

KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

EMERGENT MEETING OF KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

Roy H. Wilfong Boardroom, Education Centre
1994 Fisher Drive, Peterborough, Ontario

Character Makes a Difference

The Character Attribute for April is *Responsibility*

A G E N D A

- ITEM 1. **CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
- ITEM 2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
- ITEM 3. **DECISION ITEM**
 - 3.1 Draft Letter to Local MPPs - **
- ITEM 4. **ADJOURNMENT**

** – Copy Attached

Note: If unable to attend, please advise Susan Beacock, Executive Liaison to the Trustees, at 705-742-9773 or 1-877-741-4577, Extension 2006.

TO: Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

TOPIC: Draft Letter to Local MPPs

INITIATOR: Diane Lloyd, Chairperson of the Board

BACKGROUND

1. At the Chairpersons' Committee meeting held on Monday, April 15, 2019, Director J. Leclerc, shared a draft letter for consideration and input from the committee.
2. The draft letter with regard to changes in provincial education directions, specifically the increase in secondary class size average, is attached (Appendix A).

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the draft letter be sent to all local MPPs, with copies to the Minister of Education and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

Diane Lloyd
Chairperson of the Board



(date)

Local MPP

Address

Dear Local MPP,

At the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, we believe that public education is a cornerstone of our democracy in Ontario. We are proud to be ambassadors and advocates for public education, and we are committed to contributing to public confidence through our transparency and accountability.

Trustees:

*Diane Lloyd
(Chairperson)*

*Sarah Bobka
(Vice-chairperson)*

*Cathy Abraham
Terry Brown
Cyndi Dickson
Kailee Dupuis
Rose Kitney
Jaime Klassen Jeninga
Angela Lloyd
Shirley Patterson
Steve Russell*

*Aidan Hussey
Lindsay Keene
(Student Trustees)*

We know you share our commitment to education in our province, and on behalf of our Board of Trustees, we welcome our continued work together.

First and foremost, we want to ensure our students have the best opportunity we can provide for their growth, advancement of their learning, and pathways to lifelong success.

For these reasons, and in recognition that the government is currently welcoming feedback and input until May 31 on recently announced changes for our publicly funded education system, we wanted to share with you the impact we expect locally, for our students and staff, as a result of the increase in secondary class size averages.

Firstly, as a result of the increased class size average, we are forecasting that we will need the equivalent of approximately 55 fewer full-time secondary teaching positions for next year. While offset somewhat by retirements, this will conservatively result in the loss of approximately 35 individual teachers who will no longer be available to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Most significantly, while Principals and school staff have just begun to plan their student course offerings for next year, this reduction in teaching positions equates to approximately 300 fewer classes available for students next year.

This speaks to our broader and long-term concern with the increased class average direction – a significant loss of educational programming for our students.

With your announcements in March, we welcomed your government's renewed focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) courses and the skilled trades. We were an early adapter of Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs in our secondary schools, and we continue to be among the leading boards in Ontario to offer these programs, with over 50 SHSM programs

(Local MPP)

(date)

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Board-wide in 13 sectors, ranging from business and construction, to information technology and transportation.

We need to be clear in sharing with you that the expected 28 student class size average places at serious risk a school's ability to offer the specialized courses in skilled trades and technology which your government is prioritizing. By collective agreement, these classes must be limited to 22 students for safety reasons; as a result they will be under great pressure to be cancelled or limited in many schools.

This dynamic will also adversely affect other specialized courses, including those across the Arts and other disciplines, which are life-changing in their ability to keep students engaged in school.

We know that your government shares our commitment to keeping smaller secondary schools, especially in our rural communities, vital and strong. For a number of years we have been actively working with our communities to ensure that our students at these smaller secondary schools benefit from the broadest educational programming we are able to provide.

While Principals and school staff will continue to be innovative and resourceful in their planning for students, the announced class size changes will force many smaller secondary schools to cancel courses because there simply will not be enough students for them to run.

This is troubling for us, and for the communities we serve.

In closing, we appreciate that, with the recently announced task force, your government is reviewing options to find efficiencies in the delivery of education in Ontario. We welcome the opportunity to work together with you toward that end. We ask that you consider what we have shared above as part of a collaborative process to meet that goal while ensuring the best interests of students remain at the heart of all decision making.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter, and look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with your government toward a successful future for the students of Ontario.

Sincerely,

Diane Lloyd
Chairperson of the Board

Cc: The Honourable Lisa Thompson
MPPs of Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
Ontario Public School Board Association