

**STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1-2018**

To the Chair and Members  
Winnipeg Public School Board:

March 6, 2018

The Student Advisory Committee reports as follows:

**1. 2018/2019 Draft Budget Discussion**

The Committee was provided with an overview of the 2018/2019 Draft Budget.

The Committee was informed that on February 8, 2017, the Province of Manitoba announced funding for public education. The increase for all of Manitoba for 2018/2019 is .5% or \$6.6 million dollars. The Committee was informed that the portion of the funding allocated to the Division is tied to the number of students enrolled in the Division and equals an increase of .3% or \$600,000 over last year's funding.

The Committee was informed that the Division's costs increase every year due to inflation on required expenses such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance Premiums and Payroll Taxes. The Committee was informed that even with the Province's introduction of wage freezes for public sector employees, including teachers, salary increments earned by Division staff must be accounted for in the 2018/2019 budget.

The Committee was informed that the Minister encouraged school boards to limit the special requirement increase to 2%. The Committee was informed that special requirement is based on the school year and property taxes are based on a calendar year.

The Committee was informed that one option is a 2% special requirement or 3.29% property tax and is based on proposed additions for Health and Safety enhancements, additional resources for program and policy analysis and no reductions to existing programs and services.

The Committee was informed that an alternative option is a 2% special requirement or 3.29% property tax increase and is based on proposed additions for additional resources for program and policy analysis, financial software expenditures, building maintenance, school specialty programming promotional signage, additional teaching support for the Aerospace Program at Tec Voc High School, Health and Safety enhancements, online course delivery and school program additions such as additional funding to support students in care who are 18 to 21 years of age, Morningstar program, Inner City Science Centre. The Committee was informed that proposed reductions to this option include discontinuing the School Resource Officer program, Full-Day Kindergarten program reduction to half-day, converting summer school program to an online course delivery model, reduction of travel budgets and vacancy management.

The Committee was informed that a third option is a 3% special requirement or 3.71% property tax increase and is based on proposed additions such as additional resources for program and policy analysis, building maintenance, school specialty programming promotional signage, additional teaching support for the Aerospace Program at Tec Voc High School, Health and Safety enhancements, online course delivery and school program additions such as additional funding to support students in care who are 18 to 21 years of age, Morningstar program, Inner City Science Centre. This option is based on no reductions to existing programs and services.

The Committee was informed that a 2% special requirement or 3.29% increase on property taxes for education is approximately \$45 per year on the average assessed home value of \$214,200.

The Committee was informed that at a meeting held October 2, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a motion that the Division enter into a three-year contract with the City of Winnipeg for the School Resource Officer (SRO) program for the period September 2017 to June 2020.

The Division, the Province and the City of Winnipeg are each responsible for paying one-third of the program, and although not required under the Public Schools Act, the Division is required to increase the Special Levy to support this valuable program and provide the much needed resources that keep our school communities safe for our students.

Although the Province informed the Division that no further funding would be forthcoming, the Board has requested a meeting with the Minister of Education and the Minister of Justice to discuss the importance of the School Resource Officer Program, the financial impact on school divisions and the importance of the Department of Justice to financially support the educational component of justice through the SROs in the public school system and community.

The Committee was informed that the current provincial government has suggested that a review of school division amalgamation will take place after the 2018 municipal elections.

The Committee was informed that amalgamation may eliminate some of Manitoba's 37 school boards and would cut administration costs and save tax dollars, although it may achieve minimal savings at the cost of meeting localized education needs.

The Committee was informed that the members of the Board will continue to seek clarification from the Minister of Education on the intent of amalgamation and share concerns on the impact an amalgamation will have on the Division's ability to provide unique programs and services that are required to support students and community.

The Committee was informed that the Division faces further challenges as downtown growth is promoted under the Community Revitalization Tax Increment Financing Act (TIF). The School Division receives less property taxation for properties identified under TIF designation.

## **2. ATMs in Schools / Interac Payments**

At the previous meeting, the Committee agreed to discuss ATMs in Schools / Interac payments. The Committee was informed that as a result of previous discussions at Student Advisory Committee meetings, regarding automated banking machines, administration has obtained information regarding the viability of placing Automated Banking Machines (ATM) in schools.

The Committee was informed that the cost to acquire an ATM is approximately \$4,000. In addition to the cost of the machine, whether purchased outright or leased, the customer is responsible for the costs of installation including electrical and internet or telephone communication hook-ups, anchoring/placement, and security. The replenishment of cash to the machine is usually the responsibility of the customer although some third-party services may be available. The customers generate revenues from the machine by charging a user transaction fee which ranges approximately between \$1.00 and \$1.75.

The Committee was informed that administration has previously contacted high schools in the Winnipeg School Division and the cafeterias in most schools are operated through a food service contractor who offers interac as a method of payment. At least one school indicated that a cash-back option is available with an approximate \$1.50 charge.

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The Committee was informed that in addition to the transaction fee charged at ATMs, the user is also often charged a processing fee by their own financial institution that can range from \$1.50 to \$2.00.

The Committee indicated that safety concerns may be an issue if ATMs were placed in schools. The Committee also discussed concerns such as students having access to funds and the ability to withdraw large amounts of money.

It was also noted that security for ATMs is becoming more critical both for the machines themselves and as a result of card reader devices that are being placed on ATMs to steal banking card information.

The Committee agreed that ATMs in schools would not benefit students and may pose safety concerns, however, the Committee agreed that mobile debit machines for payments such as school fees and school merchandise would be convenient.

### **3. Gender Neutral Washrooms**

At the previous meeting, the Committee agreed to discuss Gender Neutral Washrooms in Division schools.

The Committee was informed that in 2013, the Division embarked on a multi-year renovation program to provide gender neutral washrooms in all of our facilities.

The Committee was informed that all schools in the Division are able to provide access to a washroom for students or staff who are seeking a gender neutral facility. This type of accommodation is typically provided through re-purposing of an existing washroom facility to a gender neutral use.

### **4. Student Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities and Volunteering**

At the previous meeting, the Committee agreed to discuss student participation in extra-curricular activities and volunteering.

The Committee shared methods that may increase the awareness of extra-curricular activities and volunteer opportunities for students. The Committee indicated that volunteer opportunities have been shared by school guidance counsellors, announced over the Public Announcement System and traditional methods such as posters and email. A student representative from Sisler High School informed the Committee that the student council has been successful in reaching out to students by utilizing Telegram Channel (app) to promote extra-curricular activities and volunteer opportunities.

The Committee discussed the effectiveness of approaching students and making personal connections in order to have discussions to increase student interest in extra-curricular activities and volunteering.

Trustee Broughton informed the Committee of an opportunity to invite Volunteer Services of Manitoba to the next Student Advisory Committee or arrange visits to individual schools in order to continue the discussion.

**5. Future Agenda Items**

The Committee previously discussed and agreed to add the following topics for discussion at a future meeting:

- Nutrition in Schools (cafeteria food, pricing)
- Weapons at School (School Safety)

The Committee agreed to also add the following topics for discussion at the next meeting:

- Use of Online Learning Platforms
- Integrating Gender Education into the Health Curriculum

Respectfully Submitted,

CHRIS BROUGHTON  
Trustee Representative

**Student Representatives:**

Churchill High School  
Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute  
Elmwood High School  
Grant Park High School  
Kelvin High School  
Sisler High School

**Regrets:**

Children of the Earth High School  
Gordon Bell High School  
R.B. Russell High School  
St. John's High School  
Tec Voc High School

**Administration:**

Doug Edmond, Director of Research, Planning & Technology Services  
Emil Contreras, Vice-Principal, Churchill High School  
Robyn Harrington, Staff Advisor, Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute  
Helena Tessier, Recording Secretary

**Trustees:**

Arlene Reid  
Chris Broughton