

**Committee of the Whole Board (Budget)  
Meeting Minutes  
Limestone District School Board**

**June 1, 2015**

**Members/ Trustees:** P. Murray - Chair  
E. Crawford  
W. Garrod  
L. French  
D. Jackson  
T. Mahoney  
K. McGregor  
M. McCormac (Student Trustee) - regrets  
A. Ross  
S. Ruttan  
P. van Herpt (Student Trustee) - regrets

**Officials:** P. Babin, Superintendent of Business Services  
K. Burra, Superintendent of Equity & Inclusion and Program - regrets  
J. Douglas, Communications Officer  
D. Fowler, Manager of Facility Services  
B. Fraser-Stiff, Superintendent of Education  
T. Giles, Supervising Principal, School Effectiveness - regrets  
B. Hunter, Director of Education  
A. Labrie, Superintendent of Human Resources  
S. Lehman, Supervising Principal, Student Success & IT  
A. McDonnell, Supervising Principal, Special Education  
M. Baumann, Manager of Business Services  
S. McWilliams, Manager of Human Resources - regrets  
J. Silver, Supervising Principal of Safe & Caring Schools - regrets  
W. Toms, Manager of ITS and Planning Officer – regrets

Guests:

**Recorder:** L. Strange, Records Management Coordinator

Trustee Murray, as Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and welcomed all those present.

**Approval of Agenda**

*MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor, seconded by Trustee Ross, that the agenda of June 1, 2015, as presented, be approved. Carried.*

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

There were no Conflicts of Interest declared.

**Information Items**

**1. 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures**

Director Hunter offered the following opening remarks before the presentation of the 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures:

"I would like to preface the budget presentation this evening with a few brief remarks about the challenges of declining enrolment and reduced provincial funding for 2015-2016, specifically in the areas of special education and declining enrolment allocations.

Senior staff have worked hard over the last six months and have consulted with principals and managers to put together a balanced budget that directs resources to our strategic priorities.

We have made some tough choices, including reducing positions in caretaking, school clerical, information technology and educational assistants, however through position vacancies and upcoming retirements almost all staff in these positions will obtain another position within the board.

We have also looked for opportunities to do things differently and to make some efficiencies in use of board space to save on leasing external space, such as the alt centre in Sydenham being moved back into a board space (the log cabin at Sydenham), and moving the youth access programs from the Boys & Girls Club to the Rideau Heights Public School site.

I am confident that Limestone will continue to offer our students, families and the community the high quality educational programs and services they expect and value."

Manager Baumann presented the analysis of the the 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget – Expenditures, noting that despite the challenges of declining enrolment and reduced provincial funding the 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures is balanced to Operating Revenues and aligns resources to support the strategic direction of the Board as outlined in the "Success for All" plan.

The budget includes additional investments in classroom technology, ongoing support of professional learning opportunities for educators, and expansion of the partnership with the City of Kingston for the Bus Pass program for Grade 12 students.

The 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures of \$231,364,500 is equal to the 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Revenues of \$231,364,500.

The 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures, as presented, are compared to the 2014-2015 revised operating expenditures:

- Compensation has decreased \$2,544,484 or 1.31%.
- Elementary classroom teachers has increased \$48,884 or .07%.
- Secondary classroom teachers has decreased \$658,089 or 1.41%.

- Supply teachers has increased \$9,065 or .17%.
- Education assistants and early childhood educators have decreased by \$720,822 or 3.80%.
- Professional, paraprofessional and technicians has decreased \$187,791 or 2.55%.
- Library and Guidance has increased \$25,430 or .76%.
- Staff development decreased \$702,081 or 50.24%.
- Elementary and secondary Principals/VPs increased \$31,124 or .28%.
- School secretarial and clerical decreased by \$163,061 or 3.06%.
- Co-ordinators and consultants increased by \$126,047 or 5.85%.
- Continuing Education increased \$99,117 or 8.09%.
- Governance and administration decreased \$142,768 or 2.69%.
- Facilities services decreased \$309,539 or 2.13%
- Supplies and Services has decreased \$123,802 or .32%.
- Governance and administration has decreased \$37,184 or 1.73%.
- Transportation has increased \$223,073 or 1.50%.
- School operations and maintenance has decreased \$35,000 or .53%.
- Utilities has increased \$175,000 or 3.07%.

The 2015-2016 Preliminary Operating Budget Expenditures are \$231,364,500, which is a decrease of \$2,668,286 or 1.14%.

In response to a question Superintendent Babin clarified that the increase for the Co-ordinators and Consultants was a simple coding change, as the employees in this group had been previously captured in another category. It was further clarified that the terminology is from the Ministry of Education and refers to Teachers who work in a co-ordinating role in the Central Board office. These LDSB staff are dedicated to the planning and professional development for a specific area or initiative. The Pupil Foundation Grant is tied to the number of students, as well as number of 'consultants'.

The LDSB spends a nominal amount on external consultants, such as in the situation with the recent French review. Other examples of an external consultant that may be contracted would Architects, Accountants, lawyers or construction/safety experts.

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In response to a question about the funding reductions to Special Education Services Director Hunter offered the following statement:

"As you know, the Limestone District School Board will see a reduction in Special Education funding for the 2015-2016 school year. This reduction is due to the new Ministry of Education funding formula which was introduced in the 2014-2015 school year that is being phased in over four school years. This change has resulted in a reduction of approximately \$1.1 million from the LDSB special education budget line for the upcoming school year.

In response to this reduction in funding, senior staff has reviewed its current delivery of special education supports and services. Some staff reductions are required, however, staff have worked hard to minimize the effect on staff while maintaining services to support student achievement and well-being. It is important to note that these changes will not result in any layoffs. In fact, in some cases, reassignments of staff may mean additional supports are in place for students with special needs.

Effective September 2015, there will be:

A reduction of 1.0 FTE Student Support Teacher (SST) - This reduction is shared across a number of elementary schools. Most of the affected schools will see a reduction of .1 FTE.

A reduction of 1.0 FTE Learning Program Support teacher (LPS)-This reduction is shared across a number of secondary schools. Most of the affected schools will see a reduction of 1 section.

A reduction of 2 District Behaviour Learning Centres (DLC) at Holsgrove P.S. (Intermediate) and Rideau Heights P.S. (Primary). The LDSB is committed to providing an inclusive special education service delivery model by building capacity of all staff to work with students with special needs. The closure of the two DLCs will provide further opportunity for inclusion of students in their home schools. Additionally, the reduction of two District Behaviour Learning Centres reflects the reduced requirement for system supports in this area of exceptionality, as several District Behaviour Learning Centres have been undersubscribed in enrolment. Any student from these two District Behaviour Learning Centres who required a continuation of placement have been placed in another District Behaviour Learning Centre for the 2015-2016 school year.

The Resource Centre Educational Assistants (EAs) position in the elementary panel is being repurposed. This will result in a reduction of 15.0 FTE Resource Centre EAs (from an FTE of 30.5) for the 2015-2016 school year. There will be no job losses, however, for permanent employees as we currently have more permanent EA positions than we have permanent employees. The remaining 15.5 FTE Resource Centre EA positions will be redefined and redirected to support students with special needs. This decision is reflective of the changing needs in our district, our focus on providing inclusive learning environments for all students and the requirement of additional support for these students within our system.

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The Limestone District School Board looks forward to continuing to provide the supports and services necessary to support student achievement and well-being for all students within inclusive learning environments.”

Director Hunter will provide a report on this issue for Trustees prior to the next Committee of the Whole Board (Budget) meeting.

It was further clarified that the students being relocated into Rideau Heights Public School are all being transitioned through consultation with the LDSB Educational Services and with the support of the site Principal. One classroom will remain at the Robert Meeks location. This move will allow for better supervision and access to administrative support by staff when needed as well as facilitate easier integration opportunities for students who are ready to move back into a regular classroom setting on a part-time or full-time basis.

Trustee French expressed her concerns around providing the ‘good news’ of how the LDSB is able to manage the reductions in Special Education Funding by supplementing from other areas for the next school year, while also needing to relay the message that the work on dealing with funding reductions is still ongoing. Maintaining balance in inspiring public confidence, while working on political advocacy remains crucial.

In response to questions regarding changes to absence trends and usage patterns Superintendent Labrie stated that relative to the province the LDSB is doing well in absences, but trending a little up over last year’s data. The provincial data is showing on average across the province that teachers are using about 1 additional sick day per year.

In response to a question Superintendent Babin clarified that legal fees can vary widely from year to year, based on a number of factors. The LDSB contracts lawyers to assist with situations such as the recent judicial review, selling property, defending grievances, assisting with insurance claims, etc. The LDSB does not employ in-house counsel, and Director Hunter expressed that she did not see it would be of benefit for the LDSB to do so.

Superintendent Babin will provide further information about legal fees at the next Committee of the Whole Board (Budget) meeting.

In response to a question on multi-year budgeting Superintendent Babin explained that revenue/grant projections are not available beyond the current/subsequent school year, especially in light of ongoing EPO funding announcements and changes.

Trustee French offered her agreement that the next Trustee Strategic Planning session should address plans for future PARCs, Special Education funding reductions, changes to the rural schools funding, etc.

Trustee Jackson suggested that in light of the move to quarterly financial reporting that a section for notes could be added to keep Trustees aware of new or unusual budgetary issues.

**2. 2015-2016 Preliminary Capital Budget**

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Manager Baumann explained that the 2015-2016 Preliminary Capital Budget – Revenues & Expenditures is being presented on a modified cash basis and that the 2015-2016 Preliminary Capital Budget – Capital Revenues of \$23,972,578 are equal to the Capital Expenditures of \$23,972,578.

For 2015-2016 the School Renewal allocation is \$3,929,899 and is comparable to the 2014-2015 Revised Estimates amount of \$3,956,837.

For 2015-2016 the School Condition Improvement allocation is \$6,653,122, an increase of \$3,496,653 over the 2014-2015 Revised Estimates amount of \$3,156,469.

Over the next three years, the government will be making an investment of \$1.25B provincially in School Condition Improvement (SCI) funding. For the 2015-2016 school year the Ministry has announced that \$500M of this amount will be allocated, double the amount that was allocated to boards in 2014-2015.

The Board was been allocated \$10,465,066 including unique site costs of up to \$678,098 to construct the new elementary school in Kingston to consolidate the First Avenue and Frontenac Public Schools. This new Kindergarten to Grade 8 school will be built on the 16 acre QECVI property. The Board was allocated \$35,978,762 to construct a new composite school to consolidate secondary students from Kingston Collegiate & Vocational Institute (KCVI), Queen Elizabeth Collegiate & Vocational Institute (QECVI) and Grades 7 & 8 intermediate French Immersion/Extended French students from Module Vanier. The Board recently announced that this new school will be built on the 16 acre QECVI property. Ministry approved funding will be used to support three projects that are in the planning stages at Central, Rideau Heights, and Southview Public Schools. Debt charges permanently financed of \$457,419 represents the 55 School Board Trust debt (pre amalgamation liabilities not permanently financed until 2033).

Capital debt support interest of \$3,597,050 includes the 20-year financing with the Royal Bank of Canada for the Frontenac Secondary School and Bayridge Secondary School additions and nine OFA long-term financings, all for 25 years. Short-term interest supported by the Ministry is estimated to be \$95,088 for 2015-2016.

In response to a question Superintendent Babin clarified that School Renewal is for capital items within a school in excess of \$10,000 and School Condition Improvement funding must be used at 80% for major components to a building and 20% for discretionary items.

Funding for major supported projects is transferred to School Boards after projects are completed, and will also include reimbursement for short-term debt from loans required to complete the work.

In response to a question Superintendent Babin clarified that FDK capital funding for Rideau Public School will cover part of the expenses associated with the resurfacing of the field and replacement of the drainage system.

Superintendent Babin stated that proceeds from sale of surplus school sites must be kept in a bank account until approval is received from the Ministry to use the funds. The monies being held do not appear as revenues in the financial statements. He further stated

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that there is an expectation of a memo from the Ministry with new guidelines about how proceeds from the sale of surplus school sites can be used. This information will be shared when it becomes available.

Trustee McGregor requested appraisal values for the sites currently for sale by the LDSB. Superintendent Babin mentioned that this information was recently provided to Trustees, however a copy will be placed in the Trustee Private Session folder on First Class.

The members were in agreement to proceed with the June 8, 2015 Budget meeting.

**Other Business**

Trustee Mahoney requested that Trustees discuss the process of information flow. This item was deferred to the June 8, 2015 Budget meeting.

**Private Session**

There were no Private Session items for discussion at this time.

**Next Meeting Dates**

Monday, June 8, 2015 6:00 p.m. (Tentative)

Monday, June 15, 2015 6:00 p.m. Agenda

- Presentation of 2015-2016 PSAB Consolidated Budget
- 2015-2016 Budget Recommendation to the Board

**Adjournment**

Trustee Murray called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

*MOVED BY: Trustee Ruttan, seconded by Trustee French, that the meeting adjourn. Carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.