

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1-2020

To the Chair and Members
Winnipeg Public School Board:

February 19, 2020

The Student Advisory Committee reports as follows:

1. 2020/2021 DRAFT BUDGET

The Committee received an overview of the 2020/2021 Draft Budget. The Committee was informed that on January 30, 2020, the Province of Manitoba announced funding for public education. The Committee was informed that the Manitoba government will increase funding for public schools by more than \$6.6 million for the 2020/2021 school year. The Committee was informed that school divisions also raise revenue through local education property taxes. The Committee was were informed that the Manitoba government is again requesting that school divisions limit increases to education property taxes to a maximum of two per cent for the 2020/2021 school year.

The Committee was informed that the enrollment has decreased by approximately 350 students which has contributed to a reduction in provincial funding. The Committee was also informed that the province has announced a 15% reduction in administrative positions.

The Committee received an overview on the program and services not mandated by the province. In response to an enquiry, the Committee was informed that the Division offers a full day Kindergarten Program and also provides a half day of program for residents in the Division. The province only funds the half day Kindergarten program.

In response to a student enquiry, the Committee was informed that the special education programs, resources for people with disabilities and Educational Assistants will not be affected for the 2020/2021 school year since the Board is proposing a stand pat budget which maintains all programs and services in the WSD.

2. PROVINCIAL K-12 EDUCATION REVIEW

The Committee was informed that the Commission would be releasing the report to the Minister of Education and Training in February 2020. It is anticipated that the report would be publically released in March 2020, which will include recommendations on the key topic areas identified by the Province. School Boards would not have the ability to provide input on the recommendations and would be obligated to implement the recommendations within the timelines established by the Province. The report and recommendations will be shared with parents indicating the next steps to be in compliance with the direction from the Minister of Education.

Committee members were informed that an update on the recommendations outlined in the report will be provided at the next meeting.

3. NUTRITION IN SCHOOLS

At a meeting held November 20, 2019, the Committee agreed to discuss nutrition in schools.

The Committee was provided with Policy IGAEA – Nutrition which outlines the Division's responsibility to promote and support nutrition in schools by ensuring that healthy food choices predominate in school cafeterias, breakfast and lunch programs, canteens, vending machines, snack programs, fundraising activities and school-wide events. The policy is in compliance with the Manitoba School Nutrition Handbook.

In response to an enquiry regarding vending machines in schools, Committee members were informed that the Division tenders vending machines in schools including the products available. Committee members suggested that plastic water bottles in schools also be reviewed and eliminated.

The Committee was informed that Sisler High School has a program "Ban the Bottle" and would like to have the vending machines removed from the school. The Committee was informed that some schools are fundraising to support the costs of water filling stations rather than fountains. The Committee was informed that sustainable development is part of the Division's five-year plan which is also identified as one of the Strategic Priorities.

4. COMPOSTING IN SCHOOLS

At a previous meeting, the Committee agreed to discuss composting in schools.

The Committee was provided with a copy of Education for Sustainable Development Plan for 2019-2021. The Committee was informed that schools in the Division are moving towards composting. The Committee was informed that each school can determine how to compost and that the proper facility is needed to compost.

The Committee was informed that the WSD is one of the leaders in sustainability not only with composting but also with changing to different lightbulbs and changing water taps which leads to saving energy and money.

The Committee was informed that Grant Park High School has a well implemented composting program however the school is experiencing some difficulty in maintaining the program. The Committee was also informed that the compost is used by the horticulture program.

In response to a student enquiry, The Committee was informed that the Division supports climate change and climate action. The Committee was informed that parents are encouraged to contact the school to confirm student participation at a climate event.

5. MUSIC/ARTS/HONOUR CHOIR

At the request of the Committee, the topic of music, arts and honour choir was added to the agenda for discussion.

A student representative expressed concern regarding the availability of volunteers to organize the honour choir. Committee members were informed that consideration will be given to providing additional opportunities next school year.

Respectfully Submitted,

JAMIE DUMONT
Trustee Representative

IN ATTENDANCE:

Student Representatives:

Collège Churchill
Churchill High School
Gordon Bell High School
Grant Park High School
École Kelvin High School
R.B. Russell High School
Sisler High School

Regrets:

Argyle Alternative
Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute
Elmwood High School

Administration:

Rob Riel, Director of Indigenous Education
Thérèse Deleurme, Recording Secretary, Board of Trustees

Trustee:

Trustee Arlene Reid

Regrets:

Trustee Jamie Dumont