

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
SOUTH DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Thursday, November 23, 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 Kathy Heppner was appointed as the Board's representative and Trustee Lois Brothers was appointed as the Board's alternate representative to this Committee.

The parent representative from Queenston School volunteered to chair the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee members requested that the New Report Card be added to the agenda for discussion. Committee members approved the revised agenda for November 23, 2023.

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 informed the mill rate for WSD is much lower compared to other divisions, which is a benefit under the current funding model. Committee members were also informed that property tax levies have been frozen at 2020 levels and it remains unknown if the levies will be increasing 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 shared concerns about the turnaround time for submitting feedback to the Board. Committee members were informed that the

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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 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 funding, which will be paired down once budget numbers are released and it is evident what is feasible and what will provide the greatest return to schools and the community.

Committee members were also informed that the majority of the budget is allocated towards staffing and buildings/maintenance, which increases the importance of being strategic with the residual funds.

A Committee member shared concerns with the process for obtaining contact information of other parents within WSD. Committee members were informed that FIPPA prevents public bodies from disclosing personal information to third parties without consent, therefore schools are not permitted to release contact information of other families within WSD. Committee members were encouraged to send out requests for contact information through Parent Council Newsletters, where parents/guardians may fill out a form to authorize/provide consent for what information, if any, may be provided to other parents/families in the Division.

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 employee 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 questioned what type of insurance would be required, where to purchase the insurance and if there was an option to collaborate with other Parent Council Lunch Programs for the purchase of insurance. Committee members were informed that the Board would look into it and provide information to the District Advisory Committees at a later date.

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 run a pilot program for the operation of a

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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 undertaking. The feasibility of offering the program is still under review and has not yet been approved by the Board.

Committee members suggested partnering with other organizations such as Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T) to offset costs of running lunch programs.

Committee members were also informed that the provincial and federal government both committed to the development of nutrition programs in schools this year. Committee members were encouraged to contact their MLA's to advocate for the nutrition programs and hold the government accountable to their promises.

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees agreed to defer Policy KMB – Parent Council Lunch Programs until after budget discussions have been completed.

6. NEW REPORT CARDS

At the request of the Committee, the new process for Report Cards was added to the agenda for discussion.

The Superintendent informed Committee members that the new process for report cards was implemented to encourage more relationship between teachers and families while also reducing the importance placed on grades. The new reporting process encourages teachers to spend time building relationships with families and to have open conversations about how students are reaching their goals.

In response to an enquiry, the Superintendent encouraged Committee members to discuss any mental health concerns with the principal.

6. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS

Committee members were informed that School Reports are submitted in writing and attached to the Summary of Discussion for the meeting.

SCHOOL REPORTS

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

- NIL

7. 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 enquired about upgrades to the ventilation systems and the potential for improved cooling systems in schools. Committee members were informed that WSD recently completed an overhaul of ventilation systems in schools including cleaning ducts, replacing

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machines and ensuring that schools are having 5 – 6 exchanges of air per day to ensure superior air quality in schools and WSD buildings. Committee members were informed that WSD is exploring options for upgrading cooling systems in schools, however, as many of the schools in the division are older buildings, cooling systems cannot be installed without severe changes to the infrastructure. Committee members were informed that some parents have offered to purchase window A/C units for classrooms, however, in the older buildings the A/C units will blow the breakers rendering them useless.

Committee members were informed that last summer many of the schools developed rotations for students to have time in cooler areas of the school if available. Committee members were encouraged to advocate and petition their MLA's for support with upgrading cooling systems, as well as for support with climate change. Trustee Kuly informed Committee members that some schools are not only without A/C, but are also losing their tree canopy due to climate change.

Committee members also enquired about the new administrative structure and requested a more detailed description of the various portfolios for each Assistant Superintendent. The Superintendent informed Committee members that the administration will put together a detailed description to be added to the WSD website.

Trustee Brothers also informed Committee members that recently WSD has established an Inclusive Education Advisory Committee that is open to any parents/guardians of students with inclusive needs. The schedule of Inclusive meetings can be found on the WSD website and consists of both formal and informal meetings that provide parents/guardians the opportunity to network with other families, as well as learn more about programs and services offered through WSD.

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Attendance:

Voting Representatives:

Brock Corydon School
College Churchill High School
Earl Grey School
Harrow School
Montrose School
Queenston School
Riverview School
Robert H. Smith School
Rockwood School

Regrets:

Carpathia School
Ecole Sir William Osler School
Gladstone School
Grant Park High School
Grosvenor School
J.B. Mitchell School
Kelvin High School
Laverendrye School
Lord Roberts School
River Heights School

Administration:

Matt Henderson, Superintendent
Lorelei Bunkowsky, Assistant Superintendent
Shelley Warkentin, Assistant Superintendent
Amanda Manness, Principal, Carpathia School
Nathan Tocher, Vice-Principal, College Churchill High School
Fernando Batista, Principal, Harrow School
Timothy Cox, Principal, Kelvin High School
Suzanne Mole, Principal, Montrose School
Dominic Zagari, Principal, River Heights School
Lauranne Parnell, Vice-Principal, River Heights School
Adam Dyck, Principal, Robert H. Smith School
Angela Perez, Principal, Rockwood School
Tarin Howard, Recording Secretary

Trustee:

Kathy Heppner
Lois Brothers
Jamie Dumont
Tamara Kuly