

## SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 21, 2026

### Public Meeting

#### Roll Call:

<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>Members:</b>
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <p>A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen’s University) Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston E. Clow, Member-at-Large H. Clark, Autism Ontario L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario</p> <p><b>Regrets:</b></p> <p>J. Barker, Lennox &amp; Addington Resources for Children G. Eaton-Smith, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston K. Hill, Member-at-Large</p>
<b>Invitees:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>
	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <p>S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education, Learning for All D. Thompson, Principal of Educational Services W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Lead C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator M. Aylsworth, Special Education Program Coordinator M. West, Special Education Program Coordinator L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator</p> <p><b>Regrets:</b></p> <p>T. Bonham-Carter, Special Education Program Coordinator</p>
<b>Recorder:</b>	<b>Guests:</b>
J. Senior, Administrative Assistant	R. MacKay, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing T. Farrell, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing K. Kyte, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sarah Ruta, Teacher of Blind, Low Vision

Limestone District School Board

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

## 1. WELCOME

Chair McGregor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair McGregor read the Acknowledgement of Territory:

“The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek 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.”

## 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

*MOVED BY: Trustee Tiffany Lloyd that the agenda be approved. Carried.*

## 3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None at this time.

## 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*MOVED BY Member-at-Large Erin Clow that the December 10, 2025, Minutes be approved. Carried.*

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None at this time.

## 6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

**6.1 Sharing of Exceptionalities – Physical – Blind, Low Vision/Deaf Hard of Hearing** – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teachers Robbie MacKay, Katie Kyte, and Terry Farrell, along with Blind/Low Vision Teacher Sarah Ruta, provided an overview of these exceptionalities and the services offered within the Limestone District School Board (LDSB).

### Blind/Low Vision

The Ministry of Education defines the exceptionality of Blind/Low Vision as “*A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.*”

The presentation outlined the current profile of students receiving Blind/Low Vision support, noting a diverse caseload across elementary and secondary schools, including students with both ocular and cortical vision conditions and many with multiple exceptionalities.

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Key supports include:

- Conducting functional vision assessments and interpreting eye reports for educators.
- Increasing staff understanding of the impact of vision loss and providing guidance on adapting instruction, assessments, learning materials, and school environments.
- Providing accommodations and materials in accessible formats, including assistive technology and Braille literacy instruction.
- Supporting students with self-advocacy skills, transitions, and use of vision-related tools and technology.
- Offering support to families regarding their child's vision condition and connecting them with community and provincial resources.
- Ensuring Orientation and Mobility (O&M) support and promoting accessibility within school spaces.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)**

The DHH team reported on student demographics within the board, which includes a wide range of hearing profiles and support needs across approximately 40 schools.

Key areas of support included:

- Auditory management, including hearing loss education, use of Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT), and self-advocacy skills.
- Developing students' expressive/receptive language, listening skills, and social-emotional communication.
- Providing speech support where required.
- Building strong relationships and connections between students, families, educators, and DHH teachers to help bridge learning gaps.
- Collaborative projects such as noise audits, acoustic panel trials, classroom soundfield initiatives, and parent engagement activities.
- Creating transition documents, developing new resources, and offering classroom presentations to raise awareness of hearing and hearing loss.
- Showcasing student successes in literacy, hands-on learning, early awareness activities, and family engagement events.

**6.2 Students with Special Education Needs EQAO Results 2024-2025** – Principal Deborah Thompson and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard presented an overview of EQAO results and Special Education data. The following key highlights were shared:

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### Overview of EQAO

EQAO (Education Quality & Accountability Office) administers provincial assessments in Grade 3 and 6 Reading, Writing, and Mathematics; Grade 9 Mathematics; and the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), which is a graduation requirement.

### Overall Board Trends

Results demonstrated an upward trend across all eight assessment areas for Grades 3, 6, 9, and 10, including students with Special Education needs. This aligns with the Board's intention to support positive student outcomes across all schools.

### Grade 3 Highlights

- Increases of 5%–8% in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics.
- LDSB outperformed provincial averages in all three areas.
- Students with Special Education needs improved by 8%–9%.

### Grade 6 Highlights

- Achievement continued to rise, with 88% meeting Reading standards, 87% in Writing, and 51% in Math.
- Students with Special Education needs showed strong gains, including a 22% increase in Writing achievement.

### Grade 9 Mathematics

Grade 9 Math results increased by 5%, with LDSB students with Special Education needs performing better than students with similar needs elsewhere.

### Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

The OSSLT saw 95% participation and 84% success, representing a 3% improvement. Students with Special Education needs continued to demonstrate steady growth.

### Contextual Data

- Participation rates for students with Special Education needs in LDSB exceeded provincial participation rates at all grade levels.
- Exemption rates for Math among students with Special Education needs remained below or close to provincial rates.

### Ongoing Focus Areas

- Continued monitoring of participation and achievement trends, with attention to sustaining growth under the new Special Education model.
- Close examination of consistently higher LDSB participation rates compared to provincial results.

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**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

None at this time.

**8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES**

None at this time.

**9. OTHER BUSINESS**

**9.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Scot Gillam provided an overview of the Superintendent's Report, which was included in the Agenda Package.

**10. NEXT MEETING DATE**

February 11, 2026

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

*MOVED BY: Member-at-Large Erin Clow that the meeting adjourn. Carried.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm.*

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