

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Board Room/Microsoft Teams
Jim McCuaig Education Centre

2026 MAR 24
7:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Leah Vanderwey (Chair)
Ellen Chambers
Pat Johansen
Donica LeBlanc
Ron Oikonen

George Saarinen (virtual)
Ryan Sitch
Trudy Tuchenhagen
Breanna Bruce (Student Trustee)
Eryn Genno (Indigenous Student Trustee)

ABSENT WITH REGRETS:

Scottie Wemigwans (Indigenous Trustee)

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 7:32 p.m.

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

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Trustee Tuchenhagen

Seconded by Trustee Saarinen

"THAT the Agenda for Regular Board Meeting, March 24, 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 Johansen read the Land Acknowledgement.

8. Consent Agenda

Moved by Trustee LeBlanc

Seconded by Trustee Chambers

"THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the consent agenda, item 8.1 as presented."

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 Math Achievement Action Plan (026-26)

Patti-Jo Pesola-Brunton, Superintendent of Education: Math Lead, presented the report. All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.1.3 Reconcile – N/A

10.1.4 Other

10.1.4.1 Bus Transportation Update/Final Costs 2025-2026 (018-26)

Kirsti Alaksa, Superintendent of Business, introduced Craig Murphy, Consortium Manager, Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay, who presented the report. All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.1.4.2 2026 Municipal Election – Trustee Determination and Distribution (027-26)

Moved by Trustee Saarinen Seconded by Trustee Chambers

“THAT for the 2026 municipal election, Lakehead District School Board:

1. *Declare that a low population area not be designated.*
2. *Select option 4.2 (maintain the number of trustees at eight)of Report No. 027-26, consideration for the 2026 municipal election.”*

CARRIED

10.1.4.3 Policy Review – 2010 Policy Review and Development (028-26)

Moved by Trustee Sitch Seconded by Trustee LeBlanc

“THAT Lakehead District School Board approve the review of the 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy, as indicated in Report No. 028-26 and update any other LDSB policies where the 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy is referenced.”

CARRIED

10.2 Chairs Reports – N/A

10.3 Student/Indigenous Student Trustee Reports

10.3.1 Indigenous Student Trustee March Report (Handout)

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

- attending the Miiniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Meeting on February 26, 2026, where she provided the committee members a brief overview of her work as Indigenous student trustee over the past couple months.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.3.2 Student Trustee March Report (Handout)

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

- a mentor meeting with Trustee Saarinen and Indigenous Student Trustee Genno;
- engaged with Ontario Student Trustees through a group chat to discuss current issues related to educational governance in Ontario;
- drafting a document for a potential outreach event for student trustees in Northern Ontario; and
- responding to an inquiry made by Possibility Seeds requesting further clarification on how their program engages students in promoting equity and inclusion in hopes of bringing their program to students in Thunder Bay, she stated she plans to keep the Board updated on this as she obtains more information.

All trustees' questions were addressed.

10.4 Reports of Standing Committees

10.4.1 Miiniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Minutes – October 2, 2026

Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education, presented the minutes. All questions from trustees were addressed.

10.4.2 Parent Involvement Committee Minutes – November 17, 2025

Sherrilynne Pharand, Director of Education, presented the minutes. There were no questions from trustees.

10.5 Reports of External Board or Agency Representation

10.5.1 Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Report

Trustee Sitch provided Board members with updates on the following items:

- on March 12, 2026, OPSBA's membership approved amendments to the OPSBA General By-Laws, revising the governance structure by changing the number of Board of Directors to 17-18 members and adjusting the Regional Council structures.
- the OPSBA voting delegate and alternate delegates for each member Board will remain unchanged;
- each region will have a Regional Chair and Vice-Chair serving on the Board of Directors for each region; and
- Trustee Saarinen attending the AGM as the representative for Lakehead District School Board.

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 inquired if any Board members had any announcements. The following announcements were made by Board members:

- Trustee Chambers provided members with an update from the communications committee on the correspondence that had been sent out by trustees to city councillors and a response from some of the councillors;
- Trustee Chambers also provided members with an update on an information session held on March 4, 2026, at the Waverley Resource Library and a virtual town hall with Lise Vaugeois on March 16, 2026;
- Trustee Vanderwey informed members that she had the pleasure of attending the elementary hockey tournament on March 3, 2026, and March 10, 2026, at the Fort William First Nations Arena;
- Director Pharand informed the trustees of the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations curling championships being held this week at the Port Arthur Curling Club and that Kelly will provide details via email should Board members wish to attend.

16. Adjournment


Moved by Trustee Saarinen

Seconded by Trustee Johansen


"THAT we do now adjourn at 8:42 p.m."

CARRIED

CONFIRMED BY THE BOARD – April 28, 2026



Chair



Secretary