

For Immediate Release
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LRSD Budget Focuses on Growth, Supporting a Diversity of Student Needs

WINNIPEG, MB - Louis Riel School Division has shown its commitment to fiscal and community responsibility with continued and sensible investments in its 2018-19 budget. This positions its schools to better support an increasingly diverse and continuously growing student population.

“Our students are our greatest assets and we must do everything we can to ensure their successes, both at school and at home,” says LRSD Board Chair Chris Sigurdson. “A major priority for this budget was to extend our educational reach to meet the many different needs of our students and families while not overextending our spending.”

The \$189.8-million operating budget, which was adopted March 13 by the LRSD School Board, will meet the needs of a projected 15,458 students. It marks a 3.16% spending increase over 2017-18. This expenditure increase results in a 1.96% increase to the Special Requirement, as per the Minister of Education’s request to limit the increase to 2%. The Special Requirement is based on the school year and property taxes are based on a calendar year, hence, the special requirement increase translates to a 3.5% property tax increase for 2018.

Overall, this budget equates to just a 0.315% increase in spending on a per-pupil basis as a direct result of a projected influx of 445 students.

“We are confident that we are positioning our students and staff for success by focusing on providing rich academic experiences and lasting impact without significantly affecting our community’s bottom lines,” says Sigurdson. The average LRSD home will see a tax increase of just \$5.54 per month (or \$66.42 per year) to support a total operating budget of \$189,838,129.

The budget continues to keep administration costs under 3%, in line with the minister’s expectation. It also dedicates funds to increasing non-instructional spaces not funded by the Province and required investment in the Division’s aging infrastructure. Most importantly, the budget will impact students by improving supports for a growing diversity of needs and addressing the ongoing challenges of growing socio-economic inequities.

Budget highlights include:

- 20.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) new teachers to meet the needs of a growing student population and to help maintain lower class sizes
- Additional dedicated Indigenous Education staff to honour our commitment to truth and reconciliation in LRSD
- Supporting a growing diversity of student needs by adding a total of 24.65 FTE Educational Assistants
- Adding five staff in the new rehabilitation assistant role to assist our team of speech/language and occupational therapists
- One additional itinerant English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher and one additional itinerant EAL Educational Assistant to support a growing newcomer community

- Enhancing our Transition to Adulthood programming, which provides post-graduation support for students with exceptional needs
- 1.5 FTE new student services teachers
- Continuing the Full-Day Kindergarten pilot (eight classrooms in four schools), a small investment that initial research suggests is having significant impact, especially for our most vulnerable learners

Ultimately, the Division's spending helps ensure the health of its community of schools today and for years to come.

"Our students' journeys don't end with graduation and neither does our responsibility to our students," says acting Superintendent Christian Michalik. "This budget illustrates our commitment to setting our students of all abilities, from all walks of life, on a journey of lifelong growth and wellbeing. I'm proud to be part of a division that is able to provide that ... while also demonstrating fiscal responsibility to taxpayers in our community that support our 15,458 students on their journeys."

Investing in LRSD

Total Operating Budget - \$189,838,129

Increase of \$5,817,440 or 3.16%

Tax increase – 3.5% for the average LRSD home
\$5.54/month or \$66.42/year for the average LRSD home

For more information or to learn more about the budget, visit www.lrsd.net, or contact:

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