





### Fixed costs have increased

- Insurance
- Utilities
- Technology
- Paper supplies
- School buses
- Fuel

“The rise in inflation has been felt by everyone in the community, and RETSD is no different. There are fixed cost items that have gone up significantly in recent years,” said Elise Downey, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO. “However, there is no negotiating these costs. We must pay our insurance, heat our schools, turn on the lights, and order paper and other necessary supplies for schools. As the prices of these items increase, so does the amount we must allocate in the budget for them.”

### Community makes their voices heard

The Board of Trustees held two virtual budget town halls to provide

information on the budget, answer budget-related questions, and solicit feedback from community members. The first town hall was held on January 25, 2024, and focused on budgeting principles, process, and the next steps of budget deliberations for the board. A followup town hall was held on February 29, providing more specific details on the budget and the financial status of RETSD and seeking feedback on the two options being considered.

1. A budget with no tax increase would have left the division down \$15.6 million, which is equivalent to about 150 staff.
2. The 6.4 per cent tax increase that raises taxes \$105.89 on the average house in our community.

In the spirit of open, transparent, and honest communication with our public, you can find the questions and responses from both town halls on our website. To the right, you will find one question from each town hall.

### January 25 Virtual Budget Town Hall

**Q: Why do expensive projects, like building additions and elevators, continue when the division says it is broke?**

A: There is a difference between operational funding and capital funding. When it comes to projects such as renovations and additions, the monies come directly from the province as part of capital funding. The board submits a five-year capital plan every year, and the province decides which projects to fund. Capital funding is separate from the operating budget and is approved and paid for entirely by the province.

### February 29 Virtual Budget Town Hall

**Q: How have administrative costs been reduced?**

A: Administrative costs include the superintendent’s department, finance, human resources, information technology, and the trustees. As indicated in the FRAME report on the province’s website, RETSD’s admin costs have gone down. For at least five years, the province has had a limit on school divisions over 5,000 students of 2.7 per cent for administrative costs and RETSD has never been above that 2.7 per cent. The most recent FRAME information (2022–23), specifically page 68, shows RETSD at 2.52 per cent for administrative costs.

To view the Q&A or PowerPoint from either town hall, scan the QR codes below.

#### January 25 Town Hall



#### February 29 Town Hall



### RETSD growing rapidly

Since its establishment in 2002, RETSD has never encountered such significant growth in student enrolment, creating an unprecedented situation. We are currently anticipating over 500 additional students for the 2024–25 school year, with our projected enrolment to reach 18,769. Moreover, RETSD has welcomed a substantial number of newcomer students; last year alone we welcomed almost 1,400 and are at 539 so far this year. Despite the increased enrolment, RETSD remains committed to delivering exemplary educational experiences and support to all students.

## Your River East Transcona School Division Trustees

#### Ward 1

Colleen Carswell (board chair)  
204.222.1486  
ccarswell@retsd.mb.ca

Sheri Irwin  
204.223.5079  
sirwin@retsd.mb.ca

#### Ward 2

Rod Giesbrecht  
204.391.8225  
rgiesbrecht@retsd.mb.ca

Sheri Hanson  
204.915.7313  
shanson2@retsd.mb.ca

#### Ward 3

Brianne Goertzen  
204.955.6782  
bgoertzen@retsd.mb.ca

Keith Morrison  
204.795.3357  
kmorrison@retsd.mb.ca

#### Ward 4

Susan Olynik (board vice-chair)  
204.661.6440  
solynik@retsd.mb.ca

Brenda Bage  
204.221.2951  
bbage@retsd.mb.ca

#### Ward 5

Shannon Hiebert  
204.771.8435  
shiebert@retsd.mb.ca

The Board of Trustees meets the first and third Tuesday of each month. You are welcome to attend, either in person or online. For more information about the Board of Trustees, visit: [www.retsd.mb.ca](http://www.retsd.mb.ca) > Your RETSD > Board of Trustees