

NEWS RELEASE

Pembina Trails Board approves 2025/2026 budget adding 176 full time positions

March 14, 2025 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Pembina Trails School Division Board of Trustees has unanimously passed the division’s 2025/2026 budget. The budget will see an additional 76.6 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers, 80 FTE educational assistants and 20 FTE bus drivers.

Baseline provincial funding for Pembina Trails has increased by 1.5 percent or \$1.3 million. The funding fails to meet the division’s almost nine percent increase in student enrolment over the past two years, nor the standard increases in salaries and fixed costs like utilities.

To ensure a balanced budget, the board has approved a 3.8 percent increase to the mill rate for a total mill rate of 10.8, which remains the lowest in Winnipeg. Pembina Trails’ final budget is \$248 million for 2025/2026. The modest mill rate increase combined with the new Home Affordability Tax Credit, which replaces the Manitoba School Tax Rebate, will see homes valued up to \$420,000 with a net zero- or decrease to education taxes (see schedule 5).

“This budget will have a direct and positive impact on three areas: education excellence and support for students, responsible rates for homeowners and fair and equitable compensation for staff,” says Cindy Nachtigall, Chair, Board of Trustees, Pembina Trails School Division. “This budget allows us to focus on improving outcomes by decreasing the size of Kindergarten to Grade 6 classes and putting in place support staff to allow teachers to focus on students.”

In addition to the additional 176 FTE, the division is committing \$400,000 to cyber security products, a necessary expense considering recent incidents involving education software providers and the division itself. The division will continue to support Pre-K to Grade 6 early learning needs through its summer programming (Ignite 3) for the 2025/26 school year. The division is also adding 4,500 hours of adult cross guard services to support student safety.

“We thank our community for their input during the budget consultation process,” says Nachtigall. “We believe this budget, with its modest increase in education taxes for our community, allows us to provide excellent education opportunities for all students.”

Pembina Trails School Division was established in 2002. It is dedicated to educational excellence through challenging and enriching experiences in a safe, inclusive and caring community of over 17,000 students and almost 2,500 full and part time staff. Pembina Trails gets its name from the “Old Pembina Trail” – the main road southward, followed by First Nations peoples, traders and settlers in the early 1800s.