



Evergreen School Division

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Proposed Budget 2024-2025 Overview, Highlights, and Impact on Local Taxpayers

School Divisions in Manitoba have received direction from the Provincial Government that this year, funding for schools will include both provincial base funding, as well as locally generated tax revenue. A new funding model for Manitoba Schools is to be released sometime next school year.

This summary will provide an overview of the proposed budget for Evergreen School Division, which will be passed at a meeting of the board on March 19th, 2024.

Context / Background

The context in which our Board has been deliberating on our budget this year includes the following matters of relevance:

- Seven consecutive years of funding cuts and funding below inflation, as well as the freezing of our ability to generate local tax revenue to support programming.
- Last year's funding shortfall alone had an estimated impact, when taking inflation into account, equivalent to a cut of over \$700,000.
- In the provincial funding announcement for next year, our increase was 1.2% vs. the provincial increase of over 3%. This amounts to a small increase, outside of the funds provided for a nutrition program, of \$128,000. This amount again falls short of cost increases / inflationary pressures.
- Our current year's budget is a deficit budget with a projected shortfall of \$600,000.
- Costs continue to rise due to inflation and price increases on nearly everything, including fuel, mechanical parts, and learning resources.
- Salary settlements are forthcoming for our employee groups.
- Local decisions to reduce the size of the board from 9 trustees to 7, and to eliminate the position of Assistant Superintendent have resulted in reduced operating costs.
- Class sizes K-3 have crept incrementally higher over the years of funding cuts and tax freezes.
- Through the years of shortfalls, we have undertaken other cost reduction measures (for example, moving the former mature student program to a third-party provider, reduced technology budget).
- We have been limited or restricted in our ability to fund our bus and technology reserves for several years.

Proposed Budget 2024-2025

We are aiming to move from a deficit budget (2023-2024) to a balanced budget in 2024-2025, with an increase in expenditures from \$23,507,800, to \$24,897,928.

Our total budget is a balanced budget of \$25,297,928 and includes transfers to reserves of \$400,000.



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Mill Rate and Impact on Local Taxpayer

Our proposed balanced budget for 2024-2025 will affect the Mill Rate, which will go from 9.562 to 9.818.

While we have set taxes in accordance with a necessary increase to our budget, we are not attempting to restore all of what has been lost over the past 7 years in one single year.

The following indicates the recent history of the mill rate in Evergreen:

2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
11.14	10.98	10.855	9.562	9.818 (proposed)

The increased contribution from the local taxpayer to support our 2024-2025 budget is expected to be as estimated below:

On an average home value of \$230,000 our proposed budget would mean an approximate increase of \$26.50 *before* the 50% rebate from the provincial government. After the 50% rebate, the increase is estimated at \$13.25, or the estimated equivalent of \$1.10 /month.

Our budget for 2024-2025 will help us to partially build back after years of cuts and underfunding, offering the following:

- Maintaining programming K-12, including recently introduced band programming.
- Smaller class sizes K-3 in keeping with the provincial directive to aim for an average class size of 20 for K-3 classes.
- Full time Kindergarten – we will offer full time Kindergarten (note: Kindergarten in Manitoba allows for flexible participation and attendance). More detailed communication re: Kindergarten programming will be shared with families in an additional communication.
- Flexibility to schools regarding grade/class configurations. This means that we may offer single-grade classes in some early years contexts, as appropriate.
- Expected salary settlements.
- Beginning to replenish the reserves that are used to purchase technology and buses, this includes the purchase of an urgently needed bus with 2 wheelchair spaces.

If you have questions about our proposed budget or our programming, please contact us at info@esd.ca