

EDUCATION, POLICY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 2, 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. Senior, Administrative Assistant (Producer) J. Silver, Superintendent of Education W. Utton, IT Support C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
	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 Budget Meeting earlier tonight, we are meeting remotely this evening in accordance with current stay-at-home directives from the government. As a reminder to all, and to keep the meeting as efficient as possible, I will call a speakers’ list for each item for discussion and decision throughout the meeting as required.”

Chair Gingrich began the meeting by reading 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.

As you may know, the Limestone District School Board is flying flags at the Education Centre and all schools at half-mast in memory of the 215 children killed as a result of genocide at the Kamloops Residential School.

Acknowledging this genocide is an important part of the Reconciliation process. We extend our sympathies to survivors, families and First Nations communities affected by this unspeakable tragedy. The Board of Trustees will now recognize a moment of silence to honour the spirits of those children lost, and to acknowledge the ongoing trauma for survivors of residential schools, and their families.

The board will continue to consult with Indigenous community members on how to further honour those lost. Limestone Trustees remain committed to supporting the system’s important role in educating our school communities about the shameful legacy of residential schools, and the ongoing need for Reconciliation.” Chair Gingrich called for a moment of silence.

Chair Gingrich called the meeting to order.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Director Burra stated that Student Trustees’ Quadir and Traviss, requested a Student Trustee Report be added to the agenda.

Trustee Elliott requested that a Notice of Motion be added to the agenda under Item 7, Other Business.

MOVED BY: Trustee Hutcheon that the agenda, as amended, be approved. Carried.

Chair Gingrich stated that if Trustees agreed, he would ask Student Trustees to provide their Report now. There were no objections.

Student Trustee Traviss stated: “Good evening everyone. I am sure by now you have all heard about the discovery of 215 Indigenous children who were killed while attending the Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia. While this was a surprise to many across the country, it was not a surprise to me, or my family. Many of my friends and peers would be able to tell you about the first time they learned about the Canadian residential schools, but I would not be able to tell you about the first time I learned about them. Me, my siblings, my parents, and my grandparents all grew up with this knowledge, and in a weird way, it is normal to us. When the news made its way into my home, nobody talked about it with each other, because we have heard this same story before. So, while I am grateful for the efforts being made to honour their deaths, I am not optimistic that the mindset will last. The change that needs to happen, goes way deeper than the surface. It requires education, and it requires everyone to open their minds to empathy and understand what is going on. As I said before, this is not the first time I have heard a story like this, and I hope it is not the last time, because we have to find them all. If every child matters, then people need to do the work to ensure that all the children our government left behind are given back the dignity that was taken from them. Every time dead Indigenous children are found at a residential school, it causes pain, and it will continue to cause pain every time we find more. You cannot heal without hurting first, and that is something that everyone needs to do together. Thank you.”

Student Trustee Quadir stated: “As a non-Indigenous student, I learned about residential schools as a story of Canada’s “dark history” – an all-too-common euphemism that takes away from the ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples on this land. We need to ensure that as leaders in educational institutions we are not only lowering flags and holding vigils but are also teaching all students and staff about the current injustices faced by Indigenous peoples – beginning with the lasting and devastating effects of residential schools on survivors and families, but also expanding to land exploitation, boil water advisories, anti-Indigenous racism in healthcare, Indigenous children in child welfare, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and what roles each and every one of us have to play in reconciliation. Thank you to Student Trustee Traviss for speaking up and creating a path for us to hurt and heal together.”

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Elliott declared that his wife is an employee of LDSB, and member of ETFO. Trustee Godkin declared that his daughter is an occasional teacher with two other public boards, and LDSB. Student Trustee Putnam declared that her mother is a teacher in Limestone and a member of ETFO.

Section A – Matters Requiring Action at the Meeting

3. Reports for Action

3.1 De-streamed Grade 9 Math

Superintendent Silver indicated the De-Streamed Grade 9 Math report provides a comprehensive implementation plan that has been developed as part of the math team and tonight she will provide some highlights of the plan to support the implementation of the new MTH1W course beginning in September 2021.

Professional learning was planned for intermediate teachers and Grade 9 teachers, but was put on hold due to the ongoing occasional teacher shortages, almost daily. Professional Learning for secondary math teachers was offered each octomester so teachers had flexibility for when they participate. The learning includes a focus on LDSB data, student voice and the “why” and “how” of destreaming.

A plan is in place to create and develop resources. Much of the professional learning around math in the last few years has focused on starting with the concrete and moving to the abstract. The Ministry has allowed for funding that was not utilized for professional learning due to the pandemic to be used for math resources for schools.

Superintendent Silver indicated that it is anticipated some summer writing will be done by having some teachers create resources for other teachers. This is dependent on receipt of the curriculum, and she is hopeful that it comes soon, in order to put that into place.

Superintendent Silver stated that in terms of communication, one of the first iterations around the implementation plan was professional learning for K-12 administrators, which has been done. Information has been shared at School Councils. Without the curriculum, it is difficult to share much more. Presentations for families will likely take place in the fall once we receive the curriculum.

3.2 Empower Literacy Program

Associate Superintendent Sartor stated that she wanted to bring more information related to literacy right now, and more in the fall. In 2019, the Ontario Human Rights Commission launched Right to Read Public Inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities. Reading is a fundamental skill and without the proper interventions and accommodations, people

with reading disabilities may not learn to read and may have difficulty with other subjects in school. For example, word problems in math. Along with academic problems, this can also lead to mental health challenges. Then in adulthood, low literacy can lead to under employment and higher rates of homelessness, incarceration, and perhaps even suicide. Some reading disabilities such as dyslexia run in families and in failing to address dyslexia, this can lead to intergenerational cycles of illiteracy. This is precisely why the belief in Limestone is that literacy is about equity. The good news is that when an evidence-based, intensive, and systematic approach is used, people with reading disabilities respond very well, and the effects of the disability can be greatly reduced.

The Right to Read Inquiry has spent the last year and a half gathering information from eight Ontario English language public school boards, the Ministry of Education, and 13 English language public faculties of education. They held community meetings and engaged with FNMI communities. They collected family and educators' surveys and they engaged with community organizations such as the International Dyslexia Association. The Inquiry focused on five areas: Universal Design for Learning (UDL); Mandatory Early Screening for Literacy; Reading Interventions; Accommodations; and Psycho Educational Assessments.

The Inquiry Panel's evidence gathering phase is now complete and the team is now busy analyzing the data and information received to draft a final report. The report was delayed due to COVID-19. It is expected to be released this coming fall and will no doubt have short term and long-term implications for literacy in Ontario.

Although the report has not been released, the senior counsel from the Human Rights Commission Right to Read Inquiry has been meeting frequently with the Ministry of Education. This spring school boards received transfer payment agreements from the government to support summer learning and in-school literacy programs. Within the transfer payment agreement, there was an appendix of suggestions, as to how you could spend this money, and the Empower Reading Program was among the recommendations. This funding has allowed us to purchase more licences so that eight more individuals can be trained and eight more schools can start to implement the Empower reading program this fall.

3.3 School Safety and Human Rights Incident Reporting Tool

Associate Superintendent Gillam noted that this update on the Reporting Tool is the result of the motion on April 28, 2021. Since that time, staff have been investigating the best way to support

students and staff in finding ways to not only report incidents anonymously, but the board's ability to track incidents. Trustees will note there is a large team working on this, including Superintendent Babcock, Associate Superintendent Gillam, both Equity Consultants, Communications Officer Karen Smith and staff, from both Educational Services and the ITS department. Work continues with ITS at the back-end, so that when reports come in, they are effectively tracked, and a determination can be made with regards to follow up.

Limestone has had the Report Bullying/Safety Issue tool, for several years, but it has not been publicly advertised lately and is missing indicators that could also be used to report human rights incidents, discrimination or harassment issues. While we work on the back-end, the link will clearly identify the process for reporting all incidents that infringe on human rights such as discrimination or bullying/cyberbullying or school safety. Reports will be processed depending on who is reporting the incident, as well as who the report identifies as a concern. All reports will be centrally collected and collated for follow-up, tracking, and reporting purposes.

A promotional campaign is planned in September-October 2021, including social media posts, posters for schools that have an easily accessible QR code that will take you directly to the link, incorporation into professional learning and/or staff meetings, a presentation to InterSchool Council, and a presentation for administrators to use with School Councils. Recognizing that this is an electronic reporting tool, we will ensure that there is an accommodation process for accessibility.

3.4 Transition of Katarowki Learning Centre to the Limestone Education Centre

Superintendent McDonnell reminded Trustees that during the 2016-2017 school year, two alternative education sites, Second Chance and Streetsmart, were amalgamated into the Katarowki Learning Centre (KLC) in the former Frontenac Public School. The former Frontenac building would not be a permanent location, as it would need to be disposed of at a later date. Over the next couple of years, the board looked at a variety of different options to relocate the Katarowki Learning Centre. Senior Staff investigated KLC moving to the Limestone Education Centre (LEC) on the bottom floor, due to its central location in Kingston, proximity to public transportation and the Kingston Centre hub, and the general condition and accessibility features of the building.

Superintendent McDonnell noted that due to the pandemic in March 2020 schools were closed and all discussion and work on floor plans were paused for quite an extended period of time.

A Transitions Committee was struck in March 2021 to re-initiate transition planning for KLC to be relocated to LEC. It was recommended that Educational Services move to the upper floor of LEC. This would then allow KLC to move from its current location to the bottom floor of LEC.

Superintendent McDonnell stated that Educational Services is developing a plan to move that department to the upper floor of LEC effective as of the end of June. When school resumes in the fall, Educational Services will be in its new upper floor location. The location will have a reduced footprint with approximately 75% of its current space on the second floor. Educational Services will move to a shared, or hybrid, workspace model to meet staff needs.

Superintendent McDonnell advised that Katarokwi Learning Centre will continue to operate programming out of the former Frontenac Public School building until necessary renovations are completed in the LEC building. A move-in date for the KLC will be determined in the 2021-2022 school year.

International Education will move into one classroom at LCVI for administrative office space during the latter half of the 2021-2022 school year.

Superintendent McDonnell concluded that the disposition process for the former Frontenac Public School building will start in the fall of 2021.

Section B – Information

4. Internal Reports and Other Communications

None at this time.

5. External Reports and Other Communications

None at this time.

6. Other Business

Trustee Elliott provided the following Notice of Motion to be dealt with at the June 16, 2021, Board Meeting:

"That staff initiate a potential renaming process, including all stakeholders outlined in Administrative Procedure 552, and including consultation with the Indigenous Education Council, to review the name of Ecole Sir John A Macdonald Public School to ensure it reflects our board's mission, vision, values, with a lens on reconciliation, decolonization, anti-racism, and anti-oppression principles."

8. Next Meeting Date

Regular Board Meeting: June 16, 2021.

9. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor that the meeting adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.