

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 14, 2020

### PRIVATE SESSION

#### Roll Call:

#### Administrative Staff Present:

<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>
J. Brown G. Elliott L. French (Vice-Chair) T. Gingrich B. Godkin R. Hutcheon K. McGregor J. Morning S. Ruttan (Chair) A. Putnam (Student Trustee) N. Quadir (Student Trustee) Q. Traviss (Student Trustee)	K. Burra, Director of Education A. Labrie, Superintendent of Education and Human Resources C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Recorder:</b>
None at this time.	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

#### 1. MOTION TO MOVE INTO PRIVATE SESSION

*MOTION: To move into Private Session.*

*MOVED BY: Trustee Gingrich and seconded by Trustee McGregor. Carried.*

#### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Godkin declared a conflict as his daughter is an occasional teacher with two other

public boards. Trustee Elliott declared a conflict as his wife is a teacher with the LDSB and is an executive member of ETFO-Local. Trustee French stated that her partner recently accepted a short-term non-union position with Facility Services so she will recuse herself from any decision-making associated with that.

### 3. Action Items

#### 3.1 Board Minutes:

- 3.1.1 Regular Board Meeting – September 9, 2020
- 3.1.2 Committee of the Whole Audit Meeting – September 14, 2020
- 3.1.3 Committee of the Whole (EPOC) – September 23, 2020

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

### 4. For Information

- 4.1 Safe Schools Update – None at this time.
- 4.2 Property Update – None at this time.
- 4.3 OPSBA Update – Trustee French provided an OPSBA update.
- 4.4 Labour Update – Superintendent Labrie provided a labour update.
- 4.5 Legal Matter – Superintendent Young provided a legal update.
- 4.6 Personnel Update – None at this time.

### 5. 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 the resolutions, as noted above be made public.*

*MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Gingrich. Carried.*

## PUBLIC MEETING

### Roll call:

### Administrative Staff Present:

<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>
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
B. Godkin	S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent
R. Hutcheon	A. Labrie, Superintendent of Education
K. McGregor	A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education
J. Morning	S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent
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. Traviss (Student Trustee)	E. Wyncoll, Literacy Consultant
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Recorder:</b>
Candace Lloyd, Indigenous Knowledge Keeper.	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Ruttan stated: “Good evening Trustees, Senior Staff and the viewing public. Welcome to the Regular Board Meeting of the Limestone District School Board of Trustees. My name is Suzanne Ruttan, and I am Chair of the Board and Trustee for South Frontenac.”

Chair Ruttan advised that this live event is being held in the Board Room at the Education Centre and that Trustees Brown and Morning have joined virtually. The remaining Trustees, as well as the Director of Education, and Senior Staff are present around the horseshoe.

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.”

## 1. Adoption of Agenda

*MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Elliott, that the agenda, as presented, be approved. Carried.*

## 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Godkin declared a conflict as his daughter is an occasional teacher with two other public boards. Trustee Elliott declared a conflict as his wife is a teacher with the LDSB and executive member of ETFO-Local. Trustee French stated that her partner recently accepted a short-term non-union position with Facility Services so she will recuse herself from any decision-making associated with that.

## 3. Private Session Report

Trustee French made the following statement: “In Private Session earlier this evening, the Private Session Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting of September 9, the Audit Committee Meeting of September 14, and the Committee of the Whole (EPOC) Meeting of September 23, 2020, were approved.”

Trustee French indicated that there was a personnel update and legal update. In Private Session, she also provided a brief OPSBA update.

A labour update resulted in the following motion being passed:

*MOTION MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and seconded by Trustee Gingrich that the Board ratify the tentative collective agreement as presented between the Board and the ETFO Occasional Teachers. Carried.*

## 4. Chair’s Update

Chair Ruttan stated: “It is great to see Limestone students fully engaged in both face-to-face learning and virtually, despite the current situation. Orange Shirt Day, World Educators’ Day,

Islamic History Month, and adaptive models of learning outside are just some of the observances and innovative models undertaken by schools over the past several weeks.

Secondary students have just started Block 2 classes. On behalf of all Trustees, I would like to acknowledge the incredible efforts by staff as they continue to adapt and work tirelessly with students and each other, to put systems in place to support students moving to and from the Virtual School.

As we all know, this school board supports opportunities for students, staff, and families to take on leadership roles at the local, provincial, and national level, as such, Limestone Trustees embrace that same opportunity. I would like to acknowledge Limestone Trustees for putting their names forward for leadership positions at the Ontario Public School Board Association's Annual General Meeting. I would also like to congratulate Trustee Laurie French on her re-election as President of the Canadian School Boards' Association. Trustee French, your balanced perspective and experience is valued around this table, as it clearly is, at the national level as well. Congratulations.

Not unexpectedly, Limestone has reported its first case of COVID-19 in a school. I remind Trustees, that a positive case at a school does not mean individuals were exposed to the virus at a school, nor does it require a school closing down. Director Burra will have more details in the Director's Report, but the herculean efforts by staff over the weekend when the case was announced, must be acknowledged. Certainly, there are steps that could be streamlined, and staff have de-briefed to continue to build capacity to communicate swiftly and with accurate information. I urge everyone to continue to be vigilant.

We all have a responsibility to complete the daily self-screening of COVID-19 symptoms, follow public health guidelines, and stay home when sick. It will take all of us working together, to keep community cases to a minimum, and keep schools open for the important role they provide to students and families.

In closing, I would like to take a few minutes to recognize the career of Superintendent Andre Labrie, upon the announcement of his retirement effective October 31, 2020.

Mr. Labrie has been involved with the Limestone District School Board, and former Frontenac County Board of Education, for a significant part of his life, first as a student, then in a variety of administrative and leadership capacities.

Mr. Labrie has been a tireless advocate for students and staff, always holding their best

interests and well-being at the forefront.

Superintendent Labrie has served as the Board's Chief Negotiator and has a strong provincial profile as a member of various work teams with responsibilities for providing input to the Ministry of Education Labour tables.

Andre, you have always handled this complex landscape with integrity and calm. Your leadership, commitment, expertise, and great personal effort throughout your tenure at Limestone are greatly appreciated.

While we will miss Andre's unflappable character, and vital contributions to the district, I know all of Limestone, and the many labour leaders who have served over time, will join Trustees of the Limestone District School Board in wishing Andre all the best in his well-deserved retirement. Congratulations.

And that concludes my report."

## 5. Director's Update

Director Burra stated: "Good evening Trustees, and audience members joining us on our live feed. We are now part way through the seventh week of school, in what I am sure most people would agree has been a surreal start to the school year. In visiting almost 30 schools to date, I continue to be impressed with how staff and students have adapted to our new realities. This has not occurred by accident. It is a testament to the dedication and hard work of all staff across the system in making things work and doing their best.

Since our Education, Policy, and Operations Committee meeting two weeks ago, Limestone has had three positive COVID-19 cases identified in schools. All of these cases were tied to other positive cases from the community. To date, we have no cases tied to school-based contacts. We know that cases in schools are not unexpected and we have worked closely with KFL&A Public Health to prepare. The fact that we have not seen any school-based spread to date is a testament to the close working relationship we have with KFL&A Public Health; quick action to intercept cases, effective communication with all stakeholders, and the safety measures in schools. While we have identified areas for fine-tuning once a case has been identified, processes have worked very effectively. I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary work by central staff and school-based staff in effectively responding to these three cases and working with public health to further mitigate risk and communicate with

different members of the school community. I would also like to acknowledge the resilience of staff and students in the three schools impacted thus far.

On a more personal note, I would highlight that my family is directly impacted in two of the three schools that have had positive cases identified in the school population. In having a front-row seat for these three situations, I am confident in the protocols and can attest to the effectiveness of public health measures to intercept and contain any positive cases.

Consequently, and given our family does not have any extenuating health concerns, I have full confidence in having my children continue to attend classes in school.

That being said, given the increase in cases across Ontario, as a district, we need to be ready to pivot toward online learning should a class/cohort/school experience an outbreak, or the province enacts more stringent emergency management measures such as a rolling back of reopening phases or another pandemic lockdown. I would note in each of the three schools impacted, pivoting occurred very quickly to maintain a focus on learning. As we have discussed on numerous occasions over the past few months, our system must remain agile and prepared to adapt to changing health circumstances.

As Dr. Kieran Moore has stated numerous times of late, and I quote, 'Stay local. Support local. Your fate is in your hands...wash them! And then put on a mask. Stay in your family unit and screen daily for symptoms.'

Families have a choice of selecting virtual schooling or conventional face-to-face classes in schools. Trustees are also aware that we have grappled with several tensions in trying to identify and communicate another transition point for families. This is an ongoing challenge but one of the reports tonight offers a potential path forward to ensure the short-term sustainability of both modes of learning.

As you are aware, our important work this fall includes a focus on ensuring safe, equitable and inclusive teaching, learning, and working environment for all students and staff. At the end of September, we recognized Orange Shirt Day across the district to create awareness and honour the individual, family, and community intergenerational impacts of Residential Schools in Canada. This annual event is an important part of our collective journey to support reconciliation by recognizing this painful part of Canadian history, and what we can do to move forward.

As a Board, we have also begun the necessary and critical work of confronting anti-Black racism. We know there is a lot of work to do in our system, and in our communities. As you



have seen in the Board meeting package, the Student Trustees have added additional items to the list of requests for information that Trustees requested in June. This is essential work for all of us moving forward. Trustees will receive a draft Limestone District School Board Equity Action Plan later this fall that outlines our actions and outcomes for the next few years. Schools must be places where everyone values diversity, respects each other, and see themselves reflected in their learning and school/classroom environment. In an era of polarization within society and eroding decency in some quarters, schools must be bastions of hope and create positive futures for all students. Our goal remains for everyone to see themselves in Limestone. We look forward to sharing more about this action plan soon and responding to the Trustee requests for information.

In mentioning requests for information, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the leadership of the Trustees in the past few months in requesting information and passing several motions. At all times, but particularly in crises, we must be responsive to the needs of the communities we serve. Leadership also makes a difference. Whether we are at this table as a Trustee or staff member, we are all here because we want to make a difference and support the success and well-being of all students.

In thinking about the students and families we serve, I think it is important to remind ourselves that the pandemic continues to have a significant impact on everyone. The pandemic has exacerbated needs in our community, and the most vulnerable members of our community are arguably more at risk than at any other point in recent memory. COVID-19 has created significant social and economic impacts and had a disproportionate impact on some members of our community. Consequently, next week Limestone will be launching its 2020 campaign in support of the United Way. The needs in the community are real. We can see them in schools. The United Way provides many essential supports for the most vulnerable students and families and my hope is we all will contribute what we can to support fellow community members in need.

To conclude, I would like to share a few images from schools this fall to emphasize the importance of keeping the focus on students, and the incredible work of all Limestone staff in supporting teaching and learning in the system. Thank you.”

Limestone District School Board

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

SEE YOURSELF IN LIMESTONE

## 6. Presentation

Associate Superintendent Stephanie Sartor introduced Central Curriculum Program Teacher Erica Wyncoll and Métis Knowledge Keeper Candace Lloyd. Central Curriculum Program Teacher Wyncoll advised that 90 students from Grades 1-8 attended the Read-A-Lot@Home three-week program, which ran in August 2020. LDSB received \$75,000 in funding from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education. Ninety students were supported by 18 instructors and five tutors. She stated that there was very little time to pivot to online learning, and so with that, they started with the mission statement and designed the program from there. She outlined what was the same, and what was different. Staff assembled literacy kits that were picked up by families or delivered and included paper resources for writing, whiteboards, books to read, digital resources that included hot spots for Wi-Fi devices for families without Internet. Because it was online, they were able to use technology in a very simple and targeted way. Wyncoll noted that usually they make elaborate goals in the beginning of the program. They can however lose track on how to monitor those, but online, individuals went through the goals much faster and they were much more targeted.

Staff conducted a week of training before the program started and included diagnostics on the students and meeting in small teams to plan the goals. There were three Student Support Teachers and one Speech Language Practitioner as part of the team during training. Being online, staff were able to quickly visit all 18 classrooms in a morning. This provided more opportunities for feedback.

The other commitment to ongoing learning was Indigenizing online learning, and with this in mind, the program was planned to incorporate three main ideas from a Queen's University document shared by Kelly Maracle, LDSB Indigenous Re-engagement Teacher. Learning should be relationship-based; land-based; and have opportunities to listen to knowledge keepers. Ms. Wyncoll stated that they reached out to Candace Lloyd, Knowledge Keeper, to work with students and staff this summer.

Ms. Lloyd indicated that she was honoured to be part of the program. She noted that Indigenous story telling is a way that they pass on traditional knowledge to our youth and to those who are unaware, to the values and ways of life and traditions that we interact everyday as told by their Elders. Their stories are how they learn what becomes important to them. Ms. Lloyd advised that storytelling is a way to pass on values and way of life to others - to engage everyone.

Ms. Wyncoll spoke to the student achievement data that focused on three skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, and writing. Diagnostics showed great improvement for student participants.

The phonemic awareness, or oral skill, is the foundational skill for reading and writing and can be remediated at any age. She noted that once you have this skill you have it and you do not need to keep working on it. She noted they had 18 per cent average growth over the three weeks.

Phonics, which is matching the letters to the sounds, is another foundational skill for reading and writing. Consultant Wyncoll indicated that after three weeks they saw 18 per cent growth, in students, ranging from Grades 1-8.

Fifteen students, in Grades 7 and 8, focused on their writing skills. These students were marked on a pre- and post-writing sample. She noted there are six stages that they hope writers progress through by the end of Grade 8. Staff were very happy that they rose half a stage. They found that the daily time to write and confer with the students individually and in small groups made the difference.

The student and parent feedback showed that the program exceeded expectations - even though some were hesitant about the program moving online. Both educators and students were all surprised to see solid growth for three weeks. The students knew how much they had learned and were happy to celebrate the growth.

## **7. Consent Agenda**

### **7.1 Board Minutes**

7.1.1 Regular Board Meeting – September 9, 2020

### **7.2 Reports from all Committees**

7.2.1 Committee of the Whole (Audit) – September 14, 2020

7.2.2 Committee of the Whole (SEAC) September 16, 2020

7.2.3 Committee of the Whole (EPOC) – September 23, 2020

Trustee Morning asked for a clarification question from the SEAC Minutes (pages 25-27) and Superintendent McDonnell confirmed that in Section 8.1.1 reference made to home sites, referred to home school and not to the student's residence.

*MOVED BY: Trustee Hutcheon and seconded by Trustee Hutcheon that the Consent Agenda, as presented, be approved. Carried.*

## 8. Routine Matters

### 8.1 OPSBA Report

Trustee French stated that Trustees had received the more detailed update on the OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting held on September 25 and 26, 2020 but wanted to highlight a few items.

Trustee Lucille Kyle, OPSBA's Alternate First Nations Director, gave an acknowledgement at the virtual meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Indigenous peoples of Ontario.

Ontario's Chief Coroner and the Coordinator of the Provincial Pandemic Response, Dr. Dirk Huyer, presented virtually, and he was joined by Dr. Jessica Hopkins, from Public Health Ontario. They took a number of questions with respect to COVID-19 planning and COVID-19 outbreak management. The province is now posting information on COVID-19 outbreaks online and this was introduced in September.

There were a number of education policy and program issues that were discussed in public session at the meeting.

Trustee French stated that regarding OPSBA and government and public affairs, there have been a number of significant government announcements and advocacy efforts were focused largely on school reopening plans and funding implementation.

OPSBA has had a significant increase with both social media and traditional media, compared to usual, allowing them to share significant information publicly to ensure facts are getting out to the public.

For the Legislative Update, Trustee French highlighted Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020, a bill which includes changes to the *Education Act*, in a number of areas for schools.

Policy/Program 164 was introduced in mid-August and we know that includes requirements for remote learning and the online learning for school boards that have now come into play.

With respect to Indigenous Education, OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC) met and Chief Elaine Johnston was re-elected Chair for that group. Some of their discussion focused on the impact of the pandemic in Indigenous communities and that some of the differences with respect to resources and ongoing importance of engagement of school boards with First Nations partners.

Trustee French indicated there was significant discussion with respect to education funding

and lots of concerns, as has been discussed at this table, and continuing debate with respect to necessary funding for education during COVID-19 in all the areas that have been impacted. Out of that came a motion that directed OPSBA to advocate to the Minister of Education to create an immediate mechanism to address the deficiencies and inequities in funding across school boards to fund safe school reopening, and that was carried. Trustee French said this has been very helpful as opposed to individual board motions to have that solidarity at the provincial level and that continued advocacy.

Trustee French noted that the report she shared with Trustees also had links to a number of SB Memos, which are mechanisms by which the Ministry sends a funding announcement in detail to school boards. Trustees can find them all in that link.

Trustee French stated Phase III of the French as a Second Language (FSL) Labour Market Partnership Project has continued and all partners are engaged in virtual meetings to support and facilitate action plans related to the recommendations and next steps from the Phase II report. The full report will be available by March 2021. She pointed out three initiatives in particular: (1) Development of an FSL Teacher Recruitment Guide for English Language School Boards; (2) French Language Assessment Resources; and (3) Supporting Principals to Address Challenges in Hiring and Retaining Qualified FSL Teachers.

Trustee French indicated that OPSBA staff collaborated with graduate students from Wilfrid Laurier University to conduct research into the actions taken by school boards in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This research sought to understand and document boards' successes and challenges in the deployment of remote learning.

Trustee French stated that Canadian School Boards' Association (CSBA) elections took place, and she is pleased to be joined by Carolyn Broady, from B.C., as Vice-President for CSBA. Some of the main work at our table was with respect to sharing the work of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO) and the presentation of student voice across Canada and the paper initiated last year. We continue with that work in the provinces and territories across Canada spreading the great model that we have in Ontario with other provinces that are not supported in their education system to have student voice embedded quite so strenuously.

Trustee French noted that they promoted the Indigenous Trustee panel, and she knows some Trustees round this table were able to join that remotely. They were very pleased that they had close to 100 participants nationally, which is pretty exciting, considering it was a virtual meeting, but there was some very positive feedback and hopefully some valuable learning that will come out of that.

Lastly, with respect to the OPSBA election, the results were as follows: Cathy Abraham – President; Michael Barrett – First Vice-President and Kathleen Woodcock - Second Vice-President. She wanted to acknowledge Trustee Hutcheon who was re-elected for the Policy Development Work group, Trustee McGregor for the Education Program Work Groups and

Trustee Gingrich as the alternate, so Limestone is very well represented at those educational work team tables. Trustee French wished to acknowledge Trustee Hutcheon's candidacy for President.

With respect to the policy resolutions she reported as follows:

School Trip guidelines – defeated; Anti-racism Advocacy Plan – approved; Additional Trustee Code of Conduct Consequences – defeated; and Student Trustee – referred to Student Trustee Liaison Committee for recommendations.

## **8.2 Report from Student Trustees**

Trustee Quadir stated: "Good evening everyone! As Student Trustees, we would like to extend a hearty congratulations to the high school students who just last week completed their first ever octomester and additionally to those not in the octomester format, but still attending school and continuing to do their best to support themselves and one another in these exceptional circumstances. We are happy to report that the students we have spoken with are generally expressing that they are feeling more comfortable and content as time passes, with their COVID-adjusted school day schedules, despite the occasional cases we have seen in our Board. We would also like to sincerely thank all staff and parents across the Limestone District School Board for going out of your way to support our students; we truly appreciate it. I will turn it over to Student Trustee Putnam to continue."

Trustee Putnam stated: "Good evening, I hope everyone is doing well and enjoying the always fluctuating fall weather. Yesterday, we held the first virtual LDSB InterSchool Council meeting of the 2020-2021 school year. Trustee Quadir, Trustee Traviss and I want to say a huge thank you to all the students who attended to represent their schools, we had great attendance considering the short notice and odd year. We also had representatives from North Addington Education Centre which we have not had in the last few years. We would also like to extend our gratitude to Director Burra for dropping by to introduce himself to the new members, it was great to have you there. The energy of the meeting was fantastic with school spirit ideas and inspiration flying everywhere. We are all so excited for the year to come! I will turn it over to Student Trustee Traviss to finish up our report."

Trustee Traviss stated: "Much like the InterSchool Council, the Indigenous Student Advisory Council (ISAC) had their first meeting yesterday evening, and although the turnout was small, the invitation was sent out on short notice. The opportunity for Indigenous students from different schools to come together and share ideas is a blessing in itself, and I am excited to

see where things go!”

## 9. Reports for Information

### 9.1 Class Size Fall 2020

Superintendent Labrie stated that Trustees had received the report, but wanted to highlight a few items. The LDSB Virtual School has approximately 10 percent of Limestone students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The dynamics continue to morph in terms of requests, both ways, but probably slightly trending toward more wanting virtual school as time goes on.

Superintendent Labrie stated that the main purpose of this particular report is to give Trustees some idea of class size. He noted that the Board has approved the use of reserve funds to help maintain staffing levels in the system, despite the fact that enrolment is below projection this year. Superintendent Labrie indicated they believe this is largely due to individuals choosing to home school. He reported that class sizes are in rather good shape, noting that the chart is sorted by school as to how many students associated with that school have elected to go virtual as well as the number that are still in face-to-face, with the total number included.

Superintendent Labrie noted that with respect to secondary enrolment in virtual school, we have just begun the second octomester, and the number of students attending virtual school for the first octomester was 549, and in the second block, it is at 600.

Superintendent Labrie noted the Elementary Virtual School is at its maximum, in terms of class sizes, and there are approximately 120 students on a wait list.

### 9.2 Strategic Plan Priorities – Areas of Focus 2020 – 2021

Director Burra noted that Senior Staff have prepared, and this is similar to what has happened over the last couple of years, a list of areas of focus. Trustees will not see significant changes as these are the larger aspirational goals for any given year and most areas of focus are drawn from these goals. Next month, Senior Staff will bring a report to summarize the 2019-2020 strategic plan outcomes. Two very significant factors derailed much of the work planned for last year: labour action and the pandemic lockdown. Consequently some of those priorities will roll over into this year, which is why Trustees will not see those areas of focus significantly change. Director Burra did highlight a few areas of focus that Senior Staff have started to bring to Trustee’s attention. For example, tonight’s Read-A-Lot presentation falls

into the category of the literacy work that we are doing in the system. Likewise, Director Burra advised that over the course of the last few weeks Senior Staff have brought Trustees numerous updates as it relates to COVID-19, which would fall under healthy schools (Including COVID Response). These are just a few highlights of the work that is under way and we are already touching on different areas of the strategic plan and more will be coming through the agenda setting committee as well as Senior Staff trying to accommodate different requests from Trustees.

Another piece Director Burra highlighted is that the idea of a boundary review has been removed due to physical pressures in buildings being lessened because of the virtual school. LDSB would have to hold a number of different public meetings, and as a result, in terms of space limitations on public gatherings, etc., it is not the time to undertake a public engagement. The Director did point out however, that this could be a good opportunity for the Board to step back and complete an enrolment analysis instead as market share is an area of interest to boards. Where are we seeing growth in populations of student in the city versus where do we have schools? This is an opportunity to present data to Trustees regarding pressure points. Director Burra did state that he wanted to be clear that while there is a moratorium on any kind of accommodation review that is actually not what we are talking about. LDSB is experiencing pressures that we potentially could address by adjusting boundaries once we are safety back to normal operations. That would help alleviate some of those operational kinds of pressures that we are feeling. This pause is an opportunity to look at the data and be better prepared to make some potential decisions. This will also allow the Board to engage the public at that point in time to make sure that we are getting feedback as well.

Director Burra advised that another aspect that will be included under 13.2 Technologically Enhanced Education is the LDSB Virtual School.

Director Burra stated that he did want to bring this to Trustees for information but also to get their input if there are particular areas that they may want to see highlighted.

## **10. Reports Requiring Decision**

### **10.1 Closing of School or Class by Board**

Director Burra advised that he was bringing this report forward for Trustees to

consider a motion for approval, as a proactive measure at this point in time. He noted that other school boards, are in more challenging circumstances in terms of trying to find occasional staff to fill vacancies. The report outlined the potential need to close a school, or schools, in the event of staff absences due to illness, quarantine, and/or other absences. Director Burra explained if a school board/schools have exhausted their formal and emergency occasional teachers, closing a school or schools may be necessary for safety reasons. He added staff were bringing this report forward as a proactive measure in the event it is needed, and that this action would only be taken in exigent circumstances as a last resort. Historically, the Board has passed similar motions due to other extreme circumstances.

*MOTION: That for school operations and the safety of students in the 2020-2021 school year if at such time as the safety and security of students becomes compromised as a result of insufficient staffing at a school, or schools, due to staff illness, quarantine, or cumulative other causes, the Director of Education be authorized to close one or more schools, per Section 19(1) of the Education Act.*

*MOVED BY: Trustee French and seconded by Trustee Gingrich*

Trustee Godkin requested a friendly amendment be added at the end of the motion:

*That the following words be added at the end of the motion: "For a period not to exceed 10 consecutive days without being brought before the Board of Trustees."*

*MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Hutcheon*

After discussion, Chair Ruttan called for a vote as she no longer felt this was a friendly amendment.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon (2)

NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (10)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon (2)

NAYS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (7)

Chair Ruttan called the question for the original motion:

*MOTION MOVED BY: Trustee French and seconded by Trustee Gingrich that for school operations and the safety of students in the 2020-2021 school year if at such time as the safety and security of students becomes compromised as a result of insufficient staffing at a school, or schools, due to staff illness, quarantine, or cumulative other causes, the Director of Education be authorized to close one or more schools, per Section 19(1) of the Education Act. Carried.*

Roll call vote.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (9)

NAYS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning (3)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Ruttan (6)

NAYS: Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning (3)

## **10.2 Learning Model Update**

Director Burra stated he wanted to provide Trustees with an update regarding the sustainability and potential implications of maintaining two viable models of learning: conventional face-to-face and virtual.

Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 164 was released in the middle of August 2020 and outlined the Ministry of Education's expectations regarding school boards providing virtual synchronous and asynchronous learning for students/families choosing to not attend school. As of September 22-23, 2020, Limestone had 1,302 virtual elementary students and 549 virtual secondary students. As of October 8, 2020, we have almost 200 additional elementary students and 50 additional secondary students wanting to access the LDSB Virtual School. There are a small number of virtual elementary and secondary students wanting to move back to face-to-face classes. Numbers may change further depending on how the pandemic evolves in the area.

From an educational perspective, being unable to quickly honour family requests for a change

of model is extremely problematic. At the same time, the ramifications for the system in honouring multiple entry/exit points are also unignorable.

Director Burra stated that based on the collective bargaining agreement with ETFO, Limestone reorganized schools toward the end of September to serve virtual elementary learners. The first date for transition was established in September to align with the agreement, and to maximize family choice until that date. Based on the financial update provided at the September 2020 Education, Policy and Operations Committee meeting, Trustees are aware that we are utilizing the additional provincial funding and the 1 per cent of reserves approved by Trustees to maintain current staffing levels in the system, even though overall enrolment is down approximately 200 students. To date, we have not provided another specific date for elementary families to move from one model of learning to the other. The ETFO Collective Bargaining Agreement only considers the September reorganization and no further guidance has been provided by the Ministry of Education. Secondary families have the ability to move between the models from one octomester block to another. However, virtual secondary classes are now full, and additional requests may not be possible moving into Block 2 or subsequent blocks without an equivalent number of students moving in the opposite direction.

Based on class sizes in the elementary virtual school, we cannot accommodate the current number of students wanting to move to that model of learning without conducting another elementary school reorganization. Increased numbers at another time during the school year might require further reorganizations to provide families with choice at different intervals. Given the mental health and well-being toll of school reorganizations on students, families, and staff; and the fact we are in the midst of a global pandemic, we do not view another, or repeated, reorganization(s) as a viable solution. The Ministry of Education stated in August that families would have opportunities to move between models of learning without any dates being provided. As indicated, thus far, no further Ministry direction has been provided to school boards on this issue.

To accommodate the movement of additional elementary students to virtual learning, only two solutions exist: (a) classroom teachers in schools continue to support students wanting to move to virtual learning in a synchronous and/or asynchronous fashion, or (b) more elementary staffing is provided through additional use of currently allocated reserves. Short of a reorganization, depending on the number of students wanting to pursue virtual learning, Limestone may face a situation where both (a) and (b) above must be utilized at some point

during this school year.

Several school boards have tasked classroom staff with providing support for all models of learning: face-to-face, synchronous, and asynchronous. From a teaching and learning perspective, we do not believe this is an ideal model of learning for students, and places significant, increased workload on teachers. However, this model does maximize family choice in moving between models over the course of the year.

Superintendent Young said in order to have the financial ability to potentially execute option (b) LDSB will need to access additional accumulated surplus, which requires Board approval. School boards have the ability to access their accumulated surplus up to 2% of operating revenues to address COVID-19 expenses. Staff recommend that the Board of Trustees approve amending the budget to use the Accumulated Surplus of up to 2% of operating revenues to a value of \$4.93 million (including the \$2.465 million previously approved) to address the increasing COVID-19 expenses in the 2020-2021 budget year. He added that the accumulated surplus should be about \$5 million for 2019-2020. Staff recommend using about half of that.

It should be noted that until October 31, 2020 enrolment is finalized, along with the commensurate funding, if the goal is to maintain current staffing levels in schools while accommodating additional virtual learners, the additional funding should be focused on staffing costs.

Assuming no further funding from the province, it should also be noted that once this additional LDSB funding is utilized, option (a) may have to be utilized at some point later in the year to accommodate additional demand for the virtual model.

*MOTION: That the Limestone District School Board approve amending the budget to use their Accumulated Surplus of up to 2% of operating revenues to a value of \$4.93 million to address the increasing COVID-19 expenses in the 2020-2021 budget year.*

*MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Hutcheon.*

Roll call vote:

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Traviss (11)

NAYS: (0)

Trustee Elliott recused himself from the vote.

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee French, Trustee Gingrich, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Ruttan (8)

NAYS: (0)

Trustee Elliott recused himself from the vote.

## 11. Notice of Motion

There were no notices of motion.

## SECTION B – Information

### 12. Internal Reports and Other Communication

There were no internal reports or other communication.

### 13. External Reports and Other Communications

#### 13.1 Conflict of Interest Complaint, Trustee Elliott's motion to mask JK-Grade 3

Chair Ruttan referenced a letter that expressed concerns of a potential conflict of interest regarding Trustee Elliott's earlier motion to mask students in Kindergarten to Grade 3. Chair Ruttan stated that she would begin by having Trustee Elliott speak to the letter in agenda package.

Trustee Elliot provided the following statement: "Thank you for giving me a few minutes to speak about the letter from Michael Pritchard. When that email was sent on September 21, 2020 there were no COVID cases in Limestone schools. Since that time, in just over two weeks, we are now up to three identified cases within our schools, and more in our community. If we look to the east and west of the Limestone District School Board catchment area, those numbers are rising as well.

The source of the masking motion was not obtained from the ETFO; it was from the Waterloo Region District School Board, who proposed and approved a masking motion in their August

17, 2020 meeting. This was researched by watching the YouTube recording of their meeting and comparing their motion to others (like the Toronto Catholic District School Board, Toronto District, Upper Grand, and Thames Valley). Premier Doug Ford, himself, has said he will support any school board that wants to implement a mandatory mask policy for all students. I am not here to represent the interests of teachers' unions – I am here to represent the best interests of all students, staff, and families, just like everyone else around the table. I do not think any of us would have run for Trustee if that was not the case.

We know students are on crowded buses together. We know some class sizes have increased since reorganization. And we know that not all classrooms have good ventilation, and classes cannot stay outside forever as the weather changes. As a parent and Board Trustee I want to maximize those layers of protection to the best of our ability, because no single layer is perfect – the more you bundle together the safer you are, as per many health organizations including Sick Kids, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, and the Canadian Pediatric Society, thank you to the other eight Trustees and three Student Trustees for being proactive and supporting this motion unanimously.

I can understand the perceived conflict of interest outlined in the letter based on articles 18 and 19 in LDSB Policy 5, particularly given I was the Trustee that brought the K-3 masking motion forward on a couple of different occasions in August. Moving forward, I will continue to be aware of this optic in relation to the conflict I always declare at the start of meetings. If it is okay with everyone, given the perceived conflict, I will remove myself from the discussion and the room so that you can have a conversation and decide whether Trustees want to revisit the motion we passed at the end of September regarding masking for K-3. Thank you.”

Trustee Elliott withdrew from the meeting.

Director Burra advised Trustees that ultimately, they have two decisions that they will need to make. Given that Trustee Elliott has acknowledged a perceived basic conflict of interest and he has decided to excuse himself, Trustees will need to decide if they want to investigate this further and look at imposing any sanctions in this particular case. The other thing that Trustees would have to decide is whether or not they want to revisit or rescind the motion that had been passed in August 2020.

After a lengthy discussion Trustees agreed that there was no need for further investigation or sanctions. Trustee Elliott does declare a conflict at the beginning of each meeting, however it was noted it is crucial and incumbent on all Trustees to recuse themselves from voting,

should there be any conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest. As well, Trustees unanimously agreed that they would not revisit or rescind the motion concerning masks.

Trustee Elliott returned to the meeting.

#### **14. COMMUNICATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

There was no communication referred to committee.

#### **15. REQUESTS FOR REPORTS AND/OR INFORMATION**

##### **15.1 Student Trustees Request for Information**

Chair Ruttan called Trustee Quadir to speak to this item.

Trustee Quadir stated that she wished to bring a motion forward. Chair Ruttan asked if the motion was relevant to any item on the agenda and Trustee Quadir confirmed, this motion is relevant to Item 9.2 Strategic Plan Priorities – Areas of Focus 2020 – 2021.

*MOTION: The LDSB Strategic Plan for 2020-2021 incorporate anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism as a key area of focus to demonstrate the work being completed, including key initiatives and performance indicators.*

*Moved by Trustee Brown and seconded by Trustee Godkin and co-sponsored by all Student Trustees.*

Trustee Quadir provided the following statement: “Before I begin, I would like to thank Trustee Brown for sponsoring our motion. I would also like to recognize that the motion and request for information we are presenting are based on one put forward by former student Trustee Taylor Dallin of the Toronto Catholic District School Board in June.

Back in May, Student Trustees Putnam, Travis and myself were elected amidst a global moment of reckoning on issues of race. It was only a few days into my role when students began to approach me to inquire about the actions our board was taking to combat systemic racism.

At that time, I had a very limited understanding about the prevalence of racism at my school and much less our board. In hopes of developing a better understanding of the issues faced by our student body, from June to August I surveyed over 100 current and former Limestone students about their experiences with various forms of discrimination and personally conversed with 15 of them to take note of specific incidents of racism that they had encountered at school.

These discussions began with speaking of incidents of hurtful stereotypes and microaggressions – a girl being called a “dumb Asian”, Grade 9 boys inappropriately using racial slurs, frequent imitations of ethnic accents – but these situations became increasingly serious in nature as we progressed in our conversations.

A racialized student expressing a feeling of being tokenized within his own classroom. A Black high school student whose teacher repeatedly told him in front of his class that he would have to read children’s books because of his limited literacy abilities. A student of Chinese descent who wore a mask to school in March was confronted by another student who asked, “What’s up virus boy?” And one student who had faced race-based discrimination throughout her high school experience informed all three of us of the death threats she faced in her senior year simply because she was Black.

This represents only a fraction of the discrimination our peers have faced within our Board and I recognize that many of the students I spoke with did not realize the severity of these instances until they were asked to verbally recall them. I assured the students I spoke with that we as student trustees and as a board could and would do better to support our racialized student population.

And so, the student trustees, with the kind support of our Board’s Equity and Inclusion Consultant, the Director, and the Board Chair, put together this request for information and a few recommendations that we can use as a school board to facilitate conversations about race in the classroom; educate our students and staff about racism, specifically pertaining to Black and Indigenous students; and of most significance, to promote student wellness, safety, appreciation and achievement for the current and future generations of students of the LDSB.”

Roll call vote:

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

Limestone District School Board

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

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)

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)

## **16. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

## **17. OTHER SPECIAL MEETINGS/EVENTS**

There was no other special meetings/events.

## **18. ADJOURNMENT**

*MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and seconded by Trustee Godkin that the meeting adjourn.*

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.