

**Limestone District School Board**

**Agenda**

**Committee of the Whole Board (Budget) Meeting**

**Monday, May 11, 2015**

**Limestone Education Centre**

**220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Approval of the Agenda**

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

**1. Budget Consultations**

**Presentations**

- a) Association of Elementary School Administrators, Steve Hedderson, Principal  
(Appended.)
- b) Secondary Principals' Group, Caroline Worthy, Principal  
(Appended.)

**Written Submissions**

- a) Letter, Lorna-Jean Astle  
(Appended.)

**2. Information Items**

- a) 2015-2016 Operating Budget - Revenue, Myra Baumann, Manager of Financial Services  
(To be distributed.)
- b) Review of Accumulated Surplus Balances  
(Appended.)

**Other Business**

**Private Session**

**Committee to Rise and Report**

**Next Meeting Dates**

Monday, June 1, 2015 6 pm  
Monday, June 8, 2015 (if needed)  
Monday, June 15, 2015 6 pm

**Adjournment**

# Association of Elementary School Administrators



Helping  
Collaboration  
Professional  
Modeling  
Reflecting  
Community  
Curriculum  
Planning  
Create to Learn  
Facilitating  
**Instructional Coach**  
Instructional Design Professional Development  
Creativity Integration

## **BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2015-2016**

**LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

The Association of Elementary School Administrators has one main budget priority: continued funding for evolving, differentiated professional learning for staff to support student learning and achievement for all.

# Association of Elementary School Administrators

May 1, 2015

Dear Trustees of the Limestone District School Board:

The Association of Elementary School Administrators (AESA) would like to thank you once again for allowing us the opportunity to share our perspective on areas of priority to consider as part of your 2015-16 deliberations. Steve Hedderson, Principal at École Sir John A. Macdonald Public School and AESA Budget Chair will speak on behalf of AESA at the Budget meeting on May 11, 2015.

AESA recognizes that this is one of the most challenging upcoming fiscal years in recent memory and that difficult decisions will need to be made in order to balance next year's budget. We request that one critical area we believe is integral to continuing to improve learning and achievement for all Limestone students is funded to the fullest extent possible: professional learning for staff. We believe that staff capacity building is the key to realizing the goals in the Board's strategic plan, *Success for All*.

We want to thank you for your support with a significant investment in mobile technology through last year's budget. Elementary administrators have noticed the ways that this technology is helping staff begin to rethink pedagogy, enhance student engagement and learning outcomes in classrooms and improve communication with families. Elementary administrators are hopeful there will continue to be support in 2015-16 for professional development surrounding the use of mobile technology and that it becomes increasingly embedded in the professional learning for teachers and ultimately a part of our regular practice in all classrooms.

Elementary administrators are proud of the continued growth we have seen in teaching and learning across our classrooms with instructional strategies to support student learning and achievement in Mathematics, but we recognize we are still at the beginning of a longer journey. In order to sustain the momentum, professional learning needs to continue to be a primary area of focus for us. As we continue to support teachers in building capacity in Mathematical content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, we are hopeful release time to carry out this learning in a variety of ways can be protected as much as possible.

Please find attached a summary of AESA's budget priorities for consideration for 2015-2016.

Sincerely,

*AESA Executive*

# BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2015-2016

## Budget Priority – Evolving Professional Learning

### *Our Commitment*

Elementary administrators remain committed to our role as instructional leaders in schools, to our own continued growth as learners and leaders and to supporting the ongoing learning of all staff in service of student learning.

### *Why*

When teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants, administrators and others have time to engage in professional discourse about teaching and learning through collaborative inquiry, co-planning, co-teaching, co-debriefing and co-reflecting, as well as other research-based professional learning models, conversations amongst teams of educators become focused on student learning, lead to instructional changes, more effective monitoring, and subsequently increase the likelihood of higher levels of achievement for more students.

### *Where We Are*

Across our schools, we are seeing wider implementation of problem-solving based mathematics which honours student voice and promotes independence in learning. Educators are collaboratively deconstructing big ideas, linking them to curriculum and helping to make mathematics accessible to all through the development of deeper content knowledge and deeper pedagogical content knowledge.

Meanwhile, educators are continuing to learn more about inquiry-based learning not only in Kindergarten but how it could look in primary classes to ensure greater continuity for students moving up the grades.

### *Our Belief*

We believe in the collective capacity of educators in Limestone to continue to evolve to meet the demands of our changing learners and we embrace our role in the professional learning cycle as instructional leaders and co-learners.

### *Instructional Coaches: Moving from Discussion to Implementation*

In addition to professional learning opportunities for collaborative inquiry, we know the impact of professional learning is greatest when it results in the strategic implementation of the new ideas being discussed at the learning table, or in other words, new practices become embedded to become part of regular practice in the classroom.

Promoting co-planning, co-teaching, co-debriefing and co-reflecting with a knowledgeable other in the form of an instructional coach is an important part of the learning cycle. It provides an opportunity for risk-taking, observation, practising, feedback, reflection and ultimately – adoption and innovation. It can lead to a more collaborative approach to teaching and learning in schools and lends itself to the likelihood of more shared ownership for success of more students within a school. It's another step in developing our culture of learning.

Although it is a priority for elementary administrators to see more instructional coaches in schools to support good teaching and learning in classrooms, we understand that investment is challenging when faced with the reality of funding reductions. However, given the significant

reduction in funding to Special Education, developing the capacity of classroom teachers to be better able to address the needs of an increasingly diverse student population is critical for our continued and ongoing success.

***How: Possibilities Beyond New Money***

The implementation of instructional coaches could potentially be achieved in a number of ways outside of new money being allocated. For example, it could be considered that release time currently allocated by the full-time equivalency of staff be reduced slightly in order to achieve partial or full release for instructional coaches. There are potentially other ways to achieve this type of professional learning support as well if a new investment is not possible this year, and as always, we remain open for any type of consultation that could assist in achieving this outcome and supporting the direction of the Board moving forward.

***Reflection, Collaboration & Innovation***

We are hopeful that we can maintain funding for professional learning that has technology embedded as part of it, even if we do not have the capacity for further investment. While we are aware of the funding reductions to Special Education, we are hopeful to protect as many supports as possible while recognizing that we will need to rethink some past practices and work collaboratively to find new ways to continue to support some of our students moving forward and will continue to be willing partners in this process of reflection and innovation.

# Secondary Principals' Central Programs Budget Submission to the Limestone District School Board Trustees

May, 2015

## **Background**

Secondary Schools are directly allocated funds based on a per-pupil basis as determined by the Board. Trustees also allocate funds to support board-wide initiatives and programs through the Secondary Central Programs Budget. As everyone is aware declining enrolment and decreased funding makes financial planning a challenge for the upcoming school year.

## **Secondary School Central Programs Budget**

The Secondary School Central Programs Budget allows for cost effective use of limited financial resources among schools. It supports a number of initiatives and resources utilized Board-wide. This budget is used to support our collective mission which is *to prepare students within a safe and inclusive environment to embrace a changing world as life-long learners and informed and responsible citizens*. It specifically supports the Board's strategic objective of *student success and increased achievement levels*.

The current year we were able to support the following.

- Information Technology – particularly the area of assistive technology for students
- Professional Learning for P's and VP's
- Cooperative education
- Outdoor education
- Secondary school enrichment programs
- The University and College Info Program
- Teacher Resource Centre
- Cancopy, video, SoCan and other technical licenses
- Secondary extracurricular activities, including the arts and athletics (a portion of this is used to support late busing for after school activities in rural schools, where there continues to be financial pressure)

## ***Financial Needs for 2015-2016 School Year***

Maintenance of the Central Programs Budget is vital to the continued success of our secondary schools. For principals, collectively reviewing our financial needs and working together with central funds to address needs with cost efficiency and consistency across secondary schools has proven to be an effective model.

There is one main area in which principals agree continues to be pressure and we are unable to provide enough financial support. The need for enhanced information technology resources is critical to the engagement and success of our students.

### ***Information Technology Allocations to enhance engagement, accountability and sustainability***

There is continued pressure to ensure our schools and our teaching remain current, relevant and engaging for our students, who are often ahead of the adults in their world, in this area. As well, there is an increasing need to purchase e-books, text materials and other electronic resources to support all students, but in particular, to support students requiring assistive technologies to ensure success. As we encourage the “Bring your own Device” there are also many students whose families do not have the means to provide this technology to the students.

Secondary principals wish to acknowledge and thank Trustees for their continued support and hard work, particularly during this difficult budget process in very difficult times. Our combined efforts will continue to provide excellent programming, safe and inclusive environments and a high quality educational experience for all of our students.

Lorna-Jean Astle  
35-19 MacPherson Ave.  
Kingston, ON K7M 6W4  
[astlelj@kos.net](mailto:astlelj@kos.net)  
613-547-5538  
April 29, 2015.

Board of Trustees  
Limestone District School Board  
Kingston, ON

Dear Trustees,

My name is Lorna-Jean Astle. I was an Educational Assistant with the Limestone Board for 33 years and retired in June 2014. My last years as an E.A. were spent as a E.A. assigned to the Library in various schools including my last and most passionate endeavour of setting up the library at the new Ecole Sir John A. Macdonald P.S.

Last May E.A.s assigned to the Library got word that because of funding cuts, we would be required, on top of our numerous library duties, to provide support to a number of special needs children. This seemed like an impossible task to me and others and would severely change how the school libraries would function ( if at all). It upset me so much that I wrote a letter of passionate concern to the Board. (I have enclosed that letter for you to consider)

Since writing that letter last year I have continued to struggle to understand the Board's position in reducing an E.A. assigned to the Library's time in the library and to eliminate Library Technicians at the High School level. I see this as totally contrary to what I think an institution of learning for our children that says it values literacy should do.

At my former school, the E.A. assigned to the Library is only in the library for 1 ½ hours a day. That library is the largest public school library in Eastern Ontario and has over 25,000 books. How does anyone manage a library that size on 1 ½ hours a day. I can tell you that it is no longer a thriving, innovative learning centre of the school. It is now a large room holding books – not much more. This is happening to most of the school libraries in the county.

Teachers are complaining they cannot access the resources they need to teach. Board resources sent to schools (new beautiful mentor texts to support and enrich curriculum) sit idle because there is no time to catalogue them. In fact, very few new books for children get circulated because cataloguing cannot get done. There is no time except for the very bare bones requirements to keep the libraries functional.



Despite the wonderful work they do, volunteers are no replacement for regular staff in the library. Volunteers are often not trained (especially on sensitive computer systems), usually not reliable and need direction from an available E.A. assigned to the Library as to what needs to be done daily, weekly, monthly.

I can tell you that other school boards in Ontario and across Canada are much more committed to the protection and advancement of their school libraries than this Board is. Some examples are Kawartha Pine Ridge, Durham District, Halton District, Rainbow District, Hamilton-Wentworth and especially the incredible leadership going on at the TDSB. It breaks my heart to hear of the deterioration of our own libraries here. We are letting such a valuable resource slip through our fingers. If other school boards can make the commitment financially to their libraries than why can't our Board. To me and to so many I've talked to in our community over this past year – the Board's blatant neglect of it's libraries equals a blatant neglect of literacy for all our children.

So in conclusion, I appeal to each of you as honoured Trustees of this Board – as holders and protectors of what is valuable to our children's education – to begin to restore our school libraries by providing more financial funding to allow E.A.s assigned to the Library (and better yet – Teacher Librarians) to have more time in the library and less time providing individual student support. An E.A. full time in the library provides support to each and every child in a school as well as support to every teacher. What better value for your money can you get??

Sincerely,

Lorna-Jean Astle

Lorna-Jean Astle  
Former E.A. in the Library at  
Ecole Sir John A. Macdonald PS  
April 29, 2015.

Board of Trustees  
Board Office  
Limestone District School Board  
Kingston, ON.

Dear Board of Trustees,

(this is the letter I wrote to the Limestone Board in May 2014 while still a full-time employee with the Board)

I am writing to you in response to the Limestone Board's decision to add significant student support duties to an already overextended E.A. in the library's job.

When the memo came out regarding this I went into shock. I felt as if I had been kicked in the stomach. I am passionate about libraries and I am passionate about my job as an E.A. in the Library with the Board. I struggle mightily each day to find the time to do even the basic library necessities. I even recruited a great team of library volunteers that work hard to keep abreast of the over 100 books coming back into the library each day. I work many, many hours overtime because I believe in the power of a good library in encouraging literacy in children.

According to the Board's website, you also value the importance of literacy. On the website it states, "Literacy remains a crucial skill for success in every career pathway" and also, "The Board is dedicated to ensuring that students receive the support required to be successful in literacy."

The important role of the school library in the academic (and literacy) success of students has been well documented. In the document "Impact of School Libraries on Student Achievement: A Review of the Research"<sup>1</sup> the following conclusions were made:

- School libraries can have a positive impact, whether measured in terms of reading scores, literacy or learning more generally on student achievement
- Test scores are higher where there is higher usage of the school library
- A print-rich environment leads to more reading, and free voluntary reading is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling and grammatical ability and writing style

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<sup>1</sup> Michele Lonsdale, ASLA,  
<http://www.asla.org.au/site/defaultsite/filesystem/documents/research.pdf>

- Libraries can make a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning
- The impact of school libraries appears strongest at primary and junior high school levels
- The quality of the collection has an impact on student learning

These are only a few of the conclusions made and there is much more research out there to document the positive role of the school library on student achievement.

Limestone School Board E.A.s in the Library have for years been struggling (often in silence) to juggle the ever increasing demands of a school library in an information exploding and driven society. We do this with little funding for new resources or technology, with non-existent professional support and development and with rising amounts of student support and duty responsibilities.

E.A.s in the Library have always done student support in various forms and degrees from student tutoring or student literacy circles or small group remediation to providing support for vulnerable students or those on detention. To now require an E.A. in the Library to be responsible daily for individual students (one or several) will only serve to DECIMATE every school library in Limestone Board.

We as E.A.s in the Library do not just shelve books! We provide an integral piece in the learning success of all students in our schools. We, instead, are often viewed as an add-on resource, one that silently sits in the background moving books around. In my position, I carefully choose new books to engage students as well as to fit the curriculum needs, I provide books for teachers on any subject they need. I do all the upkeep of the library which includes cataloguing books, maintaining the collection, keeping the automated system in good working order. I design innovative decorations, pertinent book displays, and many activities and contests for the students. I am planning on trying to set up a partnership with the public library for ebooks and other literary technology. I ran a successful Book Fair in both English and French that brought in over 12,000.00 in sales and the list goes on and on.

However, I am sad to say that if I am required to do significant student support most of what I do and want to do WON'T get accomplished. The students, teaching staff and school community at large will suffer. The school library will no longer be a learning force in the school. It will not be a positive, inviting place. It will be a disorganized, chaotic mess where children will leave frustrated and disheartened and become disenchanting in the joy of learning and reading.

All teaching in our schools is directed by the Ontario Curriculum as outlined in its particular documents. Embedded all the way through these documents is the role the school library must play in the administering of curriculum teaching to all students. How does the Board plan to carry out essential Ontario curriculum when an important piece is greatly compromised?

The offering of Full Day Kindergarten in all our schools now has introduced unique curriculum situations. Kindergarten classrooms run very much on child-centred learning and often require quick access to relevant resources to satisfy curious minds. This year we have 8 kindergartens in our school. Teachers are often coming to me on very short notice looking for resources to support investigative or inquiry-based learning going on in their classroom. If I am not available to provide these resources quickly, important teaching moments can be lost. One of the joys of my job is reading a story to the

kindergarten classes when they visit the library. Their enthusiasm and energy electrifies the library for everyone!

In addition, more Board libraries are becoming fully automated. This requires an E.A. assigned to the Library to be much more available in the library for the working of the system and for its maintenance. It is fine to say teachers must learn to use the system but it is a regular, almost daily occurrence that supply teachers arrive at the library with a class unable to work the system.

Safeguards must also be recognized and upheld. The library automated systems should not be left to young student use or left unattended for very long (just recently a child used the scanner on his eyes). The whole system is fairly delicate and things can go wrong easily without an E. A. assigned to the Library nearby to keep an eye on things.

I recognize that the Board faces challenging funding cuts. I recognize that there is only so much money to go around. What I also recognize is that the Board is planning to implement a dangerous way to cut costs that will decimate a priceless resource in every school. Just because the library does not have its own report card or evaluation system (maybe it should) does not mean it does not have intrinsic value to our children's success. I believe the research done proves this. This priceless resource in every school should not be decimated. Let's keep our libraries as a powerful tool to build our children's success in literacy across the learning spectrum. Our EQAO test scores might actually flourish further!! Wouldn't that look good on the Board's report card?!? Please think about this before you undertake your plans to further remove E.A.s assigned to the Library from their true workplace – the school library.

I close this urgent plea by telling you a story from my life book of being a school librarian. I worked in a small north-end school where the library had been neglected for 5 years. No new books had been bought in that time. The children were not using the library – were not interested in the library or reading. I embarked on a vigorous plan to infuse the library with new highly-enticing books (mostly stocked with great second hand books from Value Village with little funds and a lot of my own money) By the end of the 2 years I worked there, the library was thriving, a hub in the school and kids were fighting over books to take out. The highlight of my whole 2 year experience happened in June just before school ended. I noticed one morning that a whole series of wonderful graphic novels had just disappeared. They had not been signed out, they just vanished. I feared that I might not see them again in that library. A couple of days later they amazingly reappeared much to my utter surprise! With a little investigation I found out there had been a Grade 8 school trip to Toronto. It turned out the Grade 8 boys "stole" the books to read on the bus going to and from Toronto! In an age of digital devices and Gr. 8 coolness I took this act of stealing as the highest compliment a librarian could ever receive!

Libraries do matter. Libraries do make a difference in our children's lives – FOR THE BETTER!  
Please do not take this away from our children.

Sincerely,

Lorna-Jean Astle

E.A. in the Library – Ecole Sir John A. Macdonald PS

**Limestone District School Board**  
*Administrative Report*



**Report To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Paul Babin  
Superintendent of Business Services  
**Subject:** **Accumulated Surplus**  
**Date:** May 11, 2015

**Objectives:**

To provide Trustees with the Accumulated surplus (deficit) balances as at August 2014.

**History/Background:**

The Accumulated surplus (deficit) as part of the 2013-2014 audited financial statements consists of the following:

	2013	2014
Available for Compliance:		
Unappropriated:	\$ 2,408,596	\$ 1,854,089
Internally appropriated:		
Pupil Accommodation, School Renewal	1,076,859	1,076,859
Committed Capital Projects	2,734,073	2,664,817
School Budget Balances	1,601,759	1,602,414
Retirement Benefits	874,386	474,665
Workers Safety Insurance Board	3,964,805	3,964,805
	12,660,478	11,637,649
Unavailable for Compliance:		
Employee Future Benefits	(16,561,573)	(15,359,655)
Accrued Interest	(788,659)	(830,000)
School Generated Funds	3,019,969	3,113,197
Net Tangible Capital Assets	2,545,892	2,545,892
	(11,784,371)	(10,530,566)
Accumulated surplus (deficit)	\$ 876,107	\$ 1,107,083


**Observations/Analysis:**

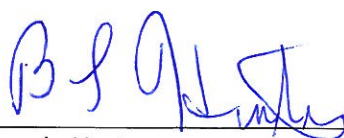
As part of the 2014-2015 Budget, \$0 of the \$1,854,089 unappropriated surplus funds were used to balance the budget.

However, the Board spent more than \$250,000 from the unappropriated surplus funds to respond to the Judicial review application brought forward by the Sydenham District Association and five local residents. The Ontario Divisional Court awarded the Board \$35,000 in connection with its recent Judicial Review ruling upholding the Board's decision to consolidate KCVI, QECVI and Module Vanier and to build a new intermediate and secondary school in Central Kingston.

**Recommendations:**

That this report be received for information.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Babin  
Superintendent of Business Services

  
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Brenda Hunter  
Director of Education