

# Lansdowne Parent Council

## Monday January 22, 2024

**Virtual Meeting:** <https://meet.google.com/kmn-zhux-apg>

*Present:* Jessica Mayor-Rodrigues, Ashley Morrison, Rick de Guzman, Andrea Harrison, Wendy Zebrasky, Brent Johnson, Debbie Purganan, Cazrina Alexandra "Reina" Chuacuco, Michelle Warren-Zizman

*Regrets Sent:*

*Minute taker:* Wendy Zebrasky

### **1. Attendance, Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement**

- Meeting called to order 6:33p.m.

### **2. Review of Meeting Agenda/ Approval of past minutes**

- Approval of October 23/23 minutes. Moved by Rick. Seconded by Andrea – CARRIED
- Approval of the December 4/23 minutes have been deferred to the Mar. 4<sup>th</sup> meeting

### **3. School Admin Update (Jessica & Ashley)**

- See attached Admin report (Appendix A).
- Changes in Grants. Admin applied for many grants and will continue to follow up with application.
- Parents brought up a point about concerns about change of funding for the arts.

### **4. Presidents, Treasurer and Vice-President Updates (Andrea & Rick)**

- **Treasurer's Report**
  - Fundraising Account: \$13,431.23
  - Lunch Program: \$28,557.46
  - Discussion of transferring money from fundraising acct to school acct earlier than end-of-year.
  - Deadline is coming up for the March Wishlist. Teachers to send in wish list as well as school wide wishlist.
  - Update on Freezer/ Fridge: Repair/ Maintenance was done in December 2023
  - Mary should look into the ideal fridge for lunch program in case they need to purchase one in the future, to minimize replacement time and to estimate cost.
- **Lunch Program Pilot Project**

- 5 schools are taking part in the pilot project. Consultations to happen in the Spring.
- Lots of concerns regarding this pilot project being implemented across the division
  - Who will oversee and run the lunch program.. admin?
  - We currently have Mary, our Lunch Program Coordinator and have 23 lunch hour workers
  - What if we do not have enough interest from EAs to work the lunch program- there will not be enough coverage for the classrooms. We also now have the portable classrooms who will need coverage
  - Can we hire outside people to come in? Right now many of our lunch hour workers are parents and family of our students, who rely on this for supplemental income and to see their children because they work during the evenings
  - Will this mean we lose Mary as our lunch time coordinator?
  - Will we still be able to offer hot lunch for our students 3 times a week?
  - Will there be milk program available?
  - Some of our EAs do not get a sub if they call in sick, then we will be short staffed during lunch hour
  - We should put out an invitation for Betty Edel, school trustee to join in on our next meeting to share our concerns with her
  - Parents representing North District (Feb. 8), French Advisory (Feb. 20) and Inclusive Advisory (Mar. 7) to bring this up at upcoming meetings
- Media links shared (Appendix B).

- **Holiday Lunch (School staff and lunch program)**

- Catered lunch from Baraka went great, well received by staff.
- Lunch program had their potluck and this was also a success.
- Admin was grateful and happy with their gifts.

## 5. WSD Advisory Meetings

- **WSD North District**
  - Next meeting Feb. 8
- **WSD French Immersion Advisory Committee**
  - Next meeting Feb. 20
- **Inclusive Advisory Committee**
  - Next meeting Mar. 7

## 6. Committee Updates

- **Performing Arts Committee**

- Summary of 2024/25 arts-focussed budget submission to WSD Board of Trustees on behalf of LPC (Appendix C).

## **7. Other Business / Round Table**

- February is a busy month: I Love to Read, Black History Month, Festival Du Voyageur.
- **MOTION:** To approve an expense of up to \$300.00 for 28 \$10.00 gift cards, for each classroom Nursery to Grade 8, for I love to Read month. Motioned by Debbie; Seconded by Rick. – CARRIED
- Next meeting will be on Monday March 4 at 630pm – Virtually. Link will be sent out.

**Meeting Adjourned** – 7:50pm. Moved by Rick. Seconded by Andrea. – CARRIED

Following pages:

- Appendix A: School administration report
- Appendix B: Media articles regarding WSD school lunch pilot
- Appendix C: 24/25 Budget Submission on Behalf of Lansdowne Parent Council Performing Arts Committee

## **Admin. Report for December**

**It is hard to believe that December is already here!**

**November was a busy month at École Lansdowne with some of the highlights being;**

- The girls volleyball team won the Divisional championship!
- The Lockyer Boys presented live to our grades N-7.
- The Royal Winnipeg Ballet performed live for our grades 1-6 students.
- Grades 5-8 students are taking part in MYRCA.
- Report cards and Tri-Conferences.
- Leadership students collected Koats for Kids, are collecting for Harvest (until December 15th) and continue to help with our younger students as lunch buddies.
- Grades 5/6 have started recess buddies.
- Picture day and bus ridership.
- Grade 4's and 5's entered in the CBC competition.
- We have 32 students currently registered for the Quebec 2025 trip. We are currently running an Epicure fundraiser.
- We are currently planning a rejuvenation project for the courtyard which will focus on play based outdoor learning and accessibility (we are anticipating this project to cost upwards of \$80 000 and will include; shaded areas, learning spaces, seating, shed, equipment, mud kitchen, shrubs, trees, loose parts and clothing/equipment for all weather).
- Students in grades 4-8 took part in the OurSchool survey. Students were asked questions regarding sense of belonging, well-being and school experiences. We have not yet received the data.
- We placed/received a school clothing order. We are looking to run another clothing order in the Spring.
- Constable Hees presented to the grades 4-8 students on internet safety.

- We would like to thank our families for attending the Tri-Conferences. The Scholastic book fair was a huge success, raising over \$2000 for the library.

**Upcoming events in December and January include;**

- Boys and Girls basketball-Dec, Jan, Feb.
- Track and field-practices and meets will begin in the New Year.
- N/K winter concert on December 5<sup>th</sup> (10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.).
- Grades 1-3 Concert on Thursday at 12:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. This year babysitting is offered via our leadership students.
- Matt Mousseau (Indigenous Leader from the Division) will be doing some teaching and learning with students and staff around smudging and in the New Year sacred fires.
- Spirit of Giving- Bazaar will take place on December 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Parents/ staff to donate any new or slightly used items. Students can purchase these items for a minimal cost. All proceeds will go towards families in need. Leadership will help wrap the gifts.
- Teachers will be participating in classroom review meetings to address/discuss; student growth, needs and forward planning.
- Portables are now complete, we are just awaiting final inspections (City and Division) and move in date to occur before the Winter Break.
- We will be opening a new grade 1 classroom, parents were notified and Mme Khady Niang has begun building relationships and working with students.
- In January- the grades 3-8 students will participate in Concours d'art Oratoire.

As always, we are truly blessed to have such a wonderful and supportive school community.

Jess and Ashley

## Appendix B: Media articles regarding WSD school lunch pilot

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/winnipeg\\_sd\\_winnipeg\\_sd-studentsupport-activity-7155226870542749696-04bX?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/winnipeg_sd_winnipeg_sd-studentsupport-activity-7155226870542749696-04bX?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop)

Pilot program in five elementary schools gives families a break from lunch-supervision fees There may be no such thing as a free lunch, but families from a handful of city schools are getting free supervision over the noon-hour. A new pilot program in the Winnipeg School Division is doing away with fees for lunch supervision in five elementary schools this winter to reduce barriers to attendance and spare families an extra monthly expense amid a cost-of-living crisis. “What we’re really trying to do is not nickel-and-dime parents for all sorts of things that should be under the umbrella of public education,” said [Matt Henderson](#), chief superintendent of WSD. A total of \$200,000 has been earmarked to pay support staff, who will take on supervision duties in lieu of parent advisory council recruits, to monitor kindergarten-to-Grade 6 classrooms for the remainder of the school year. Fort Rouge’s École LaVérendrye was the first to get rid of its fees at the start of the month. The pilot is being phased-in across the division in the coming weeks. Centennial’s École Sacré-Coeur, Shaughnessy Park School in Shaughnessy Heights, Carpathia School in Sir John Franklin and Minto’s Isaac Brock School are all involved.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/01/19/pilot-program-in-five-elementary-schools-gives-families-a-break-from-lunch-supervision-fees>

### **Pilot program in five elementary schools gives families a break from lunch-supervision fees**

There may be no such thing as a free lunch, but families from a handful of city schools are getting free supervision over the noon-hour. A new pilot program in the Winnipeg School Division is doing away with fees for lunch supervision in five elementary schools this winter to reduce barriers to attendance and spare families an extra monthly expense amid a cost-of-living crisis. “What we’re really trying to do is not nickel-and-dime parents for all sorts of things that should be under the umbrella of public education,” said Matt Henderson, chief superintendent of WSD. A total of \$200,000 has been earmarked to pay support staff, who will take on supervision duties in lieu of parent advisory council recruits, to monitor kindergarten-to-Grade 6 classrooms for the remainder of the school year. Fort Rouge’s École LaVérendrye was the first to get rid of its fees at the start of the month. The pilot is being phased-in across the division in the coming weeks. Centennial’s École Sacré-Coeur, Shaughnessy Park School in Shaughnessy Heights, Carpathia School in Sir John Franklin and Minto’s Isaac Brock School are all involved. “The norm now is that both parents are working, so it’s not feasible for a parent to pick up kids during the day and feed them lunch,” said Melissa Dupuis, a mother of two in the division. The status-quo fee schedules — remnants of generations ago when mothers were typically homemakers with flexible schedules — varies from school to school. It costs Dupuis about \$700

every academic year so that her children, now enrolled in Grades 1 and 3, can spend the entirety of the school day at LaVérendrye. Change is “long overdue,” she said. PACs often run lunch-supervision programs, meaning volunteer caregivers are tasked with hiring staff and overseeing programs for their children and their peers. Henderson said PACs have expressed concerns about the time-intensive work in recent years. He estimates it would cost roughly \$5 million to have universal no-fee lunch supervision in the division, the largest in the province, with about 15,000 early years students enrolled in 60 schools. Division administration is planning to survey families involved in the pilot program and bring a recommendation forward to the board of trustees. A permanent end to the fees could begin as early as 2024-25. “We’re confident we’re going to unroll this (across the division); it’s just a matter of how quickly we can,” Henderson said. The superintendent noted that both St. James-Assiniboia and Seven Oaks divisions, where he previously worked, have already made the “ideological decision” to stop asking parents to pay for the line item. WSD provides subsidies on a case-by-case basis and currently covers the full cost of monitoring children throughout the entirety of the day at William Whyte Community School, located in one of the lowest-income neighbourhoods in the city. People for Public Education included ending school fees on its list of resolutions for Manitoba’s kindergarten-to-Grade 12 system in 2024.

“Annual fees are charged to caregivers to pay for basic learning essentials (yearbooks, supplies). These fees must stop. School fundraising to supplement school expenses also must stop,” the advocacy group said in a report released this week.

## Appendix C: 24/25 Budget Submission on Behalf of Lansdowne Parent Council Performing Arts Committee

Gmail - 24/25 Budget Submission on Behalf of Lansdowne Parent Council Performing Arts Committee 2024-01-22, 6:44 PM



Brent Johnson <chair.lpcpab@gmail.com>

### **24/25 Budget Submission on Behalf of Lansdowne Parent Council Performing Arts Committee**

**Brent Johnson** <chair.lpcpab@gmail.com> Fri, Dec 15, 2023 at 4:08 PM To: Brenda Lapointe <brlapointe@wsd1.org>

Cc: Tamara Kuly <tkuly@wsd1.org>, Betty Edel <bedel@wsd1.org>, davis@wsd1.org, aevangelista@wsd1.org, jdumont@wsd1.org, lbrothers@wsd1.org, kheppner@wsd1.org, Rebecca Chambers <rchambers@wsd1.org>, pjavate@wsd1.org

Dear Brenda and WSD Board of Trustees,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in preparation for developing the 24/25 school year budget, I am pleased to submit the following:

I am writing to share concerns that I have experienced and have heard from contacts in the Lansdowne as well as other WSD school communities. These are relatively simple things that are limiting opportunities and experiences for our students, and creating inequities that need not exist though in some cases that inequity is itself a result of changes made under the guide of equity.

I consistently hear, and hear often from educators this year, is that teachers cannot access the funds needed for the most basic of things needed to run their programs. This especially applies to arts programs where specialized equipment and supplies are needed. For example, there has been much chatter and upset this year over a complete lack of clarity from the Division with regards to band instrument repair budget. In previous years teachers were told what their annual repair budget is, so at least they have a concrete budget to work with. This year, teachers were told they would be allocated \$32 per band student for repairs (which, by the way, is less than 50% of the cost of most repairs in my experience - so you can see how dire this is), and worse yet, later provided what appears to be an arbitrary allocation much less than that \$32/student. In all of this, it is also important to keep in mind that nearly none of these instruments are being cleaned over the summer (which is standard practice in most other places, should be in WSD too) due to this same lack of budget. In a post-Covid world, this is even more upsetting. We should be striving to provide clean, sanitary, and serviceable instruments so our learners can be successful and not fighting with substandard equipment. WSD's fleet of instruments is generally much older compared to other school divisions as well, further compounding this challenge as older instruments are less reliable and require more maintenance.

Another concern is budget allocations for arts course-related supplies and music purchases, which have also not kept up with program growth and inflation. Contrary to any equitable practice, some schools are now being forced to charge a supply fee to cope with the resulting



shortage of repair and supply budgets, which immediately changes the equation for access to arts education and adds a financial barrier that should not exist.

A fast-growing school like Lansdowne is also struggling to provide for its growing student body. I have had to personally rent a U-Haul truck to go and collect donated band instruments to try and keep up with our growing student #'s. This is a public school system, and we should not have to rely on this level of charity and volunteerism to provide for students. This also creates further inequity because not every school has a parent with the knowledge, connections, and flexibility of time to accomplish this. As a result, and the small number of instruments that the division funded this year through the annual tender, we have just barely enough, in some cases barely playable instruments, for the learners at Lansdowne. Next year with continued growth, we will be short again unless something changes.

Related to this, I have heard over the summer and through this fall from many music educators that the divisional tender process has become wildly inconsistent, and many of the items offered on the approved list are either inappropriate or flat out wrong, and as a result precious funds are being wasted by incorrect items being ordered. In the past, there was an arts consultant who would shepherd and supervise this whole process, and who could also work to get resources to where they are needed most. Now, with that position eliminated long ago, replaced with a program lead who lacks the experience and knowledge to do this effectively, and also lacks the time due to the position only being half-time, there is much waste occurring and frustration as a result. We can and should be much more careful with limited funds so that they can be used effectively and efficiently to better meet the needs that exist.

Another concern is divisional funding for arts experiences. This has been brought forward to me by several music educators this year. Under the guise of equity, teachers are being denied funding to attend festivals and learning experiences with their students that were previously funded as a result of all programs being limited to a total of two experiences, again under the guise of equity. What is not being shared, however, is the fact that most band and choir festivals are organized and run by non-profit organizations and are very accessible in terms of cost - flat rate pricing of \$200 - \$400 per group, depending on the event) whereas most dance-related events are run by FOR-profit dance studios who charge exorbitant PER-STUDENT fees closer to \$50/student, so a group of 20 students costs 3x - 5x as much, or more in this case. Why are we denying students valuable learning and growth experiences? Why is funding not being allocated based on a model of number of students participating, and taking in to account the amount of arts programming being offered by schools - Lansdowne has a wonderful team of music educators who work hard and value these experiences, but are now being limited by this, under the guise of equity. This is not equity, and needs to be addressed.

Additionally, I have heard from teachers, administrators, and parents in more than one school community that a lack of available busses, bus drivers, and budgets to pay for bussing as well as for associated sub coverage (in the case of specialists, especially), are limiting schools' ability to provide their students with curricular and cultural enrichment experiences - experiences that were impossible for three years thanks to Covid, but which are ever more crucial to student experience and growth as a result. This needs to be addressed.

Lastly, and I mentioned this in last year's budget consultation process, we should be approaching the 24-25 school year with the goal of no further staffing or programming cuts (a reminder that cuts have been necessary to balance the budget every year, except last year, for many prior years). Said cuts have resulted in the loss of many things WSD used to offer, and more recently have had direct impacts on staffing levels and therefore classroom and school supports. As one example, in a school division with 78 schools, there remain only six librarians;

some music programs have seen their staffing reduced by half, and cuts have also resulted in specialist teachers being forced to teach outside their areas of expertise, which has a direct impact on culture, morale, and ultimately staff retention at a time when there are staffing shortages in all areas and at all levels. Classrooms are becoming increasingly complex, yet EA support has been reduced to the point that even the most needy students don't have the support they need throughout the school day. At a time when students face greater mental health challenges than ever before thanks to Covid, guidance counselors have been cut at many schools leaving some schools with no guidance support at all. How can students be supported as they recover from the pandemic learning losses under these conditions?

Band, and music programs in general may be relatively expensive to run compared to other curricular courses, but are also vitally important. They provide a safe space for kids to learn, grow, and share positive experiences together in community. They teach artistry, vulnerability, resilience, compassion, and humanity. They are crucial, and better support is needed.

Thank you for your consideration. Please reach out to me with any questions or if you would like to discuss any of the above in more detail. I look forward to continued budget discussions at the next North and French Immersion Advisory Committee meetings.

Warmly,

--

Brent Johnson, *Chair*  
École Lansdowne Performing Arts Committee  
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