

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (EDUCATION, POLICY AND OPERATIONS) MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 27, 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 M. Baumann, Manager of Finance K. Burra, Director of Education J. Douglas, Communications Officer 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 C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time.	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 of the Whole Board Meeting. My name is Tom Gingrich. I am Vice-Chair of the Board, and act as Chair for this meeting. I represent the City of Kingston, Kingscourt-Rideau, and King’s Town Districts.

In accordance with the current provincial shutdown, participants of this meeting are joining remotely. To make the meeting efficient and clear, I will call a speakers’ list for each item for discussion and decision, and I will identify a mover and seconder where appropriate, unless there is an objection. And with that I call this meeting to order.”

Chair Gingrich read the Acknowledgement of Territory, “We begin with 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 Brown that the agenda, as presented, be approved. Carried.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Elliott declared a conflict as his wife is an employee of LDSB, and member of ETFO. Trustee Godkin declared a conflict as his daughter is an occasional teacher with two other public boards, and LDSB. Trustee French stated that her partner continues to do some casual admin work with LDSB Facility Services so she will recuse herself from any decision-making associated with that.

Section A – Matters Requiring Action at the Meeting

3. Reports for Information

3.1 Interim Policy (PPM) for School Board Hiring Practices

Superintendent McWilliams advised Trustees that her report is in the agenda package and she will provide an overview. The new Interim Policy for School Board Hiring Practices came into effect after the revocation of Ontario Regulation 274/12 on October 29, 2020. The Interim Policy outlines key elements that school boards are expected to adopt as well as recommended effective practices.

Prior to this new direction, Superintendent McWilliams advised that Regulation 274 governed all teacher hiring practices for Ontario school boards. School boards were required to maintain both an Occasional Teacher Roster as well as a Long-Term Occasional Teacher (LTO) List. She stated that occasional teachers had to be on the roster for 10 months and have taught 20 assignments to be eligible to apply for the long-term occasional teacher list. She advised that under Regulation 274, for all long-term assignments, the process was that the interview was to go to the five most senior qualified applicants from the LTO list. If the position was not filled, they would repost the LTO list and follow the same process. If not filled at that point, they would then

extend to the occasional teacher roster where the screening was based on application packages and not seniority. If not filled at that point, the board may extend the advertisement externally, which typically would only happen for French positions.

With the revocation of Regulation 274, and the implementation of the Interim Policy for School Board Hiring Practices, there has been a shift in philosophy, so the focus is on ensuring board hiring practices promote the following criteria:

- Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights
- Qualifications and Merit
- Employment Mobility
- Fairness and Transparency
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Limestone District School Board Administrative Procedure 400: Recruitment and Selection, outlines the board's hiring practices. This procedure was reviewed recently as part of the equity, diversity and inclusion work, and has been further reviewed within the context of the Interim Policy, including a consultative process as it relates to the alignment of the revised Administrative Procedure with the Interim Policy. The consultation was extended to several professionals with diverse backgrounds and experiences. A final review will occur with the release of the finalized PPM.

Superintendent McWilliams indicated that based on the feedback received, additional refinements have been made to Administrative Procedure 400: Recruitment and Selection. This procedure, in conjunction with the board's respective collective agreements, will guide all future hiring processes. She noted that work has begun in a number of areas to promote the attraction and selection of a more diverse workforce, including: the development of a new external job posting template that displays a LDSB diversity brand; broad statement of qualifications, skills and experiences to expand the diversity of potential applicants, based on the requirements of the job, and to support the best possible program or service; continuing efforts to expand outreach opportunities to attract diverse applicant pools; a review of our hiring process by our Equity and Human Rights Teacher, to ensure a fair and transparent process for all candidates as well as to identify any systemic barriers to be addressed; and, a review of our screening process to broaden the diversity of applicants selected for interviews.

Superintendent McWilliams advised that for Limestone, this means any elementary job postings would be open to all eligible occasional teachers. First consideration would be given to those on

the LTO list. The most senior qualified applicant on the LTO list is guaranteed an interview, and any other applicant from the LTO list who meets the required qualifications and experience, may be selected for an interview. She advised that if the LTO list is exhausted, they would consider qualified applicants from the Occasional Teacher Roster, after which they may advertise externally. Further, job postings at the Secondary level would be open to all qualified teachers eligible to apply. Applications would be screened against required qualifications and experience. The most senior qualified applicants on the LTO list are guaranteed an interview, and if no internal applicants were received, they may advertise externally.

Superintendent McWilliams stated that the Interim Policy is focused on teacher hiring and the same principles will be applied to all employee groups, as permitted. She noted the Human Resources department will continue to move the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy forward. This will include training human resources staff as well as administrators/managers in all stages of the hiring process to ensure transparent, fair, and inclusive practices so that all applicants can “See Themselves in Limestone.”

Chair Gingrich thanked Superintendent McWilliams and called upon Trustees for questions or comments.

3.2 2020-2021 Revised Estimates and Interim Financial Report for Q1

Superintendent Young introduced Manager Baumann to provide the report. Manager Baumann indicated that this report provides an update on enrolment and staffing changes since the budget was approved by the Board on July 13, 2020. She stated that the revised estimates include updated enrolment projections based upon actual enrolment levels at the October 31, 2020 count date, and projected enrolments for the upcoming March 31, 2021 count date. She noted that overall enrolment is expected to be 40 ADE lower in the 2020-2021 school year than originally forecast in the budget, with the elementary panel decreasing by 94 students and the secondary panel increasing by 54 students.

Manager Baumann advised that for revenues, the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) operating allocation decreased overall by \$0.2 million. An increase of \$2.5 million in various grants such as supported schools, learning opportunities, declining enrolment, Indigenous education, and new grant support for COVID-19, and funding stabilization which are offset by a decrease of \$2.7 million in various grants. These include continuing education, teacher and early childhood educator (ECE) qualification and experience, school operations and support for student fund,

which had the prior year amount realigned to Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF).

Manager Baumann noted that the Other Government Grants had increased by \$6.6 million, primarily due to new PPF grant announcements. She noted that PPF grants are for specific government initiatives and are supported by detailed agreements, accountability, and reporting criteria. These agreements normally indicate that any underspending is to be returned.

Manager Baumann indicated that Tuition Fees had decreased by \$0.5 million primarily due to programs that will not be running due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

She stated that Other Revenues had increased by \$0.6million. An increase of \$1.0M was a result of the Board share of the Manulife benefit plan reserves and increased secondments offset by a decrease of \$0.4 million due to COVID-19 pandemic impacts on community rentals, cafeteria, and interest revenue.

Manager Baumann advised that overall operating revenues at the 2020-2021 revised estimates had increased from \$254,124,312 to \$260,627,920 or a net increase of \$6,503,608.

Manager Baumann stated that overall operating expenditures have increased by \$7,585,413 to \$261,682,447 which is \$1,081,805 greater than the total operating revenues. The additional \$7.6 million in expenditures is a result of the increased salary and benefits expenditures due to staffing changes, expenditures pertaining to new PPF grants received from the Ministry, and planned use of the accumulated surplus internally appropriated funds.

Manager Bauman indicated that for the 2020-2021 revised estimates there was no change to the School Condition Improvement funding allocation and School Renewal funding allocation totaling \$21,083,681.

Manager Baumann noted that the interim financial operating expenditures for the period ending November 30, 2020 (Quarter 1) are being presented in a similar format as the 2020-2021 operating budget, indicating the amount spent by expenditure category and the associated percentage. As of Quarter 1, 25 percent of the operating has been spent. This is comparable to the 26 percent results from the same quarter last year. She noted that expenditures are based upon items paid within the stated period. Certain expenditures may be non-cyclical in nature, which may lead to higher or lower expenditures within a given period.

Chair Gingrich thanked Manager Baumann and Superintendent Young for the report and provided an opportunity for Trustees to ask any questions or make any comments.

3.3 K-12 English Second Language (ESL) Programming Update

Associate Superintendent Sartor stated she is proud of the evolution of support provided over the past several years, due to an increase in the number of newcomers in the Kingston community.

Associate Superintendent Sartor recognized Wilma Pettingill, who has been an integral member of the board's ESL team for a number of years. W. Pettingill has supported students in the schools she has worked in as a Student Support Teacher and Vice Principal. As a leader, she has worked hard to develop positive relationships with our community partners including Immigration Services in Kingston & the Area (ISKA). W. Pettingill has been instrumental in developing a process now used to register and welcome students into their schools through a series of supportive transition meetings.

Associate Superintendent Sartor noted Trustees will see that the newcomer population has grown significantly over the past few years. There are now 17 schools that support newcomers. W.J. Holsgrove Public School has recently been added to the ESL itinerant support schedule, that is not listed in the report. The schools that currently have the highest number of students with ESL needs are Lord Strathcona Public School, with 37 students, Molly Brant Elementary School with 14, and Bayridge Public School with 10. It is important to note that these numbers do not capture all of the students with ESL needs in the building. These are the number of students who currently receive support from our ESL itinerant educators, because the students are either at a Level 1 or Level 2 in the Steps to English Proficiency (STEP) assessment.

The STEP assessment is one of the assessments conducted when students with ESL needs register in one of Limestone's schools. It resembles a reading assessment, but focuses on Observable Language behaviours. There are 6 levels in the STEP assessment. The ESL itinerant team focuses their instructional support on students who are currently at level 1 or 2 in the STEP assessment.

Given the larger clusters of students in some schools, it has been possible to dedicate one or more of the ESL team members to a few of the sites. For example, out of the 6.5 educators that Limestone currently has, one spends all their time at Molly Brant. Given the volume of newcomers at Lord Strathcona, two of the ESL itinerant team members spend all of their time there.

In the past few years, there has been a significant increase in students with ESL needs in Limestone's secondary schools. As a result, a secondary educator has been added to the ESL team.

Associate Superintendent Sartor outlined four different goals that the ESL team developed to focus its work together this year. One of these goals is to build capacity in our system by supporting educators to plan and modify their instruction to meet the needs of the students with ESL needs in their classroom. This continues to happen through professional learning that has been developed and offered by our ESL team.

Associate Superintendent Sartor will introduce Trustees to a few members of the ESL team at the next Board Meeting when they will share a presentation.

Chair Gingrich thanked Associate Superintendent Sartor for the report and provided an opportunity for Trustees to ask any questions or make any comments.

3.4 Policy Review Schedule

Director Burra indicated that he had hoped to bring a schedule for the Policy Review meetings to Trustees tonight, however there are a few Trustees yet to respond with their availability. Once all Trustees have responded, a schedule will be provided.

4. Reports for Action

None at this time.

Section B – Information

5. Internal Reports and Other Communications

5.1 Limestone District School Board Trustee Expenses

Superintendent Young advised that this is just a housekeeping item. Limestone District School Board is required to post the Trustee expenses on an annual basis on the board website. It was noted that the reduction in expenses was mainly due to COVID-19. It was suggested that perhaps with the drop in expenses, i.e., kilometre and associated expenses mainly in attending workshops

and conferences, perhaps the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) would consider hosting more conferences virtually, a more economical way of doing business.

6. External Reports and Other Communications

None at this time.

7. Other Business

None at this time.

8. Next Meeting Date

Regular Board Meeting: February 10, 2021

9. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor that the meeting adjourn. Carried

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.