

Written Student Trustee Application:  
Tanesha Duncan

**Why do you want to be an urban/rural student trustee representing the Limestone DSB?**

I would like to be the next urban student trustee to represent the Limestone District School Board because as a Black high school student, I think it is important for other Black students within the board to feel represented and to know the Board is listening to their concerns and the issues that are affecting their school experience. I want to create a forum for minority students to feel comfortable talking to someone about their experiences with racism in schools across the district.

I want to help with improving the student experience of: People of Colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ and lower income students and everyone in between.

When I first came to Kingston I didn't know how to read, I was already 10 years old and no one cared to teach me. I went to three or more different schools, two of those in Ottawa and the other in Morrisburg. Not one teacher seemed to care; they just kept letting me move on. Without my Aunt taking the time to teach me, after I moved here I would never have been as smart and intelligent as I am today. The reason why I am telling you this is because I know other students within the board who are going through the same thing I was, and are looked down upon or bullied by other students because they can't do things at the same pace or read fluently. It took me four years and a whole lot of Kumon to reach past my grade level in reading and it was not easy at all, oftentimes I would get angry at myself. I want to create a program where students who struggle in English or mathematics can get a "side" education where tutors are judgement-free and patient. I can connect to these students on a different level because I know what it feels like, and I want them to be able to express themselves to the board and ask for what they need for their futures.

**What experience do you have that would make you a unique candidate?**

The below is a list of my experience that would make me a unique candidate:

- I have been meeting and communicating on a regular basis with Suchetan James , Equity & Inclusion Consultant for over the past year. Mr. James and I have discussed changing the school curriculum to make it more inclusive and to include teaching Black History, creating an environment that promotes inclusion, acceptance and community amongst People of Colour.
- I have participated in meetings with the Queen's Black Caucus with current urban trustee Namirah Quadir and Mr. James to create mentorship opportunities and to encourage Black students to pursue post-secondary education.
- This year, I was responsible for Black History Month celebrations at L.C.V.I., I made multiple videos sharing stories of important Black historical figures and these videos were shared on the L.C.V.I's Instagram and Twitter pages.

- I volunteered at Camp Iawah during the summer of 2019 where I gained valuable leadership skills, a sense of independence and new appreciation for working as part of a team.
- I currently work part-time at McDonald's. I have learned many skills working there, including multitasking, working under pressure and dealing with difficult customers. I have also addressed racism and microaggressions that I have experienced in the workplace.

**Are you passionate about the student voice? How will you ensure that the student voice is heard within the Interschool Council, at the Limestone District School Board Table, and with the provincial student trustee body, OSTA-AECO?**

YES, I am passionate about the student voice!! The student voice is a topic that deeply interests me and one I can speak about for hours. In speaking with me, my passion is evident.

As urban student trustee I will ensure the student voice is being heard amongst the interschool council by participating in the board meetings. I am outgoing and not afraid to ask questions on topics I might not understand. I am a good listener and feel comfortable and confident in bringing forward issues and ideas of the student voice.

I believe the most effective way to connect with students in the urban school district is to provide a variety of methods to communicate. These methods include: social media, questionnaires, surveys, videos, posters, Zoom meetings and of course in person. My goal is to gain the trust of the students' voice. I will bring forth the information I gather from my interactions to the Board Table in an open and honest manner in order to have meaningful conversations.