

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Wednesday, November 29, 2017

1. INTRODUCTIONS

At the Inaugural meeting of the Board held on September 11, 2017, Trustee Mark Wasyliw was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Chris Broughton was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee.

2. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

The parent representative from École Laura Secord School volunteered to Chair the Meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A New Business item regarding speed zones was added to the agenda. Committee members approved the amended agenda of November 29, 2017.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 2018/2019 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Committee members received an overview on the Budget Consultation for the 2018/2019 school year.

Committee members were informed that the Board is committed to obtaining feedback from school communities, parent councils, residents and staff groups for the 2018/2019 school 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 the 2017/2018 final budget included expenditures of \$406,594,200. The 2017/2018 Budget included much needed programs, although not provincially funded, such as the Nursery Program, Library Technical Assistants, School Resource Officers, Adult Crossing Guards, Summer School, Off Campus Programs, Nutrition and Therapy Services to support students.

Committee members were informed that the two major sources of funding are the Province of Manitoba and the property tax levy. In the most recent budget, provincial funding provided only 62% of the total revenue required to balance the WSD budget. The second major source of funding is from property taxation that provides an additional 36% of the total revenue. The remaining two percent is revenue from other sources such as the federal government, First Nations authorities and other school divisions who use WSD resources.

Committee members were informed that 81% of the budget goes directly to the cost of providing instruction and supports in the classroom. The other 19% covers costs such as student transportation, building maintenance and operations, business administration and support services related to research, planning and technology and other mandatory expenses such as Canada Pension Plan costs, Employment Insurance premiums, payroll tax and the cost of supplies, materials, books and equipment.

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Wednesday, November 29, 2017

- 2 -

Committee members received an overview on the financial challenges faced by the Division in education funding. Committee members discussed the level of funding that is required to assist school divisions in removing the many barriers to education that may impact student outcomes and their continued success in school. Provincial funding continues to lag behind the needs of the students, families, staff and communities of the Division, resulting in an increased reliance on property taxation.

Committee members were informed that 60% of its school buildings are more than 40 years old and 35% being more than 50 years old. The Board has made significant investments from its budget and from reserve/surplus to address much-needed building repairs and upgrades. Additional on-going/sustained budget allocations are required to address much needed investments such as electrical upgrades and additional outlets, heating and ventilation equipment maintenance, window replacement, galvanized waterline replacement, elevator and upgrades. The requirements far exceed the provincial funding for these types of projects. The challenges in ensuring that the necessary technology infrastructure and classroom technologies are kept secure and up-to-date to support student learning are also very significant and continue to grow.

Committee members were informed that for over forty years, the Division has provided nursery programming as part of an early years learning strategy for students. Implementation of full day kindergarten began with a pilot program in the 2014/15 year. In the 2016/17 year, the program was expanded and is now offered in 11 school locations. These programs allow children to succeed, in particular students and families who benefit from accessing learning opportunities at an early age. There are key cost savings to government and society when there is support for early years education.

Committee members were informed that the Province of Manitoba would continue to fund the Student Resource Officer Program but would not be increasing its funding. The Division and the Province are responsible for paying 50% of the constables salaries, and although not required under the Public Schools Act, the Division is required to increase the Special Levy to support this valuable program and provide the much needed resources that keep our school communities safe for our students. Committee members were informed that the Board has requested a meeting with the Minister of Education and the Minister of Justice to discuss the importance of the School Resource Officer Program, the financial impact on school divisions and the importance of the Department of Justice to financially support the educational component of justice through the School Resource Officers in the public school system and community.

Committee members were informed that the current provincial government has suggested that a review of school division amalgamation will take place after the 2018 municipal elections. The members of the Board will continue to seek clarification from the Minister of Education on the intent of amalgamation and share concerns on the impact an amalgamation will have on the Division's ability to provide unique programs and services that are required to support students.

Committee members received a survey to facilitate discussions on the 2018/2019 Budget which identified 3 main topics for feedback. The topics were WSD programs and services and funding challenges for the Division, what role parents and school communities play to ensure the necessary revenue from provincial funding and property taxation are available and what additional information/resources/process would be helpful to continue dialogue with parents, neighbours and the community.

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Wednesday, November 29, 2017

- 3 -

Committee members discussed a number of concerns and issues such as quality of French instruction, shortage and retention of French teachers, shortage of French support staff, flexible work hours to attract French speaking teachers, expanding the Milieu program in more schools such as Robert H. Smith.

Committee members were informed that the Division is committed to recruiting quality French teachers and that the Division makes every effort to employ local teachers and graduates from Université de Saint-Boniface. The Division also created a recruitment team that travel across Canada throughout the year and attends University career fairs to recruit French teachers for the Division. Committee members were informed that there is a great demand for French teachers for all Western provinces. The Division offers teachers permanent contracts and competitive salaries to retain quality teaching staff. In response to an enquiry, the Committee was informed that the Division designates funds specifically for Recruitment.

Committee members expressed an interest in converting École Robert H. Smith School into a milieu school to support neighbouring schools. Committee members were concerned that French students at École Robert H. Smith School are being transferred to the English program due to the shortage of supports for students in the French program.

Committee members were informed that approval from the province is required to build new schools.

Committee members discussed ways to increase revenue, such as whether the Division could recover costs from speeding tickets given to drivers in school speed zones, and the formation of a think tank where students brainstorm ideas, research what is working elsewhere, in order to generate revenue for the Division.

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees approved a motion that the administration prepare and research the feasibility of establishing a WSD Endowment Fund to invest and grow future funds to support schools. Committee members were informed that the Division faces further challenges as downtown growth is promoted while businesses receive a break in property taxes resulting in less revenue collected through property taxation for the Division.

In response to an enquiry, Committee members were informed that there has been no discussion within the Division to cap enrollment spaces in French Immersion schools.

Committee members discussed the importance of supports in schools to assist new immigrant students and families with the tools and resources to succeed and engage in school activities.

Committee members were informed that the Board held a public pre-budget consultation scheduled for November 30, 2017 at Tec Voc High Gymnasium. Educators, Parent Council and Community members were encouraged to attend the public forum to discuss the challenges in sustaining high quality programs for students.

Committee members were informed that it is anticipated that the Provincial funding announcement will be made in late January / early February. Once the announcement is received, the Finance/Personnel Committee of the Board will prepare final recommendations for approval by the Board of Trustees. Budget information will be distributed to all schools, parent councils, student councils, advisory committees, employee groups and others on request, and posted on Division's website.

Committee members were also informed that in addition to Budget presentations at District Advisory Committee meetings additional information is available on the Division's website including a Budget tool and property tax calculator. A survey is posted on the Division's website www.winnipegssd.ca. Committee members were advised that the members of the Board are interested in receiving pre budget feedback.

District Advisory Committee meetings will be scheduled in February to provide an opportunity for dialogue and discussion about the draft budget. A Public Meeting regarding the draft budget will be held on February 26, 2018. The deadline to receive feedback regarding the budget will be received by the Board until March 5, 2018. All feedback will be considered by Finance/Personnel Committee. The Board of Trustees will approve the budget at its meeting to be held March 12, 2018. The Board must finalize the budget by March 15, 2018, as required by legislation.

4.2 REVISED TRANSPORTATION POLICY – EEA

Committee members received an overview of the revised Policy EEA – Transportation of Pupils to include provisions for Courtesy Transportation Services. Courtesy Transportation is offered to those students who meet specified criteria. As with most school jurisdictions, the number of students who are eligible for transportation varies from year to year.

Committee members were informed that the Transportation Policy – EEA meets all of the provincial regulatory requirements to ensure that students who live further than 1.6 km, who have exceptional learning needs or who live in hazard areas are accommodated. The policy provides transportation at no charge to Kindergarten to Grade 6 language and alternative program students, and for Nursery students attending French immersion milieu schools.

Among the provisions is a mandate that no new bus routes or stops be added to accommodate courtesy seating. Courtesy Transportation seats are not guaranteed for the full school year as students who meet full eligibility requirements, will have precedence over a courtesy seat assignment. Committee members were advised that the number of students requiring transportation changes on a regular basis therefore vacant seats on buses may or may not be available. Courtesy seats are currently available at no cost.

Committee members were informed that the budget for transportation was growing fast at a cost to the Division. The fee for service was not earning enough money to cover the additional costs and a portion of the riders could not afford to pay. The Division was expanding bus routes, it became too costly to continue with this type of service, therefore fee for service, and exceptions were eliminated.

Committee members also expressed an interest in implementing Before and After School Care programs in schools to help alleviate transportation costs.

Committee members were informed that the Board has also directed administration to conduct a larger study on fee for service and courtesy transportation and make a recommendation for possible implementation in the 2018/2019 school year.

4.3 TREE PLANTING/URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Committee members were informed that at a meeting held March 21, 2017, the Board of Trustees recommended that the Urban Forest Management Plan be distributed to District Advisory Committees for consideration and feedback on the plan.

Committee members were informed the members of the Board would like schools to discuss whether their students and school community would benefit from participating in this educational and ongoing learning opportunity. Please visit the Division's website at <https://www.winnipegssd.ca/About%20WSD/sustainabledevelopment/Pages/default.aspx> to view the WSD School Ground Greening Guidelines for reference purposes.

As outlined in the plan, a budget would be required for the initial 3 year project and after which sustainable long term funding would be required for the continuous maintenance and upkeep of the grounds.

Committee members were informed the purpose of the Urban Forest Management Plan is to provide guidelines for increasing the number of trees by adding approximately 60 trees a year on WSD properties. The plan will provide direction on developing and caring of the urban forest, implementation framework, budget requirements and other required supports.

Committee members were informed that in order to incorporate a formal tree planting program, a number of factors would need to be considered, such as, the size, type, location of the trees/shrubs, allergies, staffing, and required equipment. A tree planting program will be valuable to the Division which gives consideration to historic issues; maintenance requirements; properly planned projects utilizing the expertise of landscape consultants for larger projects; if the school/stakeholders are involved in a planned development and take ownership of the project; and adequate funding.

Committee members were informed that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is at the forefront of curriculum in Manitoba Schools. The incorporation of key themes of sustainable development into the education system will help students become informed and responsible decision-makers, playing active roles as citizens of Canada and the world. These complex concepts can be further illustrated in well-designed school grounds. These traditionally barren landscapes can contribute to social, cultural, environmental, and mental well-being of the entire community.

Committee members received a survey to provide feedback on the benefits and challenges of implementing a Tree Planting/Urban Forest Management Plan program. Committee members separated into small groups to discuss the benefits and challenges of implementing a Tree Planting/Urban Forest Management Plan program. Committee members had many concerns such as the overall maintenance, the placement of trees and the cost of the program.

Committee members expressed an interest in the Urban Forest Management Plan, however, the members were concerned with the cost to support the program and believe that funds to support important programs and services should remain the priority.

Committee members were informed that the Division's goal is to become fully sustainable and the next step to becoming sustainable is to maintain the physical grounds. Committee members discussed creating gardening clubs and applying for grants to assist with the expenses on sustainable school initiatives. Committee members also discussed initiating a fundraising program such as "leave a tree legacy".

Committee members supported the idea of training students to assist in maintaining the trees. Committee members also supported the idea of hiring a consultant to assist with grants and conceptual plans of the placement of trees on school grounds.

4.4 BARRIER-FREE MANITOBA

Committee members were informed that as a result of the recent Accessibility Legislation, school divisions received provincial direction regarding the requirements to meet accessibility legislation, the Human Rights Code, Workplace Safety & Health Act and other legislation and regulations.

Committee members were informed that Barrier-Free Manitoba requested that school divisions provide their support by signing a letter campaign to the provincial government to develop an accessible education standard under the landmark Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

Committee members were informed that the Division responded to the request from Barrier-Free Manitoba and provided a copy of the Division's Accessibility Plan and Strategic Plan to outline achievements, goals and objectives and reaffirming our commitment to continuing to address barriers in schools.

Committee members were informed that although, the Division has been successful and progress has been made in meeting the requirements, school divisions are concerned that new regulations may incur additional costs for school divisions which may be unfunded by the government. Committee members indicated that families also have barriers that are preventing them from participating in school and community events.

Committee members were informed that Barrier-Free Manitoba is working on targeting not only schools but the general public. For more information on the Barrier-Free Manitoba or to provide feedback visit <http://www.barrierfreemb.com/>

Committee members were advised that for more information on the Winnipeg School Division's Accessibility Plan can be found on the Division website:
<https://www.winnipegssd.ca/AccessibilityPlan/Pages/default.aspx>

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Wednesday, November 29, 2017
- 7 -

4.5 2017/2018 ADVISORY COMMITTEE DATES

Committee members were informed of the following schedule of the District Advisory Committees for the 2017/2018 school year:

Central District Advisory Committee
7:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 9, 2017
Wednesday, February 21, 2018
Thursday, May 3, 2018

North District Advisory Committee
7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 14, 2017
Tuesday, February 13, 2018
Tuesday, April 24, 2018

French Immersion Advisory Committee
7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 29, 2017
Thursday, February 22, 2018
Thursday, May 10, 2018

Inner City District Advisory
Committee
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017
Thursday, February 15, 2018
Wednesday, April 25, 2018

South District Advisory Committee
7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 21, 2017
Tuesday, February 20, 2018
Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Student Advisory Committee
4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 28, 2017
Wednesday, March 6, 2018
Tuesday, May 15, 2018

5. FOR INFORMATION

5.1 Policy JJD – Right to Participate Policy

Committee members were informed that at a meeting held on September 11, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a Right to Participate Policy.

Committee members were advised that the policy was developed based on the Public Schools Act and has been developed based on the Manitoba Public School Fee Policy. The policy outlines guiding principles and best practices in relation to the school fees and ensures that no student is excluded from participating in activities based on their ability to pay supplemental school fees. The policy also outlines reporting and accountability practices in relation to fees.

5.2 Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC)

Committee members were reminded to contact the Board Office if they wish to become a member of the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils for the 2017/2018 school year.

5.3 District Advisory Reports and Summaries of Discussions

Committee members were informed that the Summary of Discussions of Advisory Committees are distributed to Committee members once the Board of Trustees receive them as information at a Board meeting.

Committee members were also informed that once received by the Board, the District Advisory Committee Reports and Summaries of Discussions are posted on the Division's website under the Family and Community tab.

<https://www.winnipegssd.ca/About%20WSD/NEWS/OurSchools/Pages/SubscribeOurSchools.aspx>

5.4 Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees

The parent representatives received a copy of the Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees for information.

6. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the French Immersion Advisory Committee will be held Thursday, February 22, 2018.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Voting Representatives:

Julie Strong, Collège Churchill
Scott Colburn, École Garden Grove School
Heather Pachet, École J.B. Mitchell School
Sharon Kirk, École secondaire Kelvin High School
Debbie Purganan, École Lansdowne
Lucy Payette, École Laura Secord School
Joelle Remillard, École LaVérendrye/École River Heights School
Maria Pochailo, École Riverview School
Lauren Hope, École Robert H. Smith
Alan Cunningham, École Sacré-Coeur
Laurie Kozak, École Victoria-Albert School

Regrets:

Trustee Chris Broughton
École Sir William Osler
École Stanley Knowles School

Administration:

Fatima Mota, Superintendent of Education Services
Mile Rendulic, Director of Buildings
Dominique Ostermann, Vice-Principal, École Robert H. Smith School
Nelie Husack, Principal, École Victoria-Albert School
Lorraine Spence, Recording Secretary

Trustees:

Mark Wasyliv

Non-Voting/Resource Members:

Brittany Morrison (WANTE Rep)