning for students during the two weeks after winter break based on the needs of the school community.

A parent representative expressed concern that WSD does not have the staffing resources required to support teachers during the additional two weeks of remote learning. A parent representative commented that the province and the federal government have stated there is funding available to support the hiring of additional staff.

The Superintendent of Education Services acknowledged that this has been a difficult time for our school community and that WSD is following the direction from the Department of Education. The Superintendent of Education Services provided an overview on some of the resources that have been provided to schools in response to the different covid response levels ordered by the province. Committee members were informed schools will receive additional resources for the two week remote learning after winter break. The Department of Education has provided guidelines which are available on the portal.

8. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS

SCHOOL REPORTS

Parent representatives from the following schools provided a written report on school activities: (attached)

- École Secondaire Kelvin High School

9. GUIDELINES FOR BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Committee members reviewed a copy of the Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees for information. The committee was informed they could read it in more detail at their leisure and direct any questions to the Board of Trustees.

10. DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE DATES

The Committee was informed the next Inner City District Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, February 11th, to continue discussions on the 2021-2022 Budget and to provide feedback to the Board of Trustees before March 15, 2021. Committee Members requested that an update on the renaming of Cecil Rhodes School and the School Resource Officer Program, Pandemic issues, vaccination protocols and planning forward be added to the next Agenda for discussion.

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In Attendance:

Voting Representatives

Carpathia School
Earl Grey School
Ecole LaVerendrye
Ecole River Heights
Harrow School
J.B. Mitchell School
Kelvin High School
Queenston School
Riverview School
Robert H. Smith School
Rockwood School

Administration

Celia Caetano-Gomes, Superintendent
Julie Millar, Director
Susan Christiuk, Principal Carpathia
Ryan Hughes, Principal Churchill High School
Jamie Hutchison, Principal Grant Park High School
Evelyn Siddall, Principal Harrow School
Paulette Huggins, Principal J.B. Mitchell School
Ruth Schappert, Principal LaVerendrye School
Michelle Namaka, Principal Queenston School
Andrea Powell, Principal Robert H. Smith School
Kathy Ateah, Principal Rockwood School
Tarin Howard, Recording Secretary

Regrets

Brock Corydon School
Churchill High School
College Churchill
Gladstone School
Grant Park High School
Grosvenor School
Lord Roberts School
Montrose School
Ecole Sir William Osler

Trustees

Jamie Dumont
Chris Broughton
Jennifer Chen

Ecole secondaire Kelvin High School Report
January 2021

This has been a most unusual year with many of our school extracurricular activities and sports on hold. The following is an update of our current activities:

Social Studies Department Head Chris Young was awarded the prestigious General Governor's History Award for Excellence in Teaching for his work with Kelvin history students on the Winnipeg Strike.

New Student Spirit Council was created to bring school spirit into our classrooms and hallways during the pandemic. In December the council promoted "ugly winter sweater" week, played festive music at lunch time and decorated all three floors of the school with snowflakes. The council is planning to reconnect with Pinkham Elementary students and to bring some new year cheer into their school this month.

Virtual Clubs taking place at Kelvin include:

Esports team who won the Fall League of Legends Exhibition Tournament in December,
EAC Environmental Action Committee where two grade 12 students participated in a national E-waste collection competition,
"The Paperclip", our on-line school newspaper has recently published its latest edition
Spectrum who promotes the message of trans inclusion in our school and community.
Kelvin's History Club
Virtual Kelvin Fitness Club, Tuesdays
Indigenous Student Group Virtual Smudging