

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 24, 2021

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) S. Johnson (Student Trustee) B. Roy (Student Trustee)	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

Vice-Gingrich was delayed and Chair Ruttan called the meeting to order.

2. MOTION TO MOVE INTO PRIVATE SESSION

MOTION: To move into Private Session.

MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Morning. 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. Action Items

- 4.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes – October 27, 2021.
- 4.2 Audit Committee Meeting Minutes – November 8, 2021.

MOVED BY: Trustee French and seconded by Trustee Elliott, that the minutes listed in Action Items, Private Session, as distributed, be approved. Carried.

5. For Information

- 5.1 Safe Schools Update – No update.
- 5.2 Property Update – No update.
- 5.2 Personnel Update – Director Bura provided a personnel update.
- 5.4 Labour Update – No update.
- 5.5 Legal Update – No update.
- 5.6 OPSBA Update – No update.

6. REPORT TO PUBLIC SESSION

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

MOTION: That the Board rise and report, and that any resolutions, be made public.
MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Morning. 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) S. Johnson (Student Trustee) B. Roy (Student Trustee)	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 K. Smith, Communications Officer C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
R. Bowen, Literacy Intervention Team J. Caldwell, Literacy Intervention Team C. Carrier-Prill, Delegate E. Chesnick, Literacy Intervention Team A. Gladu, Literacy Intervention Team K. Kay (LDSB Educator) and son, J. Devries N Kaplan-Myrth, MD, PhD, Delegate D. Lefebvre, BA, RN, BN, MPA, Delegate R. Snyder, Delegate K. Thompson, Delegate	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Ruttan called upon Trustee Elliott to present the Acknowledgement of Territory.

Trustee Elliott stated: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. 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. Although this acknowledgment is only a small piece of my reconciliation, I understand the privilege we have as School Board Trustees and that it is our responsibility to encourage continued and purposeful learning and growth so that students today learn the truth about Canada's history; the truth that I didn't learn when I was in school. We can all reflect on how we can contribute

to our own community's reconciliation.”

7. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Trustee Elliott indicated that he would like to bring forward a notice of motion and requested that it be added to the agenda under Item 17.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and seconded by Trustee Brown that the agenda, as amended, be approved. Carried.

8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

9. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

9.1 Empower Presentation

Associate Superintendent Stephanie Sartor advised Trustees that last June she presented a report summarizing the Empower Program that was piloted last year and continued to expand upon this year. As a brief reminder in 2019 the Ontario Human Rights Commission launched a Right to Read Public Inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities. Without the proper interventions and accommodations people with reading disabilities may not learn to read and may have difficulty with other subjects in school. Along with academic issues, this can also lead to mental health challenges. Our belief at Limestone is that literacy is an equity issue. The good news is that when an evidence-based intensive and systematic approach is used, people with reading disabilities respond very well and the effects of the disability can be greatly reduced. The Right to Reading Inquiry has spent the last year and a half gathering information from over 20 different school boards, various faculties of education, caregivers, students, and community organizations. The inquiry focused on five areas. One being reading intervention which means that students identified as at risk should have access to timely, scientific evidence-based reading intervention programs. While we are still awaiting the release of the report, we do know that one of the reading intervention programs that has been reviewed and supported by the Ministry of Education is the Empower Program. The team will share their successes experienced while implementing the Empower Program during the last school year and continue to see in this year's program. Associate Superintendent introduced the elementary literacy intervention teacher team: Allison Gladu, Jenny Caldwell, Richelle Bowen and Erika Chesnick. The literacy team was joined by James who is a graduate of the Empower Program and his mother Elizabeth.

The literacy team walked Trustees through the Empower Program and outlined the goals of the Empower decoding and spelling program. The decoding and spelling program is an intensive and repetitive program designed to teach word identification skills, decoding strategies and promote the effective use of these strategies. The program focuses on five strategies: sounding out, rhyming strategy, peeling off, vowel alert and spy strategy.

The literacy team reviewed the progress of James and a sampling of his reading. Before beginning the program the literacy team collected several pieces of diagnostic data from each student and also collected reading data, twice throughout the program, and once more at the conclusion of the program. James consistently trailed behind average student growth expected over the school year, and after just 8 months of Empower, not only had he closed the gap by increasing 9 reading levels, but for the first time ever in his educational career, James is now reading above grade level. James is not an anomaly, as the literacy team shared the reading level results across the district and at all four sites. On average students increased their reading scores by 8 reading levels in 10 months in the Empower Program. The team is collecting both quantitative-based skills and qualitative-based skills evidence to help them track student progress and LDSB's personal journey with Empower. At the beginning of their presentation, the team focused on the skills developed in Empower but what they really wanted to emphasize was that the Empower Program is changing the lives of these students forever and their experience in school. These are students that have received significant intervention for years, yet the literacy team has never seen these types of gains in such a short span of time. The team concluded their presentation by sharing feedback from administrators, current SSTs administering the program, families whose children are in Empower and most importantly from the students themselves, including James.

Chair Ruttan thanked the literacy team for the presentation and called upon Trustees for questions or comments.

9.2 “Beyond the Language of Inclusion: Embracing a Culture of Continuous Improvement for 2SLGBTQIA+ Students”

Constance Carriere-Prill and Ruhi Snyder are both members of the Parent Involvement Committee 2SLGBTQIA+ Focus Group. They are a group of parents who have children who are members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and that includes some parents who are also members of that community themselves. They also have a very dedicated group of administrators and a number of Trustees who are part of their group who have a strong interest in providing support to Limestone students. All of the work that they have been doing

this year comes from needs identified by students themselves through their own lived experience, either shared directly with the group, or through their parents, the GSA staff liaison, or staff themselves. This group was struck when the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) realized that despite ongoing efforts, in terms of equity, there remains significant issues with discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA+ students in Limestone. Along with serious gaps in some services and supports both continue to have tremendous impacts on basic human rights within our schools, lead to school trauma, and declining mental health. All significantly impact student outcomes. The report submitted to Trustees prior to this meeting, clearly outlines a number of urgent recommendations based on the areas of focus that they have identified. They understand that not all fall within the Trustee's purview. However, not only do they want Trustees to be aware of the work that they are doing but also to have support for the action items as they may relate to policy and governance. Even aside from discussing discrimination, when we look at our basic supports that allow students to attend school, they simply are not enough for this group of students. We must have a mind for continuous improvement in all aspects of our equity work. They provided an example that they have been discussing that illustrates that need. Being distanced from impacts, it would be easy to believe that having one or two gender neutral washrooms in the school is sufficient to meet gender diversity needs. Some might feel that adding signs and flags creates an atmosphere of inclusion, but these responses were recent social media posts by students in Limestone and paints a very different story. It is one that cannot be ignored and chalk up to facilities issue anymore.

Ruhi Snyder explained why addressing these issues is so critical in consideration of current expected outcomes. She provided a brief summary of her review of the current literature around of the crucial role that identity and belonging play in mental health, well-being, and success in 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. The global, national, and provincial data indicates a downward, negative trend. Most of these numbers are truly devastating. The data points towards a common thread that when our youth lack a sense of belonging, be it in their family, community, or among their peers because of their identity, it has devastating consequences on their lives. The World Health Organization's report has found that children who are gender non-conforming are at higher risk for bullying and victimization both at home and at school. A recent medical analysis confirms this. It shows that adolescents who are frequently bullied are twice as likely to develop mental disorders in early childhood. Furthermore, research in genetics has redefined persistent trauma related to childhood victimization as a form of social adversity and defined as being destructive, collective, and cumulative with effects that are transmissible to the next generation. Today's youth are coming out at a younger age because

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of improved social attitudes and increased visibility. This leaves them wide open to risk and vulnerability when it comes to acceptance because our society continues to favor a hetero-normative existence. In Canada we are barely halfway to full acceptance of homosexuality. The lack of belonging in adolescence leads to a state of dissidence during one of the most crucial times in their development; leading to heightened anxiety, depression, substance abuse, homelessness, and suicide. Seventy-seven per cent or three quarters of them, have considered suicide and 45 per cent, nearly half of them, have committed suicide. It is impossible to quantify the joy we feel when our children succeed. It is equally impossible to quantify the pain we feel when we watch our children disintegrate. These are extremely complex and layered issues and require collaboration for all who are involved and care about prepping our children for the inordinate challenges that they are going to face. Ms. Snyder concluded that she is very proud to be a part of this community that is actively engaging in generative conversations and are committed to the well-being of our children. Ms. Carriere-Prill stated they are here to help for collaboration and for identifying solutions to their recommendations.

Chair Ruttan thanked Ms. Carriere-Prill and Ms. Snyder for the presentation and asked Trustees for any clarifying questions.

9.3 Debra Lefebvre and Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth – Masks for Staff

Debra Lefebvre stated that it is Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario's position that all teachers and educational staff should be vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption, and that vaccine is the most effective measure to prevent COVID-19. It is also RNAO's position that wearing a mask is one protective measure in the fight against this disease and based on the precautionary principle, teachers and staff should have the right to choose to wear a better protection at work in a crowded classroom. Dr Theresa Tam, Chief Medical Officer of Health for Canada, stated that COVID-19 hangs in the air much like smoke does and it infects through inhalation. She also stated that we need to wear snugly fitting masks to protect ourselves. A level 2 mask is a loose fitting surgical mask. This mask is fluid resistant but it does not filter the air that we breathe in and out. Surgical masks are not considered respiratory protection but an N95 is. N95s are effective because they are tight fitting and can filter the air we breathe in and out. The other difference is a level 2 mask is blue and a N95 is white. While the board allows some to wear a N95 mask for medical reasons, such as the immunocompromised, there may be others who are in the developing stages of being immunocompromised and are unaware of it, such as a developing cancer. These staff do not have the respiratory protection

with the level 2 masks and are at risk of exposure to the disease in a crowded classroom. Lastly, employers certainly have an obligation to assure minimal protection for their staff, but staff should be given the right to better protect themselves if they choose to use what is known as a personal risk assessment.

Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth stated that she is a family physician in Ottawa. She noted, as Ms. Lefebvre stated, at this time educators are required to wear ill-fitting blue surgical masks which was based on policy which was an understanding that COVID-19 is spread by droplets. However, it is now widely accepted by Dr. Kaplan-Myrth's colleagues who are epidemiology and infectious disease experts in Canada and internationally, that COVID-19 is spread through aerosol. The Public Health Agency of Canada updated its own guidelines earlier this month to reflect that risk of aerosol transmission. Educators must sit in classrooms with children who are too young to be vaccinated. Those children are wearing level 1 cloth masks which offer minimal protection against droplet transmission and minimal protection against airborne transmission. Children's masks are on and off their faces and the children are all unmasked while they eat. Schools represent a high risk environment. Across Ontario children ages 5 to 11 have the highest rate of new COVID-19 cases by population of any group. At this time there are 1,257 active cases among students and 136 cases among staff. Six-hundred and sixty-six schools across Ontario currently have outbreaks. In the Kingston area there are 42 students and three staff who are currently infected with COVID-19. We want to do everything that we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in schools. As a layered approach, we know that immunization, masks, HEPA filters and ventilation are evidence-based best practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Level 2 surgical masks provides moderate droplet protection. They have gaps that allow viruses to escape offering minimal protection from airborne transmission for the wearer and those around them. Level 3 masks and higher KN95, such as the one Dr. Kaplan-Myrth is wearing, an N95 respirator provides protection that is superior to surgical masks for the wearer and for those around preventing droplets, as well as airborne transmission. There is no reason to prevent educators from wearing what is undeniably a safer mask for them and their students. In Ottawa, at the end of October, the Ottawa Carleton District School Board approved a recommendation to allow staff to wear Level 3 and higher masks rather than the medical masks provided by the province. Trustee Justine Bell proposed the idea, saying that the board has a responsibility to protect staff and students. The OCDSB agreed. On the same basis, we ask the Limestone District School Board to permit educators and staff to obtain their own health approved Level 3 or higher mask or respirator.

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Ms. Lefebvre provided a video demonstrating the difference between the fitting of a level 2 mask and the fitting of a N95 mask.

Chair Ruttan thanked Ms. Lefebvre and Dr. Kaplan-Myrth for the presentation and called upon Trustees for clarifying questions.

9.4 Krista Thompson – Masks for Staff

Krista Thompson is a registered occupational hygienist. She noted that occupational hygiene is the field responsible for anticipating and recognizing hazards, assessing risks, and evaluating control measures. It is the field of specialized selecting of personal protective equipment. Occupational hygienists regularly deal with certainty in data, so when data is not clear, they are trained to evaluate what is called the precautionary principle. There are differences in occupational hygiene as well as the aerosol sciences that COVID-19 is spread by aerosols (airborne). There are many studies, but Ms. Thompson referred to one in particular, “10 Scientific Reasons in Support of Airborne Transmission of SARS-Co-V2,” published in April 2021 as a particularly good study that outlines the data around aerosol transmission, as well as reasons that it is not just droplet transmission. As mentioned by the previous delegation, Public Health Agency of Canada recognizes COVID-19 is spread by aerosols and she noted that aerosols linger in the air, especially in indoor spaces. An update from Doctor Tam on November 12, 2021, indicates that she is saying “most importantly we have learned how the virus lingers in fine aerosols and remain suspended in the air we breathe...” and Dr. Tam goes on to say wearing a well-fitted and well-constructed mask is so important.

Ms. Thompson stated that occupational hygienists and ventilation engineers are the experts in the role of ventilation for protection in the far field. Use of increased ventilation air changes increases the percentage of fresh air in indoor spaces and improved filtration can really increase safety in the far field and some classrooms are using classroom made and homemade Corsi-Rosenthal Boxes, which Trustees may have seen. These are made using things purchased at the hardware store and are proven through scientific studies and published literature to be effective. But that is for the far field; what about the near field? The near field is not necessarily protected by good ventilation so again, this referring back to Dr. Tam, who says to wear masks with a good snug fit for seal on your face. But there are two ways, according to PHAC to get a good snug fit and that is either to wear a respirator or use a mask brace on top.

What is the difference between a medical mask and a respirator? A medical mask or surgical mask are appropriate for droplet protection to prevent the spray from infecting you from mucus membrane, but the evidence indicates that N95s are better than surgical or medical masks. Medical masks results in approximately 50 per cent leakage in both directions, when you are exhaling and inhaling. An unfitted N95 resulted in about 10 per cent leakage and one with fit testing had less than 5 per cent leakage. Also, optimal engineering design of those N95 respirators has really improved so that resistance has been established to not be significantly different than that of a medical mask, making it easier for the person wearing it.

Ms. Thompson referenced fit-testing. Should workers who are not fit tested be allowed to wear respirators? During the pandemic we have not been able to follow the prescribed protocol that would have been normally stipulated prior to the pandemic. If fit testing cannot be performed due to lack of resources the solution is not to deprive workers from the appropriate protection, but rather to adopt the precautionary principle and train users how to do a proper fit check or feel check. A proper fit check is a very simple procedure Ms. Thompson provided a link showing how it can be done. The N95 masks are designed to fit snugly, are personal protective equipment, and they provide much more protection than a medical mask. She noted that the PHAC updated their information, as of last week, they said that an N95 mask, if worn in the community, does not require fit testing.

Health Canada keeps the website up to date and people can find all the approved respirators. Ms. Thompson provided a link with resources available from the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc. (OHCOW), and she noted that OHCOW is her employer but the opinions expressed are hers and not OHCOW.

Chair Ruttan thanked Ms. Thompson for her presentation and called upon Trustees for any clarifying questions.

10. PRIVATE SESSION REPORT

Vice-Chair Gingrich stated that in Private Session earlier this evening, Private Session Minutes were approved from the Regular Board Meeting of October 27, 2021, and from the Audit Committee Meeting of November 8, 2021. Director Burra provided a personnel update, resulting in a motion. There was no other business conducted, or motions passed in Private Session.

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

11.1 Regular Board Meeting – October 27, 2021

11.2 Education, Policy and Operations Committee Meeting – November 10, 2021

11.3 Audit Committee Meeting – November 8, 2021.

MOVED BY Trustee French and seconded by Trustee Hutcheon that the minutes as presented be approved. Carried.

12. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

12.1 Chair's Update

Chair Ruttan stated: "Tonight's meeting concludes the third term of office for the Board of Trustees. Over the past year, the Limestone District School Board, and its school communities, have faced many uncertainties about COVID-19. The past year has not been easy on anyone but, together, we have done our best to support students and each other.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I offer my appreciation to students, and families for your patience, support and understanding as we navigated this year that has been like no other. We certainly did not expect, in June, to wrap up the school year remotely for the second consecutive year.

Despite the challenges of having to pivot back and forth between modes of learning, Limestone educators, administrators, school support staff, and central office staff found creative and effective ways to support student learning, collaboration, and connection. It is with profound gratitude that I express the Board's collective appreciation to all staff – in every role - for the hard work, dedication, and personal resolve shown over the past year; and the massive preparation it took to return to in-class learning this September. Thank you.

There is much progress and achievements to be proud of especially as it relates to the Board's strategic goals in the key areas of Wellness, Innovation and Collaboration.

Limestone is committed to equity, inclusion and ensuring everyone feels a strong sense of belonging. To help understand student identity, lived experience and ability, the board conducted its first-ever student census last Fall, 2020.

This important work will help the board learn more about students – their backgrounds, experiences and needs – to identify potential barriers or gaps, and to determine how to eliminate discriminatory biases in classes and schools to bring us closer to creating supportive and equitable learning environments, where every student sees themselves in Limestone.

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To uphold our commitment to truth and reconciliation, and ensure we are creating safe spaces for everyone, Trustees voted unanimously to initiate a renaming process for École Kingston East Elementary School this past June. The Board acknowledges the ongoing pain and harm related to the use of the former name within our school communities and acknowledges the systems that continue to oppress Indigenous and other marginalized communities, including residential schools.

We want schools to be a place where we celebrate and honour each student, their stories, and their voice. We can do this by moving forward education by teaching the truth.

The renaming process will continue over the next several months, through community consultation and input that creates a new and more positive legacy for this school.

We know there is much work to do, as outlined in the Limestone's Equity Action Plan. This three-year 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.

A key responsibility of the Board is to develop and adopt policies that are based on the Board's vision and to monitor and evaluate how efficiently these policies are implemented. Trustees engaged in several sessions over the year to review existing policies to contribute to the continuous improvement of board governance. Trustees discussed and adopted bylaws to help guide the Board and its meetings moving into the future. Trustees have done considerable work and will continue to do so in the coming term.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge Director Burra, Senior Staff and Trustees for their tireless efforts on behalf of all students this past year...for everyone's patience and flexibility as we continued to respond, and adapt to new ways of teaching, learning, and working, amidst this ongoing pandemic.

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of the Limestone District School Board. And that concludes my report."

12.2 Director's Update

Director Burra stated: "Good evening, Trustees and the viewing public. I have several updates to provide this evening.

There is no question that we are at a critical juncture during this pandemic. Over the past few weeks, we have seen an unprecedented number of COVID cases and rates per 100,000 in KFL&A. With the holiday season approaching and with public health rolling out vaccines for

children aged 5-11, we may see continued cases for the next few weeks but hopefully cases will be stemmed, and we can minimize school disruptions for students.

As a point of comparison, during the 2019-2020 school year, there were a total of 68 COVID cases that impacted Limestone schools, this number was comprised of 9 staff members and 59 students. Of the students, 32 were elementary aged, and 27 were secondary. It should be noted that 28 of the 68 cases occurred during the spring remote learning period from mid-April to the end of June so did not significantly impact school operations.

For the 2021-2022 school year up until November 23, we have seen 9 adult cases and 108 student cases for a total of 117. Of the student cases, 94 were among elementary students, and 14 among secondary students. As a result, we have almost doubled the number of COVID cases last year in just the first three months of this school year. Throughout the pandemic the best indicator of the health of schools has been the overall cases and rates in the community. Based on the first three months of this school year, there is no question that we have seen a considerable number of cases at elementary.

As a consequence, Public Health has instituted additional screening requirements for students and families. They have indicated that screening is absolutely essential in reducing spread. Similar to a few times last year, the expanded symptom screening will potentially stretch staffing in schools as more students 'screen out' and families need to miss work to care for their students. We will be continuing to watch this very closely, but this could be a significant challenge for us over the next few weeks in maintaining operational viability in all schools.

Late last week, COVID vaccinations for children aged 5-11 were approved by Health Canada. Clinics begin this week, and in some cases these clinics will be hosted at Limestone schools. Parent consent is required for this vaccination and all clinics are organized and run by KFL&A PH. More details will be shared and sent to families when available.

In addition, late last week, the Ministry announced new information related to COVID testing. In the coming days, we will receive rapid testing kits for close contacts of identified positive cases at schools. We will also receive 5 rapid antigen tests for each student to take home for the holidays on a voluntary basis to be used during the holidays and particularly before school resumes in January. The provincial government also announced that secondary schools could return to semesters for the second half of the year starting in February and announced that school boards will receive the second half of the COVID funding that was announced in the spring for the 2021-2022 school year. This is good news, and we will provide an update related to the second half of the funding in the New Year.

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While we have been extremely busy on the COVID front, November has also been full of lots of great examples of teaching and learning in Limestone. As Trustees are aware, November is Indigenous Education Month and there have been a wide range of activities and learning taking place at schools, along with professional learning for staff. This work has been supported by the Indigenous Education Team and educators across the system. This week is also Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week in Ontario. Schools have been highlighting the significance of kindness, empathy, inclusion, human rights, and the anonymous reporting tool. The week culminates with Pink Shirt Day this Friday.

With potential winter weather starting to creep into the forecast, the inclement weather protocol has been shared throughout the system to families and staff. This communication should provide clarity regarding the operation of schools when transportation is canceled due to the weather.

Earlier this week the initial ÉKEES renaming survey went live. The renaming committee will be reviewing these results in the coming weeks and narrowing the suggested names for a second survey that will serve as the basis for further discussion and eventually a report to the Trustees in the winter. The information and resources for this renaming process are on the LDSB and ÉKEES website and I will ask Communications Officer Douglas to now put that on screen.

And finally, Madam Chair, while the ÉKEES naming information is being put up, I am pleased to announce that we are very close to our United Way contribution goal of \$50,000. We will be doing one final push this week to hopefully achieve our goal, and more importantly support some of the most vulnerable members of the local communities we serve.

That concludes my comments this evening.”

13. REPORTS

13.1 OPSBA Report – Trustee French

Trustee French advised that the Board of Directors meet on Saturday, November 27, 2021.

The Eastern Region Meeting was held on November 6, 2021. Consultations will be held in December for Project Compass.

OPSBA provided a submission on the GSN consultation process.

The Public Education Symposium will again be held virtually this year and is scheduled for January 28, 2022.

13.2 Student Trustees' Report

Trustee Duncan indicated that during yesterday's Inter-school meeting she had recorded the meeting notes, with three schools sending regrets, La Salle, Ernestown and Granite Ridge. Trustee Johnson read the land acknowledgement and then transitioned into an ice breaker – having students introduce themselves and share the university/college they want to attend next year. All three Student Trustees gave a recap of the last Board meeting discussions, including gender-neutral bathrooms, and Indigenous education: the River Program. A special guest from United Way, Kim Hockey, shared a presentation and Trustee Johnson will elaborate on that. Trustee Roy and Trustee Duncan had an opportunity to attend the OSTA-AECO conference. She provided a debrief on the Equity and Inclusion breakout group. They had discussed making a handbook for teachers on how to address racism within schools, and the important role teachers have in a classroom. There was talk about gender-neutral bathrooms and about adding more diverse literature in our libraries. She shared what LDSB is doing in these areas and was surprised to hear that Limestone is further ahead than most school boards on these pieces. A question that she had brought up during her working group was if they are to have more BIPOC teachers, that students have a part in the teacher handbook on how to support teachers who face racism from students. Trustee Duncan thanked, Wynando Moore and the School Board for giving Trustee Roy and her the opportunity to attend the OSTA-AECO conference. Not only did she learn so much from the other trustees, but she met some long-term friends, that she would not have the pleasure in meeting without their support.

After the OSTA-AECO debrief was done, students had many questions on our role as student trustee and were very happy to hear about the diverse book selection that is soon to come to our classrooms. Trustee Roy had shared a slide show with students for the brainstorming of the clean water fundraiser and gave an explanation on the importance of having clean water in Indigenous communities. Last but not least, students shared new business that was going on in their schools for example Rotary Clubs, Candy Grams, Teddy Bear Campaigning, and planning winter week. Lastly LCVI shared their tribute to Transgender Remembrance, which was Saturday, November 20, 2021. There was a memorial displayed in the forefront that transgender women have fallen victim to violence, many of those being transgender women of colour. To close our meeting students were asked who would like to volunteer to create a land acknowledgement and a student named Wyatt Falcao volunteered.

Trustee Johnson stated that on November 23, 2021, she chaired the Inter-school Council

meeting with Trustee Duncan writing the minutes. At the meeting, Kim Hockey and Bhavana Varma from the United Way KFL&A spoke on youth homelessness and outlined some of the main causes. She had mentioned that some adults experiencing homelessness suggested providing more education about the causes and preventions and having resources readily available. Most youth may not notice that they are experiencing homelessness because they are not educated on the subject. Moving forward, further discussions involving how to help, educate, and prevent youth homelessness will be in order. Awareness about homelessness will vary in different areas and schools as a result of the different kinds of living conditions and situations. Consequently, the availability of resources will also differ depending on the circumstances. That concludes my report; thank you.

Student Trustee Roy indicated that this report regarding the OSTA-AECO General Fall Meeting, held November 4 - 7, 2021 is being presented on behalf of Student Trustee Duncan and her as they both had the privilege of attending. There were many things discussed during the three-day meeting, but some topics were of higher importance to the student body of LDSB. They had the opportunity to hear from 'Bleed the North,' an organization founded by a Queen's student that aids with period poverty and menstrual education. One thing Trustee Roy found eye-opening about this presentation was terminology surrounding periods. She learned that the term "menstruator(s)" should be used when referring to an individual that gets their periods because not all menstruators are females and not all females menstruate. There was also a presentation from the Deputy Minister of Education. After lots of Student Trustee protocols and rules were explained, they had the opportunity to join groups whose topic would be a focus for OSTA-AECO throughout the year. Trustee Roy had the privilege of joining the Indigenous Relations Group with many other Student Trustees. They discussed the need to better train teachers who teach Indigenous classes (such as NBE3U) and the student need for cultural education, but more importantly, cultural celebration. They will meet with their designated groups throughout the year to produce plans and goals for important initiatives. The OSTA-AECO executive team, as well as the communications team, is putting together the Outreach Program which allows students to understand what exactly Student Trustees do and who they are. This is essential to maintain the valuable student voice they try very hard to hear and help. The most important thing she obtained from that weekend was professional connections and valuable friendships. Every single student there is incredible and just as dedicated as the three of us to make a more equitable and supportive school environment.

Chair Ruttan thanked the Student Trustees for their report.

13.3 Reports for Action

13.3.1 Accumulated Surplus Financial Update

Superintendent Young advised Trustees that the report will provide Trustees with the latest financial information related to the Board's accumulated surplus and propose additional investments in Limestone District School Board for 2021-2022.

He noted that the table outlines the Available for Compliance - Unappropriated Surplus for \$16 million, and this is as of year-end 2020-2021. This increase in the surplus is the result of increased enrollment in March of this past year, Ministry stabilization funding, as well as savings due to reductions in supply costs, utilities, operations, and maintenance expenses as well as reduced professional development as a result of COVID. It is important to note that with the exception of the unappropriated surplus, if the Board were to spend any of the other available for compliance surplus funds beyond the unappropriated surplus, the Board may be faced with an operational deficit in future years as the internally appropriated surplus funds are encumbered. The legislation does allow school boards to incur an in-year deficit of 1% of operating revenue without requiring Minister approval. One percent of operating revenue for Limestone District School Board totals just under \$2.5 million. At the June 9, 2021 Board Meeting, Trustees did approve spending of almost \$1 million of the accumulated surplus for expenses, as outlined in the report.

As part of a calculated and planned drawdown of the accumulated surplus the following projects are proposed as additional investments into schools. These proposed investments are one-time expenditures that will not contribute to structural deficits within the organization. These investments are strategically placed in the arts and technology and are in alignment and support the budget survey results as presented to Trustees on April 21, 2021. Staff is asking for Trustee approval for an additional \$1 million investments in arts and ITS devices. The technology investment will support reading, writing and mathematics which ranked second and fourth on the survey while the arts/music/drama ranked third.

Chair Ruttan thanked Superintendent for the report and asked Trustees for any questions.

MOTION Moved by Trustee Brown and seconded by Trustee McGregor that the Limestone District School Board approve amending the budget to use an additional \$1,000,000 of accumulated surplus to support the additional investments for the 2021-

2022 school year. Carried.

13.4 Reports for Information

13.4.1 Masking/PPE Update Information

Director Burra advised that according to Public Health authorities, and as mentioned during the delegations this evening, masking has been identified as a key mitigating strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Vaccination, improved ventilation and/or filtration, and spacing, where possible, are also identified as other mitigating measures. Medical masks (level 2 surgical/procedural) are provided by the school board for all employees. These masks are provided directly by the Ministry of Education to school boards. According to Ministry and Public Health documentation N95 respirator masks are not recommended in schools, unless staff are providing care for a student during an aerosol generating medical procedure (AGMP). Some staff in our system do provide this type of medical procedure and do wear the proper PPE to allow them to do so. Director Burra stated that he wants to be very clear that Limestone does want to maximize safety for students and staff. But he also wants to be very clear that the question of what are medically or epidemiologically, the best personal protective equipment, in the form of masks for people, is something that we would all say is out of our wheelhouse of expertise, to be able to answer. In his report, Director Burra quoted from the Ministry's Operational Guidance, and this was also in a previous report to Trustees, and in particular, the following statement is made: "At the advice of the local public health unit, schools and school boards may choose to implement additional masking measures based on local circumstances." He noted that he cannot speak to what the interpretation of that would be, as certainly we have had at different points in time, Public Health recommended increased masking last year, that students should be wearing masks outdoors and recommend this year that if students are not in their cohorts outdoors, think about masking as well.

Director Burra noted that he quoted information in the report based on information from Public Health as it relates to whether or not a N95 or a KN95 mask would be recommended or required for the educational staff who are not doing those AGMP types of procedures. The issue of masking seems ever-present while on calls with the Ministry. There have been two occasions where medical staff have been advising the Ministry, including the Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health that the PPE being provided, in the form of the masks, is appropriate and sufficient for staff. The Minister has also noted that he has received several letters from school boards, as it relates to this, and Limestone being among the list, and did make that point that even though boards have been writing the requests for enhanced or improved

masking, that no Public Health Unit so far have been signatories or supporters of that particular change.

Director Burra noted on the last page of the report the quote from Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada just over 10 days ago, as it relates to the evidence of aerosol spread of COVID-19 that gets into the air. Director Burra advised that there are two occasions where Limestone has gone above and beyond, based on safety measures as it relates to COVID-19. The first occasion was in the summer of 2020 when we expanded the mandatory masking from Grades 4 – 12 to the K – Grade 3 group of students. Then again, earlier this fall, on the recommendation of Public Health to consider putting in place a vaccination program for students between the ages of 12 – 17 participating in extra-curricular activities where there is close contact or going outside of their school, and there is crossing cohorts within their own building, but also outside of buildings. As an update to that, Public Health has actually now put out a Section 22 letter indicating that all students aged 12 – 17, who are participating in any kind of athletic activities should be vaccinated.

Director Burra stated that from our standpoint, given this is not our wheelhouse, there is always a little bit of caution in terms of making a Public Health decision when there are obviously Public Health authorities to make those decisions. On the other hand, given that we are seeing differing medical opinions, it is very difficult for staff to make a recommendation to Trustees, given this is outside our area of expertise in this context.

Loosening or opening masking options and making it kind of wide open without there being any parameters, is a little bit of a concern because of the range of products that are available out there. Director Burra suggested to Trustees that if they are going to be looking at passing this motion, there are some parameters that could be put in place to make sure that people are protected and not buying a counterfeit product or lower level products and there are ways to operationalize that in such a way that we are still in compliance with other requirements. He pointed out though it is obviously always subject to potentially Public Health or the Ministry of Labour declaring something different, and if that was the case then we would have to follow those instructions.

Chair Ruttan thanked Director Burra called upon Trustees for questions to the report.

13.5 Special Committee Reports

Chair Ruttan noted that the Special Committee Reports were provided to Trustees to help guide their decision on which committees they may wish to sit on. Trustees will select their committees at the upcoming Nominations Committee Meeting on December 6, 2021.

Vice-Chair Gingrich read the report for the Food Sharing Project, which was not included in the agenda package. This report will be emailed to all Trustees for preview prior to the Nominations Committee Meeting.

MOTION moved by Trustee Gingrich and seconded by Trustee French that a letter of appreciation be sent to Tanis Fairley to acknowledge her outstanding and dedicated service on the Food Sharing Project. Carried.

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

15. NEW BUSINESS

Motion for consideration, brought forward by Trustee Hutcheon: “That Limestone District School Board staff be permitted to purchase their own masks if they choose, provided those masks are better than level 2/surgical masks and are Health Canada approved; and the Director ensures this measure is operationally workable in its implementation.”

MOTION Moved by Trustee Hutcheon and seconded by Trustee Godkin That Limestone District School Board staff be permitted to purchase their own masks if they choose, provided those masks are better than level 2/surgical masks and are Health Canada approved; and the Director ensures this measure is operationally workable in its implementation.

Trustee Elliott recused himself from the discussion and voting on the motion, citing a conflict.

After some discussion around the motion, Trustee French stated that to ensure the workable viability of this motion, she proposed the following friendly amendment:

“...staff be permitted to purchase their own masks if they choose, covered by the level 2, Ministry provided mask.”

The friendly amendment was declined as Trustee Hutchinson stated the motion allows the director to make the call on what would be operationally viable.

After some discussion, and in particular, around the operational challenges, the Director suggested the wording of the motion be slightly amended to:

“That Limestone District School Board staff be permitted to purchase their own masks if they choose, provided those masks are better than level 2/surgical masks and are Health Canada approved; and the Director ensures this measure is operationally workable in its implementation. This implementation could include the potential option of wearing enhanced masking underneath the level 2, (*Ministry provided*) mask.”

Trustee Hutcheon spoke to the motion and Chair Ruttan called the question.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning, Trustee Duncan, Trustee Johnson and Trustee Roy (8)

NAYS: Trustee French and Trustee McGregor (2)

ABSTAIN: Trustee Elliott (1)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon and, Trustee Morning (5)

NAYS: Trustee French and Trustee McGregor (2)

ABSTAIN: Trustee Elliott (1)

The motion carried.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

16.1 Correspondence from Jennifer Kehoe, Parent of past Sistema Kingston participants, School Advisory council member of Molly Brant Elementary School, dated October 26, 2021, was provided for information.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION

17.1 Notice of Motion brought forward by Trustee Elliott: “That the LDSB write a letter to the Minister of Education regarding the recent memo "*Next Steps for De-streaming: Grade 9 Course Codes and Descriptions For the 2022-2023 School Year,*" requesting that this effort be fully funded to provide maximum opportunity for student

success through smaller class sizes and proper staffing.” This motion will be debated at the next Board meeting on January 12, 2022.

18. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

19. COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

None at this time.

20. FUTURE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

December 1 and 6, 2021

January 12, 2022

February 23, 2022

March 30, 2022

April 27, 2022

May 18, 2022

June 15, 2022

21. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.