



**THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION**  
1577 Wall Street East, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 2S5  
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RENÉ APPELMANS, C.A.  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

October 30, 2013

Mr. Colin Craig  
1881 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3J 3X7

Dear Mr. Colin Craig:

Re: **Request for access to information under Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (our file number 7-2013)**

On October 17, 2013, The Winnipeg School Division received your request for access to the following records:

"Please provide documentation on any analysis the school board completed or any data it used to determine if ratepayers could afford the board's last two education property tax increases"

During the development of the Division's Budget Process, a number of communication and consultation processes are in place which include hosting District Advisory Committee meetings with parents/residents as well as providing opportunities for any resident to provide feedback to the Board on any proposed increase in property taxes.

Specifically, during the development of the 2013/2014 Budget, in November 2012, the Board hosted a meeting with parents to discuss matters important to education. Based on the feedback provided to the Board measures were taken to achieve savings in areas deemed appropriate and necessary supports in the classroom. A copy of the Parent Forum and related Budget information are available on the Division's website at [www.winnipeg.sd.ca](http://www.winnipeg.sd.ca) for your perusal.

While the Board of Trustees is mindful of the increasing costs required to support programs and services for students, maintaining an aging infrastructure and upgrading technology for schools, every effort is made to find a balance between the revenue required from the local property tax levy and student/classroom/school needs. Unfortunately, every year, the members of the Board are faced with incredible challenges which are totally dependent on whether there will be increases in provincial funding including the Tax Incentive Grant to help offset costs.

On an annual basis, the members of the Board and administration review areas of the budget to find cost savings in services. To date, the Board has been able to implement measures to achieve savings in areas such as energy management and increase proficiencies in areas such as employee support programs. Last year, the Board was able to achieve additional savings through closing and repatriation of an off campus program; linking staff training sessions; replacing outdated telephone systems; updating technology supports and improving efficiencies to student transportation.

The Board also reduced administrative costs as a result of using new technologies, changes to processes & program administration and reassigning duties of staffing duties. When possible, the Board has always used a portion of Reserve Funds to help offset a higher tax increase.

The Board of Trustees believes strongly in a communication process that has open and transparent dialogue with parents, residents and members of the community on the costs related to programs, services and supports required to care for our children and youth including the implication of these budget changes on property taxation.

If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact Ms. Brenda Lapointe, FIPPA Coordinator at 204-789-0469.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "René Appelmans". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

René Appelmans  
FIPPA Officer