

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

**April 26, 2017**

**Members/:**

**Trustees** E. Crawford  
W. Garrod  
L. French  
D. Jackson  
T. Mahoney  
K. McGregor  
P. Murray  
A. Ross  
S. Ruttan (Chair)  
W. Sanderson (Student Trustee)  
J. Ascough (Student Trustee)

**Officials:** M. Babcock, Supervising Principal - regrets  
P. Babin, Superintendent of Business Services  
M. Baumann - Manager of Business Services  
K. Burra, Superintendent of Education  
C. Downie, Planning Officer - regrets  
B. Fraser-Stiff, Superintendent of Education - regrets  
D. Fowler, Manager of Facility Services  
S. Gillam, Supervising Principal - regrets  
A. Labrie, Superintendent of Human Resources  
A. McDonnell, Supervising Principal  
J. Silver, Supervising Principal - regrets  
D. Rantz, Director of Education

**Guests:** G. Taylor, Tri-Board Student Transportation Services

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

Trustee Ruttan, as Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m., and welcomed all those present.

**Approval of Agenda**

*MOVED BY: Trustee Crawford, that the agenda of April 26, 2017, as presented, be approved. Carried.*

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

There were no Conflicts of Interest declared.

**Information Items**

1. 2017-18 Projected Enrolment and 10 Year Enrolment Trend

Superintendent Babin provided an update on the 2017-18 projected enrolment and 10-year enrolment trend.

Limestone DSB has experienced significant enrolment decline since the Board's amalgamation in 1998. Enrolment in 2012-2013 was 20,364 and is projected to be 19,403 in 2017/18, a decline of 961 students or about 4.7% as measured on an Average Daily Enrolment basis.

ADE is the basis for funding for most provincial grants through the GSN model. ADE is the weighting of enrolment at the October 31st and March 31st count dates. For example, if an elementary school student is full-time at both count dates the student is 1.0 ADE. Attached to the report is an appendix highlighting the 2017-2018 projected enrolment of 19,403 ADE for an increase of 76 ADE from 2016-2017 Revised Estimates. An increase of 8 ADE is projected at the secondary level and an increase of 68 ADE is projected at the elementary level.

This report was received for information.

2. Student Transportation

G. Taylor of Tri-Board Student Transportation Services was invited to the meeting to share information on how the organization develops its budget for the Board of Directors and three-member School Boards.

Limestone DSB, Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB and Hastings & Prince Edward DSB entered into a membership agreement in November 2006. Administration and overhead costs are equally shared and billed to board members.

Transportation costs are calculated on a weighted average (based upon student usage) and billed to board members monthly.

The annual budget is developed in the following stages:

- Draft budget to Board of Directors (BOD) in April
- Budget approved by BOD in June
- Revised Budget presented and approved by BOD in November
- Year-end reconciliation - monthly billings to board member direct cost
- Fiscal Year – September to August
- Financial Statements approved by BOD in December

Tri-Board key statistics:

- 29,400 total number of students transported by Tri-Board
- 40% or 11,760 – Limestone DSB students
- 31 operators (Tri-Board)
- 595 routes (Tri-Board)

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

**April 26, 2017**

- 41 taxis/vans/parent drivers/wheelchair bus contract
- 804,013 Kilometers / Year (Limestone DSB)

Current Operator Contracts end August 31, 2021, and consist of Fixed Components (Buses, Driver Wages, License, Training, Insurance, Administration) and Variable Components (Fuel, Time, Kilometers, Maintenance, Dispatch).

Fuel prices are reset monthly based on a fuel survey of 8 fuel suppliers/locations. The price of new vehicles are set annually by size, using an average of various manufacturers. Inflation is set annually in contract at CPI or GSN.

Tri-Board works with Member Boards on Program Changes/Location (Analysis to minimize transportation expense), new school or school consolidations (impacts and solutions), routes, and kilometers calculated by software/verified by GPS.

Tri-Board transportation billing to the LDSB was \$16,694M compared to the GSN funding amount of \$14,861M.

This report was received for information.

Trustee Mahoney inquired if there have been any incentives from the government for bus drivers to lower their carbon footprint.

G. Taylor replied that there has been no official interaction from the Ministry in this area. He further stated that the move toward gasoline from diesel is a big improvement.

G. Taylor stated that the sector is about 3 years away from a functional electric bus. Hybrid buses will be in the market place sooner. When available, electric buses will cost 20-30% more than current diesel buses.

Trustee Ross inquired how the switch to electric buses would be initiated with consortiums.

G. Taylor stated that Operators would have to be able to afford the switch over, as currently this type of decision is in their hands. With the US relaxation of environmental policies it will narrow the market of environmentally friendly vehicles, making them more expensive.

Trustee Garrod inquired where the cost of the City of Kingston partnership busing comes from.

Superintendent Babin stated that the fee comes out of the transportation budget, and costs approximately \$40,000 per year.

Trustee French inquired with the new provincial funding formula review underway, what are the key things Tri-Board would be seeking. G. Taylor stated that there has been a profound driver wage issue in this sector for many years, leading to a high turnover. The work is more complex than it ever was, so if nothing else is changed the review has to address wages.

Superintendent Babin stated that student transportation has become much more complex over the years, with many students now having multiple pick up and drop off points. The funding formula has not changed much since the 1990s, while society has. There is a need for more training for operators, better software, and increased wages.

Trustee Jackson raised the issue of traffic congestion around schools, and inquired if the GHG funding could be used for infrastructure improvements to property to assist busing.

Trustee Babin stated he was not sure if the funding could be used in that manner, but that he would follow up. He stated that many LDSB schools were built at a time when most students walked. Now there is heavy congestion from personal vehicles, and increased busing. The LDSB works diligently to implement measures to help alleviate congestion, such as new traffic loops, concrete barriers, use of safety officers, working with local police, etc.

G. Taylor stated that Tri-Board is working on hard solutions and management plans with school administration for specific schools with problematic busing areas, like LCVI and Fairfield Elementary School.

Student Trustee Sanderson inquired when buses are being replaced, who chooses the solution.

G. Taylor answered that today school bus contractors make the decision. At the end of the current contract TriBoard has the right to specify what types of buses are to be used.

Trustee McGregor raised an issue of parents parking on the side of the highway at one of the schools in her area. She inquired whose jurisdiction is it to move the vehicles.

G. Taylor answered that Tri-Board assists with issues on the school property, both with vehicle congestion and unsafe travel through the parking lots by students. With an issue not on school property Principals need to work with local police.

Trustee Mahoney inquired about bus idling times around school. G. Taylor stated that GPS software can track individual buses.

### 3. Ministry of Education - GSN Technical Briefing

Superintendent Babin provided an overview of key points of the GSN technical briefing document.

Since 2006 overall provincial student enrolment has dropped from over 2 million to under 2 million.

Nine agreements will be effective from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2019. The 2017-18 GSN reflects investments for the first year of the agreements to support the following:

- Modest wage increases and investments in benefit transformation;
- Local priorities funding – including more staffing support for special education students;
- Class size reduction investments for full-day kindergarten (FDK) and grades 4-8; and,
- Community use of schools and other priorities.

The ministry will provide a 1.5 per cent salary benchmark increase for staff in 2017-18 (projected to be \$257.2 million).

In addition, the ministry has committed to provide funding to support a one-time payment in 2017-18 for professional development, equivalent to the amount that would have been generated if the salary benchmarks for these staff had been increased by 0.5% (projected to be \$85.7 million).

Any inflation protection increases, increases to base funding and/or Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) changes for provincial benefits trusts will also be reflected in the GSN, in updated table amounts for 2017-18.

The ministry has agreed to establish a Local Priorities Fund of \$218.9 million in 2017-18 to address a range of local education issues. These funds could support about 875 FTE teachers and about 1,600 to 1,850 FTE education workers. Actual staffing depends on specific agreements and local discussions and staffing decisions.

The ministry is also providing:

- A 3% increase to Community Use of Schools funding (about \$0.8 million).
- New funding through the School Boards Administration and Governance Grant to help boards manage the impact of the extensions through the Human Resource Transition Supplement (\$10.0 million).

Trustee French inquired why additional funds are needed to offset premium increases.

Superintendent Babin stated that overall the province will see a reduction in premium fees, but that there will be fluctuation between individual boards.

#### School condition funding

The ministry will invest \$1 billion in School Condition Improvement funding in 2017-18. There will also be an additional \$40 million for the School Renewal Allocation in 2017-18. This maintains the government's commitment to invest \$1.4 billion in 2017-18.

These new investments support the ministry's vision to provide safe and healthy learning environments to support student achievement and well-being by keeping schools in a state of good repair. These investments recognize the importance of undertaking major building and site renewal work, as well as repairs and maintenance issues that improve the more visible elements of schools.

#### Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding

The Government of Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan outlines specific commitments for meeting the Government's GHG emissions reduction target by 2020. As part of our \$1.0 billion investment in SCI funding for the 2017-18 school year, the ministry is introducing a \$200.0 million initiative that will support the reduction of GHG emissions from facilities in the education sector.

Eligible expenditures under this program will support the replacement, renewal and installation of new energy efficient building components in older elementary schools, secondary schools and administrative buildings.

This initiative will run from April 2017 to March 2018.

#### School Foundation Grants

Starting in 2017-18, the government is making additional investments in supports for school administration through the SFG (projected to be \$4.6 million).

These investments were guided by recommendations of experts in the sector and includes the following changes:

- Multi-building Adjustment - Funding for an additional principal for elementary or secondary schools (excludes combined schools) that consist of multiple buildings on the same campus with large enrolment. This investment recognizes differentiated enrolment thresholds for English-language boards and French-language boards.
- French-language Board Adjustment - French-language boards' 'regular' schools will generate funding as if they were 'distant' schools. This investment recognizes that boards operating in a minority language context may face greater difficulty in meeting school size thresholds.
- Funding based on a campus definition of a school - for the purposes of funding school administration. The impacts on funding will be phased-in over four years to give time for school boards to adjust.

#### Keeping up with costs

The province continues to assist school boards with student transportation and utilities costs. In 2017-18, the government will continue this investment with a projected \$31.4 million in additional funding.

##### Student Transportation:

- Funding for student transportation will increase by 2 per cent to help boards manage increased costs. As in previous years, this cost update will be netted against a school board's transportation surplus.

##### Utilities (including electricity):

- The non-staff portion of the School Operations Allocation benchmark will again be increased by 2 per cent to help boards manage increases in commodity prices.

#### EPO Investments

The ministry will continue to support other education initiatives that advance student achievement with investments outside the GSN. Similar to last year, the ministry will release a memo to provide boards with funding allocations for their 2017-18 school year.

The memo will also contain continued support for the Renewed Math Strategy.

There will also be ongoing implementation and other changes in the following areas:

- Changes stemming from past labour agreements
- Benefits Investments
- School Board Administration and Governance Grant (SBAGG)
- School Board Efficiencies and Modernization (SBEM)
- Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA) Allocation
- Continued phase in of 2011 Census and National Household Survey

### Rural Schools

Starting this spring, the government will launch an engagement on education in rural and remote communities. Discussion topics will balance programming considerations, the need to leverage assets for the benefit of the community where possible, and feedback on funding approaches.

### Transportation

The ministry will launch a multi-stakeholder consultation to solicit input and feedback to renew the vision of student transportation in Ontario.

The consultation will focus on transportation funding principles, the roles of government and school boards, and interactions with other services outside of education.

Feedback gathered from the engagement will be used to inform the delivery of student transportation funding to school boards and future policy development.

### Ongoing Implementation of GSN Reports - New GSN Investments for 2017-18

Superintendent Babin reported on the new GSN investments for 2017-18.

The government introduced new changes to the GSN in 2015-2016 as part of the School Board Efficiencies and Modernization (SBEM) Strategy.

These changes are being phased-in over a three-year period, with 2017-2018 being the third and final year of the phase-in.

The following grants will be impacted as a result of SBEM:

- Geographic Circumstances
- School Facility Operations
- School Foundation

In addition, the government introduced changes in 2014-2015 to the Board Administration and Special Education Grants to be phased in over a four-year period, with 2017-2018 being the fourth and final year of the phase-in.

### Remote & Rural Allocation

The remote & rural allocation supports the higher costs of purchasing goods and

services for small boards as well as boards that are distant from major urban centres.

The SBEM change relates to the distance to nearest urban city is now measured from board office to nearest major city (Ottawa 165Km) vs measurement from geographic centre of board to nearest urban city (Ottawa 235Km).

As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant reduction of over \$1.06M in remote & rural funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

The rural and small community allocation supports boards with schools in rural or small communities based on MOF population data.

This grant is being phased-out completely by 2017-2018.

As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant reduction of about \$150K in rural & small communities funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

#### Supported School

The supported schools' allocation provides additional funding for teaching and early childhood educator (ECE) staffing to improve the viability of outlying schools.

There is a change for an elementary school where the closest elementary school of the board is at least 20 km away. A secondary or elementary/secondary (combined school) where the closest secondary or elementary/secondary (combined school) is at least 45 Km away. Enrolment is also a determining factor of this grant and a school may not qualify if enrolment is sufficient to fund 7.5 elementary teachers and 14 secondary teachers.

As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant reduction of about \$30K in supported schools allocation funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

The school operations allocation addresses the costs of operating school facilities (heating, lighting, maintenance and cleaning). There are five components of the grant however, this significant SBEM changes focus on the Base & Enhanced Top-Up and Base School Operations.

The Ministry will be eliminating the Base Top-Up support for school operations by 2017-2018. The Base Top-Up provides additional funding to boards with schools with excess space capacity. Schools at less than 65% utilization are provided with a base top-up of 10% and schools at 65% to 80% are provided a base top-up of 15%.

The Ministry will be introducing reduced distance thresholds for Enhanced Top-up vs eligibility based upon rural postal codes. This affects eligible elementary schools where the next closest elementary or secondary school is at least 10 Km away and eligible secondary school where next closest secondary school is at least 20 Km away.



As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant reduction of about \$1.3 million in Base & Enhanced Top-Up funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

There are five components of the grant, however this significant SBEM changes focus on the Base & Enhanced Top-Up and Base School Operations.

- SBEM change – Taking a portion of the savings from changes to the Base & Enhanced Top-Up and redirecting to the Base School Operations component. Specifically the school area requirement by reviewing various factors (supplementary area and weighted school age) to better reflect current inventory of schools including recent additions such as FDK.
- As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant increase of about \$1.2M in Base School Operations funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

#### School Foundation

This grant supports the cost of in-school administration (salaries and benefits for principals, vice principals and office support staff). As well as supplies for school administration purposes.

The change will shift funding away from very small schools that are not isolated while investing in schools that are larger, remote or combined.

Under the new allocation method there are three tiers of funding for supported, distant and regular schools.

As a result of the SBEM change the Board will see a grant increase of about \$136K in school foundation funding from the old model to the new model during the 3-year phase-in starting in 2015-2016.

#### School Board Administration Allocation (BAG)

This grant provides funding for business and other administration functions of a board.

In 2014-2015 the Ministry began phasing in a new allocation method for school board administration as recommended by the BAAG advisory group. The four-year phase-in, which is fiscally neutral provincially, will have redistributive impacts on school boards.

Under the new allocation model there are ten core functions, sorted under three tiers of funding for Director of Education & Supervisory Officers; Other Senior administration; and Board Administration Costs.

As a result of the BAG change the Board will see a grant increase of about \$400K in school board administration funding from the old model to new model during the 4-year phase-in starting in 2014-2015.

Special Education Grant – DSENA Allocation

Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA) Allocation (Formerly the High Needs Amount) addresses the variation among boards with respect to students with Special Education needs and boards' abilities to respond to those needs.

The Ministry announced a new funding approach for this allocation, to be phased in over four years starting in 2014-2015. The four-year phase-in, which is fiscally neutral provincially will have redistributive impacts on school boards.

The transition will phase out the historical HNA per-pupil amounts and move to an allocation composed of the following three components: 1. Special Education Statistical Prediction Model (SESPM) 2. Measures of Variability (MOV) 3. Base Amount for Collaboration and Integration.

Unlike the model changes, Special Education is a change in approach. The major components are the SESPM and MOV which are calculated by the Ministry and are extremely complex and very difficult for boards to replicate the calculations.

The funding approach for Special Education is also impacted by in-year enrolment fluctuations, in the case of LDSB enrolment decline.

The Ministry has not released board-by-board projections for the end of the four-year phase-in of the new Special Education approach however, LDSB staff have estimated that the funding could be about \$11,250,000 or a decline of about \$4.6M over the four years.

The Special Education grant has other allocations, such as SEPPA, SEA, SIP, Behavioral Expertise however, there has not been any funding approach changes or significant changes to these allocations.

Superintendent Babin noted that the Local Priorities Funds (in 2017-2018 will provide \$1.12 million in Special Ed amount and \$900,000 Other Amount) will help mitigate the constraints to the LDSB's regular Special Education funding.

2017-18 Labour Agreements Investments

As a result of the education sector labour negotiations, the government has agreed to establish a Local Priorities Fund to invest in a range of local priorities including special education.

Per the terms of the central agreements each board and union/federation is to meet to discuss the use of the funds consistent with the board needs.

Local priorities funding can be used to support additional staffing and/or to address staffing reductions related to declining enrolment and other exceptions.

The 2017-2018 GSN are to include salary benchmark increases to support central agreement wage settlements of 1.5%. The compensation benchmarks for non-union staff (excluding Directors) are also being increased.

The Ministry is lowering the funded class size average for grade 4 to 8 from 24.5 to 24.17 for 2017-2018. Over the next five years there is a commitment to lower the funded class size average to 22.85.

The FDK class size average funding of 26.0 is also being lowered to 25.75 for 2017-2018.

The regulated grade 4-8 class size board-wide average of 24.5 and FDK class size board-wide average of 26.0 remains unchanged. However, there is a requirement that FDK classes will have 30 or less students (with some exceptions).

#### School Renewal Investments

The government has indicated that it will invest over \$1 billion in school condition improvement funding and \$40M in enhanced school renewal funding.

As part of Ontario's climate change action plan, the government is introducing a \$200 million Greenhouse Gas initiative to support the reduction of GHG emissions from facilities in the education sector. (These funds are to be spent by March 2018).

2017-2018 School Renewal Investments (the following are estimated amounts):

- School Condition Improvement (SCI) \$10,436,690
- Greenhouse GAS Reduction (GHG) 2,609,170
- Enhanced School Renewal 463,260
- Total \$13,509,120

The Board is anticipating receiving \$3.9 million in regular school renewal funding in 2017-2018 beyond the amounts identified above.

This report was received for information.

Trustee Ross asked for confirmation that the Local Priorities-Special Education funding is enveloped and must be used for Special Education. Superintendent Babin confirmed that was that case, but clarified that the Local Priorities -Other Amount can be used at the Board's discretion.

It was clarified that for the School Renewal Investments 70% must be spent on major building components.

Trustee Mahoney inquired if the Ministry had directed specific products to be used under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction initiative (GHG).

Superintendent Babin stated that the Ministry hasn't prescribed the products.

Manager Fowler stated that the GHG is to be used in reducing the consumption of energy, and that this particular funding envelope must be spent by March of 2018. There are several LDSB projects that qualify under SCI that this fund could be used for.

Trustee Garrod inquired if the 2% allocated under transportation and utilities covers LDSB costs. Superintendent Babin stated that Financial Services haven't gotten to that level in the budget process. More information will be coming soon.

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

**April 26, 2017**

Trustee Mahoney stated that as for the GHG initiative the largest carbon footprint the LDSB has is transportation. He inquired if there was a way to address this issue with the GHG funding. Superintendent Babin replied that the funding is focused on buildings, not buses or maintenance fleets.

Trustee Jackson inquired if the GHG is a multi-year commitment. Superintendent Babin stated that at this point the Ministry has not indicated that there will be continued funding.

Trustee French inquired about the community use of school changes. Superintendent Babin clarified that there will be a 3% increase (to be approximate, \$300,000 is what the board receives) to maintain or lower the rate structure for community groups.

4. Budget Development

Superintendent Babin shared the schedule for the 2017-18 Budget Development cycle:

Wednesday, April 26, 2017 – Budget Deliberations, including;

- Overview of 2017-2018 Enrolment & 10-year enrolment trend
- Review of 2017-2018 Ministry GSN briefing presentation
- Presentation on Student Transportation

Tuesday, May 16, 2017 – Budget Deliberations, including;

- Deputations
- 2017-2018 Preliminary Operating Revenues
- Review of Accumulated Surplus Balances

Wednesday, May 31, 2017 meeting to now be cancelled. Agenda topics now moved to June 5, 2017

Monday, June 5, 2017 Budget Deliberations, including;

- 2017-2018 Preliminary Operating Expenditures
- 2017-2018 Preliminary Capital Revenues & Expenditures

Wednesday, June 14, 2017 - Budget Deliberations, including;

- 2017-2018 Draft Budget
- 2017-2018 PSAB and Compliance Report
- Draft Budget Recommendation to Board on June 21, 2017

Trustee Ross inquired how staff and the public are notified of the deputations meeting. Superintendent Babin stated that the LDSB Communications department uses the board website, social media, and email to share information. Information is also shared directly with principal and union groups.

Trustee Ruttan reminded the Board that statements from constituents can be read at the deputations meeting with advance notice.

This report was received for information.

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

**April 26, 2017**

**Other Business**

None at this time.

**Next Meeting Dates:**

Monday, May 16, 2017 4:30 pm (Public Consultations)

Monday, June 5, 2017 4:30 pm (Budget Deliberations)

Monday, June 14, 2017 4:30 pm (Budget recommendation to the Board – June 21, 2017)

**Adjournment**

Trustee Ruttan called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

*MOVED BY: Trustee Garrod, that the meeting adjourn. Carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.