

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Tuesday, December 15, 2020

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The Committee members were informed that at the Inaugural meeting of the Board held on September 14, 2020, Trustee Betty Edel was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Chris Broughton was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee. Trustee Edel welcomed everyone to the first Student Advisory Committee meeting for the 2020/2021 school year.

2. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Student Representative from College Churchill volunteered to Chair the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Committee members approved the Agenda of December 15, 2020, as distributed.

4. WSD 2021/2022 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Committee members received an overview on the Budget Consultation for the 2021/2022 school year.

Committee members were informed that the Budget is developed based on the WSD Strategic Plan that aligns with the vision to be engaged, confident, inspired and successful learners. The Committee members were informed that the budget includes:

- Students being provided a comprehensive education with equitable access and diverse opportunities and programs.
- Learning Outcomes to further improve schools attendance and achievements, Addressing Barriers to Learning developing initiatives and innovative approaches to address needs and accessibility of students.
- Employing qualified caring and competent staff who are dedicated to the vision, purpose and values of Winnipeg School Division.
- Practicing sustainable development addressing environmental social and economic issues.
- Building relationships with our community by communicating and collaborating with a variety of organizations. Managing tax dollars responsibly to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

Committee members were informed that the Board is committed to obtaining feedback from school communities, parent councils, residents and staff groups for the 2021/2022 budget. The District Advisory meetings will provide student representatives with an opportunity to share feedback, ideas and questions with the trustees in their local area.

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Committee members were informed that this year, the members of the Board are interested in receiving feedback on the following areas:

- Does your school have the resources it requires to fulfil its educational mandate? If not, what additional resources are needed?
- What is the most important issue for your school?

Committee members discussed the budget questions outlined in the brochure. Committee members recommended that more water bottle filling stations be available in the schools. Committee members also suggested that better wifi and technology such as laptops and ipads would be helpful to complete school assignments. Committee members agreed that the most important issue for their schools was the need for better access to wifi and reliable technology to support remote learning. Committee members also agreed that additional rules for wearing masks on school property and ensuring proper social distancing protocols are being practiced outdoors and after school hours. Committee members also raised the concern that the colder weather and current Covid protocols may cause some concerns for schools to have students line up outside upon arrival to school. Trustee Edel informed Committee members that their concerns and feedback were very helpful and that the issues presented would be brought to the Board of Trustees.

5. RENAMING OF CECIL RHODES SCHOOL

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees approved a motion on October 5, 2020, that the administration begin a consultation process to engage students, parents/guardians and members of the community on the interest of renaming Cecil Rhodes School and that the results of the consultation be provided to the Board of Trustees no later than March 15th, 2021.

Trustee Edel informed Committee members the request to review the name of Cecil Rhodes School was in response to a petition with 1,700 signatures requesting that the Board of Trustees consider a name change. Trustee Edel informed Committee members that while the history of Cecil Rhodes includes an acknowledgement of business contributions and achievements, he is also known for his involvement and support in politics which upheld segregationist policies against non-white citizens of South Africa.

Committee members were informed that the administration is in the process of obtaining feedback from a variety of stakeholders. The consultation process will include current students attending Cecil Rhodes School as well as former students. The students will receive the history of Cecil Rhodes and have an opportunity to discuss the name of the school and share different perspectives.

The administration will also be consulting with staff, parents, and the community to obtain feedback. The WSD website will provide an opportunity for people to complete a survey where they will be able to vote and provide feedback.

Committee members discussed the need to rename Cecil Rhodes School and agreed that information would be required to make an informed decision before providing their opinions. The Committee agreed it was an important issue and that a school name should reflect the community.

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Committee members were encouraged to discuss this matter with their respective student councils and submit their feedback to the Board of Trustees.

6. SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees received presentations, petitions and correspondence from individuals requesting the removal of SRO's in schools mainly due to their role, and interactions with students.

As a result, the Board of Trustees approved a motion that the School Resource Officer Program (SRO) be referred to the Finance/Personnel Committee for discussion. On November 16, 2020, the Board of Trustees gave direction to the administration to develop a comprehensive consultation process to evaluate the SRO program.

Committee members were informed that the administration is in the process of developing a survey to obtain feedback from students, staff and parents/guardians. A third party will be retained to consult with WSD community members and organizations to collect and compile feedback on the SRO Program.

Trustee Edel informed Committee members that as an indigenous woman growing up in the North End of Winnipeg, the community did not have a positive relationship with the Winnipeg Police. Trustee Edel informed Committee members that the intention that having SRO's in the schools would assist in building relationships with the schools and in the community and help students to feel safe at school.

Committee members discussed the SRO program and many student representatives commented that they felt that having officers in the schools may cause anxiety for some students. Committee members suggested that having social workers or other community workers in the schools may be more appropriate than the SRO's.

7. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS

SCHOOL REPORTS

Student representatives from the following schools provided a written report on school activities: (attached)

- Grant Park High School
- Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute
- St. John's High School

8. GUIDELINES FOR BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Committee members reviewed a copy of the Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees for information. Committee members were encouraged to direct any questions to the Board and Community Liaison Officer.

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9. DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE DATES

Committee members were informed the next Student Advisory Committee meeting will be held in February (T.B.D.) to continue discussions on the 2021-2022 Budget and to provide feedback to the Board of Trustees before March 15, 2021.

In Attendance:

Voting Representative

Grant Park High School
Daniel McIntyre Collegiate
Elmwood High School
Gordon Bell High School
Sisler High School
Children of the Earth High School
Argyle Alternative High School
Tec Voc High School
College Churchill

Administration

Julie Smerchanski, Director
Patricia Mainville, Principal Argyle Alternative High School
Vinh Huynh, Principal Gordon Bell High School
Josephine Audino, Principal College Churchill
Tarin Howard, Recording Secretary

Trustees

Betty Edel
Chris Broughton (Regrets)

Regrets

Churchill High School
Kelvin High School
R.B. Russell High School
St. John's High School
Winnipeg Adult Education Centre

Grant Park High School Report

In the past four months, the Student Council has organized:

- Halloween spirit week
- Halloween themed coloring contest for middle school students
- School wide survey asking the students about their personal experience with school during the pandemic
- Winter Donation Drives consisting of a food drive, winter clothing drive, and toonie drive for toys
- Virtual workouts are taking place each day for 5 weeks for all staff or students (started on December 1)
- Winter spirit week
- Holiday themed candy guessing contest (3 winners; 1 from middle school, 1 from grade 9-10, and 1 from grade 11-12)

Thank you,

Chloe Capan

Report from Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute

Daniel McIntyre's Student Council has hosted two Spirit Weeks: one for the end of Quad 1, and one before the start of winter break. Restricted by COVID-19 regulations, we visited Wellington School, an elementary school, as elves and with a teacher as Santa Claus, and presented the kids with gifts. Additionally, we put up posters around the school thanking the staff working at school, which was received warmly. Although we haven't achieved much, I believe that we have done a great job considering how restricted we are.

Thanks,
Veni Martinez.

St. John's High School Report

During this pandemic, students of St. John's High School, have been challenged by all the unfortunate events that happened during this school year. It is our senior year in high school and we are not able to do many events such as sports, attend games, or hold spirit week/grade wars. Although we had many consequences that came with the pandemic, with the support of our teachers we were able to maintain some normalcy in our school lives. We really appreciate our dance teacher continuing the dance team—with social distancing—and also having a spirit week with daily themes like pajama day and ugly Christmas sweater day.

As for our academics, being in cohorts meant fewer people in the classroom. Although it is a struggle not to be with majority of our friends, the environment is much safer and we are provided more of our personal space. This ended up being a positive, as it was a great way for students to have a one on one talk with our teachers, and we were able to ask questions with immediate feedback.

Mental health has been a major concern and challenge for students this school year. To our benefit though, there is more time for students to take advantage of for homework. As well, our teachers are always by our side presenting us with meditation to help clear our thoughts, relieve stress, and pressure. They gave students advice and opportunities to succeed during the school year. Without their help, we wouldn't be able to go forward without them.

Thank you for letting us share our experience with you so far during this challenging school year.

Sincerely, Shane Pangan and Sonima Yin
Student Representatives, St. John's High School