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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division Celebrates 105th Annual Skate Races

WINNIPEG, MB — February 17, 2026 — While Team Canada speedskaters chase gold at the Winter Olympics, students at Winnipeg School Division are taking to the ice to continue a skating tradition.

The 105th annual WSD Skate Races, taking place at Canada Life Centre on Wednesday, February 18 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., is a signature event that has brought generations of students together in the spirit of sport, determination, and community.

This year's event features approximately 375 students in Grades 3–6 from 17 participating schools across the division. Students lace up their own skates and compete in a series of friendly races.

“The goal of this event is to promote physical activity, healthy living, and positive sport behaviors,” says Alyson Gysel, Divisional Physical and Health Education Support Teacher. “Building on what students learn in class, this extra-curricular opportunity allows them to explore skating as a lifelong activity.”

To support equitable access and broad student participation, the event includes two race formats. The shuttle relay is designed for novice skaters, with teams aiming to complete as many lengths as possible within a set time. The speed relay is designed for teams of experienced skaters, who complete a lap in the shortest time possible, then tag off their next teammate.

Speed Skating Manitoba, a long-standing partner of WSD's Skate Races, will have a group of provincial team speed skaters presenting a short track speed skating demonstration for students. This showcase gives students a chance to see high-level racing up close, adding to the energy of the event.

“We are thrilled to host the 105th Skate Races in collaboration with Winnipeg School Division,” says Elizabeth W. Derraugh, Executive Director of Speed Skating Manitoba. “This longstanding event is a true community builder, bringing together students, families, schools, and volunteers in celebration of speed skating and active living.”

Media are invited to attend the 105th Skate Races at Canada Life Centre starting at 4 pm. Please enter Canada Life Centre at main entrance Gate 1, and check in at the volunteer information desk. A WSD media volunteer will escort you to designated ice level areas: event level entrance by section 103 (access via Gate 1 elevators); and Zamboni entrance (where kids are waiting and stepping onto the ice). Interviews with event reps, staff, and students can be arranged. **Please do not interview, photograph, or video any students with a red sticker on their helmet.**



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

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Winnipeg School Division is the largest and oldest school division in the Province of Manitoba with 32,000 students and nearly 6,000 employees at 78 schools. WSD nurtures a welcoming and inclusive culture of people committed to working together to inspire students to reach goals and achieve academic success.

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