

## RETSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES 2025–26 BUDGET

For Immediate Release

March 15, 2025

WINNIPEG, MB — The River East Transcona School Division Board of Trustees unanimously approved a \$268.3 million budget for the 2025–26 school year on March 11, 2025. The revenue available for this year’s budget, including provincial funding, totals \$136.3 million, which leaves a difference of \$131.97 million.

Last year, the Board passed a status quo budget that maintained the level of programs, programming, and services for students and staff that was based on an estimated increase in student enrolment for the 2024–25 school year. This year’s budget goes beyond the status quo, as the Board refuses to make cuts that would be felt directly in the classroom.

The 2025–26 budget enables RETSD to expand classroom resources by adding 35.9 FTE (full-time equivalent) teaching positions, including classroom teachers, resource and inclusion teachers, a substance use counsellor, teacher librarians, and clinicians. Additionally, 44 FTE educational assistants will be hired, along with more support staff, such as library technicians and clerical personnel, to support growing enrolment. The budget also includes the purchase of eight new school buses to replenish an aging fleet and transport an increased number of students.

“Our students are at the forefront of every decision the Board makes, and we must balance that with what taxpayers can afford during tough economic times,” said Trustee Colleen Carswell, Board Chair.

“We have a responsibility to provide the very best education to students, and that will remain our focus as we continue advocating to the province for increased funding, new schools, and other much-needed capital projects.”

The recently approved budget will result in a property tax increase of \$22.24 a month (before rebate) on the average home in our community assessed at \$360,600 and the mill rate will increase approximately 5.8 per cent. For 2025, the province announced the Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit (HATC) that is applied directly to the property tax statement, up to a maximum of \$1,500, and will only apply to a taxpayer’s principal residence.

“In absence of the provincial government properly funding public education and introducing an equitable funding model, we must unfortunately turn to our community to step up where they are failing,” said Trustee Brienne Goertzen, Chair of Finance, Facilities, Transportation, and Technology Committee. “We must address the needs of our growing division, and we cannot do that without ensuring proper levels of funding.”

### **Fast facts:**

River East Transcona is the second-largest school division in the province with nearly 19,000 students in 42 schools staffed by over 3,600 team members. The school division expects enrolment numbers to continue increasing for the foreseeable future.

The division receives approximately 50.3 per cent of its revenue from provincial government program support, including the provincial government property tax credit, and another 49.2 per cent from the local property tax base. The remaining 0.5 per cent comes from other revenue sources.

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*For additional information, please contact Colleen Carswell, Board Chair, at 204.222.1486, Trustee Brianne Goertzen, Finance, Facilities, Transportation, and Technology Committee Chair, at 204.955.6782, or Elise Downey, secretary treasurer/CFO, at 204.667.7130.*