

Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2025

PRIVATE SESSION

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
G. Elliott B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) R. Hutcheon (Chair) T. Lloyd (virtual) J. Maracle K. McGregor J. Morning J. Neill S. Ruttan C. Scott A. Bukhari (Student Trustee) R. Kolosov (Student Trustee) (regrets) S. Kumar (Student Trustee) (regrets)	K. Burra, Director of Education S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education P. Gollogly, Associate Superintendent (virtual) S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education T. McKenna, Associate Superintendent (virtual) S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent of Education (virtual) J. Silver, Superintendent of Education (virtual) C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Godkin called the meeting to order.

2. RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND PRIVATE SESSION

MOTION: To move into Private Session.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and Trustee Scott. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Vice-Chair Godkin asked Trustees if they had a conflict of interest to declare with any of the agenda items. There were no conflicts declared.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes (Private) – January 15, 2025

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor that the minutes listed in Action Items, Private Session, as distributed, be approved. Carried.

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Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.

5. FOR INFORMATION

- 5.1. Safe Schools Update – Superintendent Gillam provided a Safe Schools update.
- 5.2. Property Update
- 5.3. Personnel Update – Director Burra provided a personnel update.
- 5.4. Labour Update- Superintendent Young provided a labour update.
- 5.5. Legal Update – Superintendent Young provided a legal update.
- 5.6. OPSBA Update

6. REPORT TO PUBLIC SESSION

Vice-Chair Godkin called for a motion for the Board to rise and report.

MOTION: That the Board rise and report.

MOVED BY: Trustee Scott. Carried.

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
G. Elliott B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) R. Hutcheon (Chair) T. Lloyd (virtual) J. Maracle K. McGregor J. Morning J. Neill S. Ruttan C. Scott A. Bukhari (Student Trustee) R. Kolosov (Student Trustee) (regrets) S. Kumar (Student Trustee)	K. Burra, Director of Education S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education P. Gollogly, Associate Superintendent (virtual) S. Hedderson, Associate Superintendent A. McDonnell, Superintendent of Education (virtual) T. McKenna, Associate Superintendent S. McWilliams, Superintendent of Human Resources S. Sartor, Associate Superintendent of Education (virtual) J. Silver, Superintendent of Education (virtual) C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services
Guests:	Recorder:
Erika Chesnick, Elementary Literacy and Early Years Consultant Jo Anne Ferguson, Elementary Literacy, K to 12 Empower Lead Nate Zahn, Outdoor Education Consultant Bob Seitz, Executive Lead and Vice-Principal of International Education	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

Chair Hutcheon welcomed everyone to the Regular Board Meeting and called the roll.

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She provided the Land Acknowledgement: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. 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.”

7. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and seconded by Trustee Godkin that the agenda, as amended, be approved. Carried.

8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chair Hutcheon asked that if Trustees have a conflict of interest, could they please identify the item number. There were no conflicts declared.

9. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

9.1 Operational Plan: Literacy Operational Plan Focus

Associate Superintendent Sartor began the presentation by reviewing system data collected from 2023-2024 EQAO results, report cards, survey data, and street data. This data highlighted the need for targeted support in writing, driven by EQAO data, report card data, and educator feedback. Associate Superintendent Sartor invited Erika Chesnick, Elementary Literacy and Early Years Consultant and Jo Anne Ferguson, Elementary Literacy and K to 12 Empower Lead to the podium.

Ms. Ferguson presented on the Writing Revolution Initiative, an evidence-based strategy that ensures all students at all levels can produce clear, coherent, unified, and structured writing. She shared how this professional learning was implemented across the board and some positive testimonials from educators.

Ms. Chesnick shared another initiative, Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD), which is a research-based strategy that combines explicit instructional strategies with self-regulation support for students. She shared some information about thinkSRSD which is an educational resource that assists with improving writing skills and noted that it would be piloted this school year. She remarked on the positive feedback received from educators and highlighted the ongoing support from the learning partner team.

Associate Superintendent Sartor shared the next steps, including developing common writing tasks for educators, seeking qualitative feedback, and continuing job-embedded learning in schools. She concluded the presentation by emphasizing the importance of using data to determine next steps.

10. PRIVATE SESSION REPORT

During the Private Session following adjournment of the January 15, 2025, Public Board Meeting:

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- Director Burra provided a personnel update.

There was no other business conducted, or motions passed in Private Session.

Earlier this evening during Private Session:

- The Private Session minutes were approved from the Regular Board Meeting of January 15, 2025.
- Superintendent Gillam gave a Safe Schools update.
- Superintendent Young gave a Legal update.
- Superintendent Young gave a Labour update.
- Director Burra gave a Personnel update.

There was no other business conducted, or motions passed in Private Session.

I move that this report be approved.

*MOVED By Trustee Godkin and seconded by Trustee Scott that the Private Session Report be received.
Carried.*

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 11.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes – January 15, 2025
- 11.2 EPOC Meeting Minutes – February 5, 2025

*MOVED BY Trustee Neill and seconded by Trustee Scott that the minutes, as presented, be approved.
Carried.*

12. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

12.1 Chair's Report

Chair Hutcheon stated: "Good evening and welcome everyone. We are very soon entering everyone's favourite time – budget season. The Limestone District School Board will be seeking feedback on the development of next year's school budget through our regular annual survey that will soon be shared with families, students, staff, and community partners. This feedback helps us to identify priorities for the use of LDSB's finite financial resources. This information is invaluable in assisting Trustees throughout the budgeting process to ensure students' needs are best served in 2025-2026; and for that I say 'Thank you' to everyone who is able to provide it. If anyone is not able to get to the survey, please feel free to contact your local Trustee to articulate where you feel our budget priorities should be. Family and community feedback is our most important input to developing and approving the annual budget.

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Coming up, the 2025 Limestone Skills Competition will be held at St. Lawrence College, Bayridge Secondary School and Napanee District Secondary School next Wednesday and Thursday. This is the 25th anniversary of this event, which has grown significantly the last few years by now offering students in Grades 4 to 12 an opportunity to challenge themselves and demonstrate their interest and talents in the skilled trades and robotics. I extend my best wishes to all participating students, and extend sincere appreciation to staff advisors, and industry coaches, for their support of students in their pursuit of excellence.

Two reminders for families: First; Limestone families are invited to Kids and Screens: Healthy Habits - An Evening with Dr. Shimi Kang, at Queen's University on March 4. Dr Kang is the author of The Tech Solution: Creating Healthy Habits for Kids Growing up in a Digital World, and is providing a free, one-hour keynote to share how families can navigate healthy technology use with their children of all ages. We have provided a link on the Limestone website to reserve your seats for this evening event, which is being held, again, at Queen's University on March 4.

Second; next Thursday, February 27, will mark the election of the 44th parliament in Ontario. Our provincial government decides how our provincial taxes and federal transfer payments are distributed, how much is provided for education and where we prioritize their large envelopes of spending, and what is taught in our schools. It is in our best interest, as citizens of KFL&A, of Ontario, of Canada, and of this Earth, to know where candidates stand on education issues. Your vote is your voice; make it an informed one. Democracy is a wonderful institution which works best with an informed populace and an engaged voting population. You can find information about voting, where, how, and accessibility options, on the Elections Ontario website.

With that, I would like to turn things to a less comfortable part of where we are in schools at the moment. Even folks who aren't paying attention; even on purpose, because I know lots of people, including me, who tune out the daily news as a matter of course; even those folks, have a sense of what's going on in the world these days. We are in worrying times, and I don't say that to incite anxiety or to be alarmist. I have two young boys – 11 and 13 – and they think it's quite funny to Sieg Heil behind my back. Or to do so in a slightly subtle, half-hearted way with a sly look to make sure they have my attention. This, I find very concerning; in no small part due to the state of world affairs and our neighbours to the south. Make no mistake – it is never okay for my boys to do this. And I fully understand that children do things to get a reaction. I have four children; trust me, I understand this. My boys have their own phones and they have access to the internet if they have wifi; which is everywhere, including our schools. This is the world we live in. I monitor as much as I can and I am separated from their father, so my monitoring is limited. I do

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see enough content, and enough news, to know that we are at a tipping point. We have leaders elected to national levels born after World War II. We have social media that is a breeding ground for extremist content. The realities and lessons of history run the risk of slipping out of our social and individual consciousness. I believe it is important to be vigilant and to not stay silent. Hate can be insidious; it can present as a saviour or as a joke, or just an alternative; and I would like, I think it is important, to remind us all that there is never room for it. It is not funny, it is not cute, and it is not welcome. We are a small governing body and in the grand scheme of things we may seem minor. And we are directly connected to our future. A future that I hope, and I pray, is one filled with love and kindness, not dominated by divisive hate and intolerance. I believe, and this is why I sit proudly in this chair, that here in this room and out there in our schools we strive for, and we promote, a culture of tolerance and kindness and love. Sometimes we might get it wrong and when we do we learn and we grow. When we know better, we do better. I believe in that education system and it is why I believe in the public education system. Because here, we sit in these chairs, and we stand for a system that is inclusive, that provides equity of opportunity, and that champions diversity as the keystone of human achievement. We must not let hate win; and it starts with our children.

And that concludes my report.”

12.2 Director’s Report

Director Burra stated: “Good evening Trustees and the viewing public. It is hard to believe, but we are already a few weeks into the second half of the 2024-2025 school year. First term and first semester report cards have been sent home, secondary students are making course selections for next year, Choices at 9 programs have completed their processes, Choices at 7 programs will be making decisions soon, March Break is just around the corner, and planning is well underway for the 2025-2026 school year. Preparations for next year will continue to ramp up and we eagerly await the release of the budget for next school year that may well be delayed by the current provincial election.

I have a number of highlights and upcoming events that I would like to share this evening. Winter KASSA seasons have either ended or will be ending prior to March Break. Last week the volleyball championships were held at St. Lawrence College, and tomorrow evening St. Lawrence hosts the boys’ basketball finals. It should be noted that all of the finals had, or will have, only LDSB schools in the finals.

A second highlight occurred on February 5, just before our EPOC meeting, when a Black History Kick-off event was held at LCVI. While I know senior staff and some Trustees were only able to attend the first half

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of the event due to our EPOC meeting, there were several moving tributes to our former colleague and friend, Trustee Judi Brown.

A third highlight is that Limestone has three secondary schools competing this week in a regional Canadian Improv Games event being held at the Spire starting this evening.

In terms of upcoming events, I would like to highlight that LDSB, in partnership with LDSB PIC and KFL&A Public Health, are hosting an evening with Dr. Shimi Kang, author of “The Tech Solution: Creating Healthy Habits for Kids Growing Up in a Digital World.” Given the emerging research, and provincial focus on healthy habits for children and youth interacting with screens and various media, this is a timely presentation that will be held at Humphrey Hall at Queen’s University on Tuesday, March 4 starting at 6:00.

A second upcoming event of note will be held on the evening of Wednesday, April 30, when we will host an evening for Limestone families focused on artificial intelligence. This evening will provide an overview of this relatively new technology, how it impacts people’s lives already, and its potential uses to support student learning in Limestone schools. Further details will be shared about this event in several weeks.

A third upcoming event is what we are hoping will be an outstanding Skills Competition at St. Lawrence College next week on February 26 and February 27. Almost 300 Limestone students, Grades 4 to 12, will be participating across 25 secondary events and seven elementary events. The Skills Competition is yet another example of community partnership that showcases critical skills events and the local community college.

One final highlight that I will draw Trustees’ attention to is our continued emphasis on collecting voice from the communities we serve. Tonight, Associate Superintendent Gollogly will share an overview of the school year calendar feedback and look for Trustee approval of the 2025-2026 calendar. In the next week or so, we will be providing an opportunity for input on the 2025-2026 budget and gauge interest from families in virtual school programming for next year. Additionally, in the spring, all Limestone staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback on LDSB Corporate Services (Communications, Facilities, Finance, Human Resources, and ITS) as we continue to look for improved delivery of services for staff. Limestone school communities and staff are critical partners, and our schools are representative of the communities we serve; we have a responsibility to be responsive to community voice and changing circumstances. And on this final note, I would like to thank all Limestone staff who contributed to the 2024 United Way campaign. We just received the final tally and LDSB staff contributed almost \$55,000 to the campaign

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which provides critical supports to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in KFL&A, including students and families we serve.

Thank you, Chair Hutcheon. That concludes my report.”

13 REPORTS

13.1 OPSBA Report

Trustee McGregor provided her update:

- PES Conference: Trustees had an opportunity to attend some great workshops on a variety of topics including AI which were all well-attended.
- This past weekend was supposed to be an advocacy day but was delayed due to the election.
- The next board meeting will take place February 23, 2025.

13.2 Student Trustees’ Report

Student Trustee Kumar stated: “Good evening Trustees and the viewing public.

At our meeting on February 11, 2025, the Inter-Student Council (ISC) held elections for the Urban and Rural Student Trustee positions for the 2025-2026 term. Through an interview and voting process, student representatives from high schools across the board selected the candidates they thought best-suited the role of a Student Trustee.

We are pleased to congratulate Siham Ishmail from Kingston Secondary School (KSS) who was elected as the incoming Urban Student Trustee, Mia Comeau from Granite Ridge Education Centre who was acclaimed as the incoming Rural Student Trustee, and current Indigenous Student Trustee Rachel Kolosov from KSS who was acclaimed as the Indigenous Student Trustee for the 2025-2026 term.

As we move into the second half of our term as Student Trustees, we look forward to working with the incoming Student Trustees to help them transition into their roles. This concludes our February ISC meeting report. Thank you.”

13.3 Reports for Action

13.3.1 School Year Calendar

Associate Superintendent Gollogly shared an overview of the School Year Calendar consultation results from the survey which closed on February 3, 2025. She noted that participation this year was 71% from

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families, 21% from staff, and 8% from students and other. The data showed that Calendar Option 3 was the most selected and was chosen 45.7% of the time. Associate Superintendent Gollogly recommended that Trustees approve and submit Option 3 to the Ministry by March 1, 2025.

MOTION MOVED by Trustee Ruttan and seconded by Trustee McGregor that Trustees approve calendar Option 3 for the 2025-2026 school year. Carried.

13.4 Reports for Information

13.4.1 Outdoor Education

Superintendent McWilliams introduced Nate Zahn, Outdoor Education Coordinator, and remarked on how this programming supports student well-being and sense of belonging, participation, and engagement in class time.

Mr. Zahn shared some background information about the partnership between Limestone District School Board and the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) dating back to the late 1960s. He indicated that typically the Gould Lake Outdoor Centre sees 7,500 elementary students and 1,000 secondary students in a school year with 500 students in the summer.

He shared some highlights of the different school year programming which include things like swimming, cookouts, Bannock, archery, pond scooping (biodiversity), team building, hiking, learning. This programming is developed using the Ontario curriculum and touches on the following areas:

- Physical Education: hiking, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, winter activities, group dynamics, and archery.
- Social Studies: mapping, orienteering, GPS, fur trade.
- Science and Technology: pond study, rocks and minerals, plants and soils, woodland hike, structures, habitats and species at risk.

Mr. Zahn reviewed the summer programs that are offered to students in Grades 1 to 12. Participation in either day camps or wilderness trip programs allow students to earn credits and other certifications during trips that range from five to 25 days. There are nine different programs that build on the previous year's skills which include:

- Nature Camp
- Outdoor Escape
- Girls Adventure Program
- Quest
- Outreach
- Outdoor Pursuits

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- Outdoor Skills
- Wilderness Instructor Course
- Kayak Instructor Course

Mr. Zahn explained how the Friends of Outreach (FOO) was created in 1996 to eliminate costs of the programming offered. Through this charitable trust, programming costs can be offset by 50% for program tuition. He stated that due to FOO, this past summer, 42 students were able to participate programming at a reduced cost. Other FOO initiatives include an outdoor leadership scholarship which cover complete costs that 20 students across the board benefitted from, and the opportunity for 15 students from Molly Brant Public School to attend Nature Camp.

Mr. Zahn shared the opportunities that were provided for professional learning for educators, including five outdoor sessions in the fall with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers. These sessions allow for educators to engage in learning with a focus on mathematics.

Mr. Zahn concluded his presentation by sharing that the outdoor centre is now in possession of an accessible all-terrain wheelchair which allows for students to access sand, water, and snowing terrain. This will help make the programs offered by the outdoor centre more accessible and will be available for schools to access for other field trip opportunities.

Chair Hutcheon thanked Superintendent McWilliams and Mr. Zahn and asked Trustees for questions.

13.4.2 International Education

Chair Hutcheon introduced Executive Lead and Vice-Principal Bob Seitz. Mr. Seitz began his presentation by updating Trustees about the Ontario Strategy for Grades K to 12 International Education which was updated by the Provincial Government in 2015. He shared the highlights of the guide:

- Support federal commitments to global education.
- Support student achievement for those studying in Ontario.
- Support diversity.
- Social, cultural and economic benefits to Ontario.

Mr. Seitz reviewed the different types of programming offered to International Education Office students in Limestone which include:

- Multi-year to graduate
- One-year English learning
- Short-term Canada experience
- Parents working/studying in Canada

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Mr. Seitz shared some graphics about which countries our current students are from and how enrollment has changes over the years. He noted that pre-pandemic there were 14,000 Grades K to 12 students studying in Ontario. Traditionally, approximately 120 full-time students are hosted by Limestone annually. Currently, Canada is a desirable destination for students to study.

Mr. Seitz reviewed some information about the Homestay program and emphasized the need for families accepting placements. He shared the benefits of this programming for Limestone:

- Support for classes and programming
- Support for continued diversity
- Support for school funding
- Benefit to the Kingston community and global connections

Mr. Seitz concluded his presentation by inviting one of the International Education Office Homestay students, Lottie, to share her experience at Limestone. Lottie has been in Kingston since September 2024, and is visiting from Germany.

Chair Hutcheon thanked Mr. Seitz and called upon Trustees for questions.

14 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

15 NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

16 CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

17 NOTICE OF MOTION

None at this time.

18 ANNOUNCEMENTS

19 COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

19.1 Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2024

19.2 Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes –January 22, 2025

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20 FUTURE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

March 26, 2025

21 ADJOURNMENT AND MOVE INTO PRIVATE SESSION

MOTION MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor and seconded by Trustee Neill that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The Meeting Adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

PRIVATE SESSION

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
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Guests:	Recorder:
	S. Mitton, Executive Assistant to the Director and Trustee Liaison

22 FOR INFORMATION

22.1 Safe Schools Update

22.2 Property Update

22.3 Personnel Update – Director Burra provided a personnel update.

22.4 Labour Update

22.5 Legal Update

22.6 OPSBA Update

23 REPORT TO PUBLIC SESSION

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Vice-Chair Godkin called for a motion for the Board to rise and report at the March 26, 2025, Regular Board Meeting.

MOTION: That the Board rise and report.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor. Carried.

The Meeting Adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

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