



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Winnipeg School Division addresses accessibility and accountability in draft budget**

**February 12, 2019 (Winnipeg, MB)** –Winnipeg School Division (WSD) is developing its budget for the 2019/2020 school year. It is holding a series of school community consultations Feb. 12, 13, 19 and 20.

Public school funding to WSD for 2019/2020 decreased over last year by .1 percent or \$202,963. Provincial funding covers less than 60 percent of the total WSD budget. In addition, the Province has continued its direction to Trustees to cap the special requirement increase at two percent.

“The Board is considering a draft budget with a three percent special requirement increase – which works out to a 2.9 percent increase on property taxes,” says Lisa Naylor, Finance and Personnel Committee Chair, WSD Board of Trustees. The increase is about \$41 per year on the average assessed home value of \$214,200 within the division.

WSD costs increases every year because of inflation on required expenses such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance Premiums and Payroll Taxes. In addition, even with proposed wage freezes for public sector employees, WSD staff have earned salary increments which must be accounted for in the 2019/2020 budget. With the modest increase in education property tax revenue, WSD Board of Trustees will have a budget of \$416,790,588 to allocate.

“The Board has identified accountability and accessibility needs to be addressed in this budget,” says Naylor. “We are consulting the public on enhancements in those areas, as well as looking closely at existing programs and services for possible cost savings.”

The Board has pre-approved the addition of one principal and a half-time clerk to facilitate the hiring of staff and other duties as they relate to the opening of a new school the northwest corner of WSD next year. Other additions being considered, and for discussion at the upcoming Draft Budget Community Consultations, include:

#### **Accessibility**

- Autism clinical psychologist dedicated to support the Autism Spectrum Diagnostic Services team (\$96,500)
- Costs related to day program charges for access to St. Amant, New Directions and Can-Do People Inc. for students with exceptional needs (\$175,000).
- Additional Early Childhood Inclusive Needs Support to address the growing specialized needs of children with autism spectrum disorder (\$350,000).
- Sound Field Systems in all schools to improve accessibility for students with low to moderate difficulty hearing. These systems amplify a teacher’s voice and distributes it evenly throughout the classroom (\$208,000).
- Enhanced access to wifi through upgraded wireless controllers and blade servers. Modernized equipment will also provide additional data storage and improve data accessibility requirements, while reducing the use of physical space and energy consumption (\$115,000).
- Expanding the current 11 Full Day Kindergarten sites at a cost of \$50,000 per year per classroom, not including renovations that may be required.

## Accountability

- Data analytics software to ensure schools are equipped with timely and comprehensive data that allows for insights into such areas as student performance and development, to improve programming to meet students' individual needs (\$70,500).
- As part of WSD's fiscal responsibility strategy, a modern technology infrastructure that will address Provincial reporting and accountability requirements. Integrated departmental resource planning will also result in division-wide efficiencies and long-term savings (\$60,611).
- Long-term infrastructure and renewal planning to include school grounds maintenance to address asphalt deterioration and trees and foliage replacement (\$118,000).
- School parent council managed lunch programs are accountable for hiring staff, setting fees and determining the level of supervision required, following WSD guidelines. To assist parent councils with payroll and audit functions, the Board is considering adding a Lunch Program Coordinator (\$69,300).

The programs listed below are fully funded by WSD tax payers and have been implemented to address the unique needs of students in the division. These programs, which equal \$11,415,173, are areas where the Board of Trustees may find cost savings through reductions in services.

- Intercultural Support Workers
- Library Technical Assistant
- Divisional Computer Technicians
- Adult Crossing Guards
- School Resource Officers
- Off Campus Programs
- Home Learning Assistants for Early School Years
- Library and Support Services
- Therapy Services
- Summer School
- Nutrition programs
- Nursery
- Arts performances, special events and programs
- Milk Subsidy
- Attendance Officers

The Board will consult with the community on both additions and cost savings in the 2019/2020 budget.

“Even though the Province is not investing in education at the pace in which the cost of technology, maintenance and student needs are increasing, the WSD Board of Trustees is committed to providing the supports our students need for literacy in math, science, language and arts,” says Naylor.

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WSD residents and parents are encouraged to attend the budget consultation meetings:

**South District Advisory Meeting** - Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Churchill High School, 510 Hay Street

**Inner City District Advisory Meeting** – Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.  
R.B. Russell Vocational High School, 364 Dufferin Avenue

**North District Advisory Meeting** - Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Meadows West School, 150 Inkster Garden Drive

**Central District Advisory Meeting** – Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute, 720 Alverstone Street

A public Board of Trustees special budget consultation meeting will also be held on: **Monday, February 25, 7:00 p.m. 1577 Wall St. East. To address the Board, presenters must register in advance by contacting the Board office at (204) 789-0469 before noon on Feb. 21, 2019.**

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 78 schools, 33,000 students and 6,000 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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