

ThoughtExchange Summary Report

Budget 2024–25

January 2024



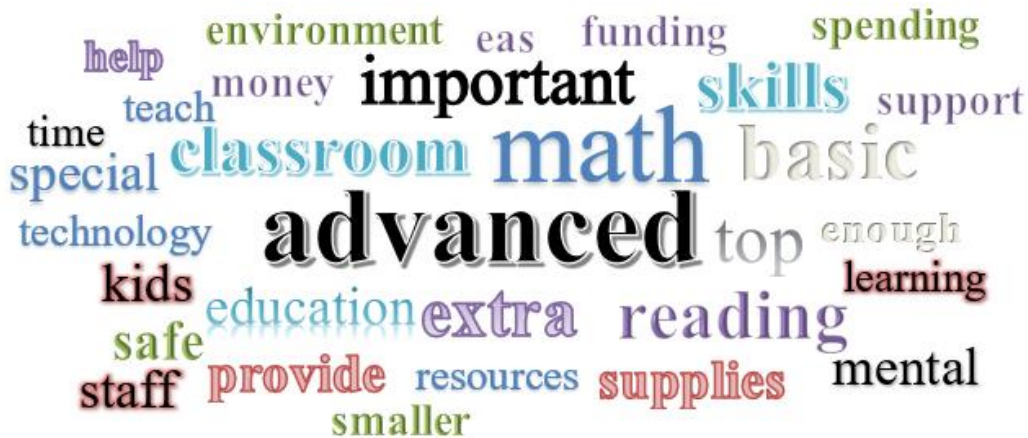
INTRODUCTION

On November 6, 2023, the River East Transcona School Division Board of Trustees launched a community ThoughtExchange asking the question: *When you think of our child(ren)'s education what are your top education spending priorities?*

The exchange remained open until December 18, 2023, with 1,541 community members participating and providing 1,037 responses to the exchange question. In addition, there were 34,162 thought ratings recorded which is equal to 20.8 ratings per participant. The community was informed of this new exchange through a variety of means, including but not limited to social media, division and school websites, letters, and emails. This report summarizes the thoughts and themes that participants rated most important in the ThoughtExchange.

KEYWORDS

The ThoughtExchange program creates a word cloud with the most common words used in responses. Below are the most common words used throughout this ThoughtExchange.



KEY THEMES

Below are the top thoughts that were generated from the ThoughtExchange organized by keyword themes (please note that these comments were taken directly from ThoughtExchange and are the words of respondents).

CLASSROOM SUPPORT

- We need more help in school, especially early years for children with extra needs.
- It's important to have adequate amount of teaching and support staff. Students' needs are ever increasing and the more caring adults in a building, the more access to support.

- More support for students with additional needs, including not waiting years for assessment. There are more and more students with additional needs and not enough services to support them and their teachers.

PROGRAMMING

- Advanced programs to provide opportunities to students who want/need the next level of development. So much goes into the kids who need more support at the bottom end. What are we doing for the kids at the top to drive them to achieve their best?
- Supports for all students to ensure they have a strong foundation in skills (literacy, numeracy, technology, science, independence, and problem solving).
- Math needs additional care. Failure to prepare students at a level that other jurisdictions teach is unfair to students, taxpayers, and all of society.
- Preparing kids for a digital future. AI will change what jobs look like.
- Mental health supports. Student issues are vast and varied and it is important to make sure that when our students have a concern, it can be addressed by someone they trust.

TECHNOLOGY

- Technology in an ever-evolving world needs funds available to purchase, maintain, and teach newest technology.
- Global digitalization is needed—to be able to succeed in life and future careers.
- Keep education up with new technologies and scientific innovations, so that students can be part of new and developing discoveries. It's important because new discoveries and innovations give us all brighter and healthier futures.
- Helping our children harmonize with machines and softwares will help them in their futures.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Proper ventilation and air quality. Teachers and kids need to be safe at school.
- Air conditioning in the summer because kids can't learn in the intense Winnipeg heat and teachers should not have to supply fans.

SUPPLIES

- Top education spending priorities should be on new, relevant material, books, and equipment in good condition. Children should be provided relevant and reliable information and material in good working order, at minimum.
- Schools should have budgets adjusted so that they can purchase all the equipment, supplies, and training aids as required.

- Having the appropriate and essential tools/resources required to appropriately learn what is being passed on by the teachers, because this is our up-and-coming workforce.

CONCLUSION

The participants of the RETSD ThoughtExchange question about budget 2024–25 expressed a variety of priorities for education spending. Respondents identified the following areas as important aspects to consider during budget deliberations:

- Additional support for students at all levels
- Support for advanced programs, like sTeam
- Improved infrastructure, such as ventilation and/or air-conditioning
- Updated classrooms and better-equipped facilities
- Focusing on core subjects, such as language arts, math, science, and technology
- Increased mental health support for students
- Renewed focus on new technology