

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Thursday, November 30, 2023

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 Jamie Dumont was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Ann Evangelista was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee.

The Committee member from École Sacré-Coeur volunteered to chair the meeting. The Committee member from Sir William Osler volunteered to chair the next meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee members approved the agenda for November 30, 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.

The Province of Manitoba established a consultant team to guide the development of a new education funding model which was to be implemented for the 2023/2024 school year. The Province later announced that the new funding model requires more consultation and would not be ready for the 2023/2024 school year as anticipated. The Province has confirmed that the funding model will be the same formula for the 2024/2025 Budget. Committee members were also informed that property tax levy has been frozen at 2020 levels and it remains unknown if the special levy will be increased this year.

Committee members were informed that in preparation of the budget announcement, the Board is requesting feedback regarding the priorities for schools and the community that should be considered in the upcoming budget process? Which programs should be expanded in school communities? And how could resources within the budget be better distributed to ensure they are reaching those who need them most? Committee members were informed the Board is requesting feedback be provided by December 15th, 2023, for discussion at the next District Advisory meeting. Committee members were informed that the Division is only beginning budget discussions and that there will be additional meetings for providing feedback regarding the budget. Committee members were also informed that budget

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feedback may be compiled by the Parent Council, or submitted individually by parents/guardians.

Committee members were informed that currently the Board is in an exploratory phase and that feedback from the community is important for determining where funding will have the maximum impact. The Board of Trustees along with administration are currently developing a utopian wish list for programs and services, which will be paired down once the budget is released and it is evident what is feasible and what will provide the greatest return to schools and the community.

Committee members requested an example of the draft budget that was presented to District Advisory Committees last year be provided to the Committee for reference.

Committee members also discussed the importance of transportation. Committee members suggested providing bus tracking to alert families when busses are running late. Committee members also shared that some parents have established a “Whatsapp” group to inform other parents when the bus has arrived at different locations so they can plan accordingly.

5. LUNCH PROGRAM - UPDATE

Committee members were informed that at a previous meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a motion to draft a new Policy KMB – Parent Council Lunch Programs for distribution to all the District Advisory Committees for review and feedback. The feedback from sixteen schools demonstrated that overall, parent councils supported the development of a flexible policy or guideline. Parent Councils suggested that WSD provide support to the parent council with staffing, training, financials and human resources. Parent Councils also recommended that WSD provide Educational Assistants to assist with staffing needs.

Committee members were informed that the administration was seeking confirmation on the insurance requirements for parent councils functioning as an employer and whether the Division’s Insurance Policy would cover any liability concerns. Committee members were informed that the administration recently received clarification on the insurance coverage required for parent councils operating as an employer and MSBA has confirmed that parent councils would be required to purchase their own insurance coverage.

Committee members were informed that at a meeting held November 6, 2023, the Board of Trustees were informed that administration is in the process of examining the potential for extending the hours for Educational Assistants to provide support for the lunch programs. Committee members were informed that WSD will operate a pilot program for the lunch program at five schools with the greatest need for support. Committee members were also informed that the operation of a division-wide lunch program would be a multi-million-dollar cost. The feasibility of offering the program is still under review and has not yet been approved by the Board.

Committee members shared concerns about schools with limited numbers of EAs and how extending hours for lunch supervision may take EAs out of the classroom during regular school hours. Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees has no intention of inadequately staffing classrooms, and that supervision would provide EAs the opportunity for full-time employment which may assist WSD in attracting more EAs as well.

In response to an enquiry regarding portable classroom supervision, Committee members were informed that there are many variables that will need to be considered in the roll out of a

WSD operated lunch program and that as much information as possible will be gathered during the pilot program. Committee members were encouraged to share feedback and concerns with the Board via email.

6. MANITOBA'S RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY FOR FRENCH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Committee members were informed that in the fall of 2021, Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning in collaboration with a variety of Departmental Groups, Professional Organizations, School Divisions, Universities, Groups, Networks, Community Organizations, National Organizations and Members of Academia, developed a strategy for recruiting and retaining French Language teachers in Manitoba.

Committee members were informed that the essential components outlined in the strategy include, Training and Professional Learning, Recruitment, Retention, Data Collection and Analysis, and Loyalty Development.

Committee members were informed that to ensure a supply of teachers who will remain teaching in Manitoba, it is key to ensure a strong supply of teacher candidates and sufficient training capacity in Manitoba universities, including increased access to professional learning for current certified teachers.

Committee members were informed that to build a robust supply of teacher candidates, the promotion of French language teaching careers needs to be strong and recruitment practices need to be concerted and updated to welcome and expand the potential pool of candidates through equitable hiring practices.

Committee members were informed that to ensure that teachers remain in the profession teaching French, retention strategies and appropriate supports need to be in place throughout their entire career cycle: beginning, mid and near exit.

Committee members were informed that to effectively and efficiently target all initiatives, a clear data collection and analysis plan needs to be in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of actions and to ensure system accountability and responsiveness to emerging needs.

Committee members were informed that to reduce staff turnover, it is important to implement positive practices to foster a work environment that promotes personal development and job satisfaction, which motivates employees to stay in their current organization.

The Assistant Superintendent informed Committee members that WSD is partnering with universities and the community to recruit French teachers, as well as recruiting internationally. Committee members were informed that the strategies outlined are long-term plans and it may take a while to see the impacts of the efforts being made.

8. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS

Committee members shared that Sir William Osler is currently under construction to expand the capacity of the school to provide education for Nursery – Grade 8. Committee members were informed it is anticipated the construction will be completed for the fall term in 2025.

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SCHOOL REPORTS

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

- NIL

9. FOR INFORMATION

Committee members were provided information on Guidelines for Board Advisory Committees, COVID update/Ventilation information, School Grants/Proposals, New Structure/Clusters, as well as Lead in Drinking Water Testing and Mitigation Results.

Committee members were informed that schools and parent councils may contact Brenda Lapointe at brlapointe@wsd1.org if they require guidance or assistance with writing grants or proposals.

Committee members were also informed that the new organizational chart shuffled schools to provide better flow and to allow Assistant Superintendents the opportunity to get to know families and be able to follow them through their educational careers from elementary to high school.

In Attendance:

Voting Representatives:

École Luxton
École River Heights
École Robert H. Smith
École Sacre-Coeur
École Sir William Osler
École Sisler High School
École Stanley Knowles

Administration:

Shelley Warkentin, Assistant Superintendent
Nathan Tocher, Vice-Principal, College Churchill High School
Jessica Mayor-Rodrigues, Principal, École Lansdowne
Ashley Morrison, Vice-Principal, École Lansdowne
Warren Nickerson, Principal, École Luxton
Lauranne Parnell, Vice-Principal, École River Heights
Dominique Ostermann, Principal, École Sir William Osler

Regrets:

College Churchill High School
École Garden Grove
École George V
École J.B. Mitchell
École Lansdowne
École Laura Secord
École LaVénrendrye
École Secondaire Kelvin
École Victoria Albert
École Waterford Springs

Trustees:

Tamara Kuly
Jamie Dumont (Regrets)
Ann Evangelista (Regrets)