

SOUTH DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2-2017

To the Chair and Members
Winnipeg Public School Board:

November 21, 2017

The South District Advisory Committee reports as follows:

1. Election of Committee Chair

The Committee was informed that at the Inaugural meeting of the Board held on September 11, 2017, Trustee Chris Broughton was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Mark Wasyliv was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee.

The parent representative from Grant Park High School volunteered to Chair the South District Advisory Committee for the 2017/2018 school year.

2. Approval of Agenda

A New Business item regarding EpiPens was added to the agenda. The Committee approved the amended Agenda of November 21, 2017.

3. 2018/2019 Budget Consultation

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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 which provided 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.

The Committee was 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.

South District Advisory Committee Report No. 2-2017

The Committee received an overview on the financial challenges faced by the Division in education funding. The Committee 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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. The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee received a survey to facilitate discussions on the 2018/2019 Pre-Budget Consultation.

The Committee discussed the funding challenges for the Division and expressed concern on maintaining the necessary programs and services required for students. The Committee discussed the benefits of daycares in schools and the significant costs to have energy efficient building upgrades as well as meeting requirements as identified in the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

The Committee discussed what role parents and school communities can play to help ensure the necessary revenues from provincial funding and property taxation are available to fund student programs and services. The Committee agreed that parents should voice their concerns to their local MPs to ensure appropriate educational resources are available for students. The Committee also suggested increased attendance at parent council meetings and community consultations are beneficial in keeping parents and members of the community informed of budget information.

The Committee discussed what additional information/resources/process would be helpful to continue meaningful dialogue with parents, neighbours, the community and partners in education. The Committee indicated it would be beneficial to receive a breakdown of program costs and how much the Province pays for each program. The Committee also discussed the success of having "Meet and Greet" evenings at schools to increase involvement in parent councils and in schools.

In response to an enquiry, Trustee Wasyliw informed the Committee that the Board is supportive of implementing full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools. The Committee was informed that the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine as well as Brandon School Division have implemented full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools. The Committee was informed that due to the size of the Division, the Board is implementing the expansion of the full-day kindergarten program slowly, taking into consideration the cost and available classroom space.

In response to an enquiry from a parent representative from École LaVérendrye, the Superintendent of Education Services informed the Committee that all schools are expected to operate in an inclusive manner including French Immersion programs.

The Committee was informed that the Board will be holding a public pre-budget consultation scheduled for November 30, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at Tec Voc gymnasium. Educators, Parent Council and Community members are encouraged to attend the public forum to discuss the challenges in sustaining high quality programs for students.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was informed that 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. Revised Transportation Policy – EEA

The Committee 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.

The Committee was 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. The Committee was advised that the number of students requiring transportation changes on a regular basis therefore vacant seats on buses may or may not be available.

The Committee was 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.

5. Tree Planting/Urban Forest Management Plan

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was provided with a survey to share with their parent councils to provide feedback on the benefits and challenges of implementing a Tree Planting/Urban Forest Management Plan program.

In response to an enquiry, the Director of Buildings informed the Committee that schools who have already begun urban planning will still be considered and further assisted under the proposed Urban Forest Management Plan.

The Committee discussed both the positive benefits from implementing a Tree Planting Plan such as noise buffering, outdoor education opportunities, shade from sun and wind breaks, as well as the concerns related to the cost of the plan.

The parent representative from Grant Park High school suggested that fruit trees could be harvested and be incorporated into a cooking class that can yield products such as apple sauce or jams that can be used as a fundraiser. The Committee was informed that the Board has recently constituted a WSD Food Issues Council that will research, review and develop policies and practices of the Division in relation to food issues that affect the Division, its students or its affected community. The ultimate goal is to develop policies that would address food/nutrition issues as barriers to learning and to encourage sustainable practices, food literacy, food security and food justice.

6. Barrier-Free Manitoba

The Committee was 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.

The Committee was informed that at a meeting held October 2, 2017, the Board of Trustees was 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.

The Division responded to the request from Barrier-Free Manitoba and provided a copy of the Division's Accessibility Plan and Strategic Plan that outlines the Division's achievements, goals and objectives and reaffirm our commitment to continuing to address barriers in schools.

The Committee was informed that although, the Division has been successful and progress has been made in meeting the accessibility requirements, school divisions are concerned that new regulations may incur additional costs for school divisions which may be unfunded by the government.

The Committee was 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>

Information on the Winnipeg School Division's Accessibility Plan can be found on the Division website:

<https://www.winnipeg.ca/AccessibilityPlan/Pages/default.aspx>

The Committee was encouraged to visit the Barrier-Free Manitoba website and complete a survey at www.barrierfreemb.com to voice your opinion as a stakeholder.

7. **2017/2018 Advisory Committee Dates**

The Committee was 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

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

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

North District Advisory Committee 7:00 p.m.

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

South District Advisory Committee **7:00 p.m.**

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

French Immersion Advisory Committee 7:00 p.m.

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

Student Advisory Committee 4:00 p.m.

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

8. **EpiPens**

The Committee discussed that the Winnipeg School Division policy regarding administration of medication to students currently prohibits staff from administering any medication that is not prescribed to a particular student, even in an emergency situation, and staff are prohibited from using one child's EpiPen in the event of an allergic emergency affecting a different child.

 South District Advisory Committee Report No. 2-2017

The parent representative of École Riverview School informed the Committee that life-threatening allergies have increased among children in recent years and currently affect approximately 1 in 7 children in North America. Adrenaline (the medication contained in an EpiPen) is recognized by medical experts as the only effective treatment for a life-threatening allergic reaction and is safe and easy to administer. EpiPens are available without a prescription at Canadian pharmacies. In order to prevent deaths from severe allergic reactions, it is critical that adrenaline (also known as epinephrine) be administered within minutes, and waiting for an ambulance may be too long. Other parts of Canada, the US, Australia, and the UK either require or allow schools to keep “stock epinephrine,” that is, emergency epiPens that are not prescribed to a specific person and can be administered to anyone experiencing a severe allergic reaction. In the US alone this strategy has saved hundreds of lives.

The parent representative sought to raise awareness on this issue and encouraged other parent councils to express concerns and advocate to their school trustee to reconsider the policy in place so that schools would be allowed to have emergency EpiPens that are not prescribed to a particular student and can be used for any person in case of an allergic emergency.

The Committee was informed that Trustees will be having discussions regarding EpiPens at a scheduled Policy/Program Committee meeting in the near future.

Respectfully Submitted,

MARK WASYLIW
Trustee Representative

IN ATTENDANCE:

Voting Representatives:

Michelle Rossen, Brock Corydon School
Sara McIvor-Prouty, Carpathia School
Beth Smyth, Collège Churchill
Tanya Sigurdson, Earl Grey School
Andrea Villeneuve, Grant Park High School
Lorna Thomas, Grosvenor School
Lisa Smit-Beiko, Harrow School
Doug Thiessen, École J.B. Mitchell School
Judy Grossman, Kelvin High School
École LaVerendrye
Lindsay Wright, Queenston School
Dawn Clarke, École River Heights School
Orla Nazarko, École Riverview School
Kaleigh Hamilton, École Sir William Osler

Alternate Voting Members

Additional Parents and Community members

Regrets:

Trustee Chris Broughton
Gladstone School
École Robert H. Smith School

Administration:

Celia Caetano-Gomes, Superintendent
Julie Millar, Director, Student Services
Mile Rendulic, Director of Buildings
Ara Morris, Principal, Brock Corydon School
Susan Anderson, Principal, Grant Park High School
Mohammad Rezai, Vice-Principal, Grant Park High School
Bonnie McEachern, Vice-Principal, Grant Park High School
Andrea Powell, Principal, Grosvenor School
Evelyn Siddall, Principal, Harrow School
Cree Crowchild, Vice-Principal, Kelvin High School
Wade Gregg, Principal, Queenston School
Susan Drysdale, Vice-Principal, River Heights School
Grant Bridgeman, Principal, École Riverview School
Camie Lawson, Vice-Principal, École Riverview School
Tom Rossi, Principal, École Robert H. Smith School
Karen Loveridge, Principal, École Sir William Osler
Helena Tessier, Recording Secretary

Trustees:

Mark Wasyliw
Sherri Rollins

Non-Voting/Resource Members:

Carrie Logan, W.A.N.T.E. Representative