



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 16, 2022

PRIVATE SESSION

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
J. Brown G. Elliott L. French T. Gingrich (Vice-Chair) B. Godkin R. Hutcheon K. McGregor J. Morning S. Ruttan (Chair) T. Duncan (Student Trustee) (Regrets) S. Johnson (Student Trustee) (Regrets) B. Roy (Student Trustee) (Regrets)	K. Burra, Director of Education
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time.	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gingrich called the meeting to order.

2. MOTION TO MOVE INTO PRIVATE SESSION

MOTION MOVED BY Trustee Hutcheon to move into Private Session. Carried.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Elliott declared his wife is an employee with the LDSB and is a member of ETFO.

4. For Information

- 4.1 Safe Schools Update – No update.
- 4.2 Property Update – No update.
- 4.3 Personnel Update – No update.
- 4.4 Labour Update – No update.
- 4.5 Legal Update – Director Burra provided a legal update.
- 4.6 OPSBA Update – No update.

5. REPORT TO PUBLIC SESSION

Chair Gingrich called for a motion for the Board to rise and report.

MOTION MOVED BY: Trustee Ruttan that the Board rise and report, and that any resolutions, be made public. Carried.

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll call:

Trustees:	Staff:
J. Brown G. Elliott L. French T. Gingrich (Vice-Chair) B. Godkin R. Hutcheon K. McGregor J. Morning S. Ruttan (Chair) T. Duncan (Student Trustee) (Regrets) S. Johnson (Student Trustee) (Regrets) B. Roy (Student Trustee) (Regrets)	K. Burra, Director of Education J. Douglas, Communications Officer S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education P. Gollogly, Associate Superintendent S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent J. Silver, Superintendent of Education C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time.	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

6. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ruttan welcomed everyone to the Special Board Meeting of the Limestone District School Board of Trustees, which is being held virtually, to address one item, the Ministry of Education's lifting of health and safety measures in schools.

Chair Ruttan called upon Trustee Brown to read the Acknowledgement of Territory: "For those of us in the Kingston area, I wish to acknowledge that we are situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. To recognize this traditional territory is to acknowledge its longer historyone predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. The first people called this land, Cataraqui, - meaning meeting place on the flat rocks. As we meet may we ever be mindful of the significance of this land to the Indigenous people who lived and continue to live upon it. People whose practices and spiritualities are tied to this land and continue to develop in relationship to the land and its other inhabitants. We cannot sincerely express gratitude and respect for the land, the water, the animals and the First People of this land if we do nothing to disrupt anti-indigenous racism or allow land theft to be normalized. When we respect the inherent human and treaty rights of Indigenous People, we are in a right

relationship with this land. I therefore encourage one and all to consider your position on this land and how one can work to help decolonize our institutions and minds.”

7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Trustee Elliott declared that his wife is an employee of the LDSB and member of ETFO.

8. PRIVATE SESSION REPORT

Vice-Chair Gingrich stated that earlier this evening during Private Session Director Burra provided a legal update.

MOTION MOVED BY Trustee Gingrich and seconded by Trustee McGregor that the Private Session Report be approved as presented. Carried.

9. ACTION ITEM

9.1 Ministry of Education’s Lifting of Health and Safety Measures in Schools

Chair Ruttan called upon Director Burra to review the Ministry’s position on the lifting of Health and Safety measures in schools.

Director Burra stated that a week ago today, Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Dr. Kieran Moore, released new information to the education sector, and the Minister of Education did release a Memorandum reiterating the CMOH’s communication as it relates to public health measures that are in place within the public education sector in the province of Ontario. That advice suggested that the public health measures in schools would be lifted to be aligned with what was occurring in other sectors of the economy, as well as in the province.

Included are:

- School boards are no longer required to have a COVID-19 vaccine disclosure policy in place and provincial requirements of collecting proof of COVID-19 vaccinations and medical exemptions, as of March 14, 2022. Therefore, unvaccinated individuals covered under school board vaccination policies will no longer be required to undertake rapid antigen screening.
- Masking & Staff Personal Protective Equipment - In alignment with community masking requirements, masks will no longer be required for students, staff and visitors in schools, school board offices and on student transportation, effective March 21, 2022. There are some exceptions to that, from the standpoint of current federal travel requirements, as well

as if people are close contacts with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19, having to mask for a period of time.

- Lifting of Cohorting and Distancing, effective March 21, 2022 – The new protocol will allow spectators to watch athletic activities and it would allow schools to begin to plan school-wide assemblies, celebrations or graduations as the last portion of the year approaches.
- On-site Confirmation of Screening, effective March 21, 2022 - Staff and students should continue to self-screen every day before attending school however, the daily on-site confirmation of screening for all students, staff and visitors will no longer be required.
- Short-term Remote Learning – There is an expectation that there would potentially be the need for continued short-term remote learning, as well as families wanting to move from either in-person learning into virtual learning or from virtual learning back to in-person learning, within the staffing capacity of the school board in question.

Director Burra noted that remaining health and safety measures in schools for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year include:

- Daily self-screening
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting.
- Ventilation measures and delivery of additional HEPA units to schools.
- Absence reporting - School boards are expected to continue to report daily on absenteeism and closures through the absence reporting tool until April 14, 2022.

Director Burra advised that the memorandum does indicate that the government will continue to provide Rapid Antigen Tests and PPE for the remainder of the school year. Additionally, there is a change to the screening protocol, that again, does distinguish between people who are vaccinated and boosted, versus those who are not vaccinated and what that means if there is someone symptomatic within the household and what restrictions have now been removed.

Chair Ruttan thanked Director Burra and called upon Trustees for questions or comments.

The following motion was brought forward by Trustee Morning, seconded by Trustee Brown:

That LDSB write a letter to the Premier, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education, asking that LDSB schools wait two weeks after March Break before removing masks.

Trustee Gingrich asked for a friendly amendment that the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kieran Moore be included as an addressee to the letter. Trustee Morning agreed to the friendly amendment.

Trustee French asked for a friendly amendment that the local Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Piotr Oglaza also be included as an addressee in the letter. Trustee Morning agreed to the friendly amendment.

Chair Ruttan called the question.

MOTION MOVED BY Trustee Morning and seconded by Trustee Brown That LDSB write a letter to the Premier, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education, and the local Medical Officer of Health, asking that LDSB schools wait two weeks after March Break before removing masks. Carried.

The following motion was brought forward by Trustee Godkin, seconded by Trustee Morning:

That LDSB delay the implementation by 2 weeks of the Province's new mandate based on the recommendation of the Children's Health Collation which includes Sick Children's Hospital.

When questioned about the implications of imposing a delay, Director Burra reiterated what a Trustee already alluded to previously, that constitutionally speaking, education does fall under the purview of the provincial government. For public health measures primary authority resides with the Ministry of Health, as well as the local Public Health units. We have seen the perspective of the Chief Medical Officer of Health with the information that came out a week ago, and then the local Public Health expressed their support for the province's current plan their communication released earlier this afternoon. Very clearly the language in the memorandum, and since the memorandum has been released, has been more of a compulsory nature, rather than a choice. Trustees should be prepared for potential response if this motion was passed. Director Burra thought the motion may need to be explicit about continuing allowance for those exemptions that already existed. There are those students and staff who have very clearly documented medical exemptions and would need to may sure those are respected moving forward. Operationally, Director Burra indicated Limestone could see

continued challenges around enforcement of masking with the information that was put out by the province last week. There could potentially be some increased resistance to masking for the duration of the amount of time Trustees would be requesting for a transition period, where masking would continue, locally, based on the motion on the floor.

Trustee Morning requested a friendly amendment to include “CHEO,” after ‘Sick Children’s Hospital.’ Trustee Godkin accepted the friendly amendment.

In response to a question, Director Burra indicated that there may be a couple of things Trustees should consider that may require some restructuring of the motion. The first aspect is the reference of two weeks. It would be better to have a specific date, as opposed to two weeks, as two weeks from today would be March 30, and he did not believe that was the Trustees’ intent. Director Burra also indicated that Trustees may wish to consider inserting messaging about a transition period, in terms of the two weeks to accommodate the 14 day international travel requirements. Also, Director Burra offered the suggestion that Trustees may need to be more specific about a mandate, because currently we do not have a mandate any longer for students from Grades 4-12. Director Burra also suggested that Trustees consider putting this forward as a two week transitional period of time, or a Ministry directive to cut the timeline down, whichever comes first.

Director Burra did wish to reiterate that if this motion does pass Trustees should be aware that it could cause some significant enforcement issues at the school level. Similarly, this would impact busing, because if this motion passes, students from Hastings Prince Edward District School Board and Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board would not be masked on buses on Monday and would be sharing seating with Limestone students that would be masked.

Chair Ruttan questioned Trustee Godkin as to how he wished to proceed, as this would bring significant changes to the motion and would not be considered friendly amendments.

Trustee Godkin suggested to change his motion to read ‘end of day April 1,’ rather than two weeks.

Trustee Hutcheon asked for a friendly amendment to change ‘end of day April 1’ to ‘April 4.’ Trustee Godkin agreed to this friendly amendment.

Before calling the question, Chair Ruttan had two clarifying questions for the Director. The first, what would be the implications for a Board if they went against the Ministry's memorandum, and second, the Board's previous motion in August, regarding masking was encouraging and supporting, but was it a 'must do?'

Director Burra advised that the motion passed in August of 2020 indicated that for students K-3 it was strongly encouraged, and it would be supported by staff and that there will be no disciplinary action for students having difficulty complying with this direction. He further advised that end of day April 1 would be the same as April 4, as end of day April 1 falls on Friday and April 4 would be beginning day Monday. With respect to potential consequences, ultimately it would mean a directive or letter of instruction to the school board that they would need to come into compliance or face consequences. The province has the authority over the area of education and school boards do fall under their purview.

Trustee Godkin indicated he was fine having the motion read, 'end of day April 1.' Trustee Hutcheon rescinded her friendly amendment.

To clarify his motion, Trustee Godkin changed the wording of the motion from 'province's mandate' to 'Ministry's memorandum regarding the lifting of masking.' And further that it specifies, 'the Ministry's masking rules that existed prior to March Break.' Trustee Godkin also wished to include, after April 1, 'or a written Ministry directive is received,' to indicate, whichever comes first.

Chair Ruttan called the question:

MOTION MOVED BY Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Morning, That LDSB delay the implementation of the Ministry's memorandum regarding the lifting of masking, until the end of the day on April 1, or a written Ministry directive is received, and that the Ministry's masking rules that existed prior to March Break, continue based on the recommendation of the Children's Health Collation which includes Sick Children's Hospital and CHEO.

Roll call vote.

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Elliott, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon and Trustee Morning (4)

NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee McGregor, and Trustee Ruttan (5)

Absent: Trustee Duncan, Trustee Johnson, and Trustee Roy (3)

The motion was lost.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

None at this time.

11. ADJOURNMENT

*MOVED BY: Trustee Brown and seconded by Trustee McGregor that the meeting adjourn.
Carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.