



## NEWS RELEASE

### Winnipeg School Division Board releases draft budget for 2021/22

**Feb. 10, 2021 (Winnipeg, MB)** – The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees is developing its budget for the 2021/22 school year. The WSD Board of Trustees is required to cut almost \$5 million in programs in order to achieve a balanced budget of \$421,039,405. As directed by the Provincial Government, the property tax levy for WSD home and business owners will be frozen at 2020 levels or a decrease of about \$6 a year on the average assessed home value of \$225,700 within in WSD.

“The Province has cut funding by 1.6 percent for Winnipeg School Division next year, and we are also required to freeze property tax levies, eliminating our ability to raise funds for programs that address the unique needs of our community,” says Chris Broughton, Chair of the Finance Committee of the WSD Board of Trustees. “It’s not a position anyone wants to be in, but I applaud my colleagues on the Board and the members of WSD Senior Administration for focusing on solutions so that we can move forward this budget year.”

Proposed reductions for the 2021/22 school year equal almost \$5 million and include the following programs:

- School Resource Officers - \$537,174
- Unfilled support position vacancies - \$317,659
- Occupational/Physio-therapy - \$667,400
- Milk subsidy - \$210,000
- Utilities savings - \$500,000
- Summer clerical positions - \$928,200
- Non-salary expenses in schools - \$1,470,900

“Some of the reductions need to be funded by other areas of government, such as Occupational/Physio-therapy services,” says Broughton. “This is a valuable program, but it should rightfully be funded through Manitoba Health, and we will be pursuing that option.”

Broughton says trustees are mindful not to sacrifice programs strongly supported in the community, such as nursery school, nutrition and summer school. He says, however, tough decisions have to be made and that is clearly reflected in the draft budget.

“People are going to be unhappy about what we are proposing, we understand that, and we want to be respectful of the many concerns and issues that our school communities have to share with us,” says Broughton. “This is still a draft budget, and there is some room for us to make adjustments. Throughout the consultation process, we will keep the best interests of our students as our top priority.”

The public is invited to share their input on the draft budget by email, in writing or by registering by no later than February 18, 2021 to appear as a delegation (via MS Teams) to the Board of Trustee at a budget consultation meeting with the Board at 7:00 p.m., Monday, February 22, 2021.

WSD is celebrating 150 years of learning this year and has 79 schools, 32,752 students and 4,587 full-time 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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