

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 26, 2020

A special meeting of the Limestone District School Board was held in the Barry O'Connor Board Room at the Limestone Education Centre, 220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario, on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, following the EPOC Meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Administrative Staff Present:

Trustees:	Staff:
J. Brown	M. Babcock, Superintendent of Education
G. Elliott	K. Burra, Director of Education
L. French (Vice-Chair)	J. Douglas, Communications Officer
T. Gingrich	S. Gillam, Associate Superintendent, Safe and Caring Schools
B. Godkin	S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent
R. Hutcheon	A. Labrie, Superintendent of Education and Human Resources
K. McGregor	A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education
J. Morning	S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent, School Effectiveness and Assessment
S. Ruttan (Chair)	J. Silver, Superintendent of Education
A. Putnam (Student Trustee)	K. Smith, Communications Officer
N. Quadir (Student Trustee)	C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Q. Travis (Student Trustee)	
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Ruttan stated:

“Good evening Trustees, Senior Staff, and the viewing public. Welcome to a special meeting of the Limestone District School Board of Trustees.

I am Suzanne Ruttan, Chair of the Board, and Trustee for South Frontenac.

Tonight's special meeting provides the Board with another update on Limestone's school re-entry plans to reflect additional directives received from the government, as well as several motions for discussion."

Chair Ruttan read the Acknowledgement of Territory:

"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."

Chair Ruttan stated:

"Before I ask for adoption of the agenda, I will briefly explain to those who may be joining us via MS Teams, that we are holding this meeting in the main boardroom at the Education Centre. Some Trustees and Senior Staff are joining the meeting remotely, while the majority are present here at the Education Centre.

Trustees Brown and Morning, and Superintendent Young join us virtually."

1. Adoption of Agenda

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor, seconded by Trustee Godkin, that the agenda be approved. Carried.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Elliott declared a conflict as his wife is an employee of the Board and a member of ETFO. Trustee Godkin declared a conflict as his daughter is an occasional teacher with two other public boards.

3. Chair's Update

Chair Ruttan stated:

"It has been quite a week. Staff continue to show how resilient and flexible they are in response to recent Ministry announcements on school reopening plans. Within the past few

days, we were advised by the Ministry of Education that our model for secondary schools should be revised to ensure we are keeping student contacts to a minimum.

Director Burra will provide Trustees with an update tonight on the secondary learning model. To our families and staff, we understand the frustration and worries you may be feeling because of these changes with schools opening next week. I would like to acknowledge our families and staff for all your time, effort, and patience as we work together to ensure we are ready for a safe start up to a new school year. While we recognize this is another change, we are following Ministry guidance and maximizing safety for students and staff.

There was much discussion at last week's Board meeting around policies, business practices and the timing of Board motions.

Past practice has been to share motions that Trustees are considering, in writing, in advance of a meeting, as a courtesy to their colleagues and staff. This also aligns with our policy language which we are required to follow under the Education Act. As Trustees are aware, I have shared the relevant policy sections and we will have an opportunity to revisit Board policies later this year. Sharing information and potential motions for consideration in advance of meetings ensures we are operating effectively. I hope everyone has a clearer understanding that motions from the floor, and identifying new business, does not automatically place an item on the agenda for debate. Instead it highlights an issue or topic to be placed for future debate or actioned by staff. At the same time, I acknowledge that we are going through unprecedented times at the moment that require us to streamline processes where possible. As a result, Trustees were provided with an opportunity to put forward written, draft motions for consideration this evening.

We have some important discussions before us tonight on these draft motions requiring decision that relate to school reopening. These motions have many layers to consider and I welcome a thorough debate. And that concludes my update."

4. Director's Update

Director Burra stated:

"Good evening Trustees and the public gallery joining us remotely through our live feed.

We are continuing to hone our live feed to try to improve the experiences of remote viewers and participants. I would like to acknowledge the staff who have helped ensure we are able to move forward with this meeting set-up this evening.

As we prepare for schools to reopen for students toward the end of next week, I am very happy to report that Educational Services' staff have supported almost 30 students this week in a transition program for all students placed in District Autism Classrooms. Transition meetings for students with complex needs are occurring in our elementary and secondary schools with the support of Educational Services staff and school-based staff to ensure a smooth transition back to school. Our social workers continue to support over 50 students with mental health counseling.

All schools have had staff returning to prepare for the school year and the arrival of students. This dedication and preparation for the school year was also exemplified in our Virtual Summer Institute sessions that ran today between 9 a.m.— 3 p.m. These sessions were open to all educators (teachers, EAs, ECEs, and support staff). There were 27 sessions spanning K-12. Sessions included the new math curriculum, literacy, coding, understanding D2L, available special education supports, Indigenous Education sessions, and anti-racism work. In all, over 600 LDSB employees participated in the learning today. Sessions were recorded and will be available for those who were unable to attend. A big thank you to the 18 educators who prepared and facilitated sessions for other staff today.

There is no question that this is a critical time in public education. Preparing for the school year has certainly tested our resiliency as a district school board to prepare for the return of students toward the end of next week. As we begin a new school year, a clear focus has been placed on health and safety during this global pandemic. With the start of the school year, while necessarily addressing health and safety matters and establishing routines, we will need to place a renewed focus on issues of mental health and equity. Uniting these priorities will be essential as the school year starts.

While we have prioritized health and safety in planning and worked collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, communication has been, and will continue to be a primary focus. At the same time, juggling evolving and new information has been a significant challenge. The change to our secondary model is the newest example. Ministry direction related to the

limiting of direct and indirect secondary student contacts has necessitated this change in most of our secondary schools. Our co-terminous boards are making the same change. While this model presents some educational challenges, it does reduce contacts and mirrors both our secondary summer session model and our elementary model of one student cohort. Students will of course receive breaks and lunch during the structure of the day.

Regardless of our school models and planning, I know all staff in this building, and in every school of the board, regardless of their role, are doing the very best they can to manage school re-entry. Change is difficult at the best of times, and current circumstances may have created some anxiety among students, families, and staff. When it comes to education, students, and safety, strong feelings are entirely natural. However, just as the health of our community is directly tied to everyone doing their part to be vigilant about following public health guidelines to stop the spread of COVID-19, our strength in supporting students, families, and staff will be based on us continuing to work together, and focusing on doing the very best we can to serve students and our communities.

I also feel compelled to continue to repeat what local public health officials continue to say about schools reopening in our area. Currently, there are a handful of cases that appear to be isolated and no community spread. As our Medical Officer of Health Dr. Moore reiterated with administrators yesterday, our local health conditions are ideal for schools to reopen. If our community and region continue to be vigilant, schools will be able to continue to operate. Again, I do not say this from a place of complacency. If health circumstances change, we will adapt and work with public health to maximize safety. While each family must decide what is best for their specific circumstances and the health of their loved ones, for my family, the guidance I have heard from local public health officials, and repeated in numerous media interviews, is why I am sending my three children back to school next week. School is much more than a building, and it is more than just curriculum-based learning. School is a place for meeting with friends, interacting with others, and having a routine outside of the home. While we have been forced to adapt our structures and delivery of schooling, we must not lose sight of the larger roles schools play in supporting young people and communities.

That concludes my update Madam Chair.”

5. Reports for Information

5.1 School Re-entry Plan Update

Director Burra stated that he realizes Trustees received this report mid-afternoon today, and so a hard copy has been provided tonight. He wished that all the updates were in this report, however, about two hours ago another update was received as it relates to an injection of additional federal funding into the system. Director Burra said staff will need to unpack what that means for LDSB and verifying that those dollars are not in fact previously announced dollars; what portion is new funding; and determined if it is a little bit of a combination of the two. So even though the update was coming to you mid-afternoon today, unfortunately there still are more updates in the last couple of hours. Director Burra ensures that these updates will get to Trustees.

Director Burra advised that the purpose of this update in terms of school re-entry is simply to provide another update to Trustees about where we are as it relates to some of those hot topics.

Director Burra stated that the big issues have been the adjustment to the secondary model. There continues to be a few questions as it relates to staggered entry.

As indicated last week, LDSB is putting in place a staggered entry for return to school for elementary and secondary students. This will support a safe re-entry to school by having time to teach and orient smaller numbers of students to new routines in the classroom and school, and safety practices. The Limestone staggered entry plan for elementary students will be in place from the first day of school on Thursday, September 3, 2020 and conclude by Friday, September 11, 2020. Full attendance for elementary students will be in place on Monday, September 14, 2020. The plan at secondary will be shorter in duration due to the scheduling change for most secondary schools.

Director Burra stated that infrastructure and support for remote learning and the Limestone DSB Virtual School is underway. The expectations of PPM 164 were shared with Trustees last week. To maintain maximum flexibility for elementary students and observe requirements of collective bargaining agreements, remote learning will be staggered for the first few days to allow for device allocation for students requiring technology, and establish a connection between remote learners and their current school. Once schools and staffing have been reorganized after the first opportunity for learners and families to change their learning model in mid-September, virtual classes will be established with an assigned

teacher. As a reminder, virtual classes will be comprised of learners from multiple schools based on grade(s) for elementary and specific courses (secondary). Secondary students will be in specific remote learning classes aligned with the revised secondary model.

With respect to the secondary model, Director Burra indicated that we had announced a quadmester plan for secondary students returning to conventional schooling. This would have involved students having two classes of 150 minutes each per day. However, follow up communication from the Ministry of Education this past weekend highlighted the significance of ensuring student contacts were kept to a minimum at the secondary level. The guidance document outlines keeping direct and indirect contacts to less than 100. With secondary scheduling, the only way for us to ensure indirect contacts are kept to a minimum, and below 100, at most schools is to adjust our secondary schedule to a block timetable. This type of schedule is the same one that has been utilized as part of summer session courses. Students would have breaks and lunch scheduled over the course of a day. A block timetable schedule will have students attend one class per day for a period of 22 days, followed by a day for culminating activities/exam. The students would then move to another class for another 22 days. Students would still attempt four credits between September and January as they would under a normal semester system. It should be noted that due to smaller secondary populations, GREC and NAEC can cohort by grade that allows them to continue with their regular semestered timetables.

Director Burra stated that while we recognize this is a change, we are following Ministry guidance and maximizing safety for students and staff by reducing direct and indirect student contacts in the secondary context. In the last 24 hours, this information has been shared with staff and families.

Families wanting to change the model of delivery between timetable blocks should connect with their home school. Course availability in a switch between either model will be dependent on space in available courses in either format.

Director Burra indicated that the other two boards in our region, Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and Hastings Prince Edward District School Board, are making this same change at this juncture.

Director Burra indicated that further to the health and safety update in the report, between 1- 3 p.m. today, was the Ministry's release of the release of the operational guidance as it relates to the management of COVID-19 in schools. That document, again, just released, is

going to require filtration through KFL&A Public Health to make sure that we then have the Board protocol in place for our schools. But again, Director Burra stated that at least we now have it in our possession.

Director Burra stated Trustees may recall that last week Superintendent Young indicated that the province had allocated funding to support ventilation HVAC systems in schools. Earlier this week we did receive the funding allocation for Limestone. Director Burra said that Superintendent Young indicated we are a 1% board, which would equate to approximately \$500,000 in funding. In the report, Trustees can see we received just slightly over that amount, \$568,100 in terms of allocation.

Director Burra stated that he could not thank Communications enough for the efforts that they put in terms of engaging with people online, not only with Twitter but also on Facebook, and also trying address the range of emails that we continue to receive to try to answer questions for parents. The FAQs on the website continue to grow with each and every day.

Director Burra advised Trustees that this was a quick overview of his report and he would be happy to take any questions.

Chair Ruttan called upon Trustees for comments or questions, which Senior Staff addressed.

6. Reports Requiring Decision

None at this time.

7. Draft Motions Requiring Decision

7.1 Motion brought by Trustee Elliott

Chair Ruttan thanked Student Trustee Quadir for being a co-named representative of this motion. Chair Ruttan stated that as per Policy 25.1.0 v) e) Student Trustees may bring forward motions as a co-named representative sponsored by an elected Trustee.

Trustee Elliott brought forth the following motion:

MOTION: That all students in the LDSB (K-12) wear masks inside schools and on buses, allowing for appropriate medical exemptions.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustees Quadir and Gingrich.

Trustee French brought forth the following amendment:

MOTION: Add: For younger students from Kindergarten to Grade 3, staff will explore alternatives, such as face shields, for students who are unable to wear masks. Staff will work toward compliance among younger students with compassion and a focus on education. There will be no disciplinary action for students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 having difficulty complying with this direction.

MOVED BY: Trustee French and seconded by Trustee McGregor.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (12)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (9)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The motion was carried.

Chair Ruttan asked for a roll call vote on the original motion with the amendment:

MOTION: That all students in the LDSB (K-12) wear masks inside schools and on buses, allowing for appropriate medical exemptions. For younger students from Kindergarten to grade 3, staff will explore alternatives, such as face shields, for students who are unable to wear masks. Staff will work toward compliance among younger students with compassion and a focus on education. There will be no disciplinary action for students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 having difficulty

complying with this direction.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustees Quadir and Gingrich.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (12)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (9)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

7.2 Motion brought by Trustee Elliott

Trustee Elliott brought forth the following motion:

MOTION: That the Director, or designate, investigate the purchase of stand-alone HEPA air filters for windowless classrooms, prioritize ventilation improvements over any unassigned capital school renewal projects from the 2019-2020 plan, and brings a report as soon as possible.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Godkin.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (12)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (9)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The motion carried.

7.3 Motion brought by Trustee Elliott

Trustee Elliott brought forth the following:

MOTION: That the Director, or designate, investigate the purchase of Plexiglas shields and movable dividers between desks, and brings a report as soon as possible.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Hutcheon.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (12)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (9)

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

The motion carried.

7.4 Motion brought by Trustee Morning

Trustee Morning brought forward the following motion.

MOTION: That Limestone District School Board places the Ontario Ministry of Education on notice regarding the provincial responsibility to provide the required fiscal infrastructure to implement the health regulations and safety measures advised by Canada's most trusted health experts federally and provincially: namely and most critically, two-metres of social distancing and proper ventilation. Under the current funding parameters, LDSB staff have done everything possible to mitigate risk, but enhancing existing health and safety measures, including proper spacing, requires additional funding. The Board, therefore, declares formally and unambiguously that Return to School directives and allocations provided by the Ministry for return to school are inadequate to maximize safety for the resumption of classes.

MOVED BY: Trustee Morning and seconded by Trustee Elliott.

Trustee Morning advised that this was not the motion that she put forward. She did not have the word "that" at the beginning and it was missing the first sentence: "The Limestone District School Board Trustees approve sending the following letter to the Minister of Education."

Trustee Elliott brought forth the following amendment:

MOTION: That the Chair craft a letter with language and content that touches on the concerns raised by Trustees over the amount of funding provided by the Ministry to support the current return to school. Under the current funding parameters staff have done everything they can do to mitigate risk but enhancing existing health and safety measures (including consistent spacing) requires additional funding.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Godkin.

Chair Ruttan asked for clarification on the amendment as it did not speak to the original motion. Trustee Elliott concurred and withdrew the amendment.

Chair Ruttan called a vote on the original motion, with Trustee Morning's noted comments:

MOTION: That the Limestone District School Board Trustees approve sending the following letter to the Minister of Education: Limestone District School Board places the Ontario Ministry of Education on notice regarding the provincial responsibility to provide the required fiscal infrastructure to implement the health regulations and safety measures advised by Canada's most trusted health experts federally and provincially: namely and most critically, two-metres of social distancing and proper ventilation. Under the current funding parameters, LDSB staff have done everything possible to mitigate risk, but enhancing existing health and safety measures, including proper spacing, requires additional funding. The Board, therefore, declares formally and unambiguously that Return to School directives and allocations provided by the Ministry for return to school are inadequate to maximize safety for the resumption of classes.

MOVED BY: Trustee Morning and seconded by Trustees Hutcheon.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning (3)
NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee
McGregor, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss
(9)
ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning (3)
NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee
McGregor, Trustee Ruttan (6)
ABSENT: (0)

The motion was lost.

Trustee French put forth the following motion:

MOTION: That the Chair craft a letter with language and content that touches on the concerns raised by Trustees for a safe return to school, outlining strong common-ground challenges and identify the need for further flexible funding to support some of the most critical needs.

MOVED BY: Trustee French and seconded by Trustee Elliott.

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (10)
NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee McGregor (2)
ABSENT: (0)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (7)
NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee McGregor (2)
ABSENT: (0)

The motion carried.

8. Notice of Motions

9. Internal Reports and Other Communications

9.1 LDSB Letter to Minister of Education re: Funding, July 24, 2020

This letter was provided for information.

10. External Reports and Other Communications

10.1 Letter to the Limestone District School Board Trustees, from Crystal Bevens-Leblanc, Chair, Parent Involvement Committee

This letter was provided for reference.

11. Other Special Meetings/Events

None noted at this time.

12. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin, seconded by Trustee Hutcheon, that the meeting adjourn. Carried

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10 p.m.