



ASSOCIATION OF
MANITOBA
MUNICIPALITIES

Meeting with the Honourable Ian Wishart
Minister of Education and Training

2017

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Introduction

- The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Ian Wishart and representatives of the Department of Education and Training.
- The AMM encourages the Province of Manitoba to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process.
- This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the Education and Training portfolio.

Priority Issues

1) Modernizing Education Funding

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Establish a multi-stakeholder Task Force to comprehensively review and modernize Manitoba's education funding model; and*
 - ❖ *Work with the Departments of Finance and Agriculture to rescind the \$5,000 cap on the Farmland School Tax Rebate.*
- The AMM continues to urge the Province of Manitoba to provide new, sustainable long-term funding to reduce school division reliance on property taxes.
 - To this end, the AMM and the Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA) have renewed discussions on this issue with the shared objective of establishing a provincially-endorsed Task Force to review opportunities and options concerning the education funding model in Manitoba.
 - The current model is both antiquated and inadequate, particularly given the ever-increasing demands on municipalities.
 - Therefore, the AMM strongly encourages the Province of Manitoba to establish a multi-stakeholder Task Force to comprehensively review and modernize Manitoba's education funding model.
 - In addition, AMM members continue to appeal for the \$5,000 cap on the Farmland School Tax Rebate to be lifted as it discriminates against agricultural producers while negatively affecting the vibrancy of local communities.
 - Landowners are currently required to submit an annual application to the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) to apply for up to an 80 per cent rebate that is limited to \$5,000 on farmland school taxes.
 - When the rebate was first introduced, there was no cap in place.

2) Labour Market Transfer Agreements

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Ensure municipalities are included as eligible applicants for the Canada-Manitoba Job Grant; and*
 - ❖ *Leverage federal funding for employment and skills training programs to support economic development professionals and water and wastewater operators.*
- The AMM wishes to thank the Department for the opportunity to participate in consultative roundtables on labour market transfer agreements in summer 2016.
 - Under the auspices of the current Canada-Manitoba Job Grant, employers are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 for each individual employee or prospective employee to assist with direct training costs.
 - However, Manitoba municipalities are excluded as eligible recipients despite their need to enhance training for their employees that help build strong and safer local communities.
 - Therefore, the AMM urges the Province of Manitoba to ensure municipalities are included as eligible applicants for Canada-Manitoba Job Grant funding.
 - In addition, the federal government has committed to providing an additional \$50 million to support labour market programming across the country.
 - The AMM believes these new funds could help attract and retain economic development professionals and increase employment in rural communities, a priority area identified by Manitoba's Rural Economic Development Steering Committee co-chaired by the AMM.
 - Lastly, the AMM continues to be involved with the Water and Wastewater Certification program in partnership with the Province of Manitoba.
 - Greater access to federal funding could further enhance this program that trains operators who ensure clean drinking water and wastewater systems for Manitobans.

3) Strategy for Increasing Immigration to Manitoba

The AMM recommends the government:

❖ *Consult with the AMM on the development of a Manitoba Immigration Strategy.*

- In order to strengthen and grow Manitoba local communities, Manitoba must reaffirm its commitment and take immediate steps to further attract, settle, and retain new Manitobans as immigration is a key pillar of Manitoba's economic development.
- Many local communities in Manitoba are pursuing immigration as part of their growth strategy, and many immigrants are choosing to settle in regions outside of Winnipeg.
- In fact, since 1999 roughly 150,000 people have immigrated to our province, including more than 30,000 to Manitoba's rural communities.
- Although the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) has proven useful to respond to local economic and community needs, gaps in providing settlement services, language training and credential recognition must be urgently addressed to foster economic growth and job creation.
- This is especially important in rural areas, since many Manitoba communities are facing labour shortages of doctors and other healthcare practitioners.
- It is essential that the Province of Manitoba help expedite the recognition of foreign credentials to allow newcomers to more effectively utilize their knowledge and skills and grow Manitoba's economy.
- Increased immigration also creates greater demands for more affordable housing, and thus additional resettlement and support measures must be provided in coordination with other provincial departments and the federal government.
- The AMM strongly encourages the Province of Manitoba to consult with our organization during the development of an improved Manitoba Immigration Strategy.

Appendix A – Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution #41-2016

Topic: Green Team Program

Sponsor(s): RM of Lac du Bonnet (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Education and Training

WHEREAS the Green Team Program provides employment for summer students; and

WHEREAS there is inequity between public sector and private sector funding; and

WHEREAS the private sector receives full funding based on minimum wage and the public sector receives partial funding to support summer employment opportunities for students;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide equitable funding for all municipalities.

AMM Resolution #30-2015

Topic: Canada-Manitoba Job Fund Agreement

Sponsor(s): Town of Winnipeg Beach (Interlake District)

Department(s): Manitoba Growth, Enterprise and Trade, Manitoba Education and Training, Employment, Workforce Development and Labour Canada

WHEREAS the Canada-Manitoba Job Fund Agreement offers funding toward the cost of training provided by eligible third-party trainers, with the Government of Canada providing two-thirds of the cost of training, up to a maximum of \$10,000 per grant;

AND WHEREAS Eligible Recipients under this agreement excludes municipalities;

AND WHEREAS the Agreement calls for a review of its terms in Year 2 (2015/2016) of the program;

AND WHEREAS municipalities incur training costs, especially in the training of Water and Wastewater Treatment and Distribution to meet provincial mandated requirements that can reach \$10,000 or more per operator;

AND WHEREAS such training provides the operators with skills that can result in long-term, specialized employment, thus fulfilling the objectives of the Canada-Manitoba Job Fund Agreement;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the federal and provincial governments to revise the Agreement to include municipalities as Eligible Recipients under the Canada-Manitoba Job Fund Agreement.

AMM Resolution #32-2013

Topic: Modernize Education Funding

Sponsor(s): RM of Edward (Western District)

Department(s): Manitoba Education and Training

WHEREAS farmers in rural Manitoba have lobbied and fought for fairness when it comes to the education tax system;

AND WHEREAS the 2013 Budget would see the rebate capped at \$5,000, which would unfairly discriminate against producers with a larger land base, causing greater hardship;

AND WHEREAS the current education tax system is clearly dysfunctional and antiquated, in need of restructuring so that the cost of education is funded fairly;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to repeal the \$5,000 cap on the Farmland School Tax Rebate immediately;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba work to create a new, modernized model for how education funding is achieved.