



NEWS RELEASE

WSD Board releases Building Systems Assessment Report Deferred maintenance costs estimated at \$261 million

March 8, 2018 (Winnipeg, MB) – Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees today released a report on WSD's [Building Systems Assessment](#), citing almost \$261 million in deferred maintenance costs in the form of building systems exceeding their useful life and capital improvements.

"As part of our due diligence, the Board of Trustees asked administration for a report on the status of various major building systems such as structural, mechanical and electrical. An additional consideration is looking at how accessible are WSD facilities," said Trustee Mark Wasyliw, Chair of the WSD Building and Transportation Committee during a news conference to publicly release the report. "The numbers are shocking."

Pointing out the average age of WSD facilities is 62 years – with 10 facilities being over 100 years old, Wasyliw said hard decisions have had to be made by current and past Boards to defer some building and systems work in order to balance budgets, with very limited provincial funding for education, while maintaining the unique programs and services required within WSD.

"We know from this study that our schools and facilities are safe. Our students and staff are safe," said Wasyliw. "The division has implemented regular preventative maintenance and replacement of obsolete and inefficient systems and equipment in order to keep buildings in good operating condition. That commitment to regular preventative maintenance will continue."

Wasyliw advised, however, that deferred maintenance in the form of building systems exceeding their useful life and capital improvements represents a budgeted deficiency of about \$261 million. Areas for immediate attention include deferred maintenance, accessibility, sustainability and infrastructure needs.

"Not only do we want to ensure our facilities are accessible, we are mandated to do so in the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Yet there is no funding coming from the province to make that possible," said Wasyliw. "There are 21 sites that do not have any designated accessible parking. Twenty-five sites do not have curb cuts. Forty-three facilities that require auto door openers and another 20 need elevators. All things considered, we are looking at over \$31 million to make Winnipeg School Division physically accessible."

Wasyliw points out that the Province of Manitoba's "Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan" proposes a flat carbon pricing of \$25 per tonne in 2018 – that's a staggering carbon tax bill of almost \$400,000 a year for Winnipeg School Division taxpayers.

The WSD Board of Trustees has asked the Minister of Education to meet to discuss future funding needs specifically in the area of building maintenance.

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.

-30-

Media contact:

Radean Carter

Senior Information Officer

Winnipeg School Division

(204) 789-0412 or mobile (204) 771-5352