

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Board Room/Microsoft Teams
Jim McCuaig Education Centre

2026 JAN 27
7:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Leah Vanderwey (Chair)
Pat Johansen
Donica LeBlanc
Ron Oikonen
Trudy Tuchenhagen

Ryan Sitch
Scottie Wemigwans (Indigenous Trustee)
Eryn Genno (Indigenous Student Trustee)
Breanna Bruce (Student Trustee)

ABSENT WITH REGRETS:

Ellen Chambers
George Saarinen

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION:

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education
Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education: Child Care & Elementary Education
Jane Lower, Superintendent of Education
Patti-Jo Pesola-Brunton, Superintendent of Education: Math Lead
Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education
Kirsti Alaksa, Superintendent of Business

PUBLIC SESSION:

1. **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order by Chair Vanderwey at 7:30 p.m.

2. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest – None**

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Johansen

“THAT the Agenda for Regular Board Meeting, January 27, 2026, be approved.”

CARRIED

4. Resolve into Committee of the Whole – Closed Session – N/A

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – CLOSED SESSION – N/A

5. Committee of the Whole – Closed Session - N/A

PUBLIC SESSION – 7:30 P.M.

6. Report of the Committee of the Whole – Closed Session – N/A

7. Land Acknowledgement

Trustee Oikonen read the Land Acknowledgement.

8. Consent Agenda

Moved by Trustee Wemigwans

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhagen

“THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the consent agenda, including items 8.1 and 8.2, as presented, and 8.3 as amended to include Trustee LeBlanc.”

CARRIED

9. Delegations/ Presentations – N/A

10. Reports

10.1 Director’s Reports

10.1.1 Belong – N/A

10.1.2 Succeed

10.1.2.1 French Immersion Program Review (011-26)

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

10.1.3 Reconcile – N/A

10.1.4 Other

10.1.4.1 Information and Technology Report (013-26)

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

10.2 Chairs Reports – N/A

10.3 Student/Indigenous Student Trustee Reports

10.3.1 Indigenous Student Trustee January Report (Handout)

Eryn Genno, Indigenous Student Trustee, presented her January report to the Board. Items addressed in the report included:

- reflecting on her first year as the Indigenous student trustee;
- goals as the Indigenous student trustee moving into the new year;
- making greater use of social media and the Student Trustee Instagram account; and
- collaborating more closely with Student Trustee Bruce.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.3.2 Student Trustee January Report (Handout)

Breanna Bruce, Student Trustee, presented her January report to the Board. Items addressed in the report included:

- attending the annual calendar committee meeting;
- participating in Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute's Gala night;
- an impromptu meeting with one of the Thunder Bay District Catholic Board's Student trustee; and
- speaking at Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute's International Baccalaureate Program night.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.4 Reports of Standing Committees – N/A

10.5 Reports of External Board or Agency Representation

10.5.1 Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Report

Trustee Sitch updated members on the following items:

- OPSBA Board of Directors (BOD) have not had a meeting this month;
- currently the BOD members are working on revising OPSBA's Executive Board and Board of Directors, there will be an upcoming vote on March 12, 2026, to go over the recommended changes. This vote will give school boards an additional chance to provide their feedback to the BOD on the recommendations; and
- the next BOD meeting is on February 22, 2026, which Trustee Sitch will be attending virtually.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

11. Reports of Special (Ad Hoc) Committees – N/A

12. Special Orders – N/A

13. Unfinished Business/ General Orders – N/A

14. Notices of Motion – N/A

15. Announcements

15.1 Chair Vanderwey shared with the Board Sue Peever's Project Lost and Found 20205 update as a handout.

15.2 Chair Vanderwey informed the Board that the following events were attended by trustees:

- January 23-24, 2026 – OPSBA's Public Education Symposium; and
- January 27, 2026 – Vance Chapman Public School's Family Literacy Day.

15.3 Director Pharand thanked Jane Lower, Superintendent of Education and Natasha Harding, Teacher at Westgate for their presentations at OPSBA Public Education Symposium on the KZ Lodge and the Indigenous Skilled Trades (formerly called the Tiny Home project). A student from Superior Greenstone and the Chief of Ginoogaming First Nations shared the impact of the Indigenous Skilled trades Program on students and the Community. Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, presented alongside legal counsel from Hicks Morley on Special Education issues and Ontario education law as it pertains to Special Education.

16. Adjournment

Moved by Trustee Johansen

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhagen

"THAT we do now adjourn at 8:27 p.m."

CARRIED

CONFIRMED BY THE BOARD – February 24, 2026


Chair


Secretary