

## Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education

Hanover School Division Board of Trustees appreciate the opportunity to participate in this comprehensive review, and respectfully submit the following recommendations to the Commission.

*Commission Members: Dr. Janice MacKinnon (Co-Chair), Clayton Manness (Co-Chair), Terry Brown, Mark Frison, J.D. Lees, Jill Quilty, Laurel Repski, Denis Robert, and Ian Wishart.*



### FOCUS AREA - LONG TERM VISION

#### What should the goals and purpose of K to Gr. 12 education be in a rapidly changing world?

When viewed through an educational lens, the recent Government of Manitoba publication, *Transforming the Manitoba Public Service: A Strategy for Action*, provides an accurate assessment that can also be applied to public education.

“The world is changing rapidly, and that provides us with a unique opportunity to transform (*Education in Manitoba*) for the future.

We are in a period of profound technological, environmental, and socioeconomic change that compels us to evaluate the nature of our work (*education*) and the essence of our culture. We can no longer meet the needs of citizens and achieved outcomes defined by government if we continue to rely on our historical approaches to providing (*education*). While it has previously served us well, these approaches were not designed to meet the unprecedented challenges we now face.”

This Commission presents a generational opportunity for a **bold transformation** in the program of education that is provided for the young people of Manitoba.

In Hanover School Division we believe that we have begun this bold transformational journey. In 2012 we asked hundreds of individuals (students, parents, community, and teachers) as to what skills, dispositions, values, and knowledge our young people require to live a productive and wholesome life.

When we synthesized our responses, we identified eight core learning competencies. An educated person is a learner, critical thinker, communicator, collaborator, literate, creative, and exhibits good citizenship and character. These eight competencies serve as the very core of the purpose and outcomes of our work, and are a close match to the *World Economic Forum’s 2022 Skills Outlook*. We refer to these competencies as *Our Kid* and suggest these competencies would serve all young people of Manitoba well as they prepare for a bold new world.

#### Board Recommendations:

- That Manitoba Education and Training develops, and clearly articulates a bold new vision for education that will transform learning for all students in the province.
- That Manitoba Education and Training develops, implements and supports a bold new curriculum for education that reflects our rapidly changing world. A curriculum that will transform learning for all students in the province, one with greatly reduced specific learning outcomes, and more focus on the general learning competencies.



## FOCUS AREA - STUDENT LEARNING

### What are the conditions required to achieve excellence in student achievement and outcomes in Manitoba?

We believe excellence in student achievement and outcomes can be achieved by incorporating Deeper Learning into all facets of instruction and programming.

What do we mean when we say Deeper Learning? We mean a clear focus on learning those essential skills, dispositions, values, and knowledge. We mean more relevance, more rigor, more curiosity, more connections, more questions, more clarity, more community, more preparation for a digital environment, and even more adventure. We also mean deeper academic engagement, social engagement, emotional engagement, and intellectual engagement.

#### OUR KID

The Deeper Learning Plan identifies eight core learning competencies. *Our Kid* is a learner, critical thinker, communicator, collaborator, literate, creative, and exhibits good citizenship and character. For students to flourish, all eight competencies are essential.

#### LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that there is great power in strong and supportive personal relationships, between teachers and students. Learning is deepened further by extending our learning partnerships to include families and external partners in the community, and across the world.

#### LEVERAGING DIGITAL

Leveraging digital technology in our classrooms supports personalized learning, real-time assessment, and provides opportunity to connect families with their children’s learning experiences. By embedding digital technologies into classroom practice, we accelerate, amplify, and add value to learning.

#### PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

We desire our teachers to be purposeful in designing classroom learning experiences, and precise in their pedagogy. This requires the use of proven and emerging pedagogical practice. In the context of Deeper Learning, we want to focus on how best to teach our students so that they will learn the eight competencies of *Our Kid*.

#### LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Intentionally preparing students to understand how their learning environment can support their learning, is an important step in facilitating lifelong learning. Learning tasks build on earlier successes, creating interactive learning environments where all students are deeply engaged and motivated.



## Board Recommendations:

- That Manitoba Education and Training invests in the identification and implementation of new innovative and community-based learning partnerships for all students.
- That Manitoba Education and Training ensures every student has access to the digital resources essential to learning in our world today, and creates dynamic curricular resources to ensure that outcomes drive the learning more than the technology itself.
- That Manitoba Education and Training carefully consider the development and support of best practice learning environments for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.



## FOCUS AREA - TEACHING

### How can teachers and school leaders become most effective?

As stated in our divisional priorities, Hanover strives to build the capacity of all staff, so that all students will learn. In this model, teachers and school leaders are also learners.

Ongoing and sustained professional learning is necessary for educators. This concept is embedded in our divisional priorities, and is reflected in our ongoing investment in professional development events and activities. Various PD opportunities are available to teachers and leaders, including workshops, courses, seminars, and conferences. Mentorship programming is also offered to our teachers. A key component in our professional development efforts is the HSD Summer Institute. The primary focus of this event is on preparing new and early career teachers for a strong start to the school year, and equipping them with tools to thrive in their new careers.

We also believe that teachers teach students, not subjects, and that no significant learning occurs without a significant relationship. Teachers require a clear understanding of how their work affects outcomes. Students learn best when teachers take care to use their skills of engaging instruction and meaningful assessment, to develop an intentional learning relationship between student and curriculum.

For teachers to be most effective, we need an educational system and funding solution that addresses the growing needs for resource support. Student needs are complex and substantial. This poses a significant challenge for teachers, and has the potential to result in an overload of responsibilities, thereby impacting their ability to teach effectively. This solution must be inter-sectoral and coordinated with all other related community resources to engage the entire “village” in the well-being, and well-becoming of all our students. When support resources are insufficient, group instructional time is often replaced with specialized student care that requires full attention of the teacher.

Effective teaching also depends on training and competency. Our teachers are well-trained professionals, and we are confident in their abilities. Education is changing rapidly, so too is our understanding of educational theory and student learning. For this reason, teacher learning must take place throughout their career, from graduation to retirement. Teacher learning must constantly adapt to the disruptive and systemic change in our world. Therefore it is imperative that Manitoba institutions tasked with training teachers, maintain ongoing dialogue with stakeholders at the front-line of public education.

### Board Recommendations

- That Manitoba Education and Training works together with universities, teachers, and school divisions to create a robust (graduation to retirement) teacher development program, that all teachers will participate in throughout their careers.
- That Manitoba Education and Training integrates inter-sectoral support and initiatives to address mental health, well-being, and well-becoming of students.



## FOCUS AREA - ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT LEARNING

### **How can the education system develop a stronger sense of shared accountability for student learning?**

We believe that student learning is a shared responsibility between parents/guardians, educators, school boards, and government. Partners in the education of our children. The work of education is interconnected and engaged, therefore accountability must be approached from a collaborative perspective. Our experience is that this model of shared accountability is most effective when all partners are fully invested, take ownership of the process, and clearly understand their role.

In Hanover, this partnership includes community members. This is reflected in our stated priority, that we will partner with our communities to enable all students to learn. Our goal is to break down the walls between school and community, by providing learning opportunities for students within the community, and by inviting the community into our schools to participate in the learning process.

A healthy framework of accountability also requires a clear understanding of desired outcomes. That all students learn the skills, dispositions, values, and knowledge required for a productive and wholesome life. In Hanover, this is articulated in the eight core competencies of *Our Kid*, as described in the Deeper Learning Plan. Appropriately measuring genuine progress is a critical part of being accountable for results. For this reason, a unified vision of purpose, consensus on measures, and an openness to varied means of assessment are necessary.

Our education system requires an innovative approach to accountability, one that shares this important responsibility with key partners, but does so within the context of a tiered system of governance. A unique challenge, that may require new administrative structures, creative solutions, and processes that disrupt the status quo - a new culture of accountability.

#### **Board Recommendations**

- That Manitoba Education and Training develops a “balanced scorecard” for learning that reflects the eight learning competencies.
- That Manitoba Education and Training invests in an effective communications plan to help parents/guardians understand this new “balanced scorecard.”



## FOCUS AREA - GOVERNANCE

### **What type of governance structures are needed to create a coordinated and relevant education system?**

Hanover School Division Board of Trustees welcome a review of our public education system, including governance.

Two matters which may be under consideration in this review are the large-scale amalgamation of the 37 elected school boards in our province, and a possible move to appointed, rather than elected school boards. HSD Board of Trustees strongly oppose any mandated reduction of school divisions in Manitoba, or the elimination of locally elected school boards.

We concur with Manitoba School Boards Association, that alone, either of these changes would severely undermine the ability of communities to shape local schools. The first would create overly large administrative units, and the second would eliminate the right of communities to choose their own representatives to govern their school system. Together, these two changes could silence the community’s voice in education and take away community ownership of local schools. As citizens within the communities of Hanover School Division, we

believe it is important to advocate for school division autonomy. This ensures decisions are made locally, based on what is best for the students within our schools.

School boards are grassroots, democratic institutions. As partners in education, we are invested in our communities and the education of our children. It is our belief that local/elected school boards, as opposed to government appointed representatives, will always understand and envision the needs of their communities in a better way. More importantly, as parents, grandparents, and fellow community members, we value our ability to have ownership over the educational needs of our children. By removing local school boards, the provincial government would effectively remove this ability from our community.

Although substantive change to Governance is not necessary, there are limitations to the existing governance structure that must be overcome. The current model inadvertently creates divisional silos of programming and resources. Rather than eliminate school boards or amalgamate school divisions, we believe that Manitoba students would benefit from greater cooperation between school divisions and their boards. The sharing of ideas, expertise, resources, and programming would be of significant benefit to all. A system of governance that encourages and facilitates such partnerships, would have the potential to drive innovation and reduce costs.

### **Board Recommendations**

- That Manitoba Education and Training takes seriously this generational opportunity to carefully review the best structure for educational governance in the province, one that provides for the voice of the community in education.
- That Manitoba Education and Training provides high quality and effective learning opportunities for all those who are involved in the governance of learning.



## **FOCUS AREA - FUNDING**

### **What actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?**

Educational funding serves as an investment in the education of children, and their future. While striving to provide the best education possible, Hanover School Division has proven to be a model of fiscal responsibility.

The average cost to educate one Hanover student is \$11,074 whereas the provincial average is \$13,284.\* Our cost to educate is one of the lowest in the province. Even though HSD is the 8th largest school division in Manitoba, administrative costs make up only 2.6% of our overall budget (provincial average is 3.0%).\* This too, ranks Hanover among the most cost-efficient in the province. When compared to other school divisions, HSD local taxation (as a percentage of total revenue) is also below the Manitoba provincial average. Local taxes comprise 30.0% of total revenue, whereas the provincial average is 34.7%.\*

Although provincial funding increased by \$761,400 (1.6%) for 2019-20, operational costs are projected to rise by \$2,986,000. The cap on local taxation (2%) will limit tax revenue to \$694,400, thereby creating a deficit of \$1,530,200. Expenditures include an annual operating cost of \$550,100 for the new Niverville High School, and an increase of \$511,100 for French education fees (paid to other school divisions). To meet provincial budget guidelines, the Board reduced expenditures in transportation by \$340,000 (bus replacements) and school maintenance by \$500,000 (projects). An additional cost reduction of \$370,200 was achieved through the elimination of existing divisional programs and services. The remaining budgetary gap will be covered by using \$320,000 of accumulated surplus. Similar reductions in future budgets are not sustainable, and will directly impact our ability to provide quality education for all students.

We believe the education system in Manitoba needs a new funding model. One that is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children. This will require robust funding for special needs and educational

support services. Student needs are complex and significant. Sufficient resources are needed to ensure all children receive the care and education they deserve.

Funding must also recognize the unique needs and differences between divisions, based upon location and communities they serve. For example, Hanover School Division has additional operating costs that are unique to our division. HSD operates one of the largest bus fleets in the Province, with over 100 bus routes providing daily transportation to 5,000+ students. HSD spends approximately 5% of its total budget on transportation, compared to an average of 2% for Winnipeg school divisions.

A new funding model must be responsive to a bold and transformational approach to education. There are costs associated with such changes, but if it is directed toward a compelling new vision, it will be a worthy investment for the future of our children and communities.

*Source: \* MB FRAME Report*

### **Board Recommendations**

- That Manitoba Education and Training develops a bold and transformational vision for education, and commits to a funding model that will ensure all students in the province have equitable access to education that reflects this new vision.

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Ron Falk, Board Chair  
Hanover School Division Board of Trustees  
May 30, 2019

### **Ward 1 West - Bothwell, Crystal Springs, Kleefeld, and Niverille**

Trustees: Shannon Friesen, Carisa Klassen

### **Ward 2 North - Blumenort, Landmark, and Mitchell**

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### **Ward 4 South - Grunthal**

Trustee: Jonathon Driedger



Hanover is a student-centred school division striving for excellence while developing skills and promoting values for a productive and wholesome life.

Representing 18 schools in nine communities, Hanover School Division educates approximately 8,200 students and employs 1,100 total staff. In addition to academics, athletics, and the arts, HSD offers full vocational and technology education programming.