



News Release

For Immediate Release

SJASD Budget Invests in Staffing to Support Growing Student Population and Needs

Average homeowner can expect a \$9-a-month increase to their gross school tax bill

March 7, 2025 (Winnipeg, MB) – The St. James-Assiniboia School Division (SJASD) approved its budget for the 2025/26 school year at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

The Board of Trustees approved an operating budget of **\$141,909,111**, an increase of **9 per cent** or \$11,699,234 over the 2024/25 budget. The mill rate for 2025 remains low, increasing to **12.720**, up from 12.453 in 2024.

In 2025, the Provincial Government provided SJASD with a **1.7 per cent** increase in provincial operating support. This is in addition to \$735,000 earmarked for a universal Nutrition Program, bringing total provincial funding to 2 per cent. The Province also advised school divisions they could once again increase the Special Requirement.

After consulting with the community, and factoring in the impact of a decrease in portioned assessment values on March 1, the SJASD Board of Trustees approved a final education property tax increase of **6.2 per cent**. The average homeowner can expect to pay **\$110, or \$9 a month**, more in gross school taxes this year, based on an average home value of **\$330,300**, before the Province's new \$1,500 Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit is applied (*Jan. 2025 Residential Unit Report*).

"This is a reassessment year, so the impact of those portioned assessment changes meant that we had to ask our community for just over \$2 more a month than we had originally estimated to enable us to make the investments we presented to the community," said Holly Hunter, Chair of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

In 2025/26, enrolment is projected to increase by **1.8 per cent**, or 154 students, for a total of **8,514 students**.

SJASD is making the following targeted investments to support growth and student needs:

- Hiring a total of **24 Educational Assistants** and **1 Speech Language Pathologist** to increase student engagement and success in the classroom.
- Adding **1 Assistant Superintendent position** to Division Administration, restoring the total number of Assistant Superintendent positions to two while strengthening strategic leadership and addressing workload intensification.
- Investing in **10 Supply Teachers** from December to April to proactively address absences during the respiratory season and support capacity at some of the Division's smallest schools.
- **Reserving funding to support up to 10 additional FTE Teachers** to maintain small class sizes in the event of enrolment increases.
- Adding **1 Information Technology staff member** to enhance cyber security efforts, protecting digital assets and the privacy of our community.
- **Hiring 1 FTE Michif Teacher** to provide language exposure and instruction to students and staff through the Let's Speak Michif Indigenous Language Program.
- Investing in **1 Grant Writer** to leverage resources available in the public and private sector.
- **Lowering school fees** for families by eliminating the fundraising fee and supplementing school budgets to reduce and standardize supply fees for students in Early and Middle Years.

"Our Board is strongly committed to supporting our growing student population by investing in direct classroom instruction, keeping class sizes small, and resourcing student needs. These investments will ensure our classrooms remain successful places for teaching and learning in our community," said Hunter.

Administrative costs of **2.84 per cent** remain close to the Provincial Government's 2.7 per cent expenditure guideline. SJASD also expects to set aside \$7,473,111, or **5.27 per cent** of operating expenditures as a Gross Operating Reserve. (*The Provincial Government's guidelines for Operating Reserves is 4 per cent*).

For more information on the 2025/26 budget, visit sjasd.ca/governance/budget.

SJASD is a progressive school division in west Winnipeg serving over 8,500 students across 26 schools. SJASD is committed to educational programs in which children can develop their natural abilities to their fullest extent, building upon personal strengths and the richness of our area's culturally diverse population. SJASD operates on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, the Ininewak, and the Dakota Oyate peoples, and on the birthplace and homeland of the Red River Métis. Our community is bound by Treaty One and we are all tied together through the treaties. For more information, visit sjasd.ca.

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