



MASS

**MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**

SUBMISSION TO

The Manitoba Commission
on Kindergarten to
Grade 12 Education

May 30, 2019

Executive Summary

The Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS) is the voice of 120 school system administrators, including superintendents, assistant superintendents and directors in Manitoba's public school system. MASS members are highly experienced educators and the school system's leaders. We work closely with school administrators, teachers, parents and school boards, providing direction and accountability as, together, we all strive to find the most effective ways to help students achieve their individual best.

The recommendations in our submission are derived from feedback from our members through discussion groups, an online membership survey and a review of a draft submission at our annual meeting.

What should the goals and purpose of K-12 education be in a rapidly changing world?

In a rapidly changing world, our long-term vision remains constant: education as involving both the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the formation of character in order to live a successful life in concert with other human beings.¹

Public education is foundational for a democratic and just society. It is the first formal experience in which children become part of the public space. Education provides children and youth with the opportunity to grow to be adults who lead good lives as individuals and community members. Education is fluid to meet the needs and changes in society. Public schooling is for ALL children and youth and can succeed when it is based on a partnership among all stakeholders.

Our recommendations in this section both support and will bring these principles to life:

- Manitoba's vision for public education is success for all students
- Implement the educational recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
- Manitoba's education system is student-focused

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

MASS believes that "outcomes" need to be viewed both from the perspective of success for individual students and from a provincial lens. We consider "excellence in student achievement" encompasses multiple outcomes, including: meeting or exceeding grade level outcomes; meeting clearly defined expectations and being highly engaged; recognizing the relationship between curriculum and life; and having empathy and interpersonal competencies.

Our recommendations to support excellence in achievement and outcomes are:

- Renew the curriculum framework to address what students need to know and why
- Clearly define the expectations of the public education system
- Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health and well-being
- Develop partnerships to support schools in building student connections to the world outside of school
- Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives to ensure student readiness for school
- Provide sufficient and equitable resource allocation to allow for student-focused, effective learning opportunities

How can teachers and school leaders become most effective?

Our recommendations in this section identify the need for improved teacher induction; ongoing and flexible professional learning; and how to help support and build instructional leaders. Each of these steps will contribute to more effective teachers and instructional leaders who, in turn, contribute to positive outcomes for students.

- Provide ongoing professional learning to support flexible, student-focused pedagogical methods
- Develop better prepared teachers (new and tenured) through an effective teacher induction process
- Commit to train, recruit and retain engaging, high quality instructional leaders

¹ Coulter, D.L.; Wiens, J.R.; Why Do We Educate? Renewing the Conversation, Volume 1; National Society for the Study of Education, 2008

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

We all have a responsibility to set high expectations for learning and to set high expectations for everyone responsible for student learning and hold them accountable – the province, school systems, school leaders, teachers, parents and students. By working together, we can hold each other accountable in ways to support each other in meeting our expectations. Our recommendations for accountability address both systems and people:

- Accountability systems must reflect the full purpose of education and clearly articulate the role and purpose of student assessment data, along with its limitations
- Create accountability requirements for leaders and teachers and provide ongoing professional developments

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

MASS presents two recommendations in this area, both designed to keep the focus on the best educational opportunities and outcomes for students within the public school system. Our submission largely emphasizes the previous four question areas because we see significant opportunities to make a difference to a more equitable and relevant education system in those areas. The governance question may require a separate discussion and decisions about any changes to governance must be done in consultation with all partners – MASS, individual divisions, parents, Manitoba School Board Association, Manitoba Association of School Business Officials, Manitoba Teachers' Society, etc.

- Seek more ways to share resources
- Consider changes to school boards from the perspective of best outcomes for students and retaining local input

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

Adequate and equitably allocated funding is a requirement to achieve success for all students in a student-focused public education system. The question to consider is what actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

MASS believes that sustainable and equitable learning opportunities are possible if the following funding-related considerations are addressed: greater flexibility to respond to local needs and individuals rather than an enrolment formula; working with intersectoral partners to meet the multifaceted needs in schools across Manitoba stemming from poverty, social and emotional well-being/well-becoming; support for Indigenous curriculum and acting on the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action; support for newcomer students; and ensure stable funding for children with additional needs.

Many of our previous recommendations identify several areas where inequities occur, often because of insufficient or inappropriately allocated funding:

- Student Learning Recommendation 2.3: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health, well-being, well-becoming
- Student Learning Recommendation 2.5: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to ensure student readiness for school
- Student Learning Recommendation 2.6: Provide sufficient and equitable resource allocation to allow for student-focused, effective learning opportunities
- Teaching Recommendation 3.1: Provide ongoing professional learning to support flexible, student-focused pedagogical methods
- Teaching Recommendation 3.2: Develop better prepared teachers (new and tenured) through an effective teacher induction process

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Preface

The Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education (K-12 Review) is inviting the public (including organizations) to submit their ideas about the future of public education. We present this submission from the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS) with a series of recommendations on five of the six topic areas listed in the Commission's Terms of Reference.² These six topic areas and corresponding questions in the Terms of Reference are:

1. **Long-term vision** – What should the goals and purpose of K-12 education be in a rapidly changing world?
2. **Student learning** – What are the conditions required to achieve excellence in student achievement and outcomes in Manitoba?
3. **Teaching** – How can teachers and school leaders become most effective?
4. **Accountability for student learning** – How can the education system develop a stronger sense of shared accountability for student learning?
5. **Governance** – What type of governance structures are needed to create a coordinated and relevant education system?
6. **Funding** – What actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

MASS believes the best outcomes for the education system from the K-12 Review will be achieved by focusing on and fostering:

- Strong connections between students, schools, families and communities to strengthen confidence in public education in Manitoba
- A responsive, respectful and open dialogue among all partners – and continued after the Review has concluded

MASS is responding to the above questions, with many of our comments and recommendations relating to funding integrated into the other topics, since they all are highly interrelated.

We are the voice of 120 school system administrators, including superintendents, assistant superintendents and directors in Manitoba's public school system. MASS members are highly experienced educators and the school system's leaders. We work closely with school administrators, teachers, parents and school boards, providing direction and accountability as, together, we all strive to find the most effective ways to help students achieve their individual best.

Our recommendations are organized around the topics and respective questions presented by the K-12 Review. The recommendations are derived from feedback from our members through discussion groups and an online survey to members. MASS advocates for evidence-based decision making and, therefore, our recommendations are supported by education experts as footnoted throughout this submission.

² <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/mandate.html>

Introduction

What is public education? A shared understanding of the mandate of public education is required as the framework to the discussions generated by the K-12 Review. The entire system, schools and educators need to understand their mandate and that this mandate is rooted in the definition of public education.

Manitoba Education and Training's mandate, mission and vision align well with many of our recommendations in this submission. Its mission is noted here since it provides strong direction for the Commission as it considers all submissions to its review.

Manitoba Education and Training's Mission

To ensure that all Manitoba's children and youth have access to an array of educational opportunities such that every learner experiences success through relevant, engaging and high quality education that prepares them for lifelong learning and citizenship in a democratic, socially just and sustainable society.

The Public Schools Act (PSA) in Manitoba provides the mandate and framework for the purpose of education in the province. The umbrella provided by the PSA illustrates the importance of educating the whole child, not just academic (external) scores. Our own set of core beliefs about public education emphasize the need for the system to be designed and required to assist children to become contributing, positive members of society to the best of their individual abilities.³ Manitoba K-12 schools reflect the mandate and the intent of public education when they are open, welcoming and equitable in supporting every child.⁴

The recommendations in our submission are based on the PSA framework and our core beliefs. They are presented in the context of a shift in expectations for educators and schools to take on responsibilities beyond the scope of public education. These include mental health, social work, daycare and other socio-economic factors outside the scope and training of most educators. We know students come to school with many assets and challenges and educators and schools do their best to support them.

In February 2019, MASS organized a Student Leadership Forum attended by 160 students from across Manitoba. They made many similar recommendations to those in our submission and we have indicated this with each of the relevant recommendations.

³ See Appendix 1 for full Statement of Beliefs

⁴ Education Week: How to Define Public Schooling in the age of Choice? By Sarah M. Stitzloein September 5, 2017.

1. Long-term vision

What should the goals and purpose of K-12 education be in a rapidly changing world?

Education provides children and youth with the opportunity to grow to be adults who lead productive lives as individuals and community members. In a rapidly changing world, our long-term vision remains constant: education as involving both the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the formation of character in order to live a successful life in concert with other human beings.⁵

Public education is foundational for a democratic and just society. It is the first formal experience in which children become part of the public space. Education provides children and youth with the opportunity to grow to be adults who lead good lives as individuals and community members. Education is fluid to meet the needs and changes in society. Public schooling is for ALL children and youth and can succeed when it is based on a partnership among all stakeholders.

Long-term Vision Recommendation 1.1: Manitoba's vision for public education is success for all students

This recommendation frames all our subsequent recommendations in this report. It is the overall goal of public education and its responsibility to meet the needs of all students and to help each student succeed. The recommendations that follow throughout this submission address the many factors impacting students' ability to succeed and how the system can support them from K-12. Our vision is reflected in Manitoba Education and Training's vision: "That every learner will complete a high school education with a profound sense of accomplishment, hope and optimism."⁶

Inclusive education is a multifaceted concept that aims at "promoting mutual respect, and value for all persons and at building education environments in which the approach to learning, the culture of the education institution, and the curriculum itself, reflect the value of diversity."⁷

Inclusive education means celebrating the strengths and diversity – including cultural, heritage, gender orientation and socioeconomic – of all students from an asset rather than a deficit lens. The concept of curriculum is therefore focused on different ways of learning, which provide diverse contexts for learning and utilizes frameworks that support designing learning from the strengths of student diversity, rather than modifying for difference.

Every student can achieve success and the public education system has the responsibility to develop the skills, knowledge and abilities for all. Shelley Moore, an Inclusion Advocate in Vancouver, BC, has stated: "We are diverse, all of us. We all have strengths, we all have stretches and we all need to get better at something. The difference in teaching to diversity, however, is that we don't start with our deficits, we start with our strengths."

Inclusivity is at the heart of the vision and our submission. Students must be welcome in school, feel valued and safe. It is a stated priority for Manitoba Education and Training: "Application of [equity and inclusion] is essential for the education system and must be integrated into all policies, programs, operations and practices."⁸

Putting the principles into practice requires a concerted effort on the part of the government, education system and all partners involved in students' lives, including a recognition of the multiple factors that can lead to exclusion (e.g., poverty, physical and developmental abilities, mental health, ethnicity, language, etc.). Schools need adequate resources to fully include all students with every unique attribute they bring, including abilities and other challenges. Teachers require appropriate training from the outset and through ongoing professional learning to expand their ability to include all students.

5 Coulter, D.L.; Wiens, J.R.; Why Do We Educate? Renewing the Conversation, Volume 1; National Society for the Study of Education, 2008

6 <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu/mandate.html>

7 United Nations 2016 Right to inclusive education (General Comment No. 4: Article 24)

8 Manitoba Education and Training Mandate, Mission, Vision and Priority Areas. <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu/mandate.html>

Long-term Vision Recommendation 1.2: Implement the educational recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

Success for Indigenous students requires particular attention since Indigenous children and youth are the most marginalized and vulnerable within the educational system. The education recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action⁹ need to be addressed and implemented in Manitoba schools to create equitable opportunities and increased Indigenous graduation rates in our public schools.

Manitoba has a diverse population and curricula need to reflect this. Indigenous students comprise 18 per cent of our student population and our provincial data and research has shown that Indigenous students exhibit more challenges with school achievement. Literacy and numeracy learning needs to be culturally relevant. This is especially true for diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.

MASS affirms and values the contribution of Aboriginal knowledge and calls on all Manitoba educational organizations to:

- Ensure that the mandated Aboriginal perspectives and outcomes in the provincial curriculum are addressed in the classroom in a meaningful and culturally respectful way for all students.
- Infuse existing curricula with Aboriginal content.
- Ensure sufficient resources for the teaching of the mandatory outcomes in the provincial curriculum concerning Manitoba treaty education and the history of residential schools.
- Offer and promote specific courses in Aboriginal studies and languages.
- Promptly address stereotypical images of Aboriginal people in texts, media and in the general school environment¹⁰

The participants at the Student Leadership Forum echoed these recommendations.

Long-Term Vision Recommendation 1.3: Manitoba's education system is student-focused

Student success is dependent on a student-focused philosophy that underlines the belief that schools exist for students to learn. The distinction is important: when students engage socially, academically and intellectually it contributes to success. Students need meaningful relationships, care, encouragement and recognition of interests and high expectations for learning and achievement. Critical to a student-focused approach is relevant curriculum, meaningful curriculum choices and the use of research-based instructional strategies.

A student-focused approach considers everything including school schedules, curriculum, graduation timelines, teacher training and more. The following highlight some of the ways the system can adapt to be truly student-focused. Recommendations about teacher training (see section 3) also describe how it can support a student-focused system.

A core principle in a student-focused educational approach is flexibility, including how curriculum is delivered, length of time to graduate and class times/schedules. The current yearly calendar and structure of the school day has been in place for decades. Some schools have adopted balanced school days and some divisions offer summer professional development institutes; however, these still are fit into the government-mandated parameters for the length of the school day and the school year. Student learning loss over the summer is a specific and real concern. Many school divisions have independently created and introduced summer reading and other programs to help decrease the amount of loss experienced. Consideration needs to be given to a change to the school year structure to help support continued student learning.

⁹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015. Page 2.

¹⁰ MASS Aboriginal Position Paper March 2013

In the classroom, successful students need real life examples they can relate to, work outside the classrooms through partnerships, develop a culture of mutual respect and connect school with life. They also need different pathways to graduation and success, rather than a four-year time frame. Schools also need to have the flexibility to provide multiple pathways for student success to transition from school to post-secondary or the world of work. The pathways need to be appropriate to life and work outside the school. A student learning pathway needs to be individual and focused on the strengths of each child. Supports must then be put in place to help each child to maximize their success.

Different pathways can include shifting away from the traditional structure of the school calendar and the school day. Options that may work for some students and some schools include: a balanced school year (e.g., more breaks throughout the year instead of two months in the summer); a balanced school day, with three longer breaks rather than a long lunch and short recesses for early years students; different start times for high school students, based on research suggesting mornings are not optimal learning times; and longer school days with a four-day week and one day a week dedicated to staff professional development, collaborative time and co-planning/co-assessing time. In some of these scenarios, it will be important to include communities to help find creative solutions for childcare and extra-curricular activities for students. Another consideration is to hold teacher professional learning at the end of August to lessen the impact on students when teachers are away while benefitting teachers from increased knowledge at the start of the school year when they can implement their new learning.

Transitions are a normal and important part of student life and student success. They provide valuable experiences as students learn from the joy and the anxiety of transitioning from grade to grade, school to school and, ultimately, to life after school. A student-focused system ensures teachers have time to communicate with each other as their classrooms of children move from one grade to the next. These conversations need to include strengths, challenges and next steps for each child. Transitions between schools can benefit from tailored programming, with attention and support for all students.

2. Student learning

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

The following recommendations build on the concept of student-focused learning. This means “outcomes” are viewed both from the perspective of success for individual students and from a provincial lens.

What is excellence in student achievement? MASS describes it as follows:

- Each student meets or exceeds grade level outcomes
- Students experience a year of growth for each year of being in school¹¹
- Students meet clearly defined and high expectations and are highly engaged
- Students develop critical thinking to understand the “why” of different ideas and see the connections between curriculum and life
- Students build interpersonal competencies, empathy, conflict resolution and to be good neighbours

Student Learning Recommendation 2.1: Renew the curriculum framework to address what students need to know and why

A renewed curriculum framework is needed to reflect the realities of our world as they impact both students and the ability of educators to provide student-focused, relevant programming. These realities range from poverty and low socioeconomic status – considered to be the “most powerful predictor of educational outcomes”¹² – to English as an additional language (EAL) to mental health issues and more.

Learners in the 21st century will face massive challenges related to a changing climate and a changing world of work. The skills, knowledge and sense of being will be dramatically different from those in the 20th century. As per the RBC Humans Wanted¹³ report, learners within our schools need to be engaged in learning experiences designed to have them read, write and think deeply, communicate effectively and empathize with others to resolve critical problems. Learning in schools needs to change if students are to succeed in this changed context. Education must move beyond a transactional process and into a transformational one whereby learners gain a deep knowledge of the world, are able to engage in critical self-reflection and can imagine the plight of others on this planet. Learners need to know how to pose significant questions and answer them with critical thought, imagination and precision.¹⁴ To provide our learners with this mindset, schools need to be actively engaged in the design learning experiences where all learners are included and challenged. The K-12 system needs to allow time and space for learners to engage in the existential challenges which lie before them.

To support 21st century learners, therefore, our curricula need to be innovative, rigorous, relevant and reflective of Manitoba culture. Rather than focusing on knowledge and content, we need to teach children how to digest and interact with knowledge and content. We need curricula to focus on skills such as critical and discerning thinking, problem solving and creativity. Students need to learn how to take in information and make sense of it. They need to learn how to hold multiple perspectives at once and make educated decisions and informed opinions. The participants at the Student Leadership Forum expressed similar recommendations.

The process of developing or renewing curricula needs to include multiple levels of educators and stakeholders and its implementation needs to be effectively resourced and strongly supported.

11 (Hattie, J. (2015). What doesn't work in education: the politics of distraction. Toronto: ON, Pearson)
<https://visible-learning.org/2015/06/download-john-hattie-politics-distraction/>

12 13: Brownell, Mami and Nathan Nickel, 2014. Addressing Poverty the answer to improving educational outcomes. Evidence Network.
<https://evidencenetwork.ca/why-did-manitoba-manitoba-students-perform-so-poorly-on-the-latest-national-school-report/>

13 <https://www.rbc.com/dms/enterprise/futurelaunch/human>

14 Nussbaum Cosmopolitanis

An effective curriculum framework would:

- Address the roots of the systemic challenges facing students in Manitoba
- Coordinate and refocus/redistribute resources to support students/families and the work of schools
- Systemically reduce gaps in the areas of student achievement, include aligning professional development
- Include early childhood/preschool curriculum and resources (see Student Learning Recommendation 2.4)
- Allocate appropriate resources for EAL, French, Indigenous and other language learners
- Include curriculum relevant to the minority historic population and reflect Indigenous as well as Francophone perspectives

The effectiveness of a renewed curriculum also depends on continued supports and professional learning for teachers to make it relevant.

Student Learning Recommendation 2.2: Clearly define the expectations of the public education system

Schools, divisions and the province all have responsibilities to help students achieve excellence and need to set expectations about excellence. Those expectations are required of students, teachers, the school, parents, the division and the province – and can be met most effectively through a consultative approach.

Manitoba Education and Training defines its responsibilities in its mandate, mission and vision.¹⁵ To ensure that all Manitoba's children and youth have access to an array of educational opportunities such that every learner experiences success through relevant, engaging and high quality education that prepares them for lifelong learning and citizenship in a democratic, socially just and sustainable society.

At a minimum, the expectations of the province include:

- Establishing and supporting relevant curriculum
- Allocating appropriate resources to support equitable delivery of the curriculum to all
- Resources to support longitudinal professional learning for teacher

Expectations for schools and divisions include:

- High achieving school environments with supports for all students
- Creating environment for highly engaged students through:
 - Student-focused learning
 - Hands-on, relevant, real-world experiential learning
 - Learning relevant to students' age and stage
 - Embracing students' curiosity and creativity
- Demonstration of learning in a variety of ways (differentiated assessment)¹⁶
- Inclusive of all students
- Government and all stakeholders need to acknowledge and address the magnitude of non-education-specific issues in schools. Schools are the only place in Manitoba where children are expected to attend, regardless of any profound challenges students may bring with them because of social, economic and other factors. Although there are some intersectoral supports in schools, teachers –who are not trained as social workers, psychologists or any other specialty many students require – are often left to fill huge gaps and fulfill their teaching obligations.

There needs to be clarity in – and funding for – the roles of intersectoral supports and partners. (See next Student Learning recommendation.)

¹⁵ See Appendix 2, Manitoba Education and Training, Mandate, Mission and Vision

¹⁶ Davies, A., Herbst, S., Parrott-Reynolds, B. (2008). Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work. Courtenay, BC, Connections Publishing.

Student Learning Recommendation 2.3: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health and well-being

The report on Literacy and Numeracy in Manitoba: Setting the Context states, “Governance and system structures both enable and constrain action. Change is needed to enable multiple systems to work together more effectively and to facilitate a web of relationships that can support learners and their families. Collaborative approaches need to be tailored to unique geographic and community contexts.”¹⁷ We endorse this concept. We need to develop mechanisms that enable integration, collaboration and coordinated services in meeting the needs of the whole child. We need greater flexibility and responsiveness to deliver holistic solutions to the complex challenges facing our children and our youth.

Student success is dependent on many factors, including the determinants of health. According to Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada (and other sources), these are the “range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health.” They include: income and social status; employment and working conditions; education and literacy; childhood experiences; physical environments; social supports and coping skills; healthy behaviours; access to health services; biology and genetic endowment; gender; and culture.¹⁸

Excellence in student achievement and outcomes will be possible only by recognizing the impact of the determinants of health on the ability to learn. Every student’s basic needs must be met and the school system is just one player with a role to play. A multisectoral coordination of services is required, including justice, healthy child, health, mental health services, etc., in collaboration with stakeholders from schools, mental health, etc. The Student Forum in February included strong support to address mental health needs in schools.

In 2012, MASS published its position paper Mental Health Framework for Students and some seven years later our position and the rationale remain unchanged. Resources for mental health services still do not meet the need “resulting in inequities in service, lack of collaboration and communication between systems, and lengthy wait times.”¹⁹ Further, MASS continues to espouse the principles of its position paper: “Effective, sustainable progress in school-based mental health promotion depends on a common vision, shared responsibilities and harmonized actions among health, education and other sectors. The challenge is to coordinate these efforts so that partners pool resources and develop action plans with, and in support of schools...A significant amount of work is required to implement a comprehensive, collaborative and reliable framework based on the social determinants of health that crosses the private and public sectors and links jurisdictions.”²⁰

Student Learning Recommendation 2.4: Develop partnerships to support schools in building student connections to world outside of school

Intersectoral initiatives as described in Student Learning Recommendation 2.3 will facilitate a strong student-focused approach to helping young people learn and achieve success. Partnerships with external groups expand on this concept by supporting schools in providing a broader world view and opening doors to possibilities after school.

MASS supports the expansion of:

- Partnerships with business and industry: to provide opportunities for students to explore careers as they progress through their school years, starting in about grade 5.²¹ Partnerships with business and industry can create such opportunities and show students possibilities the school curriculum alone may not present to them.

17 <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/doc/setting-the-context>; Literacy and Numeracy in Manitoba: Setting the Context (2019)

18 <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health.html>

19 MASS: Mental Health Framework for Students – A Position Paper (2012)

20 Ibid

21 Sutton, R. (1995). Assessment For Learning. Salford, England: RS Publications.

- Partnerships with community, parents/caregivers: already firmly established in some schools, more of such partnerships are encouraged because of the positive impact on student success

MASS also supports partnerships to help create or reinforce:

- Vocational programming, which provides options and pathways for students
- Access to include rural, northern and urban school divisions
- Equitable and accessible course offerings for all high school students regardless of where they go to school (rural, northern, urban); this was also emphasized by participants at the Student Leadership Forum hosted by MASS in February
- Equitable access to technology (high speed internet) across the province

Student Learning Recommendation 2.5: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives to ensure student readiness for school

Student readiness is another critical factor in student success, starting with preschool. Research is showing the importance of early learning to longer-term student success. For every \$1 spent on child care there is a \$2 economic benefit. The benefit comes back through increased tax revenues and decreased social, education and health costs.²³

Education is very complex by nature and the aspects of education are intricately connected and interwoven. There is an array of external and internal factors that impact learning. The Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education has the responsibility to develop a renewed vision for K-12 education. One impetus for this comes from a perception based largely on testing scores that Manitoba students are falling behind those in the rest of the country. To address this concern we need to determine who are the children and youth that are underperforming and why are they underperforming? We need to identify what factors and gaps are contributing to lack of success and how to address the gaps and break the cycle.

Research has shown that there are marked differences in school achievement among Manitoba students and that these differences are related to factors beyond education, including poverty and family social and economic challenges. (See also Student Learning Recommendation 2.1.) Our Early Development Inventory data provides us with information on school readiness and is invaluable in helping to identify areas where quality preschool programming can be targeted to ensure an equitable start for all children.

MASS believes that Early Childhood Education needs to be a “provincial priority and that policies are developed and enacted, ensuring all children the right to quality early learning programs and opportunities”²⁴ and the ability to access these programs. We need to improve the life chances of children and youth to improve learning and school performance.

Early learning has a significant impact on future educational success. The development of emotional, cognitive and behavioural skills takes place early in life (0-5 years).²⁵ Students who have not achieved competence in reading comprehension by grade 3 are potentially at risk for not graduating high school. The Early Development Index (EDI) is helpful in determining supports to put in place for specific classrooms, for example, by meeting a child's needs early on through identification and interventions, they can better learn and retain the foundational skills and knowledge to help them succeed in the future.

22 25: Cleveland & Krashinsky, 1998. The benefits and costs of good child care: The economic rationale for public investment in young children, Department of Economics, University of Toronto at Scarborough

23 MASS Early Childhood Education and Care Position Paper 2015. Page 3.

24 MASS (2015) Early Childhood Education and Care: A Position Paper

Student Learning Recommendation 2.6: Provide sufficient and equitable resource allocation to allow for student-focused, effective learning opportunities

Many educators understand they are important figures in students' lives, demonstrate they believe in students' ability to succeed and build relationships with them. They also understand the gifts and strengths of each child and help them build on those strengths. This appreciation translates into a student-focused approach by many educators and needs to be supported and expanded throughout the system.

Educators can strengthen a student-focused approach by working to understand and meet the needs of individual students. In essence, every student's needs and their progress should be tracked, measured and feedback provided to help the student achieve the highest levels of success. A student-focused approach and system will ensure there are appropriate supports for students and teachers for students of all needs and abilities (e.g., Indigenous, EAL, Child and Family Services, gender, students with additional needs).

Student achievement for all Manitobans requires equitable resource allocation to all divisions. There is inconsistency in the availability of opportunities and resources throughout the province. Many students live in situations with limited access to different kinds of experiential learning, enrichment or educators with specialized skills (e.g., in different languages).

3. Teaching

How can teachers and school leaders become most effective?

Effective teachers and school leaders require a common understanding of K-12 – a continuum in terms of scope and sequence of how learners move through grades and the curriculum. This allows teachers to plan with an end in mind beyond trying to work through the curriculum for their class. School-based teams focused on essential outcomes and able to provide early interventions when students need support can be an important contributing factor to student success. The system needs to ensure there is staffing, time and resources for these teams.

Our recommendations in this section identify the need for improved teacher induction; ongoing and flexible professional learning; and how to help support and build instructional leaders who, in turn, contribute to positive outcomes for students.

Teaching Recommendation 3.1: Provide ongoing professional learning to support flexible, student-focused pedagogical methods

Our own experiences and research by people like Regie Routman, Steven Katz and Simon Breakspear²⁵ show that the one-stop professional development sessions we have offered to teachers in the past are not the most effective way to generate change in teacher pedagogy and increase student achievement. Teachers become master teachers through ongoing learning, collaboration, co-teaching, feedback and reflection. This does not happen in a one- or two-day session. This needs to happen on a daily basis. Effective professional development needs to be job embedded and focused on what the teacher needs in response to what the student needs. There must be intentional opportunities for this to happen.

In addition to improving a teacher's ability to be effective, there are many other items that teaching staff receive training in every year – workplace safety and health, Child and Family Services Protocols, accessibility legislation and threat risk assessment training are just a few examples. Is there a way that the staff school year can be longer than the students' to engage in this work and other learning work prior to students entering school, or is there a change that can be made within the current parameters to allow this to occur without interrupting the classroom time?

An important part of equitable resource allocation is professional learning. Relevant, timely, ongoing training will keep educators current, excited and able to engage students. Alternate ways of delivering and funding to support all teachers to access professional development is required.

Teacher training and ongoing professional development need to adjust and emphasize theory and practice in flexible teaching approaches. Individual teachers and schools have adapted and implemented different ways to ensure they are student-focused in their educational approach. There is a need to make this universal across the province and in all schools. A facilitation approach is called for, where educators go beyond conveying information and engage students in the process of learning, not simply trying to absorb information. To be an effective facilitator of student learning, MASS acknowledges that teachers must have the content knowledge that is appropriate for the grade and subject they are teaching. This shift in approach balances the importance of inquiry-based learning and essential outcomes. It is inherently flexible by nature because effective facilitation will acknowledge and respect the individuality of students.

At a very practical level, we need to increase opportunities and efforts to train and recruit French language and Indigenous teachers. We know this is a priority among post-secondary institutions and also recognize it is a challenge; however, continued focus is required to fill gaps in both areas and provide relevant curriculum to all students.

²⁵ Katz, S., Dack L.A., & Malloy, J.; *The Intelligent Responsive Leader*; Thousand Oaks CA: Corwin, 2018, p. 26; Simon Breakspear: www.LearningSprints.com; Routman, R. (2014). *Read, Write, Lead: Breakthrough Strategies in Schoolwide Literacy Success*. Alexandria, VA, ASCD.

Training and recruitment efforts also are required to fill significant gaps in many rural and northern areas and to help build a cadre of qualified substitute teachers who are needed throughout the province. Student learning is impacted considerably without the availability of qualified teachers and substitute teachers.

Teaching Recommendation 3.2: Develop better prepared teachers (new and tenured) through an effective teacher induction process

In concert with a renewed educational framework and approach to education, it is time to rethink the induction process for new teachers. MASS supports having a longer-term mentorship or apprenticeship before full certification is received. One scenario would have recent graduates employed full time but have part-time teaching duties for their first two years. The non-teaching time would be used for continued learning, collaboration, team teaching and reflection. This would require a strong partnership between school divisions and universities, but would build strong teacher capacity early on their career.

MASS already works closely with Manitoba's post-secondary institutions and sees this as a vital partnership and one that will help create a successful induction process. Among the many ways we collaborate are: identifying and supporting optimal practicum placements for teacher candidates; identifying high priority programming areas, such as inclusive education and school division-specific needs; and providing guest instructors or speakers.

To succeed, a new induction process would require:

- Closer connections between university and school divisions prior to teacher graduation
- School division support for a residency-style learning/mentorship model and evaluation
- A vetting process for cooperative teachers
- Rigorous supervision of student teachers with clearly defined targets; these should include similar attributes of an effective experienced teacher (e.g., strong training in theory and practice; skilled in best practices for literacy and numeracy)

From the time applicants apply to a faculty until they sign their first contract, there needs to be rigour in the pre-service courses, a vetting process for student teachers and strong supervision with clear targets that must be met for student teachers.

We recommend investigating the concept of an oversight or governing body to be responsible for teacher induction and ongoing teacher certification. This should be done as a consultative process with partners including Manitoba Education and Training, MASS, the universities and others with a role in teacher training and certification.

Teaching Recommendation 3.3: Commit to train, recruit and retain engaging, high quality instructional leaders

Next to an effective classroom teacher, the factor having the greatest impact on student achievement is a strong instructional leader.^{26,27} In the current system, school leaders function as managers and instructional leaders. At times managerial tasks can put considerable pressure on the school leader, resulting in instructional leadership falling to the side. We need to work to support school leaders in ensuring they engage in ongoing learning and have the supports to gain and maintain the skills required to be an effective instructional leader. We envision that developing a Domains of Professional Practice Framework would assist in setting common language and targets and also identify learning needs for our school and system leaders. We also propose the development a Certificate in School Leadership, working with partners including divisions, post-secondary institutions, Manitoba Teachers' Society and system leaders.

26 Hattie, J. October 2003.. Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence. Retrieved April 13, 2019 from https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=research_conference_2003

27 Tucker, P. D., & Stronge, J. H. (2005). Linking teacher evaluation and student learning. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

The roles and mandates of schools and system leadership need to be clearly defined and understood. This can begin with a clear definition of leadership: experienced educators trained in best practices to lead schools and create and support an environment conducive to student-focused learning. Instructional leaders need to model deep and broad adult learning in their own leadership development and in the kinds of staff development they provide for others for deep engagement.²⁸ Effective instructional leaders, when able to truly balance this role with managing employees, will mentor and evaluate new and experienced teachers.

Research has shown that leaders positioning themselves as instructional leaders who understand and can lead, develop and enhance teaching and learning are a major factor in student success.²⁹ Hattie suggests that principals are engaged in instructional leadership when they “have their major focus on creating a learning climate free of disruption, a system of clear teaching objectives, and high teacher expectations for teachers and students.”³⁰ Hattie’s conclusion is that when the goal is higher levels of learning for all students, the activities associated with instructional leadership have a greater impact.

Instructional leaders promote student success by advocating and sustaining a collaborative school culture and instructional programming that focuses on improving student learning and the professional growth of teachers. The leader provides opportunities for teachers to work daily with one another to examine students’ work, review data and make the necessary adjustments to instruction in order to meet the needs of students.³¹

28 Hargraves, A.; Fink, D.; Sustainable Leadership, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; 2006, p. 41 -42.

29 <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/How-Leadership-Influences-Student-Learning.pdf>

30 (2012, p. 83)... from <https://us.corwin.com/en-us/nam/leverage/book239662>

31 MASS, 2007, Position Paper: Building an Assessment Future with Purpose In Mind

4. Accountability for student learning

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

A related question is to consider how the children and youth of Manitoba are performing. One way to answer this question is through shared responsibility and shared accountability. We have the responsibility to set high expectations for learning and to set high expectations for everyone responsible for student learning and hold them accountable – the province, school systems, school leaders, teachers, parents and students. By working together, we can hold each other accountable in a way to support each other in meeting our expectations.

MASS supports the concept put forth by Ordu and Ordustating “clear accountability systems have to be in place at seven different levels to ensure student success now and in the future.”³² These levels are: the province; the school system; schools; principals; teachers; parents; and students. Further, the provincial government and school districts need to invest in classroom resources, support teachers, set direction and establish clear expectations. Ordu and Ordu assert the need for strong instructional leaders at the school and district level.

Accountability requires a basic understanding of expectations. These need to be clearly stated from a provincial (government) perspective, including its own accountability to how it will ensure the system is adequately resourced to meet the expectations. “When done correctly, accountability can play an integral role in improving student learning and well-being. A system that is primarily focused on the narrowest kind of academic achievement...constricts the curriculum and contributes to performance gaps, student disengagement, and high school graduates that are underprepared for college or careers. Such systems fail to measure highly valued skills such as collaboration and problem solving and spark a backlash among teachers and parents, two critical groups that support education improvements.”³³

Accountability for Student Learning Recommendation 4.1: Accountability systems must reflect the full purpose of education and clearly articulate the role and purpose of student assessment data, along with its limitations

Assessment in education serves two purposes. Summative assessment, otherwise called assessment *of* learning, usually occurs at the end of a unit of study and demonstrates whether the identified curricular outcomes have been met. The main purpose of assessment of learning is to provide information to the student and parents regarding where the child is in relation to expected curricular outcomes at a particular point in time. Assessment *of* learning is also used to report to the public. When summative assessment results are shared publicly, it is essential that the public is informed of the limitations of the data, and the sharer of such information clearly articulates that the results presented are just one small piece of the entire picture. Furthermore, the sharer needs to clearly articulate the context in which the data are developed.

Effective assessments will support learning and, in a student-focused approach, highlight individual abilities. They are designed to review what has happened and what can be done to support each student in the future.³⁴ Student participation also is an important component of assessment as is the need to be criterion-referenced to curricular outcomes and facilitated by clearly defined targets.

- Accountability systems should use a variety of measures, including formative assessments, evidence of student learning, progress toward personal goals, 21st century learning skills and more qualitative metrics such as student well-being and well-becoming. We need a photo album of evidence on student learning, not a snapshot – a collection of multiple measures, appropriately aligned to different types of learning outcomes. Are we currently assessing everything that matters or only those things that are easiest to test and grade?

32 Ordu, S. R., & Ordu, P. A. (2012) Seven levels of accountability for student success. Retrieved April 13, 2019 from <https://www.advanced.org/source/seven-levels-accountability-student-success>

33 (Seltz, J. (March 25, 2015). Accountability for student success. Retrieved April 13, 2019 from ASCD Inservice <http://inservice.ascd.org/accountability-for-student-success/>

34 Sutton, R. (1995). *Assessment For Learning*. Salford, England: RS Publications.

- Rather than defining student success only by graduation rate and academic achievement, student success needs to be re-conceptualized by what students graduate with, which includes all capabilities relevant to the development of human agency and to living a flourishing life. Student well-being and well-becoming is a means and an end of school education. When student wellness is a focus in school, students are more likely to be successful in their curricular learning. Student well-being and well-becoming need to be systematically and regularly assessed and monitored at the provincial, school division and school level, and the findings should inform educational practice and policy.

We need to put learning before testing to ensure that rising test scores reflect real improvements to authentic and productive learning, instead of narrowing the learning to get quick gains in testing.

We believe in promoting data collection, facilitating discussion and learning related to analysis and effective use of data for decision making in programming, policy and practice.³⁵ Learning needs to be evaluated using a wide range of useful data. A common characteristic of high performing systems is the planned use of data. In order to build data literate individuals, we need systems and structures that support data use, create learning climates that focus on data and promote the use of multiple data sources. It is complex and, like any evolution, takes time, resources, collaboration, support and persistence. Structures such as professional learning communities facilitate high-performing teams in using data to drive cycles of problem solving, planning, action and reflection to improve instruction that makes a difference in student learning.

MASS recognizes that measures of accountability, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP), provide valuable information related to the educational performance of educational jurisdictions; however, these metrics provide only a narrow view of public education. We recognize that what we measure truly matters and that successful 21st century citizens require broader metrics to measure the quality and success of our school system, including social-emotional health, creativity and innovation, health, citizenship and quality learning environments. All of these contribute to creating flourishing citizens.³⁶

MASS also believes there is a need to refresh the provincial report card. The provincial report card needs to include all children, including children with special needs. Students who are addressing curricular outcomes, even though they are not at grade level, should have their progress reported using a provincial report card. The report card needs to also reflect student performance on more than academic progress. As stated before, the report card should also report out on student well-being, well-becoming and social-emotional learning – all things that matter!

Accountability for Student Learning Recommendation 4.2: Create accountability requirements for leaders and teachers and provide ongoing professional development.

There is a direct link between effective leadership and improved student achievement and well-being.³⁷ School leaders play a very important role in “the development of excellent teaching, excellent schools and ultimately, enhanced student achievement and well-being. System leaders play an essential role by putting in place supportive system practices and procedures for school leaders and providing system-wide leadership.”³⁸

35 Ibid

36 2017-2018 Executive Resolution 1.1 Well-Becoming

37 Stronge, J. H. (2009). *Qualities of effective teachers*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) pg. ix; Tucker, P. D., & Stronge, J. H. (2005). *Linking teacher evaluation and student learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD); Hattie, J. (October 2003). *Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence*. Retrieved April 13, 2019 from https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=research_conference_2003.

38 Ontario Leadership Framework, September 2013, pg. 3

The development of a leadership framework would support leaders and system leaders in achieving the goals of the organization. A framework that articulates the roles of both school and system leaders allows for flexible pathways to effective leadership, provides a common leadership language and a shared vision of effective leadership would support the achievement of school system goals.³⁹ Such a framework will build in accountability for leaders and teachers and will be stronger when it is supported by ongoing professional development, including opportunities for observation, sharing ideas, reviewing data and adjusting instructional approaches to meet student needs.⁴⁰

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Marzano, R. J., Frontier, T., & Livingston, D. (2011). *Effective supervision: Supporting the art and science of teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) pg. 2; MASS, 2007, Position Paper: Building an Assessment Future with Purpose In Mind.

5. Governance

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

MASS presents two recommendations in this area, both designed to keep the focus on the best educational opportunities and outcomes for students within the public school system. Our submission largely emphasizes the previous four question areas because we see significant opportunities to make a difference to a more equitable and relevant education system in those areas. The governance question may require a separate discussion and decisions about any changes to governance must be done in consultation with all partners – MASS, individual divisions, parents, etc.

Governance Recommendation 5.1: Continued collaboration in sharing resources

Divisions and schools across the province struggle with various resource constraints, some more than others. MASS believes there are opportunities to share resources. There already are successful examples of rural and urban divisions sharing human resources (e.g., clinicians) and other resources (e.g., supplies/material ordering). Divisions and schools also can work together to avoid duplication of efforts, again helping to reduce costs while focusing on student needs. There are examples of these already occurring and these can be a model for other schools and divisions, including MASS-led professional learning opportunities for system and school leaders; regional professional learning opportunities; and purchasing efficiencies between divisions.

Governance Recommendation 5.2: Consider any changes to school boards from the perspective of best outcomes for students and retaining local input

MASS is a strong proponent of local input to support local context and these are essential to providing relevant education to students. The more involved communities feel in their schools and divisions, the greater their sense of trust, connection and commitment to supporting students.

MASS believes each division is in the best position to know how to maintain or strengthen its ability to help students achieve excellence. Bigger is not always better and not even fiscally more responsible, especially if it leads to loss of purpose or cohesiveness. We can look to other jurisdictions to learn what has worked well there, when the comparison is relevant to Manitoba.

6. Funding

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

Adequate and equitably allocated funding is a requirement to achieve success for all students in a student-focused public education system. The question to consider is what actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

MASS believes that sustainable and equitable learning opportunities are possible if the following funding-related considerations are addressed, recognizing the target for all students is not equality of treatment but rather equality of outcomes:

- Greater flexibility within the current overall funding to respond to local needs and contexts and to support the needs of individual students and schools rather than using an enrolment formula that is too broad to recognize the diversity (and disparity) among different schools and regions
- Working with intersectoral partners to meet the multifaceted needs in schools across Manitoba stemming from poverty, social-emotional well-being/well-becoming
- Support for Indigenous curriculum and acting on the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
- Support for newcomer students
- Stable funding for children with additional needs

MASS is supportive of the change to a formula-based system in place of the former student-specific model provided the formula and process are subject to regular review and analysis to ensure current needs are being met.

Many of our previous recommendations identify several areas where inequities occur, often because of insufficient or inappropriately allocated funding. We present the funding-related recommendations below for reference.

Student Learning Recommendation 2.3: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health, well-being, well-becoming

Student Learning Recommendation 2.5: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to ensure student readiness for school

Student Learning Recommendation 2.6: Provide sufficient and equitable resource allocation to allow for student-focused, effective learning opportunities

Teaching Recommendation 3.1: Provide ongoing professional learning to support flexible, student-focused pedagogical methods

Teaching Recommendation 3.2: Develop better prepared teachers (new and tenured) through an effective teacher induction process

Recommendations

1. Long-term vision

Recommendation 1.1: Manitoba's vision for public education is success for all students

Recommendation 1.2: Implement the educational recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

Recommendation 1.3: Manitoba's education system is student-focused

2. Student learning

Recommendation 2.1 Renew the curriculum framework to address what students need to know and why

Recommendation 2.2: Clearly define the expectations of the public education system

Recommendation 2.3: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health, well-being, well-becoming

Recommendation 2.4: Develop partnerships to support schools in building student connections to the world outside of school

Recommendation 2.5: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to ensure student readiness for school

Recommendation 2.6: Provide sufficient and equitable resource allocation to allow for student-focused, effective learning opportunities

3. Teaching

Recommendation 3.1: Provide ongoing professional learning to support flexible, student-focused pedagogical methods

Recommendation 3.2: Develop better prepared teachers (new and tenured) through an effective teacher induction process

Recommendation 3.3: Commit to train, recruit and retain engaging, quality teachers led by instructional leaders

4. Accountability for student learning

Recommendation 4.1: Accountability systems must reflect the full purpose of education and clearly articulate the role and purpose of student assessment data, along with its limitations

Recommendation 4.2: Create accountability requirements for leaders and teachers and provide ongoing professional development

5. Governance

Recommendation 5.1: Continued collaboration in sharing resources

Recommendation 5.2: Consider changes to school boards from the perspective of best outcomes for students and retaining local input

6. Funding

Student Learning Recommendation 2.3: Integrate intersectoral support/initiatives, led by education, to address mental health, well-being, well-becoming

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APPENDIX 1 MASS Statement of Beliefs in Public Education

Public School is the only societal institution where children from diverse backgrounds gather for a common purpose – to become educated. The challenge for educators is to define what we believe about education in a manner that encompasses the values of a democratic society, respects the inherent uniqueness of the individual student and at the same time provides equity of opportunity and ensures achievement for all.

With this frame of reference and with the belief that all children can learn, the members of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents have developed a statement of beliefs about education.

We believe the purposes of public education to be:

1. To assist children to view themselves as capable of contributing to the public good and preparing them to do so.
2. To encourage in children a balance of intellectual and social development, social consciousness, and preparation for life.
3. To educate each child in a manner consistent with justice, fairness and equity.
4. To foster in each child active participation in public service and to promote the development of each child as a lifelong contributing member of our democratic society.
5. To empower each child with the knowledge and skills to live a positive fulfilling life in a manner consistent with acceptance of others and respect for democratic values in a diverse society.
6. To develop the child's self perception as a lifelong learner.
7. To assist children to develop an optimistic view of the future and a confident awareness of their potential to be an active participant in that future.

To achieve these purposes, we must:

1. Provide safe, caring and welcoming learning environments for all children.
2. Engage all students in learning to their individual capacities.
3. Respect and nurture the co-responsibility with parents/guardians for the education of their children.
4. Listen to and build relationships with the community.
5. Engage with the community to build awareness and understanding of the purposes and value of public education and engage the community in opportunities to develop and support education for the public good.
6. Be responsible and accountable to the community through clarity of vision, transparency of operation, and the sharing of educational outcomes.
7. Continue to manage and support education through publicly elected school boards.
8. Strive to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to achieve the purposes of education.
9. Be responsive to the changing needs of society.
10. Practise democracy in our school system.

APPENDIX 2 Manitoba Education and Training Mandate, Mission, Vision and Kindergarten to Grade 12 Priority Areas

Mandate

To provide direction and allocate resources in support of youth programming and kindergarten to grade 12 education in public and funded independent schools.

Mission

To ensure that all Manitoba's children and youth have access to an array of educational opportunities such that every learner experiences success through relevant, engaging and high quality education that prepares them for lifelong learning and citizenship in a democratic, socially just and sustainable society.

Vision

That every learner will complete a high school education with a profound sense of accomplishment, hope and optimism.

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Priority Areas

High Levels of Achievement – is our expectation for **all** students, reflecting their individualized programming both in terms of academic achievement and other domains. Reaching high levels of achievement will look different for each student depending on his/her circumstances, abilities and needs (e.g., students with special needs).

Equity and Inclusion – are foundational to support the uniqueness and diversity of all students, respecting their backgrounds and/or personal circumstances, so that they can be successful. Application of these principles is essential for the education system and must be integrated into all policies, programs, operations and practices.

Citizenship, Sustainability and Wellbeing – are essential to ensure that all students are prepared in their role as global citizens who are sensitive to and have respect for other cultures, and are prepared for active involvement in addressing issues of economic, social-cultural, and environmental sustainability. The cognitive, emotional, social and physical (and for some, spiritual) domains of wellbeing must be supported to meet the conditions needed in order for students to learn, grow and develop a positive sense of self.

Public Engagement – is fundamental to ensure parents, education partners and communities have the opportunity to learn, be heard, share perspectives and participate in decisions around education.

(See <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu/mandate.html>.)