



NEWS RELEASE

WSD Board tackles unprecedented losses from commercial assessment appeals

March 7, 2016 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees is tackling a new challenge in developing its 2016/17 budget.

The City of Winnipeg advised administration last week that, due to a large number of mainly commercial property assessment appeals, there is a reduction in the property tax base of \$158.6 million within Winnipeg School Division. This is three times greater than the 2014 reassessment. While minor adjustments are anticipated with every budget, it is unprecedented for such a large reduction to occur at such a critical stage of the WSD budget development. Other Winnipeg-area school divisions are also experiencing an assessment decrease, although not to the extent of the impact on WSD.

“For WSD this could result in a 6.4 percent tax increase (or \$80 annual increase on the average assessed home in WSD) in order to maintain the programs and services in the draft budget. The Board, however, is looking at all possible options to reduce the property tax increase without cutting programs,” said WSD Finance Committee Chair Chris Broughton. “We’re currently in the process of informing parents and stakeholders in the division about the issue.”

Broughton said the Finance/Personnel Committee will continue its deliberations, taking into consideration feedback the community provided while being mindful of the property tax implications to homeowners.

“Our goal continues to be improving student success and maintaining programs and services in the final budget.”

The final assessments will be calculated into the WSD budget for the 2016 tax year. WSD must submit its 2016 taxation request to the City of Winnipeg by March 15, 2016.

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