

# THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

## CENTRAL DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Monday, November 27, 2023

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#### 1. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Committee members stated that the students, staff, and communities of Winnipeg School Division are committed to truth and reconciliation through building relationships with Mother Earth, the original peoples of this land and the stories that bring us together. We acknowledge the place in which we gather is on Treaty 1 territory, the homeland of the Red River Métis and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Ininiwak and Dakota Oyate peoples.

#### 2. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

Committee members were informed that at the Inaugural meeting of the Board of Trustees held on September 11, 2023, Trustee Rebecca Chambers was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Perla Javate was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee.

The parent representative from Elmwood High School volunteered to Chair the meeting.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee members approved the agenda of November 27, 2023, as distributed.

#### 4. WSD 2024/2025 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Committee members were informed that on March 6, 2023, the Board of Trustees approved a budget for the 2023/2024 school year in the amount of \$454,832,200. Committee members were also informed that this budget was developed with the anticipation of a new education funding model by the Province of Manitoba. However, the Province later communicated that the implementation of the new funding model, initially expected for the 2023/2024 school year, would be delayed due to the need for further consultation. Committee members were informed that the funding model for the upcoming 2024/2025 Budget would adhere to the same formula as this current budget.

Committee members were informed that in preparation for the budget announcement, the Board is actively seeking input from parents/guardians on budget priorities by December 15, 2023, for consideration at the next meeting. The Board has requested feedback on priorities for schools and the community in the upcoming budget process, suggestions for program expansions in respective communities, and how budget resources could be more effectively distributed to reach those who need them the most.

Committee members were informed that the government is expected to announce funding details at the end of January. Committee members requested the distribution of the 2023/2024 Draft Budget to parent councils for both review and comparative evaluation. Committee members were informed that responses or questions posed during parent council meetings can be sent to Trustees or to the Board and Community Liaison Officer.

Committee members discussed the allocation of budget resources for cultural initiatives, expressing concerns about the lack of cultural activities in schools and advocated for a more substantial budget allocation. In response, Committee members were informed that there are budgets for cultural activities and were encouraged to provide feedback for consideration regarding opportunities to enhance and expand cultural programs within schools.

Committee members were informed about the absence of a funding formula for the current year and ongoing efforts were discussed regarding the potential raise of the special levy. Committee members discussed the government's restrictions on the special levy and acknowledged that, if granted the ability, the special levy could be used to expand programs and services. Committee members were also informed that 60% of the funding comes from the province and 40% comes from local taxation, and that all Divisions have been capped at 2%, which means there are different amounts of revenue per Division. Committee members were informed about the funding disparity in education between wealthy and less affluent areas, emphasizing that school divisions with more commercial property fare better financially, while others struggle due to fewer resources from modest homes. Committee members were informed that the Province is developing a new funding formula where wealthier individuals pay more taxes to address this inequality. Committee members were also informed that some neighbourhoods can benefit from the TIF, a civic funding program that offers significant property tax discounts for over two decades to properties that make substantial improvements, aiming to enhance and uplift the community.

## **5 LUNCH PROGRAM - UPDATE**

At a previous meeting, Committee members were informed that feedback from sixteen (16) schools indicated overall support for a flexible policy or guideline. Parent councils suggested that WSD provide assistance in staffing, training, finances, and human resources. Committee members were informed about insurance requirements for parent councils acting as employers, and it was confirmed that they would need to purchase their own coverage.

Committee members were also informed that administration is exploring the possibility of extending EA hours to support lunch programs, with plans to operate a pilot program for the lunch program at schools with the greatest need for support. The Board of Trustees agreed to defer Policy KMB – Parent Council Lunch Programs until after budget discussions have been completed.

A parent representative expressed disappointment at the lack of changes in the Draft Policy KMB – Parent Council Lunch Program, despite concerns raised by some schools. Committee members emphasized the importance of considering the impact on schools with limited EAs and the need for a systemic solution that caters to the diverse needs of the 79 schools in WSD.

Committee members were informed that Draft Policy KMB – Parent Council Lunch Program remained the same due to a pause in the process and that administration is exploring alternatives based on the feedback received from schools.

Committee members discussed the ongoing pressures faced by EAs, including the allocation of EAs during lunchtime and certain classroom needing coverage for students requiring support. Committee members were informed that there is potential alleviation through extending EA hours and that the plan is to convert all EAs from Levels A and B to Level C, allowing them to work and support students with diverse needs during both classroom and lunchtime, including introducing more flexibility in scheduling for activities like walking school buses and crossing guards. Committee members also discussed maximizing the use of existing resources, the possibility of a nutrition program, and the financial implications of a division-wide lunch program.

Committee members shared their experiences, including the struggle to collect lunch program fees from parents. Committee members were informed that the lunch program pilot program will address concerns and challenges faced by parent councils and schools. Committee members requested a description of the pilot program to present to the parent council and an update on the process of the pilot program.

Committee members were informed that five (5) schools will be chosen for the pilot program based on their current needs and challenges, with the aim of gathering essential information for a potential division-wide implementation, while emphasizing the need for careful consideration of financial constraints.

## **6. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS**

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

- Isaac Brock School
- Elmwood High School

## **7. GUIDELINES FOR BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Committee members were informed that the attached Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees, which align with the Public Schools Act, the Board of Trustees Procedural By-Law 1263, and relevant legislation and policies are provided for review.

## **8. COVID - UPDATE**

Committee members were informed that the Province of Manitoba is actively encouraging Manitobans to receive the updated COVID-19 vaccines as a crucial measure to safeguard themselves, their families, and communities during the impending respiratory virus season.

Committee members were informed that Public Health has recommended various precautions, including staying home when sick, practicing regular handwashing and sanitizing, covering coughs and sneezes, and maintaining the regular cleaning and disinfection of shared surfaces and objects.

Committee members were informed about the attached news release from the Province dated October 23, 2023, along with details about improved ventilation systems in schools.

## **9. SCHOOL GRANTS/PROPOSALS**

Committee members were informed that the Board and Community Liaison Office will be expanding to provide support to schools and parent councils by assisting with proposal writing for grants that are designated to support education programs and schools.

Committee members were informed to reach out to Ms. Brenda Lapointe, Board and Community Liaison Officer, Access and Privacy Coordinator, at 204-789-0469 or via email at [brlapointe@wsd1.org](mailto:brlapointe@wsd1.org) to request assistance or support.

## **10. NEW STRUCTURE/CLUSTERS**

Committee members were informed that, as of October 30, 2023, a new administrative structure has been put into effect for the 2023/2024 school year. Committee members were provided with a copy of the new structure, which consists of the Superintendent/CEO, six (6) Assistant Superintendents, and a Divisional Kookum. Committee members were also informed that the attached document includes details on the specific school assignments for each Assistant Superintendent, offering a comprehensive overview of the revised administrative framework.

## **11. LEAD IN DRINKING WATER TESTING AND MITIGATION RESULTS**

Committee members were informed that on June 7, 2023, the Province of Manitoba released the Lead in Drinking Water testing and mitigation data for public schools, and the full report can be accessed using the provided link (<https://gov.mb.ca/sd/water/drinking-water/lead/>).

Committee members were informed that the initiative, launched in 2019 due to updated national lead in water guidelines, aimed to reduce the permissible limit to 0.005 mg/l. Within two years, Manitoba Health advised school divisions to conduct testing, leading WSD to test over 5,000 water fixtures.

Committee members were informed that the cost of testing to the end of March 2023 was \$249,881.50, with the Province contributing \$87,414 to offset these expenses. Remediation efforts, including fixture replacements, alterations to water lines and fittings, and labeling fixtures as "not for consumption," were undertaken for fixtures surpassing the guidelines. Committee members were informed that most remediation work is finished, with only minor tasks remaining in a few high schools. Additionally, Committee members were informed that in compliance with provincial requirements, all school divisions were mandated to post findings at each school and take corrective actions. Committee members were also informed that schools are encouraged to share their results with their communities to ensure transparency and safety in providing drinking water.

## **12. FOR INFORMATION**

Committee members raised a concern about Trustees not attending District Advisory Committee meetings in their school ward. In response, Committee members were informed that WSD has nine (9) Trustees and a representative Trustee and an alternate Trustee are chosen each year for the District Advisory Committees. Committee members were also informed that Trustees are available to all schools, not just those in their specific school ward.

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Committee members discussed the Powwow club and how to incorporate more Indigenous culture programs/clubs in schools without a significant Indigenous population. Committee members shared insights, including exploring opportunities for collaboration with other parent councils and suggested to invite Indigenous speakers to visit schools. Committee members encouraged parents to reach out to principals for information about programming at their schools. Committee members emphasized the importance of understanding the significance of Indigenous cultural practices, not only for Indigenous students, but for all students and staff in WSD.

### 13. NEXT MEETING DATE

Committee members were informed the next Central District Advisory Committee meeting will be held next year (T.B.D.) to continue discussions on the WSD 2024/2025 Budget Consultation.

#### Attendance:

##### **Voting Representatives**

Clifton School  
DMCI High School  
Elmwood High School  
Glenelm School  
Isaac Brock School  
Keewatin Prairie Community School  
Laura Secord School  
River Elm School  
École Sacré-Coeur School  
Tec Voc High School

##### **Regrets**

Ecole George V School  
Greenway School  
Kent Road School  
Lord Selkirk School  
Principal Sparling School  
Sargent Park School  
Weston School  
Wolseley School

##### **Administration**

Matt Henderson, Superintendent/CEO  
Julie Smerchanski, Assistant Superintendent  
Melody Woloschuk, Principal, DMCI High School  
Ruth Schappert, Principal, Ecole George V School  
Cree Crowchild, Principal, Elmwood High School  
Christopher Torrance, Vice-Principal, Elmwood High School  
Kristine Carino, Vice-Principal, Elmwood High School  
Erin Enns, Principal (*Acting*), Keewatin Prairie Community School  
Jenny Bui, Vice-Principal (*Acting*), Keewatin Prairie Community School  
Marla Tran, Principal, River Elm School  
Joyce Wong, Vice-Principal, Sargent Park School  
Lindsey Munz, Vice-Principal, Tec Voc High School  
Michelle Lejano, Recording Secretary

##### **Trustees**

Rebecca Chambers  
Perla Javate  
Tamara Kuly

At the very best of my ability, I looked over the previous Lunch Program Document Procedure KMB side by side with the draft copy included with the agenda and saw no actual differences. If there are differences, I would expect they would be made a little more visible much like how changes are supposed to be made and noted when submitting changes for a constitution document for review. I am thoroughly disappointed that the division would produce a draft copy that has no notable changes when major concerns were expressed by all schools present at the meeting November 2022. Notably, I do not see any recognition of the Engaging Parents, Guardians and Parent Council Handbook that was also mentioned as a concern as being updated or even looked at for revision. Which again, I could not find on the divisions website for reference and fell back on last year's copy from my records.

The report as written in the agenda suggests that that Policy KMB will be deferred until after budget discussions. What does that even mean? Is it going to be further looked at or just merely passed? Or is this policy going to be held in limbo until after the pilot program that was mentioned for 2024-2025? All of this is unclear in the report.

I did number crunching AGAIN as a volunteer parent, not a paid member of the division who is putting out these policies clearly without fact checking or running numbers based on reality. Using the 2022-2023 school year as a guide with our own lunch program to run numbers, I have come up with the following. These notes will be given to you along with a very basic spreadsheet to show the numbers for year 5.

The 2022-2023 school year had approximately 186 school days, not including any school specific inservices because I did not have the time to back track that. According to your policy, simply put, we are to charge no more than a \$1.50/day and a \$0.50 decrease to subsequent children, with families paying no more than \$3.00 a day. That extent of figuring things out is beyond my time and comprehension presently so I went with our current numbers of kids with the divisions payment requirement which resulted in 100 kids paying \$1.50/day and 24 subsequent children paying \$1.00/day. That gives us a grand total of \$32,364.00 in the school year. Using last years logged hours for our coordinator and workers, our coordinator worked 506 hours and each worker worked on average 250 hours during the school year. This year, we need 7 workers to cover the amount of children in our program as per the ratios required by the division, resulting in a budgeted 1750 worker hours. Given the wages outlined in the Parent Handbook for year 5 plus vacation pay, we are looking at \$58,656.33 for wages. This does not include our portion of remittances as we are not using that model because may I remind you, we asked the division for help as to how to properly set this up and got nowhere. Our own research as volunteer parents inexperienced with starting up a business never mind a non-profit gave us no concrete answers either. Might I also remind you that in the draft policy, it states yet again that parent councils will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all the Manitoba Labour Code, Revenue Canada Regulations and Work Place Health and Safety regulations as outlined in the Engaging Parents, Guardians and Parent Councils Handbook in order to meet legal responsibilities with employees as outlined in section 8.2 in the policy. Again, placing business management and accounting responsibilities on a group of volunteers who may not have these expertise at their disposal. Estimated costs for WCB Premiums based on research from a few years ago puts us at \$428.19 for the year, and budgeted supply cost at \$250 for the year. Now, in case you weren't keeping track, our total loss for the year with the proposed wages for Year 5 would put us at -\$26,970.52. Again, this is for year 5. Collectively, assuming we made it to year 5 on the divisions proposed numbers as outlined in the Parent Council Handbook, after 5 years we would be in a deficit of \$104,942.97. Where is that money supposed to come from? This doesn't include the expenses of bank fees, audits that may be required, criminal record checks, child abuse registry checks, employer contributions to remittances and any unforeseen expenses plus anything else I might not be remembering at the moment.

I am a parent, a volunteer. Might I add that since November 2022 when these policies were first discussed, I am no longer a stay at home parent but I work full time. I do not have the time to learn how to properly run a business while working full time and still maintaining a Chair position on my parent council along with all the other day to day things I have going on in my life. And I am sure I don't just speak for myself. I nor my parent council has the capacity to rehash out a new lunch program format that ultimately will be unsustainable. When I had the time 2 years ago and asked for help from the division, we received no viable help. Our program may not be perfect, but it is not running at a deficit. If the division wants the lunch program run a certain way, then they need to be providing the guidelines, knowhow and any necessary assistance, hand-holding if you will, as well as actually running some numbers, to have this running properly as the division cannot expect a group of volunteers to run a business. You are going to burn out your volunteers and ultimately render your parent councils obsolete. Finding volunteers is hard enough without adding the expectation to run a business. Moreover, expecting your school's principals to run lunch programs should their parent councils dissolve on top of everything else they already have to do is absolutely deplorable especially considering the divisions present shortages in principles. All I can say is the division needs to do better. Thank you.

<b>Income</b>				
<i>Number of Kids</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Cost/Day</i>	<i>Total</i>	
	100	186	\$1.50	\$27,900.00
	24	186	\$1.00	\$4,464.00
	124		<i>Total:</i>	\$32,364.00

<b>Wages*</b>				
	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Wage</i>	<i>Yearly Total</i>	
Coordinator x1		506	\$29.22	\$15,376.73
Workers x7		1750	\$23.78	\$43,279.60
			<i>Grand Total:</i>	\$58,656.33

<b>Expenses</b>				
	<i>How Many</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Totals</i>	
WCB Premium***	0.73	Rate x (Payroll/\$100)		\$428.19
Supplies	10	\$25.00		\$250.00
			<i>Subtotal:</i>	\$678.19

Total Expenses: \$59,334.52  
 Profit/Loss: **-\$26,970.52**

Sindy A. Stratton  
 IBPC Chair  
 Isaac Brock School



## ELMWOOD HIGH SCHOOL PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Elmwood High School is excited to have a formal PAC being created, We will be fundraising to support a variety of different school initiatives and support the school in a variety of areas.

Elmwood has received a grant from the Walter Schroeder Foundation to support food programs within the school. Currently offering a Breakfast to Go Program every morning to ensure students receive something to eat to start their day, including a baked goods day once a week.

The school is working with the foundation to acquire more grants to allow the school to take over the contract for the cafeteria to provide more variety and healthier meals for students. The work experience program and inclusive education department to possibly run cafeteria.

Students who attend school with a minimum 80% attendance record will be eligible for free meals, whereas those who are less than 80% will have to pay a small fee.

Looking into not renewing the Vending Machine contract and have the PAC purchase vending machines and stock and use as a funding source.

Elmwood has an Elder- in the school every Thursday

In November our Elder will work with the textiles students to create Ribbon Skirts

Elmwood has a Sweat Lodge provided by C. Crowchild, this has been provided to empower students, parents, staff and the community to embrace Indigenous Culture. C. Crowchild our elder as well as 6 students who were in need of some extra support have used Lodge already, they spent the day on the land and participated in a sweat.

A lodge room and prayer room are in the works of being created

Elmwood will host a Community Feast in the spring similar to the Feast that River elm had.

A Pow wow group, Drum group and Beading group are also in the works.