

## EDUCATION, POLICY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

### PUBLIC MEETING

#### Roll call:

<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>
J. Brown G. Elliott L. French (Regrets) T. Gingrich (Vice-Chair) (Regrets) B. Godkin R. Hutcheon K. McGregor (Regrets) J. Morning S. Ruttan (Chair) M. Elshrief (Student Trustee) E. Jackson (Student Trustee) (Regrets) J. Kolosov (Student Trustee)	K. Burra, Director of Education S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education P. Gollogly, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent J. Silver, Superintendent of Education
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Recorder:</b>
None at this time.	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Ruttan welcomed everyone to the meeting. She indicated that she would chair the meeting as Vice-Chair Gingrich send his regrets. She 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.”

#### 1. Call to Order

Chair Ruttan called the meeting to order and called the roll.

## 2. Adoption of Agenda

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

## 3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts declared.

## 4. Reports for Information

### 4.1 Tutoring Programs Update

Associate Superintendent Sartor introduced the report on the planning and outcomes of the *Supporting Student Potential* funding which was available between April 1 and August 2022. As per the Ministry's direction, the LDSB developed programs and supported community partners with a focus on closing literacy and numeracy gaps as well as supporting students at risk.

Associate Superintendent Sartor stated that for Elementary students, funds were used to support the expansion of the summer Read-A-Lot program where 225 students received 3 weeks of intensive literacy support. Additionally, funding was used for almost 800 students who attended a one-week Academic Boost Camp literacy program which was run by the Boys and Girls club in the Greater Kingston Area. LDSB also partnered with KEYS to offer summer literacy support for future LDSB students. Finally, 40 elementary schools received support through the Spring tutoring program in the format of literacy tutors, math tutors or both. This program was developed, organized, and run by the LDSB Program Team and ran from the end of April to mid-June.

Associate Superintendent Sartor highlighted that 608 kindergarten to grade 2 students received literacy support. She stated that the students who participated were identified by school staff and students who would benefit from additional instruction in phonemic awareness and or phonics skills. The impact of the tutor training was quantitatively measured and showed that a majority of students demonstrated significant improvement in the targeted literacy skills over the 6-week period. Student voice data demonstrated an increase in self-confidence as readers and writers, as well as confidence using the introduced strategies.

Superintendent Silver indicated that 27 secondary tutors were hired with a focus on Grade 7 and 8 Math. The tutors worked with almost 300 Grade 7 and 8 students throughout the system. They were identified as students who needed some extra time to consolidate learning and close gaps ahead of going into de-streamed Grade 9 math. Quantitative data showed that students moved across the continuum of multiplicative thinking as well as number and operation fluency. The goal

was to close the gaps and promote student confidence which was supported by the student voice and skills data that was collected. At the secondary level, community partners allowed in-person tutoring and virtual tutoring through our community partner Pathways to Education. LDSB also offered virtual tutors to secondary students who were enrolled in virtual summer school. Additionally, LDSB ran an ESL math camp and made tutors available for incoming students through the International Education Office. Tutors were also connected with schools centered around success days which is a program that offers student who need to finish or complete previously missed credits ahead of the new school year.

Chair Ruttan thanked Associate Superintendent Sartor and Superintendent Silver and called upon Trustees for questions.

#### **4.2 De-streaming Report**

Superintendent Silver shared an update on the de-streamed grade 9 program. LDSB held summer writing teams comprised of teachers throughout the system creating de-streamed resources for educators. The focus of these resources was to ensure accessible access to the curriculum, and choice and voice for students. She indicated that communication has been sent out to provide strategies to be used in the de-streamed classroom around instruction and assessment, along with links to the resources created over the summer.

Superintendent Silver noted that instructional coaches have returned to secondary schools with a focus on grade 9. LDSB will support the coaches in ensuring curriculum around structure and assessment of the de-streaming pathway are available. Central program team will also be available to provide support in providing professional learning and instructional coaching.

Chair Ruttan thanked Superintendent Silver for the report and called upon Trustees for questions.

#### **4.3 EA Allocation around Special Education**

Superintendent Gillam stated that the funding for the provision of Educational Assistants comes from the Ministry of Education's Special Education Grant within the Grants for Student Needs or GSNs. Funding for Special Education services in LDSB also includes additional support staff, teaching staff, mental health professionals, administrative staff, and general expenses like mileage, photocopying, and teaching and office supplies. In addition to these expenses, additional Educational Assistants are provided to the system regularly to support situations that require mitigation, such as new students moving to LDSB that require support as well as situations that are deemed safety concerns for a variety of reasons. These positions are known as Short Term Education Assistants or (STEA) support. Funding for these positions is above and

beyond the regular budgetary process. As was reported at the June 8, 2022, Budget Committee Meeting, special education expenses are typically overspent by several million dollars each year. For the 2021/22 year, the total overfunding was more than seven million as detailed in Appendix C from that meeting (See Appendix A attached). It is anticipated that we will be in the same position for the 2022/23 year.

The number of Educational Assistants (EAs) in LDSB has steadily increased over the past few years. Recently, COVID has played a role in the increased number of EAs for a variety of reasons, including the inability to cohort students who require support, as well as a surge in mental health needs as a result of the pandemic. However, it is important to note that despite relatively static enrolment, the number of students who enter LDSB with significant needs has continued to increase the past six years. Regardless of the reasons, the number of EAs provided to the system since 2017-18 are listed below:

Year	Number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Educational Assistants
2017-2018	301.50
2018-19	306.75
2019-20	308
2020-21	312.50
2021-2022	317.50

In addition to the EAs provided to schools, the number of STEA positions has also been tracked carefully. During the past five years, the average number of STEAs provided to the system was twenty-eight (28) additional FTE positions. During the 2021-22 school year, a total of thirty-eight (38) FTE STEA were provided to the system. The increase can be attributed to the pandemic as well as an increased number of students presenting with significant needs. These 38 additional staff resulted in the STEA budget being over by approximately \$510, 000.

Educational Assistants are provided to schools to meet the significant medical and safety needs of students with special education needs. Principals and their teams review the needs of their school carefully and create plans to best support the needs of students at their sites. Various methods have been used over the past years to determine school need. This year, Educational Services provided an updated High Needs Template (HNT) that supported schools in reviewing the needs at their specific sites. The HNT is designed to support schools in reviewing a student's most pressing needs:

- Medical/physical which includes mobility, personal care, and medical care

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- Safety which can include aggression, self-injury or being unaware of dangers
- Adaptive which includes communication challenges as well as sensory or self-regulation concerns

Schools are also able to complete a whole school profile. See Appendix B. This profile provides the school and Educational Services with a comprehensive summary of the needs presented at each individual site. Once these documents are completed, the Principal and Vice Principal of Educational Services, along with all the Special Education Coordinators, review each school and provide the level of support required based on the documentation provided, as well as knowledge gathered by the various Educational Services teams and support personnel who work at the schools and work with the students who have been identified through the process.

As previously mentioned, to provide some flexibility of support for students new to the board, or for safety situations that have been identified, we provide STEA. Schools can work through the Principal of Educational Services on the identification of needs, the provision of STEA, and a plan to reduce/remove the STEA when appropriate.

Once the school allocation has been provided to a school principal, the principal creates positions and support plans for the students who were listed in the HNT. This process requires Administrators to plan purposefully and to use these invaluable resources as efficiently as possible. Once finalized, these positions are then shared with Educational Services, CUPE, and Educational Assistants across the Board so that the staffing process can take place. The staffing process is predicated on seniority and follows the current CUPE collective agreement.

For the 2022/23 school year, 325 FTE Education Assistant positions were provided to the system. We are also anticipating the allocation of 43 STEA to begin the school year.

Superintendent Gillam also highlighted that the staffing process of EA job selection has changed over the course of the year.

Chair Ruttan thanked Superintendent Gillam for the report and called upon Trustees for questions.

#### **4.4 COVID- 19 Update**

Associate Superintendent Gollogly reviewed the recently announced updates to the School and Child Care Screening tool as released by the Ministry of Health and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer. She noted that Limestone will continue to work closely with KFL&A Public Health and community partners as it relates to COVID-19 and absence due to illness.

Chair Ruttan thanked Associate Superintendent Gollogly and called upon Trustees for questions.

5. **Reports for Action**

None at this time.

6. **Unfinished Business**

None at this time.

7. **New Business**

None at this time.

8. **Correspondence**

None at this time.

9. **Next Meeting Date**

October 5, 2022

10. **Adjournment**

*Moved by Trustee Morning that the meeting adjourn. Carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.