



To Avoid Cuts, Seven Oaks Raises Taxes

Seven Oaks School Division will raise school taxes rather than cut staff and programs in the face of growing enrolment and the need to recover from the experience of the pandemic.

Seven Oaks received the lowest funding increase of any Winnipeg school division. The increase of \$3.3 million has been touted as a 3.8% increase by the province but when coupled with a tax freeze it translates to only a 2.1% increase. “2.1% doesn’t cover increased enrollment let alone inflation and wage pressures,” said Board Chair Maria Santos. “It’s either raise taxes or cut.”

“Thanks to a substantial number of new homes, apartments and businesses coming on to our tax roll, the impact on individual taxpayers will be slight,” said Board Chair Maria Santos. “The impact of reducing staffing and programming now would be dramatic, especially for those students who most need extra attention.”

The division budget will be \$170,993,475 and will support very modest increases in teaching and other staff to address increased enrollment estimated to be 3% or 355 students. The mill rate will actually decrease from 15.521 to 14.809. Homeowners will see a tax increase of \$118 on the average home valued at \$341,000, but that increase will be reduced by the 50% education property tax rebate and follows several years of tax decreases.

Seven Oaks will maintain its parent-friendly approach with no fees for lunch supervision, musical instruments, and field trips. School supplies will cost a modest \$40. Transportation policy will not be significantly affected.

Programs like Learn to Swim, Learn to Skate and Learn to Bike will remain in place. “Class sizes will remain reasonable, and students will still get the help they need when they need it,” said Santos.

The overall budget increases 4.95%. Non salary expenditure increases only 0.31%. Overall, this budget will still reduce staffing levels and freeze school budgets.

For more information on the 2023/2024 Seven Oaks School Division budget, please contact Brian O’Leary, Superintendent of Seven Oaks School Division.