



Prairie Rose School Division

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PRSD FEEDBACK ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEW EDUCATION FUNDING MODEL

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback and a submission regarding the development of a new funding model for K to 12 education in the province that ensures equity through a stable, predictable, and phased implementation plan to transition from the existing funding formula to the new formula.

To begin our presentation, the following background information is being presented to ensure that a full contextual understanding of our school division and its challenges are in place.

SCHOOLS AND STUDENT ENROLMENT

Prairie Rose School Division has 9 community schools; one K-5 school, three K-6 schools, one Grade 6 to 12 school, one Grade 7-12 school, and three K-12 schools. Of these schools, the following are French Immersion: one K-5 school, one K-6 school, and one Grades 7-12 school.

Projected K-12 student enrollment of our community schools for 2022-2023 school year is 2,020 students.

In addition to the 9 community schools, our school division has the most Hutterian Colony school sites of all Manitoba school divisions. We have 17 K-12 Hutterian school communities. K-8 teaching is delivered on-site and all Grades 9-12 credits are delivered through an interactive television network from the Hutterian Administration Office located in St. Paul's Collegiate in Elie, Manitoba.

Projected K-12 Hutterian Colony student enrollment for 2022-2023 school year is 502 students.

Total projected enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year is 2,522 students.

STUDENT COMPOSITION

PRSD has a diverse group of student learners. Each group of learners brings unique challenges and opportunities for both student learning and engagement. Our school division has been committed to addressing the barriers that these learners must overcome to meet Manitoba Education's aspirational targets - example, student achievement standing, credit completion, and graduation targets.

Student Category	Number of students	Percentage of student population
English as an Additional Language	205	9%
Self-declared Aboriginal	329	14%
French Immersion	257	11%
Child in Care	81	3.4%

*Based on September 30, 2021 Enrolment Data

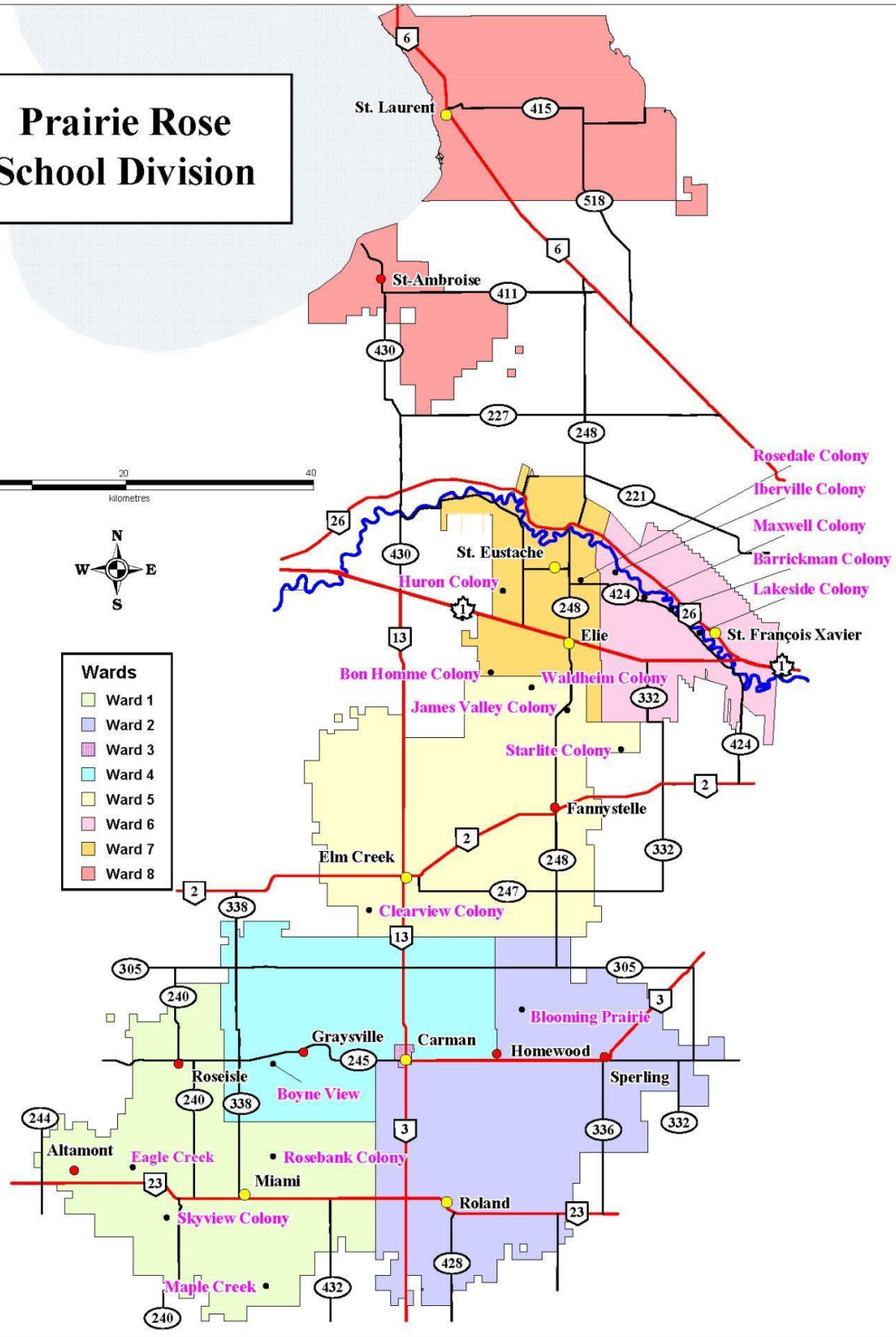
SCHOOL DIVISION- GEOGRAPHICAL SIZE

All of PRSD community school sites and our Hutterian Colony schools site fall within a geographic range of 3,729.5 square kilometers. Prairie Rose School Division spans as far south as Miami, Manitoba, and as far north as St. Laurent, Manitoba (driving travel time of 2 hours/153 kms one-way). PRSD has 16 different provincial municipalities within our boundaries. Within such a large geographic range, diversity of cultural and socio-economical needs are vast.

Prairie Rose School Division



- Wards**
- Ward 1
 - Ward 2
 - Ward 3
 - Ward 4
 - Ward 5
 - Ward 6
 - Ward 7
 - Ward 8



PERSONNEL PROFILE

The following chart lists the 2021-2022 staffing categories and the respective FTE (full time equivalent staff) from the 2021-2022 Frame Budget.

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Teachers (Classroom Teachers, Resource Teachers, Clinicians, Guidance and Career Counselors)	187.83
Instructional Leadership (Assistant Superintendent, Director of Student Services, Principals, Vice-Principals)	14.55
Educational Assistants	79.68
Librarian Technicians	7.49
School Secretaries	11.92
Division Administration Office (Superintendent/CEO, Secretary-Treasurer, Human Resources Manager, Executive Assistant, Administrative Assistants)	7.0
Information/Communication/Technology (Supervisor, Computer Technicians)	4.00
Facilities/Maintenance (Supervisor, Administration Assistant, Tradespeople, Custodians, Grounds)	27.11
Transportation (Supervisor, Administration Assistant, Bus Drivers, Mechanics)	47.90
Total	387.48

Professional Teaching and Instructional Leadership Staff = 52.2%

Support Staff = 47.8%

PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL FUNDING HISTORY

As per past public school funding announcements, the 2022-2023 funding announcement, fell short in providing the required funding for our school division.

Starting the 2016-2017 school year, despite continual student enrolment growth, PRSD has either received a reduction and/or minimal provincial funding increases. The following chart clearly shows the limited provincial funding increases to our school division and the continual student enrolment growth.

Operating Fund			
Budgeted Revenue – FRAME Report			
School Year	Provincial Government	Municipal Government	Student Enrolment FTE K-12
2011-2012	16,205,275	7,783,637	2,057.0
2012-2013	16,355,482	8,763,799	2,051.0
2013-2014	16,646,592	9,317,976	2,045.5
2014-2015	16,788,610	10,164,168	2,103.5
2015-2016	17,447,061	11,766,252	2,188.0
2016-2017	17,372,970	13,347,012	2,181.0
2017-2018	17,089,327	13,890,605	2,213.0
2018-2019	16,935,666	14,208,483	2,263.5
2019-2020	16,678,661	14,491,814	2,231.5
2020-2021	16,476,935	14,845,693	2,335.5
2021-2022	17,088,459	14,817,038	2,368.0

2016-2017 to 2021-2022 - Student Enrolment Growth (8.6%) = 187 students

2016-2017 to 2021-2022 - Provincial Funding Decrease (-3.85%) = (\$284,511)

2020-2021 to 2022-2023 - Special Levy = 0% change

Based on the above information for 2016-2017 to 2021-2022, Prairie Rose has annually reduced and/or eliminated personnel and/or funding to our schools. The support staff consisting of Educational Assistants, Custodians, and Administrative Assistants have been the most affected from the reductions over the years. For the 2022-2023 Budget, PRSD is now forced to reduce professional teaching staff by over 5.0 FTE.

These reductions all have contributed to the Prairie Rose School Division having the lowest per pupil cost when compared to similar rural school divisions as per Manitoba Education's Financial Reporting and Accounting in Manitoba Education (FRAME) Report for 2020-2021.

PROVINCIAL AVERAGE – \$13,436 PER PUPIL

1. Prairie Rose School Division – \$13,432
2. Interlake School Division – \$13,520
3. Rolling River School Division – \$13,835
4. Prairie Spirit School Division – \$13,896
5. Red River School Division - \$13,998
6. Park West School Division – \$14,166
7. SouthWest Horizon School Division – \$15,644
8. Borderland School Division – \$15,793

STUDENT LEARNING

Even with continual student enrolment growth, the province's current funding model, coupled with the inability for school divisions to access local taxation to generate required revenue, has impacted the student learning, particularly in our 9 community schools, because of our inability to provide required school-based and divisional supports.

A listing of cost-cutting actions during the past several years that have negatively impacted student learning are as follows:

Kindergarten to Grade 8 Schools

1. St. Laurent School – 1.00 FTE reduction forcing multi-graded classrooms of 23-25 students
2. Roland School - .50 FTE reduction
3. Miami School - .50 FTE reduction - unable to support that section of staffing formula
4. Hutterian Colony Schools – unable to provide up to 2.00 FTE for growing K-8 Hutterian Colony Schools for 2021-2022. The need has now grown to 3.00 FTE for 2022-2023.

High Schools

1. Main Street Campus – Closed an Alternative High School Program in Carman, Manitoba
2. Limited FTE allocation for alternate support programming at St. Laurent School
3. Reduced FTE allocations for classroom teachers at Carman Collegiate, Elm Creek School, Miami School, St. Laurent School, and St. Paul's Collegiate (French Immersion)

4. Reduced .50 FTE resource teacher allocations for two high schools; Carman Collegiate and Elm Creek School
5. Reduced .80 FTE guidance counseling time at Carman Collegiate
6. Eliminated a 1.00 FTE Career Technology Studies position that supported all high schools with career development and mentorship opportunities
7. Reduced Career Development FTE allocation for the school division and five community high schools

PRSD also eliminated the following divisional positions as cut costing measures in response to provincial funding announcements during the past four years. These positions provided necessary support to our schools as they worked towards meeting provincial expectations with their K-12 Framework for Continuous Improvement Plans for improving student achievement and student engagement results.

1. K-12 Literacy Leader – Eliminated 1.00 FTE Position
2. K-12 Numeracy Leader – Eliminated 1.00 FTE Position
3. K-12 English as an Additional Language Leader – Eliminated 1.00 FTE Position
4. K-12 Literacy with ICT Leader – Eliminated 1.00 FTE Position
5. Social Workers – 1.75 FTE

Educational Assistants

1. Total number of hours per day was reduced four years ago and those hours have been frozen since that daily hourly reduction. PRSD is facing increased pressures on these limited hours due to the growing number of special needs learners with no additional funding for these students.

PRSD has also reduced other school-based operational expenses during the past six years that have impacted the school's ability to improve student learning opportunities. These include:

- Annual budget reviews for line-by-line efficiency reductions in Functions 100 (Regular Instruction), 200 (Student Support Services), and 600 (Instructional and Other Support Services)
- Annual reduction to professional development funds for training principals, teachers, and educational assistants
- Reduction of field trip funding for co-curricular and the elimination of funding to offset high school athletic costs; transportation, etc.

PRSD has lost key educational gains since the 2016-2017 in providing the required operational, personnel, and programming support for our 9 community schools and 17 colony school sites.

Non-salary expenditures for classrooms such as textbooks, supplies and other classroom supports have also **decreased** from 2015-2016 to 2021-22 **by 18%**.

After years of inadequate provincial funding to our school division, which has already resulted in major cost-cutting reductions, future cost-cutting measures of **1.87 million** are scheduled for the 2022-2023 year.

FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION - MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE

PRSD's aging community schools and our large geographical area brings additional challenges to our facility and transportation departments. PRSD has 9 community school buildings, a division office and two bus garages (due to our geographical size). Most of our schools were constructed in the 1960's, with the exception of our newest building, St. François Xavier School, constructed in 1992, and our oldest building, École St. Eustache, constructed in 1948.

Some of our rural communities, especially those that are close to a large urban centre such as Winnipeg, will be experiencing increased student enrolment growth in a few years due to new residential subdivisions that are being planned. One such community is St. François Xavier. The Rural Municipality of St. François Xavier is in the planning stages with multiple residential housing developments of up to 85 new homes in the next two years and with a potential of an additional 300 new homes in the near future. Other communities within PRSD boundaries, such as Elie and Carman, are also looking at new housing developments that will greatly impact our schools' capacities. These residential developments will require PRSD to install additional modular classrooms and a future new school to accommodate this student population growth.

PRSD has an active fleet of 45 buses for transporting students to school. PRSD school buses travel 6,351.6 kms each day to bring our students to our community schools. The majority of our buses are over 10 years old.

PRSD has also reduced operational expenses during the past six years because of the province's declining and/or modest increases that are not covering the increased operational and personnel costs to support our facility and transportation responsibilities. For example, PRSD's non-salary expenditures for maintenance of our school buildings and other facilities have **decreased** from 2015-2016 to 2021-2022 **by 21%** even though the cost of utilities has **risen** by 14% (electricity) and 76% (natural gas) over that same time period.

Other examples of operational expense reductions include:

- An annual reduction and eventual elimination of special levy funded facility repairs (Function 850 - School Buildings Repairs and Replacement) of \$677,186 comparative from 2015-2016 to 2021-2022. This board approved fund supported by special levy was used to revitalize and upgrade school facilities, bus garages, school grounds, and parking lots.
- A reduction of new bus purchases; placing growing maintenance pressures on our aging bus fleet with ever increasing maintenance costs (Note: PRSD had in place a plan to purchase 2 new buses per year. This plan had to be abandoned 5 years ago. We have no new bus purchases in our current 2021-2022 budget.)
- Annual budget reviews for line-by-line efficiency for Function 700 (Transportation of Pupils) and 800 (Operations and Maintenance) with a **reduction of \$461,200** comparative from 2015-2016 to 2021-2022.

HUTTERIAN COLONY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Key factors affecting the Hutterian Colony school system in our school are as follows:

1. Cost efficiency staff assignment and staff management strategies, teachers and educational assistants, are limited with 17 colony sites that range in K-12 student enrolments from 10 - 44 students. Due to these limitations, expense reductions due to reduced provincial funding has to be directed to community schools and general divisional operations that impact community schools.
2. PRSD has 17 colony school sites; the largest number of colony sites in a single school division of all 37 Manitoba school divisions.
3. 24% of the school division's total student enrolment are Hutterian students.
4. 100% of our K-4 Hutterian students are English as Additional Language Learners.
5. Additional educational assistant time is required to support single teacher schools with "Working Alone" guidelines.

K-8 teaching is delivered on-site and all Grades 9-12 credits are delivered through an interactive television network from the Hutterian Administration Office located in St. Paul's Collegiate in Elie, Manitoba.

The 17 K-8 Hutterite colony sites bring additional financial challenges, pressures, and costs to our school division. Staffing efficiencies are next to impossible, therefore, personnel costs are much higher than they would be if the same number of K-8 students were in a single building.

Example

K-8 Hutterite student enrolment (17 sites) - 363 students

- Allocated FTE (teachers) = 27 teachers (13.44 to 1 student/teacher ratio)
- Allocated FTE (Educational Assistants) 24

K-8 Community School (1 site)- 363 students

- Allocated FTE (teachers) - 17.28 teachers (21.00 to 1 - student/teacher ratio)
- Allocated FTE (education assistants) - 12

Based on the above example, PRSD's Hutterite Colony school system brings additional personnel costs to our school division. Furthermore, when our school division has to reduce operational costs, it is the 9 community schools and divisional support for all schools that face the consequences of budget cuts.

The current funding formula fails to recognize this unique challenge for rural school divisions that have Hutterite colonies within their boundaries. For our school division, the number of Hutterite colonies that we serve definitely impacts our ability to provide required services to all students and when budget cuts are imminent, it is the community schools that face the price.

NEW FUNDING MODEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the provided information, we are forwarding the following recommendations that will ensure that the new funding model for K to 12 education in the province ensures equity through a stable, predictable, and phased implementation plan to transition from the existing funding formula to the new formula.

Recommendation #1 - Weighted Student Enrolment Funding

School division student enrolment counts for funding purposes should be weighted to recognize additional costs associated with student programming requirements.

Example

- Regular Student - 1.0
- Self-Declared Indigenous Student - 1.2
- English as Additional Language - 1.3

Recommendation #2 - Kindergarten to Grade 3 Class Sizes

The new funding model should prioritize K-3 student learning by providing additional funding to support smaller class sizes similar to the province's 20K3 initiative that was in place and suspended by this government about five years ago.

Recommendation #3 - Provincial Funding Must Recognize Hutterian Colony School Operational Challenges

Funding to support rural school divisions with Hutterian schools that would help offset the cost of staff required in operating small schools that are unable to take advantage of staff management efficiencies that are available in larger community school systems.

Recommendation #4 - Special Education Funding

Funding for Level/Tier III special education students should be directly funded by Manitoba Education as per the past funding application process and Level/Tier III student funding should move with the students when these students move from one school division to another school division. The current block funding model for Level/Tier III students is not working and placing challenges in properly supporting Level/Tier I and II students. Funding for 2022-2023 is **short** \$357,000 for Educational Assistant support to these students alone.

Recommendation #5 - Categorical Grant Funding

Based funding must be sufficient to ensure that categorical grant funding can be used to specifically address the purpose of the categorical grants.

Recommendation #6 - Facilities, Maintenance, and Workplace, Safety, and Health

Current Provincial Funding of Schools Program Base Support - Occupancy covers only 43.8% of our total Facilities and Maintenance Budget. From 2015-2016 to 2022-2023, occupancy funding has only **increased .6%** or \$8,695. We have been forced to reduce custodial staffing and the maintenance and repairs of our buildings and property on an annual basis. Funding for Facilities and Maintenance should have an inflationary increase. Workplace Safety and Health and Accessibility is not identified in our current funding model but instead comes out of our stagnant Occupancy funding. Any new provincial identified programs that affect schools should always have a component of support allocated in our annual funding.

Recommendation #7 - Transportation

Current Provincial Funding of Schools Program Categorical Support - Transportation covers only 55.6% of our total Transportation Budget. From 2015-2016 to 2022-2023, transportation funding has only **increased by 3.8%** or \$50,036. Fuel costs and the rate of inflation on general goods and services has surpassed this percentage increase almost yearly. Funding for Transportation should have an inflationary increase. Due to our aging bus fleet, in order to provide safe transportation of pupils, there needs to be funding for new bus purchases. Our current funding model does not address this issue.

Recommendation #8 - Technology and Rural Connectivity

Current Provincial Funding of Schools Program Base Support for Information Technology covers only 36.9% of our total Technology Budget. From 2015-2016 to 2022-2023, information technology funding has only increased by 14.4% or \$18,674. Rural communication connectivity compared to urban connectivity is more expensive. Rural connectivity relies on PRSD owned and/or leased towers and/or expensive fiber optics services to service the geographical distances between school sites. Outages are more prevalent in rural areas due to the lack of secure and alternate infrastructure. To address this issue, PRSD has installed our own fiber optic lines to some of our schools at cost of \$1,372,726 that is serviced through debt with an annual cost of \$88,800 paid by PRSD. Additional support for technology infrastructure should be a part of the new funding model.

The shift to remote learning also adds pressure on our Technology budget as we supply more devices for students to accommodate remote learning. These increased cost pressures are not covered in our current funding model.

Recommendation #9 - CPI Adjustments

General expenditures (other than salaries and employee benefits and allowances and capital expenditures) should have an inflationary adjustment each funding year. PRSD's cost of Services, Supplies, Materials and Minor Equipment has **decreased by 13.4%** or \$709,364 since 2015-2016 as we have made cuts to operational costs in our schools, programs and buildings to support the classroom.

General expenditures, which is only 14.2% of our total 2021-2022 budget, has **shrunk by 4.0%** from 2015-2016. Annual adjustments for CPI should be implemented to offset school divisions' inability to access an alternate revenue source such as taxation for these cost pressures.

No supplemental revenue funding from taxation to offset CPI increases = more staff layoffs and reduced classroom supports. Something desperately needs to change.

CONCLUSION

Prairie Rose School Division has a responsibility to provide our students with best possible learning opportunities. However, as our presentation clearly demonstrates, the decrease of provincial funding of \$284,511 (-3.85%) and an increase of 187 (8.6%) students since 2016-2017 without having the opportunity to generate required revenue has resulted in serious and unsustainable reductions to our schools and to our system.

The current funding model, along with the loss of local taxation ability, is not working for Prairie School Division. The new funding model must ensure that rural school divisions are appropriately funded so that we can provide our students with well resourced student learning opportunities.

On behalf of the Prairie Rose School Division, I want to thank you this opportunity to share our challenges and recommendations in your work of framing a new funding model for K to 12 education in the province that ensures equity through a stable, predictable, and phased implementation plan to transition from the existing funding formula to the new formula.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Respectfully yours,

Mr. Terry M.J. Osiowy
Superintendent/CEO