

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY MAY 5, 2020 – 6:30 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	A	Cindy Véronneau	Z
Richard Gagnon	Z	Daniel Zigby	Z
Gary Holliday	A	DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)	
Joy Humenuik, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	Z	Secretary General, Éric Campbell	Z
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	P
Michael Murray, <i>Chairman</i>	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services, Eva Lettner	P
Tina Pezzi-Bilodeau	Z	Director of Complementary Services, Emmanuelle Gaudet	P
		Director of Material Resources, Éric Plante	P

ZOOM: Z

OBSERVERS

Sharon Priest, Communications Consultant – ZOOM

PUBLIC – ZOOM

- ✓ Megan Seline, President of the Appalachian Teachers' Association (ATA)
- ✓ Matthew McCully, The Record
- ✓ Crystle Reid, Richmond Regional High School Teacher
- ✓ Lori Hill, Richmond Regional High School Teacher
- ✓ Wanda Cox, Richmond Regional High School Support Staff
- ✓ Jim Lemaître, Sunnyside Principal
- ✓ J. Daigle-Coates, Pope Memorial Parent
- ✓ Robert Young, Bus Contractor (West sector)
- ✓ Mirabelle Kelly, Parkview GB Parent
- ✓ Patrica Martin, Richmond Regional High School Support Staff
- ✓ Kymberley Morin, Professional at Board Office
- ✓ Graham Weeks, Taxpayer
- ✓ Laura Rietveld, Knowlton Academy Parent
- ✓ Lisa Simard, Knowlton Academy Parent
- ✓ Victoria Emanuelle Forest Briand, CBC Quebec Reporter
- ✓ Rachel Hostetler, North Hatley (NHES) Teacher
- ✓ Amy McComb, Lennoxville Elementary Parent
- ✓ Paul Downing, Bus Driver Support Staff
- ✓ Gail Klinck, Massey-Vanier High School Teacher – (ATA)
- ✓ Peggy McCourt, Alexander Galt Regional High School Principal (ETAA)

1. CALL THE SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.

2. QUORUM

QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E. Kirby to adopt the Agenda of May 5, 2020 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

3. COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURE FOR CALLING THE SPECIAL MEETING

The Chairman ascertained with the Secretary General that the procedure for calling the meeting complied with Article 165 of the Education Act.

All the Commissioners present have received the convocation within the prescribed delays.

4. REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

The Chariman of the Board, M. Murray, presented the following:

Just so we are all on the same page about reopening schools, I would like to restate some key aspects of our situation as we understand it today.

Reopening of schools and of society must happen sometime. It will not be easier, safer or more productive in the near future. Consequently, it is appropriate to restart now.

Some comments suggest reopening schools in September, but I ask you to imagine the fully loaded buses, fully occupied classrooms and regular school activities with students crowded together in cafeterias, gymnasiums and playgrounds. By starting progressively now, we can test preventive measures and adjust before resuming full attendance. We can learn which preventive measures may safely be adjusted.

We acknowledge that reopening schools and businesses entails risk to public health. Repeated references to availability of hospital and critical care capacity is a clear signal that Public Health Leadership anticipates a surge in contagion and hospitalization. In the absence of an effective vaccine, there seems to be no realistic alternative to tolerating a wider spread of COVID-19.

We acknowledge that given the directives from Public Health and the Commission on Working Conditions, few or no educational activities will be possible at this trial stage. Students will not be returning to normal. This reopening is a process to evaluate our ability to manage and respond to student socialization and mental health needs.

We further acknowledge that the guidelines proposed by Public Health and by the Commission on Working Conditions will be violated regularly in practice. They include social distancing between educators and students at all times, hand-washing frequency, sharing pedagogical tools and keeping young children at their desks for up to five hours per day. Despite everyone trying to respect the guidelines, reality will override them.

We may choose to work around other guidelines. We chose to install fountains that refill water bottles, permitting us to allow students to get water at school. We choose to equip Bus drivers with protective equipment for enhanced safety rather than enclose them in Plexiglas. We may choose to restore breakfast and lunch programs in the interests of student nutrition and health wherever possible. We will continue to adapt and adjust as experience dictates.

We will adapt and adjust as we progress together, supporting each other despite the stress.

The Vice-Chair of the Board, J. Humenuik, presented the following:

I think it is important to acknowledge all the hard work and dedication that has been done by our DG and our central Administrators, by our Principals, Teachers and Support Staff during these trying times. Online learning

has been happening across our territory. Students are being reached out to in all sorts of ways. One of the advantages of social media is that we can see many of the initiatives and good things happening across our territory. They didn't wait for directives, they did what was needed for the students. As we reopen our schools and centres, I believe I can speak for the whole Council of Commissioners that we support that the online learning continues. Hopefully, this will be helpful for Teachers and Students in our schools to connect with classmates and Teachers at home.

I am positive great things will be happening within our school community.

The Secretary General, É. Campbell, shared data in order to present the level of preparation of all schools.

The following resolution was presented and discussed at tonight's meeting:

Resolution ETSB 20-05-82
Schools and Centres reopening

WHEREAS all schools and centres across Quebec, including those of the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB), have been closed since March 13th due to the COVID-19 Pandemic;

WHEREAS the Government of Quebec has announced a target date of May 11th outside the Montreal Metropolitan Community to reopen elementary schools, based on a recommendation from Direction de la Santé Publique (DSPu);

WHEREAS the reopening of schools was announced by the Minister of Education with the collaboration of the experts from the DSPu, who have the authority to judge whether or not the sanitary conditions for a gradual back to school have been met;

WHEREAS to reopen schools and centres, the ETSB must have in place measures that conform with the recommendations from the DSPu to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff;

WHEREAS the ETSB has the responsibility first and foremost to ensure the health and safety of all students, staff and their families;

WHEREAS the ETSB has consulted its schools, centres and services' administrative teams to assess their level of preparedness and readiness to reopen;

WHEREAS the Minister of Education announced on May 5th, the possibility of a progressive reopening of schools and centres to be completed by May 13th;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E. Kirby that the Council of Commissioners of the Eastern Townships School Board will take advantage of the possibility of a progressive reopening and will reopen all its elementary schools on May 13th;

IT WAS FURTHER MOVED to reopen all ETSB Adult Education and Vocational Training Centres on May 11th, due to their different clientele and offer of service.

Carried unanimously

5. QUESTION PERIOD

- M. Seine: How will the CNESST list be applied?
- J. Pauw: We have just received the guide from the CNESST, which will be sent to all administrators. A translated version will be available soon.
- M. Kelly (Parkview GB parent): What is the protocol if a student is infected?
- E. Gaudet: A protocol guided by the DSPu is in place.
- M. Kelly (Parkview GB parent): Will personnel know how to use the protective equipment?
- É. Plante: Yes.
- G. Klink (MVHS Teacher – ATA): If a staff member doesn't feel safe, what can be done?
- J. Pauw: A program exists on how to deal with a stressful situation. Online information is available with Morneau-Shepell.
- P. McCourt (President of ETAA): Ms. McCourt shared the survey results.
- M. Murray: We have to reopen at some point and waiting for the Fall would not be a good idea.
- M. Soucy: A tool (Q&A) was developed in order to answer administrative questions, which is available to all Managers and will soon be updated. MEES will provide us with the answers.
- M. Seline: If a student is unable to behave themselves and not respect the preventative measures, will they be sent home?
- E. Gaudet: Yes, even with all the appropriate support, a student who cannot respect the preventative measures, they will be sent home and will be provided distance support in order for them to continue learning.
- M. McCully: Will the ETSB move forward even if 91.7% of the administrators have mentioned that they don't feel ready?

- M. Murray: As mentioned earlier, even if everything won't be perfect, we have to reopen for the benefit of the students.
- V. E. Forest-Briand (CBC QC): Which schools do not meet the four conditions?
- M. Soucy: We still will have a week to get ready. As of now, there is no school that doesn't seem ready.
- P. McCourt (President of ETAA): Will school Administrators get the four conditions in order to behave themselves?
- M. Soucy: It will be shared with Administrators at tomorrow night's meeting.
- G. Klink (MVHS Teacher – ATA): How will the ETSB signal the courage of Teachers?
- M. Murray: We are not at the point to recognize the courage, not only of Teachers, but also all of the ETSB employees.
- J. Lemaître: The 2-day delay could cause problems for the parents that have already planned to get back to work.
- M. Murray: We are aware of the inconvenience this may cause, but we thought that the extra two days could be beneficial for our schools in order to be better prepared.
- V. E. Forest-Briand (CBC QC): When will parents be informed on when the schools will reopen?
- S. Priest: As soon as tonight; all parents and staff will be informed of the date of reopening.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner R. Gagnon at 8:11 p.m.

Éric Campbell
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

EC/gm
05.05.2020