

Education, Policy and Operations Committee Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2024

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
G. Elliott (virtual) B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) R. Hutcheon (Chair) T. Lloyd (virtual) J. Maracle K. McGregor J. Morning (virtual) J. Neill (regrets) S. Ruttan C. Scott A. Bukhari (Student Trustee) (regrets) R. Kolosov (Student Trustee) (regrets) S. Kumar (Student Trustee) (regrets)	K. Burra, Director of Education M. Christopher, IT Programmer J. Douglas, Communications Consultant P. Gollogly, Associate Superintendent J. Silver, Superintendent of Education C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Godkin welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided the Land Acknowledgement: “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. From a personal perspective I am very appreciative for and honored to live on this land and very privileged to be a part of this this board and to over the last six years to have learned so much. I have gained a much greater appreciation for Indigenous people and all the wealth knowledge and everything that they have to share with us.”

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor that the agenda be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts declared.

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4. REPORTS FOR ACTION

4.1 Updates to Policies 9 and 15

Director Burra began by introducing his report on the two Policy changes being presented with Policy 9- Student Trustees containing housekeeping changes to align with current practices and Policy 15 – Trustee Attendance, Electronic Meetings and Participation of Board Members containing significant adjustments to align with Bill 98 and associated regulations. He noted that each policy's changes would be reviewed separately and that the attendance expectations in Policy 15 do not apply to Student Trustees.

Director Burra explained that the proposed changes reflected in Policy 15 would be in effect September 2025 to align with Regulation 463/97. He reviewed the significant changes which include:

- Electronic meeting attendance
- Missing a Committee of the Whole meeting
- Consequences of missing a Committee of the Whole meeting

The new Policy would reflect that if a Trustee is absent for a meeting without authorization by Board motion, they may be required to vacate their seat. For a Trustee to attend a meeting electronically, an approval process would be in place where Trustee's would submit requests in advance to the Chair for approval. In order to meet approval conditions, the request would have to be based on the following criteria:

- Distance greater than 125km
- Weather conditions
- Health concerns
- Disability
- Family responsibilities

Director Burra explained in the case that the Chair of the Board needed to submit an absence or electronic attendance request that it would be made to the Vice Chair of the Board. Director Burra highlighted some potential additions that Trustees may want to consider that would supplement the policy in extenuating circumstances. After discussion, Trustees requested that changes to Policy 15 be deferred and that Director Burra bring back Policy 15 with additional language later in the Winter to provide more provisions based on Section 228 of the Education Act.

Chair Godkin proceeded with the proposed motion for the Policy 9 housekeeping changes.

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MOTION MOVED By Trustee Scott that the changes to Policy 9 be approved with edits as outlined in Appendix A. Carried.

Chair Godkin thanked Director Burra for his report.

5. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

5.1 Director's Annual Report 2023-2024

Director Burra stated that the Director's Annual Report is a legislated regulatory, annual requirement. The Annual Report is a summary of the previous 2023-2024 School Year. Director Burra explained that this is a legal requirement to publicly share information about LDSB including budget information, EQAO, as well as an opportunity to highlight and celebrate different Board initiatives. The report will be communicated to families, caregivers and community members in addition to being posted to the Board website for viewing. This will be submitted to the Ministry of Education in compliance with the January 31, 2025 deadline.

Chair Godkin thanked Director Burra and called upon Trustees for questions.

5.2 School Climate Data Survey

Associate Superintendent Gollogly introduced her report. She reminded Trustees that as part of the ongoing effort to maintain a safe, inclusive, and accepting school environment, the Limestone District School Board conducts a school climate survey every two years. This is also a requirement of the Ministry of Education as part of PPM 145. The latest survey, conducted in April of 2024, gathered input from students in grades 4 to 12. The results from the 2023-2024 survey were compared with those from the 2021-2022 survey.

Associate Superintendent Gollogly provided a high-level overview of the survey results which revealed a slight decline in overall participation rates, with a notable drop in secondary students' participation. However, there was an increase in students' sense of agency, with more students feeling that their learning is connected to the world and that they can make a difference. Engagement in schoolwork also saw positive responses, with most students reporting interest in their learning at least some of the time.

Future orientation showed a significant increase, with more students thinking about their future careers. The proportion of students who believe they will graduate from high school increased by 5%. However, there was a decline in students feeling safe in certain areas, such as online and in gym change rooms and bathrooms. Reports of bullying increased, which can be attributed to the improved human rights reporting tool. Despite this, reports of physical bullying decreased, and more students reported bullying incidents to adults.

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In terms of human rights and equity, there was a decrease in negative treatment of transgender students and an increase in the use of correct pronouns by adults. Mental health concerns were highlighted, with nearly one in four secondary students rating their mental health as poor. Substance use, particularly vaping, alcohol, and high-caffeine energy drinks, was common among students. Social media use increased with grade level, and students who slept less were more likely to use social media longer, especially at night.

Vice-Chair Godkin thanked Associate Superintendent Gollogly for her reports and called upon Trustees for questions.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

9. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

February 5, 2025

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Scott that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The Meeting Adjourned at 6:36 p.m.