

EDUCATION, POLICY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2021

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll call:

Trustees:	Staff:
J. Brown G. Elliott L. French T. Gingrich (Vice-Chair) B. Godkin R. Hutcheon K. McGregor J. Morning S. Ruttan (Chair) A. Putnam (Student Trustee) N. Quadir (Student Trustee) Q. Traviss (Student Trustee)	M. Babcock, Superintendent of Education K. Burra, Director of Education S. Gillam, Associate Superintendent S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent J. Silver, Superintendent of Education L. Strange, Records Management Coordinator C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
N. Zahn, Outdoor Education Educator S. McShane, Outdoor Education Educator	W. Moore, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Gingrich stated: “Good evening Trustees, Senior Staff and the viewing public. Welcome to the Limestone District School Board’s Education, Policy and Operations Committee Meeting. My name is Tom Gingrich. I am Vice-Chair of the Board, and act as Chair for this meeting.”

“As was the case with the earlier special meeting, tonight we are using a hybrid meeting model with some Trustees and staff attending virtually, and some attending in-person at the Education Centre in accordance with current Public Health directives. All Trustees in attendance at the Special Board Meeting, prior to this meeting, are still in attendance for our EPOC meeting.

We normally begin with the Indigenous Acknowledgement of Territory, so thank you to Trustee Elliott for providing that earlier this evening.”

Chair Gingrich called the meeting to order.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Trustee Elliot stated, before moving to adopt the agenda, he would like to bring two motions forward, and add them to the agenda under Other Business, for discussion and decision.

“That the Limestone District School Board send a letter to our partners at KFL&A Public Health and our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kieran Moore, requesting the immediate prioritization of vaccines for Special Education workers and, pending the availability of vaccine, for the prioritization of the remaining LDSB school-based staff and LDSB staff who are required to work in a school setting and/or provide either director or indirect service to students and receive the vaccination during the April 12-16 break, or a date as soon as possible before June.”

Before voting, Chair Gingrich clarified that this vote is to place the motions on the agenda this evening, and the Committee we will then vote to place these on the Board agenda for a later date.

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning, Trustee Putnam, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Travis (9)

NAYS: Trustee French and Trustee Ruttan (2)

Abstain: Trustee Gingrich (1)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Morning (6)

NAYS: Trustee French and Trustee Ruttan (2)

Abstain: Trustee Gingrich (1)

The motion carried.

“That the Limestone District School Board, in solidarity with the South Frontenac Council, condemns the blatant disregard to COVID regulations and restrictions by MPP Randy Hillier

(Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston) as well as his recent repugnant tweet comparing public health safety measures to Nazi Germany. His misinformed and dangerous opinions are not representative of the Limestone District School Board's efforts to work with our Public Health partners to combat disinformation and ensure maximum safety for all of our staff, students, and families."

The non-binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning, Trustee Quadir, Trustee Travis (7)

NAYS: Trustee French, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Ruttan, Trustee Putnam (4)

Abstain: Trustee Gingrich (1)

The binding recorded vote was as follows:

YEAS: Trustee Brown, Trustee Elliott, Trustee Godkin, Trustee Hutcheon, Trustee Morning (5)

NAYS: Trustee French, Trustee McGregor, Trustee Ruttan (3)

Abstain: Trustee Gingrich (1)

The motion was lost as two-thirds is required.

MOVED BY: Trustee Elliott that the agenda, as amended, 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, and LDSB. Trustee Elliott declared a conflict as his wife is an employee of LDSB, and member of ETFO.

Section A – Matters Requiring Action at the Meeting

3. Reports for Information

3.1 Outdoor Education

Associate Superintendent Hedderson stated that the history of outdoor education in Limestone District School Board includes a long standing partnership with the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA), and the former Frontenac County Board of Education, that dates back to the late 1960s, where space has been leased to the Board to use for outdoor learning at Gould Lake. The small, yet dynamic outdoor education team has helped create many lasting memories for Limestone graduates who would have visited the Gould Lake Outdoor Education

Centre over the years. For some students, this would have included attending one of the overnight programs that have been offered during the summer months since the 1970s.

Associate Superintendent Hedderson indicated that unfortunately, LDSB was not able to run summer programs last year because of the pandemic. The Outdoor Education Team has continued to innovate and provide outdoor learning opportunities to students across the district remotely last spring, and were recently, this school year, primarily at students' home schools. The Team has continued to evolve the enhanced programming and includes more intentional Indigenous connections.

Associate Superintendent Hedderson introduced the guest presenters, Nate Zahn, an elementary teacher, who is currently serving as the Outdoor Education Specialist, and Sean McShane, the Outdoor Education Coordinator and acting Outdoor Education Program Manager.

N. Zahn, who oversees the day-to-day operations of the Gould Lake Outdoor Centre (GLOC), indicated that the Outdoor Centre is located just north of Sydenham, on Gould Lake. Typically, GLOC sees 7,500 elementary students and 1,000 secondary students in a school year, and around 500 students in the summer, mostly secondary students.

Programming at GLOC is developed using the Ontario curriculum. The four main streams that lessons are based on the following provincial curriculums: Physical Education; Social Studies; Science and Technology; and more recently, integrating Math. On the website teachers can pick programs that are offered when they register their class for programming.

N. Zahn stated that summer programs are offered to students in Grades 7-12 to participate in either 5-day, day camps, or 30+ day kayak trip and Anticosti Island students can earn secondary school credits and also other certifications. He noted there are 10 different graduated programs that build on previous years skills that follow the Ontario curriculum. The website outlines how those programs look, similar to taking Math in Grade 9 to Math in Grade 12, things are built year to year, which is the same as GLOC programs as well.

N. Zahn indicated that GLOC has adapted this year. With no field trips happening, and students unable to come to the GLOC, the Gould Lake team started visiting elementary schools since September. He noted that the team has visited every school in the board this school year, except one, but plans to be there before June.

N. Zahn stated that last spring, during the provincial shutdown, from March to June, the Outdoor Education Team developed K-12 resources for teachers, students, and families to use while at home, and with those lesson plans, there were complementary YouTube videos. This is also linked into Minds Online that teachers can access on the website. N. Zahn advised that Gould Lake staff continue with the school-based programs for elementary students for the remainder of the year and outlined some new programs for the spring, including potential day camps.

S. McShane advised that outdoor education has evolved and incorporated more Indigenous content. This includes passing on Indigenous history and traditional knowledge of, and on, land use, for materials and medicines to our interpretive hikes, and “voyageur for a day” fur trade programs, among others. He noted that within the past 10 years, the Outdoor Education Team has been working directly with Indigenous students in secondary school programs, like the “River” and “Portage,” as well as elementary students at Rideau Heights, J. G. Simcoe, and Molly Brant public schools.

S. McShane noted that summer offerings of programs include leadership-based programs for high school students, where both secondary and elementary students come together on the land and explore Indigenous histories and ideas together. He indicated that space is made available for Knowledge Keepers to come and teach at the site, for example, a raising of a Teepee, where Elder Bernard Nelson can come in and pass on the teachings.

In the past couple of years, the Outdoor Education Team worked with the Katarokwi Learning Centre to design and deliver some Specialized High School Major (SHSM) credit packages. Geared towards students who may want to work in the outdoor industry, Outdoor Professional SHSM offers lots of engaging hands on lessons like Search and Rescue, Signal Fires, and Navigation.

Chair Gingrich thanked Associate Superintendent Hedderson, N. Zahn and S. McShane, and called upon Trustees for questions or comments.

3.2 Education Quality Accountability Office (EQAO)

Superintendent Silver stated that in a typical year, students write the preliminary assessment of reading, writing and mathematics. At Grade 3, there is the primary assessment of reading, writing, and math. At Grade 6, there is junior assessment of reading, writing, and math; and at Grade 9, there is an applied and academic math assessment. There is also the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), which is typically written in Grade 10. Superintendent Silver

indicated that last year there were no assessments written because of labour disruption, and the onset of COVID-19.

Superintendent Silver noted that in June of 2020, the Minister of Education did announce that there would be no Grade 3 or 6 assessments written this year, which was primarily related to the pandemic, and then, in the fall of this year, the Ministry announced that the literacy requirement for graduating Grade 12 students for this year, would be waived.

She indicated there are no elementary assessments being written. At the secondary level, EQAO is field testing a new system, and Limestone schools are administering field tests for both Grade 9 math and the OSSLT. The new online format, supports the continued modernization of the assessment, which has been the EQAO's goal for the last number of years. The other difference this year is that EQAO has provided multiple windows for students to write. For the math assessment, there is a window at the end of each octomester, at the end of each quadmester, and each semester, depending on each school or board. She noted that for the literacy test, there is a longer writing period, which started in March and goes until June, allowing schools the flexibility to choose a time that works for them.

Superintendent Silver noted the other difference this year is that participation in the assessment is optional, so schools and boards can make decisions whether or not to participate. Some of the larger boards made decisions not to participate in the literacy test. Most of the boards that did that are in COVID "hotspots," and are designated boards, so their students attend school half time, which logistically, was more than they could manage. Luckily, here in Kingston the COVID numbers are relatively low compared to the province, and the Minister did say that any student who did write the assessment this year, and was successful, would have it count as their literacy requirement for graduation. Therefore, in consultation with the senior team and administrators, the decision was made for our board to go ahead, and schools are participating in the literacy test.

Superintendent Silver advised that Limestone had two schools participate in the math assessment, which is a bit different, because there are no graduation requirements. All schools were scheduled to write it, except that the schools were closed in January, and so at the end of octomester four, students were at home, and could not participate at that point. In terms of the literacy test, all but one school has participated so far, and that school is planning to write during octomester seven, which starts April 9, 2021.

Superintendent Silver noted that the schools that have participated have been reporting that it has gone quite well and that LDSB is well on its way to having students complete their writing this year.

Chair Gingrich thanked Superintendent Silver for the update and provided an opportunity for Trustees to ask any questions or make any comments.

4. Reports for Action

4.1 Policy/Bylaws Review

Chair Gingrich stated that the question tonight is on the adoption of the bylaws. He will move through the bylaws one article at a time. After each article is put forward, it will be open to debate and amendment. When debate and amendments to an article are completed, the next article will be considered. No article will be adopted until all have been opened to amendment. Once Trustees have gone through all articles, the entire bylaws will be open to amendment. A vote will then be taken on the proposed bylaws, either as presented, or as amended.

The Chair noted that Trustees will then work through the appendices in the same manner, appendix by appendix. Trustees will vote on the appendices, either as presented, or as amended.

Chair Gingrich advised Trustees that he will then ask if there is any objection to attaching the appendices to the bylaws, and if there are no objections, Trustees will then vote on a motion to send the bylaws and attached appendices to the Board for approval.

Article I – Board Composition. There were no amendments.

Article II – Officers and Duties. There were no amendments.

Article III – Board of Trustees. Add a proviso that this article is in draft, and that the amendment ‘the rural to urban ratio must be maintained,’ be included.

Article IV – Meetings. Add a proviso to talk about distinguishing between merely adding something to the agenda for a discussion as opposed to adding something to the agenda for a motion. Further discussion or vote on the 2/3 vote. Separate out to see if Trustees want to keep or change this language.

Article V – Administrative Operations. There were no amendments.

Article VI – Committees. There were no amendments.

Article VII – Parliamentary Authority and Suspension of Rules. Amend this to remove article.

There has to be some structure in place. There is a process in place to amend all bylaws. Bring this back for further discussion.

For clarification purposes, when asked, Director Burra stated that there is a process to amend all the bylaws. This article was in the document presented to Trustees, and discussed, however, no other structure was suggested. He confirmed the parliamentary authority and suspension of rules is the basis of having bylaws and this is a reflection of what is currently in place and used by the Board, and brought forward for approval today, based on Trustee discussions at the previous meetings.

*MOTION BY: Trustee French to defer the continuation of the bylaw approval process, until Lori Lukinuk can be present for discussions, to ensure we do not jeopardize the document by changing some sections; and further,
That the articles and appendices that were not approved and requiring further discussion, be brought back to a further EPOC meeting. Carried.*

Article VIII – Amendment. There were no amendments.

Appendix A – Special Rules of Order. There were no amendments.

Appendix B – Handling Motions. There were no amendments.

Appendix C – Thirteen Ranking Motions. There were no amendments.

Appendix D – Agenda Setting for Board and EPOC – Research how we might clarify time sensitive.

Appendix E – Regular Meeting – Order of Business – Reports (a) Requiring Acton (b) for Information, also include: (e) OPSBA Report and (f) Student Trustee Reports

Appendix F – Special Meetings – Order of Business – There were no amendments.

Appendix G – Annual Meeting – Order of Business – Processing for meeting of electing the Chair and the Vice-Chair at the Annual meeting and then a meeting a few days later for selecting Trustees on the Committee but have the Chair and Vice-Chair reported out at that meeting. Clarify that there is an organizational meeting prior to the Annual Meeting. Proviso will be in place that this comes into effect, only after all the structures are in place, i.e., a Nominating Committee.

Section B – Information

5. Internal Reports and Other Communications

None at this time.

6. External Reports and Other Communications

None at this time.

7. Other Business

7.1 Motion

“That the Limestone District School Board send a letter to our partners at KFL&A Public Health and our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kieran Moore, requesting the immediate prioritization of vaccines for Special Education workers and, pending the availability of vaccine, for the prioritization of the remaining LDSB school-based staff and LDSB staff who are required to work in a school setting and/or provide either director or indirect service to students and receive the vaccination during the April 12-16 break, or a date as soon as possible before June.”

Trustee Elliott stated, that for context, this motion is almost verbatim to the Waterloo Region District School Board’s motion which was passed on March 29, 2021, who later sent a letter to its Health Unit on March 30, 2021. Waterloo RDSB announced today, that in partnership with its Health Unit, they have chosen priority vaccination to staff that directly support students with special education needs. While he is unsure this letter assisted in that process, he was hoping to emulate this process in our district, to ensure the safety of our system, which is staff. Because our area is not a hotspot, he is unsure if Public Health is prioritizing staff.

Chair Gingrich called upon Trustees to provide comments.

Director Burra was called upon to provide Trustees with an update. He stated that staff are in contact with Public Health every single day, seven days a week, for the better part of the last six weeks. The issue of vaccination for educational staff is included in Phase Two of the provincial vaccination strategy. This has been raised by the Director at least three or four times in the last two months directly with Dr. Moore. Dr. Moore shared that educators and staff in school buildings are considered essential workers, so it is certainly on their radar. KFL&A Public Health has been rolling out vaccines quickly and they have no vaccines currently. In fact, KFL&A has the highest per capita vaccination rate in the province currently.

Director Burra advised that the Premier announced, earlier today, that beginning the week of April 12, 2021 education workers who provide direct support to students with special education needs across all areas and all education workers in select hotspot areas, beginning with Toronto and Peel are eligible to register for vaccination. This will be followed by a rollout across the remainder of the province, as supply allows. There will be specific instructions and information shared in short order. This incremental step will continue safeguarding staff and students and the province will roll this out as quickly as supply allows.

Director Burra noted the rates per 100,000 in those regions, just noted, are in many cases 10 times the rate that we have locally. He believes the KFL&A number, this morning, is in the neighborhood of 29 per 100,000 and there are many jurisdictions that are over 200.

Associate Superintendent Gillam confirmed that even with the increased cases seen over the last couple of weeks, KFL&A is in good shape. When an area is not considered a hotspot, the number of vaccinations received is less. Even though there is a priority to start vaccinating special education staff, and then move other education workers by age group, there is a limited supply of vaccines, which will determine how quickly Public Health is able to do that. As the Director said earlier, KFL&A Public Health, along with its partners, are getting needles in arms faster and more efficiently than anywhere else. Once things start rolling, we do anticipate getting teaching staff, support staff and caretaking staff done as quickly as possible.

Trustee Elliott withdrew his motion and proposed the following motion:

MOVED BY Trustee Elliott and seconded by Trustee Godkin that the Limestone District School Board send a letter to KFL&A Public Health, and our Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kieran Moore, expressing LDSB's support and gratitude for their active partnership. Given education workers have been deemed essential, LDSB commits to do everything we can to support the rollout of vaccines to LDSB staff as soon as feasible based on vaccine supply. Carried.

MOVED BY Trustee Ruttan and seconded by Trustee Godkin that to accelerate the process, the Director use email communication, to get feedback of the draft from Trustees, and once approved, send to KFL&A Public Health, prior to the next Board Meeting.

Director Burra stated that while the letter can be drafted relatively quickly, in terms of providing feedback, this could actually delay sending the letter, unless Trustees make a decision around that. Also, given that this motion is being presented at the EPOC meeting, formal approval is required, at

a Board Meeting or if Trustees waive notice, a Special Meeting of the Board, to approve the motion.

Trustee Ruttan amended her motion to remove feedback and approval from Trustees. Trustee Godkin agreed with the amendment.

MOVED BY Trustee Ruttan and seconded by Trustee Godkin that to accelerate the process, the Director use email communication to send the letter to KFL&A Public and our Health Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kieran Moore, prior to the next Board Meeting. Carried.

Trustee Godkin put forward the following motion:

That at the conclusion of the EPOC meeting, a Special Meeting of the Board be convened.

Director Burra confirmed that the Board would have to waive 48 hours notice and make a motion to convene a Special Board Meeting, however, there is a Private Session immediately following EPOC this evening. Trustees would have to adjourn the EPOC meeting and need to immediately reconvene a Special Board Meeting to address these motions, then close off the public session portion of the meeting, and then move into Private Session. The Private Session is to address an OPSBA information item and will be reported out at the April 28, 2021 Board Meeting.

Chair Gingrich stated that if Trustees were in agreement with waiving the 48 hours notice, Trustees would move into a Special Board Meeting.

8. Next Meeting Date

Regular Board Meeting: April 28, 2021.

9. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Trustee Godkin that the meeting adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.