

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Tuesday, February 21, 2023

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CANADA

Committee members were informed that the French Immersion District Advisory Committee meeting is taking place on Treaty One Land and the traditional homeland of the Red River Métis.

2. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

The parent representative from École Sacre-Coeur volunteered to chair the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda for February 21, 2023, was approved by the Committee as distributed.

4. 2023/2024 DRAFT BUDGET

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees are currently in the process of obtaining feedback on the 2023/2024 budget. Committee members were informed that for 2023/2024, the Board of Trustees is proposing a budget that maintains existing programs and allows for a limited number of additional supports for students in the areas of bilingual language programs, transportation, increased student support services and educational assistants.

Committee members were informed that as directed by the Province, revenue from property tax will remain frozen at the 2020 level.

Committee members were informed that the Board develops the budget based on WSD's guiding principles which include leading education innovation, high quality education, employing competent, qualified and caring staff and managing tax dollars responsibly.

Committee members were informed that on February 2, 2023, the Province announced the new funding formula for Manitoba schools, which included an increase of \$100 million dollars in provincial funding for Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools. The additional funding represents an increase of approximately 4.1 percent in operating funding for Winnipeg School Division.

Committee members were informed that WSD provides programming outside of what is mandated by the Public Schools Act including staffing for intercultural and newcomer supports, library and computer technicians, adult crossing guards, off-campus programs, additional early years professional development, library support services and attendance officers. WSD also offers additional programming such as Therapy services, summer school, nutrition programs, nursery as well as providing funding for students attending events outside of the Division.

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Committee members were encouraged to share priorities to be considered by the Board of Trustees to be added to the 2023/2024 budget.

Committee members were informed that the Province had planned to implement a new funding model for the 2023/2024 budget, however, they announced recently that the new funding model requires additional consultation and would not be implemented this year. In response to an enquiry, Committee members were informed that the current funding model used by the Province provides a monetary amount per student enrolled in the school.

Committee members shared concerns that the Provincial government did not provide adequate education funding over the last few years. Committee members commented that the additional Provincial funding this year may be at a cost to other programs and services within the Province. Committee members were encouraged to contact their MLA's for more information about provincial budgets.

Committee members requested that funding be provided for additional French speaking educational assistants (EA's) in French Immersion schools to assist with French language exposure for students. In response to an enquiry, Committee members were informed that throughout the Division there is a need for additional supports and services including additional EA's. Committee members were informed that additional EA support is not directed to a specific program.

In response to an enquiry regarding additional Occupational Therapy, Physio Therapy and Speech supports, Committee members were informed that currently there is funding for "wrap around" services such as the Thunderwing and Morning star program and Huddle services.

Committee members were informed that a Special Board meeting will be held on February 27, 2023, 7:00 pm at 1577 Wall Street. Anyone wishing to provide additional feedback on the budget may register as a delegation. Budget feedback can also be submitted via email to Board@wsd1.org.

5. FRENCH IMMERSION PLAN AND PROGRAM REVIEW

The Acting Superintendent of Education Services was in attendance and provided an update on the French Immersion Plan and Program review.

Committee members were informed that WSD has been actively recruiting additional French Immersion teachers. Committee members were informed that WSD has been successful in hiring some teachers and will be hosting an open house on March 8th, 2023, at Prince Charles Educational Resource Centre, to recruit students that are fluent in French that have been studying in the English stream at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba.

Committee members were informed that Universities require education students that wish to do their practicum in a French Immersion classroom to first write the Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELFF) exam. Committee members were informed that WSD is exploring the option to train staff in administering the DELFF exam and to assist in preparing students to take the exam.

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Committee members were informed that the prerequisite to take the DELF exam is a barrier for many education students and is not a prerequisite to be hired as a teacher in a French Immersion or dual track school. Committee members were informed that WSD provides additional support for teachers that want to improve their French language skills as well.

In response to an enquiry regarding hiring teachers from outside the province, Committee members were informed that WSD offers one of the highest salaries to new teachers and the cost of living in Manitoba is lower than most provinces which provides some incentive for teachers from out of province. Committee members were informed that it can be a challenge to convince teachers to re-locate due to the climate in Manitoba.

Committee members were informed that WSD has applied for grant funding through the Federal Government which would provide funding to develop a program mirrored after the WSD “Build from Within” program for French students. It is anticipated the Federal Government will announce funding in May, 2023.

Committee members were informed that WSD is also exploring options for vocational schools to partner with French Immersion schools to provide French students more options for vocational programs.

In response to an enquiry regarding university credit in high schools, Committee members were informed that schools, currently offer university credits to students.

Committee members were informed the French Immersion Provincial Plan is still under review and it is anticipated additional information will be provided at a conference being held May 3, 2023.

6. FRENCH PROGRAM – CURRICULUM AND LESSON REVIEW

At the request of Trustee Evangelista, the French Program curriculum and lesson review was added to the agenda for discussion.

Trustee Evangelista provided an opportunity for Committee members to make recommendations on how to improve the French Immersion curriculum.

Committee members were informed that curriculum is developed by the province in consultation with education experts, teachers and principals and is reviewed regularly.

7. ENQUIRIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHOOL REPORTS

SCHOOL REPORTS

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

- NIL

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8. DISTRICT ADVISORY REPORTS AND SUMMARIES OF DISCUSSION

Committee members were informed that a meeting held March 6, 2023, the Board of Trustees received the Advisory Committee Report and Summary of Discussion as information. Committee members were informed that once reviewed by the Board, District Advisory Reports and Summaries of Discussions are posted on the Division's website under the Family and Community tab.

In Attendance:

Voting Representatives:

École J.B. Mitchell
École Lansdowne
École Laura Secord
École Lavenrendrye
École Luxton
École Robert H. Smith
École Sacre-Coeur
École Sir William Osler
École Waterford Springs

Regrets:

College Churchill High School
École Garden Grove
École George V
École River Heights
École Riverview
École Secondaire Kelvin
École Sisler High School
École Stanley Knowles
École Victoria Albert

Administration:

Rob Riel, Acting Superintendent Education Services
Nathan Tocher, Vice-Principal, College Churchill High School
Joy Perrott, Principal, École Luxton
Dominique Ostermann, Principal, École Sir William Osler
Manuel Silva, Principal, École Waterford Springs
Recording Secretary, Tarin Howard

Trustees:

Jamie Dumont
Ann Evangelista
Tamara Kuly
Kathy Heppner
Lois Brothers