



News Release

For Immediate Release: March 13, 2020

St. James-Assiniboia School Division 2020/2021 Budget

Supporting staff and students in our community with a responsive, current, and fiscally responsible education

The St. James-Assiniboia School Division (SJASD) approved its 2020/2021 budget for the community it serves on Tuesday, March 10. The SJASD Board of Trustees announced that for the fourth consecutive year, the school division had received a cut in Provincial Funding. Although the Provincial Announcement indicated a Provincial Education increase of 0.5%, the St. James-Assiniboia has received a reduction of 2.0%. Overall Provincial Funding as a percentage of Total Operating Revenue has decreased from 72.95% in 1985 to 49.25% in 2020.

"School-Based Student Support and Maintenance accounts for 92.33% of our Operating Expenditure Budget," said Craig Glennie, SJASD Trustee and the Chair of School Division's Finance and Facilities Committee. "The reallocation of existing funds and reductions allow for new initiatives to be funded. Examples of new initiatives in 2020-2021 include Early Numeracy Itinerant Teachers (5), Elders-In-Residence, Indigenous Scholarships (5), Community Connectors (3), French Language Support and an increase in the School Nutritious Food Grant."

The Board of Trustees approved an Operating Budget of \$110,306,765 for 2020/2021, which is a 0.75% increase of \$821,002 from 2019/2020. Reductions of \$671,860 were identified through the budget review process and were partially utilized to fund new initiatives. The initiatives provide support directly to the classroom and promote responsive, meaningful, and engaging education. Repair and renovation of school buildings occur through a 5-year plan (\$18.8 million), along with a 5-year plan for Technology Network upgrades and replacements (\$8.9 million).

The School Taxes for an Average Home (Home Value of \$282,200 in 2020) will increase by 0.41% or \$6.85 per year, which amounts to \$0.57 per month. The SJASD continues to provide innovative and quality programming at a low mill rate. The mill rate will decrease from 13.431 to 13.147 in 2020.

"As community representatives, the SJASD Board of Trustees work with students, families and the public at large to ensure that our schools provide the programs and services that are wanted and needed locally," said Cheryl Smukowich, Chair of the SJASD Board of Trustees. "The review has provided an opportunity for our St. James-Assiniboia community, along with all Manitobans, to have their voices heard on a larger, provincial scale. It is your Board of Trustees belief that a system of local community-oriented school boards remains the most appropriate model for promoting local voices, making local choices, for the improvement and benefit of Manitoba's education system."

"The Board of Trustees' local decision making continues to focus on continually improving student education through the many programs and services that are valued by the community within funding constraints," said Glennie. "Education and its role have changed significantly over time. As our society and community needs become more complex, our schools must change to meet those challenges. Spending more money in the classroom, on students, where it belongs."

The SJASD continues to be compliant with the Provincial direction. Administration costs have decreased to 2.38%, which is lower than the Provincial Government's current requirement of 2.70%. Also, the SJASD is projecting a Gross Operating Reserve of \$3,794,171 or 3.4% of the 2020/2021 Operating Expenditures. The Provincial guideline for Operating Reserves is 4.0%.

For additional information, see our website at www.sjasd.ca