

Regular Board Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2025

PRIVATE SESSION

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
G. Elliott B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) R. Hutcheon T. Lloyd J. Maracle K. McGregor (Chair) J. Morning J. Neill S. Ruttan C. Scott M. Comeau (Student Trustee) (regrets) R. Kolosov (Student Trustee) (regrets) S. Ismail (Student Trustee) (regrets)	K. Burra, Director of Education M. Blackburn, Associate Superintendent M. Crothers, Communications Consultant S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education T. McKenna, Associate Superintendent S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent of Education C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Godkin called the meeting to order.

2. RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND PRIVATE SESSION

MOTION: To move into Private Session.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Vice-Chair Godkin asked Trustees if they had a conflict of interest to declare with any of the agenda items. There were no conflicts declared.

4. ACTION ITEMS

- 4.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes (Private) – June 19, 2024
- 4.2 Special Meeting of the Board EPOC Minutes (Private) – September 4, 2024

MOVED BY: Trustee Neill that the minutes listed in Action Items, Private Session, as distributed, be approved. Carried.

Limestone District School Board

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5. FOR INFORMATION

- 5.1. Safe Schools Update
- 5.2. Property Update – Director Burra provided a property update.
- 5.3. Personnel Update – Director Burra provided a personnel update.
- 5.4. Labour Update
- 5.5. Legal Update
- 5.6. OPSBA Update

6. REPORT TO PUBLIC SESSION

Vice-Chair Godkin called for a motion for the Board to rise and report.

MOTION: That the Board rise and report.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor. Carried.

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
G. Elliott B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) R. Hutcheon T. Lloyd J. Maracle K. McGregor (Chair) J. Morning J. Neill S. Ruttan C. Scott M. Comeau (Student Trustee) R. Kolosov (Student Trustee) S. Ismail (Student Trustee) (virtual)	K. Burra, Director of Education M. Blackburn, Associate Superintendent M. Crothers, Communications Consultant S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education T. McKenna, Associate Superintendent S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent of Education C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
D. Fowler, Manager of Facility Services C. Downie, Assistant Manager of Facility Services	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair McGregor welcomed everyone to the Regular Board Meeting and called the roll.

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She provided the Land Acknowledgement: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek. 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. We have updated our Land Acknowledgement to use Anishinaabek rather than Anishinaabe. While Anishinaabe refers to an individual person, Anishinaabek recognizes the nation as a whole—much like how we refer to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, acknowledging the many nations within it. This change reflects our commitment to honouring the collective identity, strength, and sovereignty of the Anishinaabek Nation, and to ensuring our language remains respectful and accurate.”

7. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chair McGregor noted that there was a potential notice of motion included in the Agenda for the September 3, 2025, Education, Policy, and Operations Meeting. A notice of motion is typically introduced at one Board Meeting and scheduled for discussion at the next Board Meeting. If the Board wishes, a motion to make an amendment to the agenda to discuss the motion this evening can be put forward. This would require two-thirds vote as per Limestone DSB bylaws.

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd and seconded by Trustee Godkin to amend the agenda. Carried.

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

8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chair McGregor asked that if Trustees have a conflict of interest, could they please identify the item number. There were no conflicts declared.

9. PRESENTATION

Superintendent Young introduced Manager Fowler and Assistant Manager Downie who provided an update to Trustees regarding work that was completed over the summer. Manager Fowler shared that 221 projects were completed, funded over multiple years due to project complexity and municipal approvals. Manager Fowler shared some examples of summer clean-up projects including cleaning technology improvements such as diamond-infused floor pads for cleaning terrazzo floors which reduces chemical use and saves time. Assistant Manager Downie recognized the outstanding contributions of the Maintenance Department, commending their accredited work in routine, preventative, and emergency maintenance. Their collaborative efforts with both the Operations and Capital Construction teams have been instrumental in successfully executing system replacements throughout the school year and summer months. Assistant Manager Downie reviewed examples of some of the working completed which included the following projects:

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Painting:

- New priority-based painting schedule developed in collaboration with Administration
- Routine painting as part of ongoing maintenance

Routine Maintenance:

- General upkeep including painting and building envelope repairs

Mechanical Upgrades:

- Multi-year HVAC and air conditioning projects to expand AC coverage
- Plumbing and electrical system improvements
- Communication and safety system enhancements

Accessibility Improvements:

- Elevator installations
- Accessible washrooms
- Paved accessible pathways

Building Envelope Projects:

- Window replacements
- Roofing upgrades
- Cladding improvements

Interior Improvements:

- Floor refinishing
- Washroom upgrades

Site Improvements:

- Updated playgrounds
- General site enhancements

Operational and Seasonal Work:

- Summer operational projects
- System replacements during the school year and summer

Chair McGregor thanked Manager Fowler and Assistant Manager Downie for their presentation and called upon Trustees for questions.

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10. PRIVATE SESSION REPORT

Trustee Lloyd stated “During private session at the Audit Meeting on September 15, 2025:

- Superintendent Young and Associate Superintendent Hedderson provided property of the board updates.

There was no other business conducted, or motions passed in Private Session.”

MOVED By Trustee Lloyd and seconded by Trustee Ruttan that the Audit Meeting Private Session Report be received. Carried.

Trustee Godkin stated “Earlier this evening during Private Session:

- The private session minutes were approved from the August 20, 2025, Regular Board Meeting.
- Trustees discussed a Personnel Update and Legal Update.

There was no other business conducted, or motions passed in Private Session.”

MOVED By Vice-Chair Godkin and seconded by Trustee Neill that the Private Session Report be received. Carried.

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 11.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes – August 20, 2025
- 11.2 EPOC Meeting Minutes – September 3, 2025

MOVED BY Trustee Lloyd and seconded by Trustee Elliott that the minutes, as presented, be approved. Carried.

12. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

12.1. Chair’s Report

Chair McGregor stated: “As we move into the third week of the school year, it has been truly heartening to see our schools come to life once again. Classrooms are buzzing with learning, hallways echo with laughter and conversation, and extracurricular activities are beginning to take shape—bringing students and staff together in meaningful and joyful ways.

There is something special about this time of year. The early days of September are filled with renewed energy, fresh routines, and the excitement of new beginnings. Across Limestone, we are already seeing the positive impact of strong relationships, thoughtful planning, and a shared commitment to student well-being and success.

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We are grateful to our staff for the care and dedication they bring to their work each day, and to families for their continued partnership and support. Together, we are creating welcoming, inclusive environments where every student can thrive—both in and beyond the classroom.

On behalf of the Board, thank you for all you do to make our schools vibrant, supportive places to learn and grow. We look forward to the many opportunities this year will bring.

This concludes my report.”

12.2. Director’s Report

Director Burra stated: “Good evening, Trustees and the viewing public. Overall, and all things considered, I am very pleased to report that Limestone has had a positive start to the 2025-2026 school year. While there is always room for improvement, it is amazing to see everything come together with over 20,500 students and almost 3,000 staff starting the school year in all Limestone sites and the virtual school.

Preliminary enrolment numbers are close to projections for both elementary and secondary students. Today was Day 11 of the 2025-2026 school year for students, and it has been wonderful to have students back in schools and to see various activities like sports, clubs, field trips, and great learning already underway, helping to support the overall Limestone student experience. We must all recognize and have gratitude for the time and efforts of staff and community members to make all of these extracurricular activities a reality for students. Fall sports, clubs, and activities have started across the district, parent councils are kicking off their school years, and students are involved in a range of activities like the several hundred LDSB students that attended the Fall Fair last week in Kingston or the range of Terry Fox fundraising activities that will come in the next couple of weeks. I have already started my visits to schools, and I greatly look forward to seeing, hearing, and feeling the energy and excitement of learning and fun in Limestone schools.

As we start this school year, it is important that we all are conscious of our legal responsibilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code. As a school board, we cannot accept any hate in schools. We must be conscious of the feelings of alienation and lack of faith in public institutions that exists for some people in the communities we serve. Like in so many other areas in education and society at large, as members of the community, we must continue to emphasize the importance of respecting differences in perspective and being open to dialogue to the maximum extent possible. We must be united in respecting differences given all people share many more similarities than differences. Respect and civility need to be at the

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forefront. And we must continue to be unequivocally clear that Limestone stands in support of all protected grounds of the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Ontario Human Rights Code is not a checklist where some grounds outweigh others. We need to stand with all students, staff, and families, in protecting all grounds under the Code. It is important to remember that the Code is the law in Ontario, and we have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that it is upheld. Furthermore, our own data based on human rights complaints reinforces our continuing need to be committed to upholding the Code. Additionally, we will be administering Limestone's second Student Census later this year which will provide further insight regarding students in the district and needs in the system.

Trustees may have noticed the Orange "Survivors' Flag" flying on the second flagpole at the Education Centre. Schools with a second flagpole are doing the same, and in schools without a second flagpole, the Orange flag is prominently on display in the school. Looking ahead to the next two weeks, a wide range of activities will be taking place in schools and the community to honour Orange Shirt Day, and the fifth annual National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on Tuesday, September 30. This is a critical date to recognize the harm and trauma of the Residential Schools system, to honour the survivors and their families, and continue our collective learning and journey of reconciliation. Schools continue to have a critical role in supporting this journey and ensuring the truth is known about Residential Schools and their legacy in Canada.

In the next couple of weeks, we will be kicking off the annual United Way of KFL&A campaign in Limestone. I invite all Trustees to join this effort. As you will hear, Limestone's Student Trustees and their peers on the Interschool Council will also be engaging in raising funds this year to support the United Way. No amount is too little, and every dollar matters in supporting some of the most vulnerable children, youth, and families in the communities we serve.

I would also like to bring to Trustees' attention to the professional learning focus we continue to pursue in Limestone for the 2025-2026 school year. We must continue to hone our craft to best serve students. While this work will not be completed this year, I think it is critical to highlight its importance in ensuring schools are making a difference for all students today, and into their futures. We need all Limestone students to find purpose in school, to find value in school, and to find hope in school. We know this is not the case for all students. While we do have to track, monitor, and report on the 11 indicators in the provincial Student Achievement Plan, we must continue to centre those students who are currently underserved and not currently finding success. As a result, our system focus this year for professional learning continues to centre our attention on students, and continuing the work we started three years ago focused on three inquiry questions: First, for whom is the current education system not working and

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why? Second, how do I/we know? And third, what can I/we try to do differently to make a difference? It is only through improving outcomes at the individual student level that we will see macro-level improvement on the province's three core priorities and Student Achievement Plan, and the Limestone Strategic Plan. I should note that 2024-2025 EQAO results should become public in the next couple of weeks. As educators and as a system, we have a critical responsibility in supporting children and youth in the communities we serve. Our overall purpose is well-placed by emphasizing our intention to make a positive difference in the lives of every student, in every classroom, in every school; and to make sure everyone sees themselves in Limestone.

All educators want to make a difference in the lives and destinies of children and youth. Our continued journey of inquiry and our united, stated intention will focus our collective efforts. I look forward to more discussion and updates regarding our progress in the coming days, weeks, months, and years.

Thank you, Chair McGregor. That concludes my report."

13. REPORTS

13.1 OPSBA Report

Chair McGregor provided an overview of the structure of OPSBA, explaining that Board representatives and Regional Chairs comprise the Executive Committee. Susan Humphries from Renfrew County shared an advocacy initiative via e-mail, encouraging all Boards to submit letters in support of Trustees. OPSBA has also released a comprehensive report for Trustees, which includes detailed information on honorariums, responsibilities, and guidance for responding to media and constituent inquiries. Trustees were urged to read the report carefully to ensure consistent and aligned messaging. The report is intended to support Trustees in navigating increased public scrutiny and questions regarding their roles and responsibilities. Trustees were encouraged to review both documents to be well-prepared for public and media engagement.

13.2 Student Trustees' Report

Student Trustee Comeau stated: "Representatives from all schools came to the first meeting. Student Trustees introduced themselves and discussed the purpose of the Interschool Council (ISC). Then the council focused on goals for the upcoming school year and steps to put those goals into action. Across all goals, there was a focus on improving student involvement in schools.

Mr. Burra and a United Way presenter then joined the meeting to introduce the United Way and discuss raising money for it in schools. ISC members then worked together to come up with ideas to implement funding for United Way so that they can be successful in their individual schools.

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Finally, the description and applications for the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee student positions were sent out in the meeting minutes via e-mail.”

13.3 Reports for Action

None at this time.

13.4 Reports for Information

13.4.1 Virtual School Update

Associate Superintendent Sartor began her presentation by sharing how virtual school continues to support all five Strategic Plan goals which includes:

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

Associate Superintendent Sartor explained how virtual school has evolved significantly since its creation during the COVID-19 pandemic, when enrolment peaked at 1,600 elementary and 1,000 secondary students. Following the Ministry’s decision to make virtual learning optional, Limestone entered into a partnership with Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR), which remains active, while Renfrew County opted out.

Associate Superintendent Sartor noted that current enrolment stands at 103 elementary students, up from 86 last year, with 55 from Limestone and 20 from outside the LDSB and KPR. Students from other boards are only admitted with direct approval from their home board’s Director.

To date, seven other boards have sent students to Limestone’s virtual school; once registered, these students are considered Limestone students.

Associate Superintendent Sartor shared some examples of the link to the Student Achievement Plan. Virtual school instructional goals include data-driven approaches in literacy and math, the use of the Knowledgehook math tool, proactive attendance strategies, and engagement with community speakers. She concluded her report by thanking virtual school staff and the Katarokwi Learning Centre leadership team of Kate Myers, Adam Andrecyk, and Scott McFarlane for their contributions to the successful start to the school year.

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Chair McGregor thanked Associate Superintendent Sartor and called upon Trustees for comments or questions.

13.4.2 Summer Programming

The leadership team presented an overview of summer learning programs, emphasizing their alignment with Strategic Plan goals.

Associate Superintendent Sartor introduced the "Read-a-Lot" literacy camp, a three-week intensive intervention for students entering Grades 1-6. The program supported 262 students across three sites, with 50 staff members involved, and included participation from high school students through Focus on Youth funding. Data collection incorporated student, educator, and family feedback, along with pre- and post-program literacy diagnostics. Survey results showed a notable increase in students who enjoy reading—from 40% before the program to 70% after—representing 79 additional students who reported they love to read. Academic data also demonstrated growth in phonemic awareness and decoding skills, with fewer students struggling and more showing consolidated literacy skills. Family feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many parents noting increased excitement and confidence in their children's reading abilities. Overall, the program provided targeted literacy support during the summer months and helped address the board's inquiry questions around equity—specifically, identifying whom the system is not working for, how that is known, and what actions can be taken.

Associate Superintendent Blackburn shared key highlights about Summer Session. He shared that over 800 students registered for e-learning across 20 different courses, including co-op opportunities. The increase in enrolment was attributed to expanded course offerings and participation in the online learning consortium. The program achieved a 90% course completion and credit attainment rate. Weekly feedback from families was collected, with positive responses highlighting the quality of course delivery and the benefit of daily synchronous teacher connections. The Summer Session served a range of learners, including those looking to get ahead and those needing to repeat credits or receive additional support.

Superintendent Gillam shared information about the Focus on Youth program which is supported by Ministry funding. This support enabled the hiring of 31 youth leaders and recreation assistants through the YMCA to facilitate various training camps, including the Read-a-Lot literacy initiative. Through these efforts, over 5,000 students were impacted through the Focus on Youth activities, with 262 students engaged in the Read-a-Lot program and three involved from the Y student program. The initiative created meaningful opportunities for high school students to mentor and collaborate with younger peers, fostering a supportive and enriching learning environment.

Superintendent Gillam shared that Ministry-funded summer learning supports were primarily focused on easing students' transitions back to school in late August, reaching over 500 students across 43 sites.

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These programs allowed students—especially newcomers and those requiring additional help—to connect with staff and receive tailored support. To ensure inclusivity, 12 Educational Assistants worked at Read-a-Lot literacy camps, helping students with special education needs participate successfully. Additional support was provided by an Adolescent Care Worker and a Learning Program Support Teacher, who also delivered stress management programs for elementary students.

Summer mental health supports were also funded by the Ministry, though staffing was limited due to seasonal employment constraints. Superintendent Gillam noted that two social workers maintained caseloads, continuing care for previously connected students. Administrators received Level 1 Violence Threat Risk Assessment training to better address student safety concerns. The psychiatry pilot with Kingston Health Sciences Centre continued, offering summer access to psychiatric services for previously referred students, though participation declined due to a staff leave. To strengthen support for students with complex needs, 26 Educational Assistants received intensive training, and over 50 staff participated in behaviour management workshops. Educators also engaged in School Mental Health Ontario courses to enhance mental health literacy. Funding additionally supported upcoming student mental health symposiums and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASSIST) for staff.

Superintendent McWilliams concluded the presentation by sharing information about the Gould Lake summer programs which experienced notable success, with 546 students participating; an increase of nearly 100 from the previous year. Offerings included a wide range of outdoor education experiences such as Nature Camp, Outdoor Escape, Quest, Outreach, Outdoor Pursuit, Outdoor Skills, Wilderness Instructor, and Kayak Instructor courses. These camps were held at diverse and scenic locations where many students completed half or full credit courses through their participation. Parent and student testimonials emphasized the program's positive impact, adventurous spirit, and supportive environment. Gould Lake remains one of the most popular summer offerings, thanks to the strong leadership of Nate Zahn and Dan Moser, along with a dedicated team of camp leaders and outdoor education guides.

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

15. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION

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Chair McGregor called for the motion to be brought forward. Trustee Ruttan proposed a friendly amendment, which led to a request for the OPSBA representative to engage with OPSBA regarding the potential abolition of the designation of English-speaking secular students as an equity issue. The original motion remained unchanged and was subsequently put to a vote.

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd and Seconded by Trustee Ruttan that “With the support of Trustees, the Chair of the Board write a letter indicating that the Board of Limestone DSB Trustees affirm the critical role of Trustees as democratically elected and accountable public officials, and calls on the Minister of Education and the provincial government to abandon any potential proposal to systematically remove Trustees or abolish elected district School Boards. Additionally, that this letter be communicated to the Minister of Education, Ministry of Education, all Ontario School Boards, Trustee associations, Student Trustee associations and local MPPs. Carried with one Trustee abstaining.

18. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

19. COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

19.1 Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – June 11, 2025

20. FUTURE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

October 29, 2025

21. ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting Adjourned at 7:46 p.m.