

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Board Room/Microsoft Teams
Jim McCuaig Education Centre

2025 JAN 28
7:30 P.M.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Leah Vanderwey (Chair)
Donica LeBlanc (Vice Chair)
Pat Johansen (virtual)
Scottie Wemigwans (Indigenous Trustee)
Emily Drake (Indigenous Student Trustee)
Morgann De Franceschi (Student Trustee)

Ron Oikonen (virtual)
Ryan Sitch
George Saarinen (virtual)
Trudy Tuchenhausen (virtual)

ABSENT WITH REGRET:

Ellen Chambers

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION:

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education (virtual)
Nick Sacevich, Associate Superintendent and Math/ IT Lead
Jane Lower, Superintendent of Education
Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education
Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education
Kirsti Alaksa, Superintendent of Business

PUBLIC SESSION:

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Saarinen

"THAT the Agenda for Regular Board Meeting, January 28, 2025 be approved."

CARRIED

PUBLIC SESSION:

2. Resolve into Committee of the Whole – Closed Session

Moved by Trustee Wemigwans

Seconded by Trustee Saarinen

"THAT we resolve into Committee of the Whole – Closed Session with Trustee Vanderwey in the chair to consider the following:

Legal Matter

Recommendations from the Board Advisory Committee (016-25)

and that this meeting shall not be open to the public pursuant to Section 207 (2) of the Education Act as amended."

CARRIED

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – CLOSED SESSION:

3. Committee of the Whole – Closed Session

PUBLIC SESSION

4. Report of Committee of the Whole

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Wemigwans

"THAT all items of Regular Board – Committee of the Whole – Closed Session were delt with in their entirety and shall remain in closed session."

CARRIED

5. Land Acknowledgement

Trustee Saarinen read the Land Acknowledgement.

6. Trustee Recognition Award

Trustee LeBlanc, on behalf of the Board, presented the Hammarskjold Sr Girls Basketball Team with a Trustees' Recognition Award. The team was presented the award for their undefeated season, that turned out to be historic not just for the team or their school, but the entire city of Thunder Bay as they became the first team in any sport from Thunder Bay, boys or girls, to win gold at the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association's AA championship in November.

7. Declaration of 2025-2026 Indigenous Student Trustee

Outgoing Indigenous Student Trustee Drake introduced newly appointed Indigenous Student Trustee Genno to read her declaration. Chair Vanderwey thanked outgoing Indigenous Student Trustee Drake for her terms of service with Lakehead District School Board.

8. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Saarinen

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the Minutes of Annual Board Meeting, December 3, 2024."

CARRIED

9. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Trustee Sith

Seconded by Trustee Wemigwans

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, December 17, 2024."

CARRIED

10. Business Arising from the Minutes

MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION:

11. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Report

Trustee Sith updated the Board that along with himself, Trustees Johansen, Saarinen, LeBlanc, Vanderwey, and Chambers attended the OPSBA Public Education Symposium and the Regional Meetings on January 24-25. Some of the topics discussed at the Regional meeting included;

- standard updates;
- discussion of the ongoing transportation concerns across the region;
- new upcoming National Food Program and how the funding for it will roll out;
- planning and exploring options on how to align the administration of boards; and
- a request from Moose Cree community for a letter of support on behalf of their community and school authority for their request for funding to support the school's staff and students while they navigate an investigation into locating suspected graves on the school's property. It was agreed by members present that a request be submitted to draft a letter of support for their community.

12. Student Trustee January Report

Morgann De Franceschi, Student Trustee, presented her January report to the Board. Items addressed in the report included;

- conducting Indigenous student trustee interviews with Indigenous Student Trustee Drake in December;
- participating in the Grade 8 Reach Ahead virtual class with Trustee Saarinen and Indigenous Student Trustee Drake; and
- attending the Lakehead Public Schools(LPS) Kindergarten night.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

13. Indigenous Student Trustee January Report

Emily Drake, Indigenous Student Trustee, presented her January report to the Board. Items addressed in the report included;

- attending a Grade 8 Reach Ahead class with Trustee Saarinen and Student Trustee De Franceschi;
- participating in the Lakehead District School Board's Indigenous Cultural Safety conference on January 10; and
- plans to attend the Feathers of Hope Conference on January 24, 2025.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

14. Updates from the Chair/Director

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education, updated the Board on the following items;

- elementary report cards are going home to parents next Friday and parent teacher interviews will take place on February 13;
- secondary schools are in the middle of exams with report cards going home in the middle of the month;
- thank you to all the schools who hosted Family Literacy Day events;
- special thank you to the Thunder Bay North Stars who hosted a sensory friendly hockey game;
- the Northern Fruit and Vegetable program in partnership with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, is in full swing providing fresh fruit and vegetables to the elementary student of LPS;
- this week the Jr and Intermediate Basketball tournaments are being hosted at the secondary schools;
- Chef Allan Rebelo has been hired at Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute with the plan to ultimately have students be the providers of the cafeteria program;
- Indigenous Cultural Safety conference is on January 10;
- Equity and Professional Standards training has started for all Lakehead District School Board staff;
- Math professional development for Grades 4 and 5 teachers.
- LPS had 100 % success rate of the Grade 8 Reach Ahead credit on the north side of the city with 28 students earned a family studies credit in semester one;
- the Reach Ahead program will run on the south side of the city for semester two with an invitation to our First Nations partners to participate, including Fort Hope if they are able;
- Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute hosted a lunch with our industrial partners and students to present information on apprenticeship opportunities and career pathways as well as provide feedback on the students work;
- upcoming open houses for Grade 8 registration into High School in the next month;
- the annual capital planning team meetings have started for the 2025-2026 school year with all sites and principals;
- the Accessibility Planning Committee will provide trustees with an updated five-year plan for the Board in the spring; and
- the Chief Executive Officer/Chief Financial Officer conference was attended and many of the topics of discussion was on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and LPS looks forward to rolling out appropriate and co-pilot use of AI in our system.

15. Professional Standards Report (014-25)

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education, presented the report. All trustees' questions were addressed.

16. Early Learning Report (018-25)

Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education, presented the report. All trustees' questions were addressed.

17. Information and Technology Report (011-25)

Kirsti Alaksa, Superintendent of Business, introduced Will Fredrickson, Information Technology (IT) Committee, John Loovere, Supervisor Computer Services, Michael Colistro, Cyber Security and IT Project Supervisor, who presented the report. All trustees' questions were addressed.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

18. Recommendations from the Board Advisory Committee (015-25)

18.1 Input Submission to The Ministry of Finance – Re: Ontario Budget

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Wemigwans

"THAT Lakehead District School Board authorize administration to submit, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, input to the 2025 Ontario Budget through the Budget consultation submission portal with requested changes."

CARRIED

18.2 Miiniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Terms And Conditions (012-25)

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Sitch

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the Terms and Conditions for Miniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee."

CARRIED

19. Ad Hoc and Special Committee Reports

19.1 Request for Approval of Special Education Advisory Committee Letter

Moved by Trustee Saarinen

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhausen

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the request from the Special Education Advisory Committee Chair to be permitted to add her signature of endorsement to the letter written by the SEAC Chair of Ottawa Catholic School Board, SEAC to the Ministry of Education regarding inadequate special education funding & educational assistant shortage in Ontario, as outlined in Report No. 013-25."

CARRIED

19.2 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Request for Approval of Correspondence

Moved by Trustee Sitch

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhausen

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the request from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to send correspondence of support to the Minister of Education, as outlined in Report No. 017-25."

CARRIED

20. New Reports

21. New Business

22. Notices of Motion

23. Information and Inquiries

23.1 The following events attended by trustees:

- January 22, 2025 – Thunder Bay North Stars Sensory friendly hockey Game;
- January 24-25, 2025 – OPSBA Public Education Symposium; and
- January 27, 2025 – Family Literacy Day at Vance Chapman Public School and Woodcrest Public School.

24. Adjournment

Moved by Trustee Saarinen

Seconded by Trustee LeBlanc

"THAT we do now adjourn at 9:03 p.m."

CARRIED

CONFIRMED BY THE BOARD – February 25, 2025


Chair


Secretary

