



NEWS RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division passes budget for 2017/2018

March 13, 2017 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees has approved a final budget for the 2017/2018 school year. Taxpayers within WSD boundaries will see an average 3.89 percent increase, or \$52 a year, on their property taxes based on an average residential home valued at \$203,900. As of today, this is the second lowest dollar value increase among Winnipeg urban school divisions.

The final budget approved by the Board of Trustees includes expenditures of \$406,594,200 for the fiscal period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. Instructional expenditures account for 81 percent of the total budget.

“The WSD Board of Trustees consults extensively with our constituents, more than any other level of government, in our commitment to meet the unique needs of our community,” said WSD Board of Trustees Chair Sherri Rollins. “The result is a collaborative budget that meets the education and support needs of Winnipeg School Division students while limiting the potential impact of increased property tax on home owners.”

Popular programs, although not Provincially funded, will remain in place for the coming year. These include programs and services such as Nursery, Library Technical Assistants, School Resource Officers, Adult Crossing Guards, Summer School, Off Campus Programs, Nutrition, and Therapy Services to support students. While these programs have become part of the standard of education in WSD, the division is not required to provide them under the provisions of the Public Schools Act. The total cost to taxpayers for these community programs is \$13,032,850.

The Board has approved \$1,102,000 in cost savings to achieve a balanced budget without impacting programming for students. These include \$473,400 in transportation; \$151,200 in divisional operations and administration; and \$387,400 in regular instruction. In addition, the Board has approved raising fees on permits, bringing them in line with other divisions in Winnipeg, for use of WSD facilities for an increase in revenue of \$250,000.

“The number of students diagnosed with Autism who are entering Winnipeg School Division is continuing to rise,” said Trustee Rollins. “To support these students, staff and families, we are pleased to allocate \$350,000 for an Autism early intervention team and Autism assistive technology.” The Board has also approved \$119,500 for an Arts equity adjustment.

WSD operates with one of the leanest administration teams in the Province, while providing direction, support and service to the largest school divisions. WSD administrative costs are second lowest by cost per pupil among all school divisions, equaling 2.7 percent of total spending, well below the 3.5 percent mandated limit for all large urban school divisions in the province.

“WSD reviews all of its programs and services on an annual basis as part of its fiscal responsibility to manage tax dollars while continuing to deliver programs that improve student success,” said WSD Finance Committee Chair Chris Broughton. “Over the past ten years, WSD has achieved cost savings in areas such as heating and electrical costs, water usage, reducing paper and reorganizing the leadership team.”

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.

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