

## Speaking About Properly Funded Education

There will always be competing priorities during election periods. Is it important to be armed with the facts and be clear in the action you are proposing.

Here are some key messages:

1. Manitobans want the province to stop the tax cuts and adequately fund public education.
2. Fifty per cent (50%) of Manitobans say that the provincial government is on the wrong track when it comes to providing quality K-12 public education.
3. Manitoba increased the education property tax rebate cheques to 50 per cent of property taxes for \$453 million. To date, the rebate cheques have cost \$578 million. This is money that could have been invested into the public education system.
4. The province is phasing out the education property tax, years ahead of schedule, but has no plan on how to pay for a sustainable public education system.
5. The government is borrowing money to fund rebate cheques, even though most Manitobans would prefer this money be invested in public services.
6. Public education in Manitoba is funded by general revenue and education property taxes. The government has told school divisions they cannot increase the special levy, or division budgets will be clawed back. With property taxes capped by Bill 71, the result is a cut to public education funding.
7. Six years of chronic underfunding has resulted in school divisions struggling to meet the needs of their students.
8. Inadequate funding has led to cuts of student electives, apprenticeship programs, and fewer teachers hired, resulting in larger class sizes.
9. Inadequate funding means bigger class sizes and less one-on-one help for children who need extra attention.
10. Divisions are looking at cutting transportation for students. Students in rural areas are facing increased time on buses — up to an hour each way.
11. Budget cuts mean schools rely more often on fundraising from parents, which discriminates against schools in lower socio-economic areas and perpetuates the cycle of poverty.
12. Most Manitobans don't want the property tax rebate cheques if it means cutting public services such as education funding. A Probe Research study found that most (58 per cent) want the provincial government to keep the money earmarked for the property tax rebate and spend it on needed public services.
13. Students, teachers and schools are counting on stable, effective and equitable funding year after year to meet their growing needs. Without stable funding, there is no guarantee that crucial programs will exist year after year.
14. It is not enough to hold the line. Government must provide stable, effective and equitable funds to continually improve programs and services to students.
15. With record high inflation it costs more to provide the same level of service and programs than the previous year. Divisions are forced to make cuts.