

Myth Busting - Change the Conversation to one that Matters to Rural Education

When it comes to Education, talking to people connected to schools like staff members, parents, and students, helps develop an accurate picture of what is happening in our local community schools and what is important to students. Recently there have been numerous myths regarding Education. Social Media posts and news articles we read online may not be from our local area, and may not be from a credible source. It is important that we read and think critically regardless of where our information is coming from. Critical thinking is simply questioning what we read to consider if it makes sense and then checking it against other sources who are in a position to know. Schools prioritize critical thinking and these are skills required by everyone these days.

Frequently there are misunderstandings about what is taught in Manitoba Public Schools, referred to as Curriculum. The Manitoba Department of Education sets the Curriculum for the entire province. Curriculum documents provide the information that is to be taught in Manitoba classrooms. All curriculum links are available online. [Manitoba Curriculum Documents](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/index.html) can be found here <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/index.html>.

It's important to change the conversations from myths and topics that aren't relevant to Manitoba students, to *priorities that matter to our students*. Here are some topics to talk to your MLA candidates about:

- Education is struggling to pick up the work that is no longer being done by an overloaded Manitoba Healthcare system including but not limited to:
 - mental health supports for students;
 - access to specialists to ensure that our early learners are school ready and will be successful in schools.
- Adequate resources in small public and Hutterian schools for academic needs and the ability to provide additional support for early years students that may not be school-ready;
- Ample opportunities in small public and Hutterian schools for all students;
- Inadequate funding. Between 2006/07 and 2021/22, actual growth to Manitoba's education budget was 19.2 percent, while inflation across this same time grew by 34.6 percent impacting classroom and school operations (ie: hydro, fuel costs, building maintenance, etc).

Given these realities and provincial funding below the rate of inflation, we are concerned about meeting the needs of Prairie Spirit students.

We encourage Manitobans to discuss Manitoba Public School issues within your communities and with your MLA candidates.

Submitted by the Prairie Spirit School Division Board of Trustees