
Agenda – Education, Policy & Operations Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Limestone Education Centre

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario

Public Viewing: <https://bit.ly/LDSBEOCMTGOct224>

Public Meeting – 5:30 p.m.

Land Acknowledgement: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

4. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

4.1 Equity Action Plan 2nd Edition, 2020-2024 – Superintendent McDonnell (Pages 2-17)

4.2 Summer Programming – Program Leadership Team (Pages 18-24)

5. REPORTS FOR ACTIONS

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

8. CORRESPONDENCE

9. NEXT MEETING – December 4, 2024

10. ADJOURNMENT

Limestone District School Board

Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.

See Yourself in Limestone

Administrative Report: Equity Action Plan 2nd Edition, 2020-2024

Education, Policy, and Operations Committee Meeting

October 2, 2024

Purpose and Link to the Strategic Plan/Goal: Student Learning, Achievement, and Well-Being

To provide Trustees with an update on the Limestone District School Board (LDSB) Equity Action Plan 2nd Edition, 2020-2024 and progress being made toward established goals. The Equity Action Plan supports the following goals of the LDSB Strategic Plan:

Improve student well-being/sense of belonging, participation/engagement in class time, and time focused on learning	Improve literacy learning and achievement for every student	Improve math learning and achievement for every student	Improve graduation rates and preparedness for future success for all groups of students	Improve responsiveness and service to families, staff, and community partners
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Background

The LDSB Equity Action Plan 2nd Edition, 2020-2024, was last shared with Trustees at the October 4, 2023, Education, Policy, and Operations Committee (EPOC) meeting. On an annual basis, outcomes will be shared with Trustees at the start of each new school year.

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Current Status

Recognizing the importance of this work, the following areas of focus within the Equity Action Plan are highlighted for Trustees to provide a snapshot of the progress being made in Limestone:

Building Staff Capacity

The Equity Team provided an equity learning series to all educators, accessible virtually or in person. This learning occurred after school from November to May. The following opportunities were offered in the 2023-2024 school year:

- In the first session of the series, participants were provided with a resource, “Start Here, Start Now”. The series began by discussing perceived barriers and proactive approaches to cultivating inclusive spaces in LDSB.
- Session two covered useful tips on using inclusive language and examples of language to use and avoid.
- Session three focused on understanding microaggressions and provided definitions and examples focused on deepening collective understanding of the impact, and provided tools to address and interrupt instances of harm.
- Session four coincided with the release of the LDSB document, Prohibiting the Use of the N-Word. This session reviewed the history of the N-word, resource selection strategies, and ways to navigate challenging content. In addition, the necessity to intervene and report and the steps involved to do so were reiterated.
- The final session was a review of *AP 106: Creed-based Accommodation and AP 325: Exemptions from Human Development & Sexual Health Instruction, Grades 1-8*. This session focused on sharing suggestions when responding to requests from families and provided examples of accommodation plans.

Recognizing the importance of continuous learning and staff capacity building, the Equity team has created a Human Rights & Equity resource on the SharePoint page, available to all Limestone staff. Recently launched, this online resource is a one-stop access point for all human rights and equity-related resources, support, and information. These resources and supports will be highlighted and shared in a weekly myLDSB update, connecting all staff to the collective human rights and equity work and learning.

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Human Rights Training for Student Athletes

Last spring a series of presentations were piloted called, “Human Rights in Athletics” for all LSDB secondary school soccer athletes playing KASSAA sports. The one-hour presentation focused on the areas of concerns identified in the LSDB Human Rights Incidents/Complaints tool where increased reports of anti-Black racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and homophobia have been documented. The presentations aimed to combat hate on the soccer pitch while creating a safe and inclusive athletics environment for all LSDB students. Based on student and staff feedback from these sessions, moving forward, all student athletes will participate in this training. This September a total of 17 presentations were completed with all fall KASSAA athletes at 9 secondary schools. Students who were unable to attend an in-person session were provided with an online training option.

Canadian Black History Curriculum

Students from the LCVI BIPOC group created an extremely successful LSDB Black History Month Opening Ceremonies with over 125 LSDB and community members in attendance. Student planning has already started for the 2025 opening ceremonies. Throughout the school year Black students from various Black and Racialized Student Affinity Groups have reported the lack of Canadian Black history being taught in the classroom. Based on student feedback, a writing team of LSDB teachers was created this summer to create a series of Black Canadian History lessons for grade 10 history classes. Students have been involved in the process from start to finish which has included student vetting before the lessons are released to the system. The Ministry of Education has also announced that starting September 2025 Black Canadian history will be part of the grade 7, 8, and 10 curricula. The creation of these grade 10 lessons in advance of September 2025 will provide educators more time to engage in this important work. The creation of Grade 7-8 lessons will be a priority through the 2024-2025 school year.

Student Human Rights Reports Data

The LSDB Student Human Rights Reporting System serves as a critical tool for students, parents, and staff to report human rights concerns involving LSDB students. The platform is designed to help in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment by addressing issues such as discrimination, harassment, and other human rights violations.

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Since its launch, we have received 820 reports; 576 in the 2023-2024 school year and 244 in the 2022-2023 school year. Of the 576 reports of the past school year, 294 were verified human rights reports. Seventy reports are under investigation (open tickets), 337 tickets were unsubmitted. Two-hundred and twelve were categorized as other; these are reports that do not meet the criteria for human rights concerns but may still involve important issues, such as bullying or assault.

Both school years saw spikes in reports from February through June, particularly around issues of race and Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE). Notably, most reports involve students in grades 6, 7, and 8, suggesting that middle school students are particularly affected by, or aware of, human rights issues. This trend highlights the importance of continuing to support and educate younger students on their rights and the reporting process.

Race or race-related concerns is the most frequent human rights issue with 212 reports, highlighting the ongoing challenges of addressing racial discrimination. Reports related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression was the second most frequent. We also saw a rise in reports related to creed with a total of 51 reports, reflecting the influence of global events on school dynamics. The education campaign that was launched in the fall of 2023 also resulted in an increased number of reports as students and families had greater awareness of their rights and the reporting tool.

Next Steps and Communication Plan

At the end of the 2020 – 2024 Equity Action Plan cycle, the Community Equity Advisory Committee will review the progress made towards achieving the goals outlined herein.

Recommendations

That this report be received for information purposes.

Prepared by: Alison McDonnell, Superintendent of Curriculum & Program Services

Reviewed by: Krishna Burra, Director of Education

Attachment: Equity Action Plan 2nd Edition extended to 2020-2024

Limestone District School Board

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See Yourself in Limestone



Limestone
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Equity Action Plan 2020-2024 2nd Edition



Land Acknowledgement

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The Limestone District School Board is dedicated to continuing to encourage and elevate all voices through Equity, Inclusion and Reconciliation. Through ongoing learning and action, individual and collective experiences of staff and students are shared, understood, and valued so that everyone sees themselves in Limestone and feels a sense of belonging and connection.

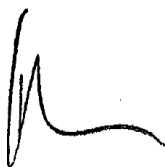
Message from the Director and Chair of the Board

The Limestone District School Board is committed to an equitable and inclusive school climate that ensures all students, staff, and members of the broader school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. We want everyone who learns, works, or volunteers in Limestone to value diversity, demonstrate respect for others, and commit to establishing a just, caring society. We know that diversity enriches the educational and employment experience of everyone.

Our three-year *Equity Action Plan* demonstrates our commitment to ensure equity at all levels of our system, as we work together to embrace and foster engaging and innovative learning where everyone achieves success and well-being. The plan is modeled on Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and *Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan (2017)* and encompasses school and classroom, leadership and governance, and human resource practices, data collection integration and reporting, and organizational culture change in our school communities.

Schools and classrooms must be places where everyone values diversity, respects each other, and where students' lived experiences are valued and celebrated. We must foster safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments where students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, their learning, and their school environment. Schools must engage and serve all students and staff and reflect the diversity of everyone.

To do this important work, we must better understand the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of the school community so that we can identify potential barriers or gaps and determine how to eliminate discriminatory biases in classes and schools. Equity must be the lens through which we embrace and lead cultural change in our school communities. Our goal remains for everyone to see themselves in Limestone.



Krishna Burra
Director of Education



Suzanne Ruttan
Chair, Board of Trustees

Introduction

The Ontario Human Rights Code protects LDSB students and staff from discrimination and harassment on the basis of citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, ancestry, disability, age, creed, sex, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Despite these protections, as a school district, we acknowledge that oppression and discrimination still exist within our systems, structures, policies, and practices. It shows up as racism and other forms of oppression and more specifically, as, but not limited to, anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism; anti-Asian racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Sikhism; classism, ableism; sexism, transphobia, heterosexism, and homophobia.

The Limestone District School Board's Equity Action Plan continues to build on the work begun through Ontario's Equity Action Plan (2017). The Plan focuses on the four key priority areas identified in Ontario's Equity Action Plan:

- School and Classroom Practices.
- Leadership, Governance and Human Resource Practices.
- Positive Culture and Well-being.
- Data Collection, Integration and Reporting.

The Actions proposed in this plan have emerged from the following data:

- Student voice (i.e., Student Voice Days, Census Focus Groups).
- Equity Team feedback.
- Staff and administrator feedback.
- School Climate Survey data.
- Community feedback and correspondence.
- Trustee feedback.
- LDSB Indigenous Team feedback.

The Guiding Principles for equity and inclusive education are based on Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009):

- Building upon a foundation of excellence.
- Meeting individual needs.
- Identifying and eliminating barriers.
- Promoting a sense of belonging that ensures all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.
- Involving the broader community.
- Building on and enhancing previous and existing initiatives.
- High Expectations for all students.
- Demonstrating commitment and follow through throughout the system.
- Eliminating discrimination by centering human rights.

Expected Outcomes

- Identify, understand, and challenge biases, systemic barriers, and discriminatory practices.
- Support positive learning and workplace environments where all students and staff feel respected, supported and seen.
- Build and foster diverse and inclusive community partnerships and engagements.
- Communicate accountability regarding our collective commitment to equity and communicate results to the public.

Monitoring & Progress

- Similar to the LDSB Strategic Plan, the Equity Action Plan has adopted the stoplight system for monitoring and sharing progress as follows:
 - Green reflects goal is on target
 - Yellow reflects goal is making progress
 - Red reflects goal requires further attention

Leadership and Governance

LDSB is committed to creating safe, inclusive, and engaging learning and work environments for all staff and students. We are committed to equity and inclusion for all and to upholding and centering human rights, by continuing to review existing structures, policies, procedures, programs, and practices that disadvantage racialized and marginalized groups within our organization.

Areas of Focus	Timelines	Status
Hire an Elementary Equity Consultant to support curriculum and staff development in incorporating anti-racism learning in the Arts, Social Studies, History and Geography).	2021 – 2022	
Create a leadership development and succession planning process that is equity focused.	2021 - 2023	
Update the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement to include a greater focus and actionable items related to equity.	2020 - 2023	
Commit dedicated time at each school staff meeting to engage in collective learning and doing, in respect to Indigenous Decolonization and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion practices.	2020 - 2023	
Schools will utilize equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenous resources to increase their own learning and further commitment to reconciliation.	2020 - 2023	
Review Administrative Procedures to ensure they adhere to principles of human rights, equity, inclusion, and fair process, beginning with AP 106, 350, AP 352, AP 400, AP 405 and AP 406.	2020 - 2023	
Create an Inclusive Language Guide that informs and supports staff and students in identifying and using language that is based in anti-oppression, anti-racism, and is equity focused.	2022-2023	
Create an Administrative Procedure that supports transgender and gender non-conforming students and staff.	2021 - 2023	
Create and distribute a monthly electronic Limestone newsletter that focuses on building capacity in equity and human rights across the district.	2020 - 2023	
Create a consistent system of collecting and tracking human rights incidents/complaints for students and staff, as well as guidelines and protocols for responding and supporting affected individuals.	2021 - 2022	
Create student option for non-gendered Grade 9 physical education classes in all secondary schools.	2023-2024	

Organizational Culture Change

Creating organizational culture change requires input at every level of an organization. With the goal of creating a more equitable, safe, and inclusive learning and work environment, it is important to have the voices and input of stakeholders. The centering of anti-oppression, equity, and human rights in every operational goal and across all departments and stakeholders is critical to entrenching the idea that it is everyone's work, and all bear responsibility for examining their own practices, biases, and patterns.

Areas of focus	Timelines	Status
Establish an LDSB Community Equity Advisory Committee to support the Limestone District School Board (LDSB) in identifying and eliminating barriers to an equitable and inclusive environment for students, staff, and the broader community, and determining strategies for systemic implementation of LDSB's Equity and Action Plan.	2022 - 2023	
Establish a racialized student advisory group to represent the student voice in Limestone.	2020 - 2023	
Establish a 2SLGBTQ+ School Staff Collective.	2021 - 2023	
Establish staff affinity groups, including: - Black, Indigenous and Racialized staff affinity - Staff living with Disabilities staff affinity 2SLGBTQ+ staff affinity - Faith based staff affinity	2021 - 2023	
Establish a Black family and community advisory group.	2020 – 2021	
Review all present system student representation structures and processes through an equity and anti-oppression lens and explore different models of representation and student voice that best reflects diverse student population.	2020 - 2021	
Build staff capacity through learning opportunities on human rights and equity topics in response to the needs of students and staff, with a focus on normalizing the language of inequity (e.g., anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Heteronormativity, Transphobia, Homophobia, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous Racism, anti-Oppression, ableism, accessibility, and White Supremacy).	2020 - 2023	
Work to ensure every elementary and secondary school in Limestone has gender-neutral and accessible washrooms for staff and students.	2020 - 2023	
Recognize and demonstrate sensitivity towards dates of cultural and religious significance.	2020 - 2023	
Review communication tools to ensure they are accessible to all Limestone community members (website, newsletters, etc.).	2021 - 2023	
Analyze, share and utilize Student Census Data at the system and school level from Student Census Reports: Student Sense of Belonging and Student Achievement.	2022-2023	

School and Classroom Practices

Our schools are committed to removing systemic barriers to ensure that school and classroom practices reflect and respond to the diversity of students and staff. We will continue to review existing structures, policies, programs, and practices within our school communities.

Areas of Focus	Timelines	Status
Support ongoing learning for staff and students regarding gender identity and human rights, by updating Limestone's Guideline to Supporting Transgender- Spectrum and/or Gender Non-Conforming Students.	2020 - 2023	
Build staff capacity and understanding, in terms of accessing community resources, in support of addressing socio-economic inequities and the impact it has on student well-being and achievement.	2022 - 2023	
Implement the vision and goals of a Grade 9 destreamed program which include increased educator capacity, and increased student engagement, achievement, and well-being.	2021 - 2023	
Implement key findings and recommendations from Right to Read (Ontario Human Rights Commission).	2022 - 2023	
Develop and implement a Text and Resource Selection Guide to support staff in reviewing, auditing, and selecting texts and resources for classroom, school and online libraries using an anti-oppression, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and equity lens.	2020 - 2023	
Review and critically analyze the selection of literature used in elementary and secondary classrooms to include an increased number of authors representing intersectional identities.	2020 - 2023	
Support staff in understanding, developing, and implementing a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach to create a flexible learning environment that emphasizes multiple means of representation, multiple means of expression, and multiple means of engagement.	2020 - 2023	
Provide professional learning and resources to support staff in understanding and implementing Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy.	2020 - 2023	
Establish a trained Equity (non-administrator) Champion and Truth and Reconciliation Lead in each school, who would be responsible for disseminating information to staff, supporting administration in leading the learning and work of equity and anti-racism at the school and supports the implementation of the Equity Action Plan at their site.	2021 - 2023	
Require each school to establish an Equity and Well-being Goal as part of our system wide inquiry.	2020 - 2023	

Ensure K-12 Assessment and Evaluation processes are explored through an equity lens.	2021 – 2023	●
Provide professional learning for all K-12 staff that are directly involved with pathways and career guidance, such as SST's, LPS, Student Success, Experiential Learning, and Guidance Teachers, to maximize opportunities for all students.	2021 - 2023	●
Ensure the consistent use of LDSB data collection tools to track and measure equity actions on the school level, including but not limited to School Climate Survey, Human Rights Incident/Complaints Form, Workforce Census and Sense of Belonging Survey.	2021 - 2023	●
Incorporate a school tracking and reporting system addressing site-specific inequities.	2021 – 2023	●
Create and roll out a Human Rights Video and Posters to all families and staff and students in Grades 4-12 to support Human Rights learning.	2023-2024	●
Consult, create and roll out a document and video, Prohibiting the Use of the N Word to all families and staff and students in Grades 4-12.	2023-2024	●
Support Grade 6 staff in the implementation of the new social studies expectations related to Holocaust Education, including the creation of a guide, resource acquisition and mandatory professional learning.	2023-2024	●
Provide Human Rights Training for Student Athletes focused on areas of concerns identified in the LDSB Human Rights Incidents/Complaints tool in order to combat hate and create a safe and inclusive athletics environment.	2023-2024	●
Support elementary teachers with arts-based creed accommodations through the creation of a guide and resource acquisition.	2023-2024	●
Create a series of Black Canadian history lessons for Grade 10 history classes to support the implementation of upcoming new Ministry of Education curriculum expectations in September 2025.	2023-2024	●

Human Resource Practices

LDSB is committed to promoting and building working and learning environments that are equitable, diverse, and inclusive. Recruitment, selection, and promotion processes must therefore ensure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, identifying and eliminating barriers that prevent full participation of some groups. A commitment to diversity and equity can be achieved through concerted efforts to ensure the inclusion of diverse and underrepresented populations, valuing, respecting and equally supporting all individuals through the recruitment process.

As a public board of education, it is important that recruitment efforts reach a broad, diversified applicant pool to broaden employee demographics, providing opportunities for all students to see themselves in Limestone.

It is equally important that our efforts are sustained post recruitment so that we may retain highly qualified, engaged, and diversified employees who together help to achieve the strategic direction of the Board.

Recruitment and Selection

In order to determine what actions are necessary to promote a recruitment strategy that supports and advances equity, diversity and inclusion, a review of existing recruitment procedures and practices has been initiated with a view to ensuring that any unintended systemic barriers are identified and addressed.

Areas of Focus	Timelines	Status
Review Administrative Procedure AP 400 – Recruitment & Selection to ensure alignment with Ministry PPM 165 Teacher Hiring Practices.	2020 - 2021	
Ensure that all components of the hiring process are barrier-free to create an equitable and inclusive experience for all candidates seeking employment with Limestone.	2020 - 2023	
Develop recruitment outreach to diverse communities by exploring partnerships with local, post-secondary educational institutions.	2020 - 2023	
Explore ways to increase the number of racially diverse applicants selected for interviews through diverse job boards and other means to attract a diversified applicant pool.	2020 – 2023	
Create a standard job posting template demonstrating LDSB's commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion that is unique and reflective of the Board.	2020 – 2022	
Review all postings and procedures to ensure the use of gender-neutral language.	2020 – 2021	
Include the ability to voluntarily self-identify as part of the application process.	2020	
Analyze recruitment data, including number of diverse applications, number selected to participate in the process, and number of candidates participating from diverse backgrounds who are successful in the process.	2022 - 2023	
Develop selection criteria for all levels of system and school leadership that ensure competencies in equity, anti-oppression, and anti-racism practices.	2021 - 2023	
Provide anti-oppression professional learning for HR staff and system leaders to foster equitable, diverse, and inclusive recruitment and selection processes.	2021 - 2023	

Retention

To actively engage and retain a diverse workforce that feels valued, respected, and included, it is prudent to understand how all current employees feel and whether they truly “see themselves in Limestone.” This can be accomplished through the Spring 2022 LDSB Workforce Census & Belonging Survey.

In addition, we will undertake the following with the goal of creating equitable and inclusive working

environments for all employees:

Areas of Focus	Timelines	Status
Review all Human Resources Administrative Procedures with a focus on identifying systemic barriers and revising procedures using an equity and inclusion framework to ensure accessible, equitable and inclusive language and practices.	2020 - 2023	
Develop partnership with KEYS (Kingston Employment & Youth Services) to advance and support Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.	2021 - 2022	
In collaboration with LDSB stakeholders, develop the Workforce Census & Belonging Survey to determine the composition of our employees.	2021 - 2022	
Analyze data collected from WCSB to create baseline with the goal of using the data to inform and monitor school and system progress towards equity and well-being goals.	2022 - 2023	
Develop or source and implement appropriate equity, diversity and inclusion education, awareness and training for Human Resources staff, Education Centre and other support staff across the district.	2020 - 2023	
Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion into all new employee orientations.	2022 - 2023	
Develop and implement an LDSB Exit Survey for all employees who resign or retire from the organization that includes questions pertaining to equity, inclusion, and sense of belonging in Limestone.	2022	
Provide mentorship, support, and leadership/succession planning opportunities designed for Black, Indigenous & racialized, 2SLGBTIQ+, people living with disabilities, and potentially other marginalized staff populations.	2022 - 2023	
Work with Employee Assistance Program providers to promote diversity among counsellors.	2020 – 2023	
Share processes for accessing Human Rights supports (health and wellness, accommodations) regularly, in staff communications.	2020 - 2023	

Data Collection, Integration & Reporting

Within each of the aforementioned areas of focus, data will be collected and analysed to demonstrate progress towards our goals and shared with Trustees, staff, and broader school communities.

Data may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Student census data
- School climate survey data

- See Yourself in Limestone Workforce Census & Belonging Survey
- Human Rights reporting tool for both students and staff
- Student and staff Voice
- Community Voice
- Graduation rates
- Pathways' data
- Course selection and credit accumulation
- EQAO
- Board and school learning plans

While responsibilities have been assigned to different departments for accountability purposes, it is essential that all equity actions are the result of the collective and collaborative work of all LDSB employees. At the end of 2020 – 2023 Equity Action Plan cycle, the Equity Advisory Committee will review the progress made towards achieving the goals outlined herein. Outcomes from the previous school year will be shared on an annual basis with Trustees at the start of each school year.

Conclusion

The Limestone District School Board upholds the principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, *the Constitution Act (1982)*, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and as outlined in Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009) and the Ontario Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009). The Board and its staff are committed to the elimination of all types of discrimination and discriminatory barriers that may exist whether because of commission or omission. The Board recognizes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to the full range of programs, the delivery of services, and resources are critical to the achievement of successful educational and social outcomes for staff and students.

Administrative Report: Summer Programming Education, Policy, and Operations Committee Meeting

October 2, 2024

Purpose and Link to the Strategic Plan/Goal: Student Learning, Achievement, and Well-Being

To provide Trustees with an update on summer programming that was offered to Limestone District School Board (LDSB) students.

LDSB continues to offer a wide variety of summer programming options for K to 12 students. In doing so, we are focusing on all of the Strategic Plan Goals, which are:

- 1) Improving student well-being/sense of belonging, participation/engagement in class time and time focused on learning
- 2) Improving literacy learning and achievement for every student
- 3) Improving math learning and achievement for every student
- 4) Improving graduation rates and preparedness for future success for all groups of students
- 5) Improving responsiveness and service to families, staff, and community partners

Background

The Limestone District School Board has traditionally offered optional programming for elementary and secondary students during the summer months. These programs have evolved to meet the needs of the students within the system, but the general structure has remained.

This includes Summer Session which offers e-learning and co-op options for secondary students and enrolment consists primarily of students looking for reach-ahead opportunities.

Summer Learning Supports for Students with Special Education Needs and Mental Health Needs started in response to the impact of COVID-19. Since that time, the Ministry of Education has provided school boards with funding to enhance opportunities to provide mental health and summer learning opportunities for students with special education and/or complex mental health needs.

Limestone District School Board

Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.

Last summer, after two years of remote learning, the program returned to an in-person model. In-person literacy programming was delivered to 225 students. Students entering Grades 1 to 6 participated in the program. The program ran at four sites that were geographically spread out in the district: Loughborough Public School, Southview Public School, Bayridge Public School and Molly Brant Elementary School. Classes ran for one 3-week session, from July 4-21, 2024 and class sizes were capped at 15 students.

Gould Lake Outdoor Education programming offers a variety of summer outdoor education experiences for students in Grades 7-12 involving a combination of credit and non-credit programs that include day camps as well as multiple-day and overnight hiking, kayaking and canoeing trips.

Current Status

Summer Literacy Program (Read-A-Lot)

This summer, from July 4-21, 308 Grade 1-6 students participated in Read-A-Lot. The program was once again offered in four geographically separated sites across the district: Bayridge PS, Loughborough PS, Molly Brant Elementary School and Southview PS.

Grounded in recommendations of the OHRC's Right to Read report that focuses on early instruction and intervention, students who completed SK were invited to register. In partnership with Educational Services, each location was staffed with two educational assistants who supported student learning throughout the program.

There was a focus on family engagement throughout the program. Daily communication was shared with families. The program hosted an Open House where families were invited into the classroom to learn alongside the students. In addition, families were provided with online recordings that were created by the leadership team, to watch at their convenience. These recordings reviewed activities that families could do at home to support literacy learning.

Data related to student engagement and parent satisfaction was tracked and the results were overwhelmingly positive. This was measured based on student attendance, and surveys completed with students and caregivers during and after the program. Moreover, family engagement throughout the program remained high, as they directly participated in many aspects of the students learning. In addition to engagement, families also commented that they learned a lot about the science of reading.

Significant achievement gains were realized in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics and writing, as were measures of student confidence following the completion of the program.

Summer Credit Programs

Summer Session offered a new Travel for Credit program in summer 2024, in addition to e-learning, and Co-op.

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Travel for Credit offered LDSB students a summer school experience that included travel in Canada and the US to develop skills in relation to the Grade 10 Careers and Civics course. The opportunity was provided for both English and French Immersion courses. Travel for Credit courses received positive feedback from students and families who appreciated the schedule, and opportunity for experiential learning modules. Over 700 students registered for courses through e-learning and were successful in obtaining their credit this summer. A survey was shared with students who responded and provided valuable feedback, which will be used to support programming moving forward. Summer Session co-op registration was strong this summer, with 114 students participating in summer school co-op, and 182 credits granted. Overall, the Summer Session program was successful in providing valuable learning experiences across various formats. While there were some challenges, students provided positive feedback and achieved high academic performance. The suggestions and feedback gathered will be instrumental in improving future summer school sessions.

Focus on Youth

The 2024 Summer Focus on Youth Program, supported by BGC Southeast Kingston and the YMCA of Kingston, successfully hired 90 youth leaders and recreational assistants for various camps. Hosted by both organizations, these camps served a wide range of communities. Training for the youth staff took place in early July, covering essential topics such as policies and procedures, healthy child development, WHMIS, AODA, workplace health and safety, violence and harassment prevention, program planning, behavior management, and child protection.

This year, the program impacted over 5,000 children, including 100 with disabilities, and nearly 500 participants in specialized literacy and robotics programs. Camps were held in Kingston, Napanee, Loyalist, and RKY Camp locations.

Back to School Transitions

Back to School Transitions were supported by Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators, Student Support Counsellors, Adolescent Care Workers, and Attendance Counsellors between August 26 and August 30. Over 700 students with special education needs and/or complex mental health concerns, at 45 elementary and secondary schools, received a supportive transition back to school through school visits, team meetings, connections to caring adults and classroom tours.

Literacy Camp Support

Educational Assistant support was provided to Camp Read-A-Lot to enable the full participation of students with special education needs in summer literacy programming. Twelve Educational Assistants provided support over three weeks at four LDSB sites.

Adolescent Care Worker (ACW) for Summer School and Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program

An ACW provided social and emotional support to five secondary students who participated in summer school. The ACW also implemented Kids Have Stress Too! sessions to two Grade 2 and 3 classes during Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program. This evidence-based program supports the creation of an

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emotionally healthy environment by promoting self-regulation and effective stress-management skills and strategies.

Learning Program Support (LPS) for Summer School

An LPS teacher provided ongoing support, guidance and resources throughout summer school. LPS provided support for the full participation of students with special education needs in summer credit courses in July.

Sundance Youth Facility

Educational programming and support were offered to youth in custody for four weeks in July/August. Students engaged in credit and non-credit courses for four hours per week through a partnership between the St. Lawrence Youth Association and LDSB.

Social Work Support

One Social Worker provided ongoing mental health support to students on their existing caseload. Two elementary students and 15 secondary students received ongoing therapy throughout July and August.

Out of the City Art Camp

Zimbabwean-Canadian stone sculpting artist Chaka Chikodzi lead a 5-day immersive art camp for racialized and newcomer youth. Nineteen LDSB students were registered for the camp (15 students in elementary, 4 students in secondary) and 3 secondary students volunteered their time for the week.

Psychiatry Pilot

Through a continued partnership with Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC), 28 LDSB students were offered a psychiatric assessment between June and August 2024. Forty-eight referrals were made for K to 12 students for this pilot. Eighteen students (~38% of those referred) were able to benefit from psychiatric assessment, diagnostic clarification, medication recommendations, and in some cases, brief follow-up. Consent was provided by the student/family for information sharing from KHSC with the student's home school. An additional 9 students received appointments for psychiatric assessment, however they did not attend, and 1 student felt they no longer required the appointment when it was offered.

Intensive Skills Y-Training

Thirty-eight Educational Assistants participated in a two-and a half-day training. Participants learned and demonstrated the skills necessary to successfully support students with complex behavioural and mental health needs. Facilitators provided strategies for working with students through teaching, modelling, demonstration, and role playing. Participants were also certified in Behaviour Management Systems training.

Behaviour Management Systems Training (BMS)

Seventy-five casual Educational Assistants, 34 Intensive Support Teachers/Student Support Teachers, and 4 Administrators participated in BMS training. The primary emphasis of BMS training is prevention and

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includes strategies such as knowing the student, acting on early warning signs, the effective use of calming and de-escalation techniques. The training also addresses personal safety techniques such as avoidance, releases, and blocks.

MH Lit- Mental Health in Action

Over 90 elementary and secondary educators, and 20 elementary and secondary administrators, completed the School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) *MH Lit – Mental Health in Action* courses for educators and school administrators respectively. These courses are designed to provide educators and administrators with basic knowledge and information related to mental health, strategies to enhance student mental health, and everyday practices.

Gould Lake Outdoor Education

The following Gould Lake summer programs ran over July and August 2024 with 437 students participating across the different programs.

Nature Camp for Students in Grades 1 to 3

Programming is held at different LDSB school sites, which included Loughborough Public School, École Maple Elementary School, Southview Public School and Molly Brant Elementary School this summer. Eighty-two students participated in the program over four different weeks, ten of whom were chosen from Molly Brant ES by staff to attend the camp for free.

Outdoor Escape for Students in Grade 7

Programming is conducted at the Gould Lake Conservation Area, where 69 students participated in the program, over 3 different one-week sessions.

Quest for Students in Grades 7 and 8

This 8-day program is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, including a 5-day canoe trip in Frontenac Provincial Park. Students have the opportunity to earn a .5 PAD105 credit. Four sessions were offered over the summer, with 106 students participating in the program. As part of the Ontario Leadership Scholarship program, 20 students were chosen by staff from schools to participate.

Girls Adventure Program for Students in Grades 7 and 8

This 8-day program, intended for students who identify as female, is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, and includes a 5-day canoe trip in Frontenac Provincial Park. Twenty-eight students attended this program earning a .5 PAD105 credit.

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Outreach for Students in Grades 9 and 10

This 16-day course is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, including a 9-day canoe trip in Algonquin Provincial Park. Students have the opportunity to earn a full PAD205 credit. Two courses ran this summer with 99 students participating between both sessions.

Outdoor Pursuits for Students in Grades 10 and 11

This 16-day course is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, including an 8-day canoe trip in Killarney Provincial Park or Temagami Area, and a 7-day hiking trip in the Adirondak Mountains. Students earn a full PAD305 credit. Two courses ran this summer with 48 students participating between both sessions.

Outdoor Skills for Students in Grades 10 and 11

This 16-day program is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, including a 9-day kayak trip in Georgian Bay, and 4-day moving water course at Palmer Rapids. Students have the opportunity to earn a full PAD405 credit. Two courses ran this summer with 29 students participating between both sessions.

Wilderness Instructor Course for Students in Grades 11 and 12

This 16-day co-op program is conducted at Gould Lake Conservation Area, including 13 days at Algonquin Provincial Park (Petawawa River). Twelve students participated in this program, each earning a full PPL300 credit and a full PAD30C credit.

Next Steps and Communication Plan

Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program

Pre and post assessment data was collected for the Read-A-Lot program. Progress Reports were also completed for each student, and sent to their home school, for review by the school team. A copy of the Progress report was also sent home to families.

Outdoor Education

The Outdoor Education Team will continue to offer current programming and explore ways to enhance student programs and experiences.

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Summer Credit Programs

Summer Session options will continue to be offered through Limestone District School Board, and will include e-learning courses, co-operative education, and Travel for Credit.

Gould Lake Outdoor Education

The Outdoor Education Team will plan to offer both summer credit and non-credit courses at Gould Lake Outdoor Education Centre in the summer of 2025.

Recommendations

That this report be received for information purposes.

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