

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.

ETSB BOARD ROOM

340, SAINT-JEAN-BOSCO

MAGOG, QC. J1X 1K9

MINUTES

Enhanced Literacy and Numeracy – Dropout Prevention – Physical and Mental Health

MEMBERS PRESENT (P):

COMMISSIONERS		PARENT COMMISSIONERS	
Gordon Barnett	Z	Marc Mercure	Z
Claire Beaubien	Z	Hélène Turgeon	Z
Daniel Brodie	Z	Cindy Véronneau	Z
Richard Gagnon	Z	Daniel Zigby	Z
Gary Holliday	A	DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)	
Joy Humenuik, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Z	Secretary General, Éric Campbell	P
Mary-Ellen Kirby	Z	Director General, Kandy Mackey	A
Frank MacGregor	Z	Interim Director General and Director of Continuing Education, Michel Soucy	P
Alice McCrory	Z	Interim Assistant Director General and Director of Human Resources, Jeffrey Pauw	P
Jonathan Murray	Z	Director of Financial Services, Sophie Leduc	Z
Michael Murray, <i>Chairman</i>	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services, Eva Lettner	Z
Tina Pezzi-Bilodeau	Z	Director of Complementary Services, Emmanuelle Gaudet	Z
		Director of Material Resources, Éric Plante	Z

Zoom: Z

OBSERVERS

Sharon Priest, Communications Consultant – Zoom

PUBLIC

Megan Seline, President of the Appalachian Teachers' Association (ATA) – Conference call
Matthew McCully, The Record – Conference call

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. QUORUM AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner H. Turgeon to adopt the Agenda of February 25, 2020, as deposited.

Carried unanimously

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-66

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Commissioners held on February 25, 2020

WHEREAS a copy of the Minutes of the meetings of February 25, 2020, has been given to each Commissioner at least 6 hours before the opening of the meeting, the Secretary General is excused from reading the Minutes.

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner G. Barnett to excuse the Secretary General from reading the Minutes and to approve the Minutes of the meetings held on February 25, 2020, as modified.

Carried unanimously

We should have read:

12. QESBA

QESBA made the decision to contest the parts of Bill 40 that apply to English School Boards with the collaboration of the Quebec Community Group Network (QCGN) and the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-language Education in Québec (APPELE). Which parts of Bill 40 and on what grounds will these parts be contested, has yet to be determined.

4. QUESTION PERIOD

M. Seline: Due to the current situation, have any parents and/or teachers contacted any commissioners individually and if so what are their concerns?

A. McCrory: I have spoke with the administrators in my schools and the emergency daycares are going well, especially Waterloo Elementary.

- M. E. Kirby: The communication about the COVID-19 case at LVTC was well received. Even though for some parents, communications are difficult, they are glad for the individual teachers reaching out to students on Facebook and Facebook chat.
- M. Seline: Have individual teachers or parents reached out to individual commissioners?
- T. Bilodeau: Some have concerns that if there was a COVID-19 case declared at a school, how would parents find out and there was some concern about the case that was reported at ADS.
- D. Brodie: I have spoken with parents who were concerned about the possible end of the school year and whether the students will graduate. I referred parents to the MEES website and they were relieved with the Minister's recent comments.
- M. McCully: Is the ETSB working with the *Directeur de la Santé Publique* on what to do in order to provide support to students with special needs?
- E. Gaudet: The ETSB is working very closely with the *Directeur de la Santé Publique* on all health related issues with COVID-19. We have not specifically addressed special needs students as we have to wait for what's coming from the MEES, but we will be working on it. There are resources for mental health on the pedagogical and complementary services website and we are reaching out to our complementary services professionals for extra help.

5. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Murray extended congratulations to principals and teachers for their initiatives that have been put into place: reaching out to students and staff members, videos, suggestions to students and activities as well as other initiatives. He also expressed his pride with the ETSB community for rising to the occasion.

6. BUSINESS ARISING

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-67 Request for an alcohol permit – Knowlton Academy

WHEREAS Knowlton Academy is planning a Volunteer Recognition Event to be held on May 28th 2020, at the school where alcohol will be served;

WHEREAS the Knowlton Academy Governing Board was consulted and approved the requirements for the above-mentioned event and are fully aware that alcohol will be available;

WHEREAS no minors will be present at the event and it will be held outside of the regular hours of school;

WHEREAS Knowlton Academy will conform with the *Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux du Québec (RACJ)*;

WHEREAS Knowlton Academy must obtain a resolution from the Council of Commissioners authorizing them to have alcoholic beverages on the premises and in this case, will supply a photocopy of the permit provided by the RACJ once received, to the Secretary General's office;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner R. Gagnon to authorize Knowlton Academy to serve alcoholic beverages, in conformity with the *Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux du Québec*, at the above-mentioned event being held May 28th 2020, organized by the Knowlton Academy.

Carried unanimously

7.2 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-68

Adult Education Centres (Brome-Missisquoi Campus and New Horizons) and Distance Education Merger

WHEREAS the main objective of the ETSB Commitment to Success Plan 2018-2023 is to raise the 7-year cohort graduation and certification rates to 76.2%;

WHEREAS the ETSB provides learning opportunities to the adult English communities on the Eastern Townships territory and surrounding areas in its facilities at New Horizons, located on 2365 Galt Street West in Sherbrooke and at Centre Brome-Missisquoi Campus, located at 180 Adélarde Street – Godbout in Cowansville;

WHEREAS the ETSB also offers educational services at a distance to the adult clientele within the province;

WHEREAS the ETSB wishes to improve its offer of delivery service and reach out to the adult communities throughout the Eastern Townships Territory, including its more remote areas;

WHEREAS the ETSB wishes to promote collaboration and consolidate expertise among the personnel of its Adult General Education Centres;

WHEREAS the ETSB wishes to promote a sharing of resources within its Adult General Education Centres and create new opportunities for learning to the Adult English communities;

WHEREAS a resolution will be prepared at the Council of Commissioners meeting in May 2020 to present a new Deed of Establishment, including the name of this new entity;

WHEREAS the ETSB wishes to ensure a sectorial parity of representation in the composition of the Governing Board regarding this new entity;

WHEREAS the proposed merger was discussed in consultation with Commissioners at its Advisory Committees, as well as with all adult sector personnel and union representatives;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Humenuik to approve the merger of the ETSB's Adult Education Centres (Brome-Missisquoi Campus and New Horizons) and Distance Education, effective on July 1st 2020.

Carried unanimously

7.3 **Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-69**

Commitment to Success Plan Alignment with the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* strategic plan

WHEREAS the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* strategic plan is for 2019-2023;

WHEREAS the Eastern Townships School Board's (ETSB) Commitment to Success plan is for 2018-2022;

WHEREAS the MEES asks all School Boards to modify their Commitment to Success plan, to end the same year as their Strategic Plan, that is in 2023;

IT IS MOVED by Commissioner M. E. Kirby that the ETSB Commitment to Success Plan be aligned with the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* strategic plan.

Carried unanimously

8. **REPORTS**

8.1 **DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT**

The Interim Director General, Michel Soucy, reported that since our last council of Commissioners meeting, the Coronavirus COVID-19 has been declared a pandemic. Our provincial government has been quick and decisive in implementing measures to help stop the spread of the virus. One measure that has directly impacted the Eastern Townships School Board is the temporary closing of all schools as of Monday, March 16th until Friday, May 1st 2020. Yesterday, all businesses across Quebec, except for those that offer essential services, are to be closed for the next 3 weeks, which shows just how serious this is.

Although the closing of schools has been difficult for many parents and students, I would like to recognize our government, the Premier and his team for putting the safety of students and staff first. On Monday, March 16th, three ETSB daycares were opened at Heroes' in Cowansville, Parkview in Granby and Waterloo for the children of essential services personnel. We are fortunate to have some dedicated daycare educators, secretaries, caretakers and principals, who have really stepped up and kept these daycares open all week. In the coming days, our staff at these schools will need some time to recharge and I am confident that our ETSB community will answer the call to action to help out.

We realize that the closure of schools and daycares has caused a lot of stress for parents. I want to thank them for their collaboration and patience. We understand your concerns and that is why we have created a website where parents and students can access learning activities for now. The MEES is also preparing some online services and we need to coordinate our efforts to avoid confusion.

I also want to thank the head office, the schools and centre personnel for keeping our services up and running. Our administrators and teachers for their implications. I also want to say thank you to my colleagues on the DC who have worked hard (even before the school closures) to monitor the situation on a daily basis, coordinate with government agencies, and help to keep our personnel and parents informed.

We are all in this together and the most important message tonight is to follow the recommendations from Santé Publique, for social distancing, washing your hands, and self-isolating, if you are sick. Remember to reach by any way you can and especially those members of our community that are having a hard time dealing with the isolation. Help your neighbors and family members who cannot get out for groceries and basic needs. Be kind to each other; remember that everyone is concerned and feeling stressed right now. Together, we can make a difference.

8.2 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair of the Commissioners' Council, M. Murray, presented the report below:

Greetings from self-quarantine. I trust everyone is well and carefully observing all recommendations for physical distancing and social connecting.

I want to share with you my immense pride in the efforts of our entire ETSB team over the last dozen days. Despite the complete disruption of what we have, until now, considered normal and despite the real risk of falling into chaos; our leadership has risen to every challenge. I know our DG has spent inordinate amounts of time coping with the confusing and conflicting messaging from government and ministry. Apparently, meetings are called at any hour and quite often on weekends to issue instructions and directives. Completely unprecedented changes have been announced, such as the government suspension of collective agreements, that leadership is left to contend with. Despite some of our management team being required to self-quarantine because of possible exposure to contagion and all are required to respect physical distancing recommendations, everyone has carried on magnificently. Board services like payroll and accounts payable have been sustained to ensure that our personnel and our suppliers receive the funds they need at this critical juncture. HR is still operating to support personnel and begin planning for staffing next year while finding personnel for our three emergency daycares that support essential services workers. Our Facilities Management team is even accelerating the pace of activities to ensure schools will be safe and projects take advantage of this period without students or staff in the buildings. Above all, we depend absolutely on our communications thanks to our IT professionals who have kept us all connected.

Like you, I have seen the indications that our educators are taking initiative to connect with students and their families in many ways. There are videos online with greetings and often suggestions for constructive ways to use this time at home. Some school staffs have divided up the lists of students and contacted every household just to keep in touch. Our Pedagogical and Special Services teams have produced a website of learning activities that I feel certain will be appreciated. When I touched base with school administrators, they all expressed admiration and appreciation for the efforts of the central office team to keep them informed, to encourage solidarity and to provide support.

This is a time when we all must pull together to demonstrate that despite extraordinary stresses and disruptions, we can and will continue to perform our central obligations based on our pillars of pedagogical leadership, student engagement, professional learning community and attachment-based developmental approach.

I want to add an expression of my personal delight at the communiqué issued yesterday in which the minister of education announced that new material can be taught, although it will not be evaluated. This removes one of the principal barriers to getting back to educating in our new environment. I hope to see an explosion of fresh initiatives taking advantage of our deployment of computers to all students above cycle 2 and in earlier cycles that special needs students also have computers. We are equipped, capable and eager to demonstrate the best qualities of professional educators.

Congratulations again to everyone doing their share. I am sure I speak for all commissioners as well as the general public when I say we support you and endorse your efforts.

9. ADVISORY COMMITTEES' REPORTS

9.1 Executive Committee

The Chair of the Executive Committee, Commissioner M. Murray, presented the topics that were discussed at tonight's Executive meeting:

- ✓ Staffing plan.

9.2 Governance and Ethics Committee

The Chair of the Governance and Ethics Committee, Commissioner R. Gagnon, mentioned that the next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2020 and may very well be an online meeting.

9.3 Audit Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee, Commissioner J. Humenuik, presented the following resolutions:

Finance:

None.

Material Resources:**9.3.1 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-70
Lennoxville Elementary School – Drainage and Parking Pavement**

WHEREAS the ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) approved a budget of \$468,370 for the project stated above, under the program MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure: 50621: MDB;

WHEREAS due to the constraints within the timeline to implement the project stated above, this resolution must be presented on a budgetary basis in the amount of \$468,370;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted as soon as the results of the call for tenders will be known;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted in respect of authorization by the MEES for this project (contract, professional fees and taxes included) and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements (laws, policies, rules, etc.);

WHEREAS if additional funds are required to complete the project, money will be taken from the *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure: 50621* program;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted according to the recommendations of the professional firm;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. Mercure to proceed, in conformity with the authorization by the MEES and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements, for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Interim Director General and/or the Director of Material Resources be authorized to sign all associated documentation.

Carried unanimously

**9.3.2 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-71
St. Francis Elementary School – Interior Lighting and Renovation**

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* approved a budget of \$312,247 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB – Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure :50621 :MDB*;

WHEREAS due to the constraints within the timeline to implement the project stated above, this resolution must be presented on a budgetary basis in the amount of \$312,247;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted as soon as the results of the call for tenders will be known;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted in respect of authorization by the MEES for this project (contract, professional fees and taxes included) and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements (laws, policies, rules, etc.);

WHEREAS if additional funds are required to complete the project, money will be taken from the *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure: 50621* program;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted according to the recommendations of the professional firm;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner T. Pezzi-Bilodeau to proceed, in conformity with the authorization by the MEES and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements, for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Interim Director General and/or the Director of Material Resources be authorized to sign all associated documentation.

Carried unanimously

9.3.3 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-72
Mansonville Elementary School – Windows Replacement

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* approved a budget of \$299,945 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure: 50621: MDB*;

WHEREAS due to the constraints within the timeline to implement the project stated above, this resolution must be presented on a budgetary basis in the amount of \$299,945;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted as soon as the results of the call for tenders will be known;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted in respect of authorization by the MEES for this project (contract, professional fees & taxes included) and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements (laws, policies, rules, etc.);

WHEREAS if additional funds are required to complete the project, money will be taken from the *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2019-20 Mesure: 50621* program;

WHEREAS the contract will be granted according to the recommendations of the professional firm;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner D. Brodie to proceed, in conformity with the authorization by the MEES and the ETSB's purchase policy and government requirements, for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Interim Director General and/or the Director of Material Resources be authorized to sign all associated documentation.

Carried unanimously

9.3.4 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-73
Cookshire Elementary School – Interior Lighting and Renovation

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)* dedicated a budget of \$208,165 for the project stated above, under the program *RDE - Résorption du déficit d'entretien 2019-20 Mesure: 50622*;

WHEREAS three (3) companies retrieved the project specifications after a public invitation to bid on the project;

WHEREAS three (3) bids were received by the Eastern Townships School Board by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$154,444 (excluding taxes) was received from the company *Les Constructions Encore Ltée*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *BOUM Architecture*, has recommended the company *Les Constructions Encore Ltée*, lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work;

WHEREAS the amount of the lowest bid from the contractor plus the professional fees and taxes is \$197,230;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E. Kirby that the Company *Les Constructions Encore Ltée* be awarded the contract for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Interim Director General and/or the Director of Material Resources be authorized to sign all associated documentation.

Carried unanimously

The next Audit Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2020.

9.4 Educational Services Advisory Committee

The Chair also mentioned the following topics discussed at the March 10, 2020 meeting:

- ✓ Living Schools Symposium – could be on hold;
- ✓ Presentation – Shift in Teaching Practices in Mathematics: Math program – Math diagnostic, enthusiastic about the new program.

9.5 Communications Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Communications Advisory Committee, D. Zigby, mentioned that the meeting was postponed and the next meeting is scheduled on May 5, 2020.

9.6 Human Resources Advisory Committee

The Director of Human Resources, J. Pauw, presented the following resolution:

9.6.1 Resolution No. ETSB 20-03-74 Youth Sector Calendar – 2020-2021

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner C. Beaubien to approve the 2020-2021 School Year Calendar, as deposited.

Carried unanimously

The next Human Resources Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled on April 21, 2020.

9.7 Transportation Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee, Commissioner H. Turgeon, mentioned that the next meeting is scheduled on May 21, 2020.

9.8 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The Chair of the SEAC, C. Véronneau, mentioned that the next SEAC meeting is scheduled May 2020, but may very well have to be cancelled. M. Murray asked if a virtual meeting was a possibility and C. Veronneau replied that it could be possible.

10. Parents' Committee

The Commissioner representing parents, D. Zigby, mentioned that the following was discussed:

A meeting took place on March 11th 2020 regarding an animated discussion about Bill 40. There were many comments and questions. The next Parents' Committee meeting is scheduled on April 1st 2020 – hoping to hold it on line, if we can have something other than Google hangout.

11. Student Advisory Committee

Commissioner J. Humenuik, representing the Student Advisory Committee, mentioned the following topics were discussed at the March 13, 2020, meeting:

A meeting took place at Alexander Galt Regional High School (AGRHS) on March 13, 2020. A tour of the school including Lennoxville Vocational Training Centre (LVTC) was done. The meeting took place on the same day the Premier announced that schools were suspended. The student members of this committee are curious and really motivated. They are going above and beyond their mandate.

A May meeting was planned with commissioners, but will have to wait and see. A zoom meeting should be considered and organized with students of this committee. M. Murray asked if CSAC could maybe hold meetings with ZOOM to make them more productive, more frequent and less travelling. J. Humenuik thought it was a good idea now that we have a tool that works well. We need a couple of meetings in person for them to get to know each other, but meeting on-line would give the members more time to meet.

The next Student Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled May 19, 2020.

12. QESBA

- ✓ QESBA is still contesting in the courts in regards to Bill 40, but this has been put on hold due to the current circumstances;
- ✓ COVID-19 context: QESBA provided support to the MEES in order to contribute with learning tools that could be put on the MEES platform for supporting English clientele;

✓ Spring Conference is officially cancelled.

13. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Commissioner A. McCrory: Regarding the awards and the commissioner's bursary – we will be looking into how to support this.

Commissioner C. Beaubien: Three elementary schools were contacted: Grades 5 and 6 students in her area (North Hatley Elementary School, Ayer's Cliff Elementary School and Sunnyside Elementary School) brought their computers home. Grades 4 have school chrome books which can't be taken home. 20 to 25% of the parents of Sunnyside do not have internet access. At Ayer's Cliff Elementary School, six parents do not have internet.

Commissioner M. Mercure: Are you working on contingency plans on how we will integrate the students next year if this year is cancelled?

E. Lettner: Nothing can be compulsory this year – so next year, we will really have to focus on the essentials to get up to speed. Our move towards formative assessment will be essential.

Commissioner M. Mercure: Can we do on-line teaching?

E. Lettner: We have a good plan is in progress, but will wait in order to move ahead with it to make sure we align with what the MEES is doing.

Commissioner M. Murray: It is our obligation to stay equitable with all our students, including the ones who are struggling the most. Not all families have the same tools and accessibility.

Commissioner R. Gagnon: We should take the salami approach – have to take small bites – maybe for students who are going into advanced math next year, we can focus on smaller groups.

Commissioner A. McCrory: I think that the three-core subjects should be taught and what they need to leave high school, or be promoted to high school.

Commissioner J. Humenuik: People are stressed – we are still in the uncertain, panic mode; we must be cautious about adding more onto people's plates that are already overflowing.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

None.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

M. Seline: What will be the impact on student services in regards to the merger of Adult Education services? Given the merger, will the offer be improved? With the merger, will there be an impact on teachers?

M. Soucy: Services should be improved and there should not be a negative impact on teachers.

M. Seline: Given the COVID-19 pandemic, what will happen to the staffing plan?

J. Pauw: We are hoping that it will not impact the staffing plan and we are currently working with the principals. The needs are being looked into for next year and for consultations, we will try ZOOM meetings.

M. Seline: Are the standard deadlines being respected within the current context, especially staffing for special needs students?

J. Pauw: Yes, we are working within the parameters.

M. Seline: Who do I contact in regards to these questions?

J. Pauw: You may go through me for your questions.

M. Seline: How are Governing Boards going to function?

E. Campbell: Governing Board meetings are public meetings. To hold meetings on line, this must be part of the internal rules of management. Deadlines will be difficult to meet. We are waiting on the directives from the MEES.

M. Seline: What will happen with school-based activities – school council, TAC and special needs committees, etc.?

J. Pauw: All noncritical meetings have been postponed – we are looking at how we can adjust for these meetings.

M. Seline: To be clear, are you looking to reschedule?

J. Pauw: We are looking at our options, to be able to meet deadline and respect the process.

- M. McCully: For the families that do not have internet, are resources being made available to parents during school closures? How do we make work available to those who do not have internet access, do they have a dropping point?
- M. Murray: The Minister has said that arrangements will be made. Activities available now are on a voluntary basis because many do not involve technology to carry them out.
- M. McCully: Could the record remind the school board that despite the closures, the school pages are still available?
- E. Campbell: Yes, thank you. The Eastern Townships School Board will provide The Record with information in this current context. We are working on it.

17. **GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION**

None.

18. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner R. Gagnon at 8:21 p.m.

Éric Campbell
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

EC/gm
24.03.2020