



Bluewater District School Board

P.O. Box 190, 351 1st Avenue North
Chesley, Ontario N0G 1L0
Telephone: (519) 363-2014 Fax: (519) 370-2909
www.bwdsb.on.ca

The following remarks were provided by Bluewater District School Board Chair Jan Johnstone at the Regular Meeting of the Board held on June 18, 2019:

Bluewater District School Board is working diligently to mitigate the impact of the provincial government's increase to class sizes, particularly at the secondary level.

We are pleased to report that the potential lay-off list for next year has been reduced by 35.1 full time equivalent (FTE) positions as a result of the Attrition Allocation Funding that we received. This equals approximately 210 classes that will continue to be offered to our students in 2019 – 2020.

Despite this reduction, the reality remains that some of our staff will not be returning next year. This saddens us.

As it stands, our secondary principals have each submitted a list of courses that require additional staffing due to the loss of qualified teachers. These include areas such as technology (e.g. transportation, hospitality), French, computer programming, business courses, and mathematics. Approximately 51 sections have been set aside in the hope of recalling teachers with specific qualifications to address these gaps. We anticipate that some of this additional staffing will be in place by the end of June for semester 1, while the remainder will be placed at a later time for semester 2 programs.

While we have been able to reduce next year's number of potential secondary lay-offs by approximately half, trustees remain concerned that there will be fewer secondary teachers in our schools by the end of four years as class size increases are phased in. As a small rural school board, this would mean a loss in both teaching and programming support for our students, and the inability of our secondary schools to provide a number of specialized course options.

Please rest assured that the Board of Trustees will continue to advocate on behalf of our rural schools, and seek out ways to work with the provincial government to find solutions that ensure our students have equal opportunities to learn and succeed.

Jan Johnstone
Chair, Bluewater District School Board