

# ETSBCS Connections Newsletter



*Don't forget to check the  
modified school calendar  
for the  
youth sector!*

## November/December 2020

Number 4 – Volume 1

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*La version française sera disponible sur  
notre site web prochainement*

## ETSBCS's Central Student Advisory Committee tackles the COVID-19 Wave

At the beginning of October the Premier, Health Minister and local Director of the Public Health, challenged the population to a 28-day challenge to break the COVID wave.

Since the challenge and the end of the 28-day period, we have seen cases across the region increase. With this in mind, the Eastern Townships School Board's Central Students Advisory Committee (CSAC) created a video to remind fellow students and everyone, the importance of following the sanitary measures to help stop the spread of COVID-19. As the students ask, what will you do to stop the COVID wave?

To watch the [video click here](#)



## The ETSB's Council of Commissioners Start their New Mandate

In early August 2020, the Superior Court of Québec granted a stay on the application of Bill 40 for all English school boards. For the Eastern Townships School Board, this meant school elections to elect members in each of the 11 wards, plus a chairman of the council of commissioners.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, after the nomination period had ended for the 2020 school elections, all but one ward for the Eastern Townships School Board was filled. The 10 returning commissioners and chairman were re-elected by acclamation, with only the Magog ward being left vacant.

Due to the pandemic and the Estrie region being a red zone, all school by-elections have been postponed until further notice. In the meantime, to ensure that electors in the Magog ward will continue to be represented, Mr. Brodie has agreed to continue as the commissioner for the ward.

On November 9<sup>th</sup> the elected commissioners took their oath of office and elected the Vice-Chairman and advisory committee chairs. For the first time in the ETSB history, the position of Vice-Chairman is held by a Commissioner Representing Parents.

The Chairs of the advisory committees are:

Audit	Joy Humenuik
Communications	Marc Mercure
Educational Services	Mary-Ellen Kirby
Governance & Ethics	Richard Gagnon
Human Resources	Claire Beaubien
Transportation	Gary Holliday

### Commissioners

Michael Murray	<b>Chairman</b>
Daniel Zigby	<b>Vice-Chair/ Commissioner Representing Parents</b>
Gordon Barnett	<b>Fleurimont/ Lennoxville</b>
Claire Beaubien	<b>Hatley/ Stanstead</b>
Tina Pezzi-Bilodeau	<b>Drummondville</b>
Daniel Brodie	<b>Magog</b>
Richard Gagnon	<b>Lac-Brome/ Sutton</b>
Gary Holliday	<b>Richmond</b>
Joy Humenuik	<b>Bedford/ Farnham</b>
Mary-Ellen Kirby	<b>Compton/Mégantic</b>
Francis MacGregor	<b>Sherbrooke</b>
Alice McCrory	<b>Granby/Waterloo</b>
Jonathan Murray	<b>Cowansville</b>

### Commissioners Representing Parents (elected from the Central Parents Committee)

Hélène Turgeon	<b>Representing Elementary Schools</b>
Ryan Darwin	<b>Representative for the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)</b>
Marc Mercure	<b>Representing Secondary Schools</b>

## COVID-19 Update

### Situation in ETSB Schools & Centres

Since our last newsletter, we have had individuals in our schools and centres test positive for COVID-19.

At the time of writing this newsletter, since the first case on October 16th the ETSB has a total of 35 cases in 11 of our schools/centres and services. The majority of schools have not had a reported case, for now. But we must remain vigilant and follow the sanitary measures and social distancing as prescribed by Public Health, to keep our schools and centres as safe as possible.

We know that the number of cases across the province and in the Estrie continue to be high, therefore now is not the time to let our guard down.

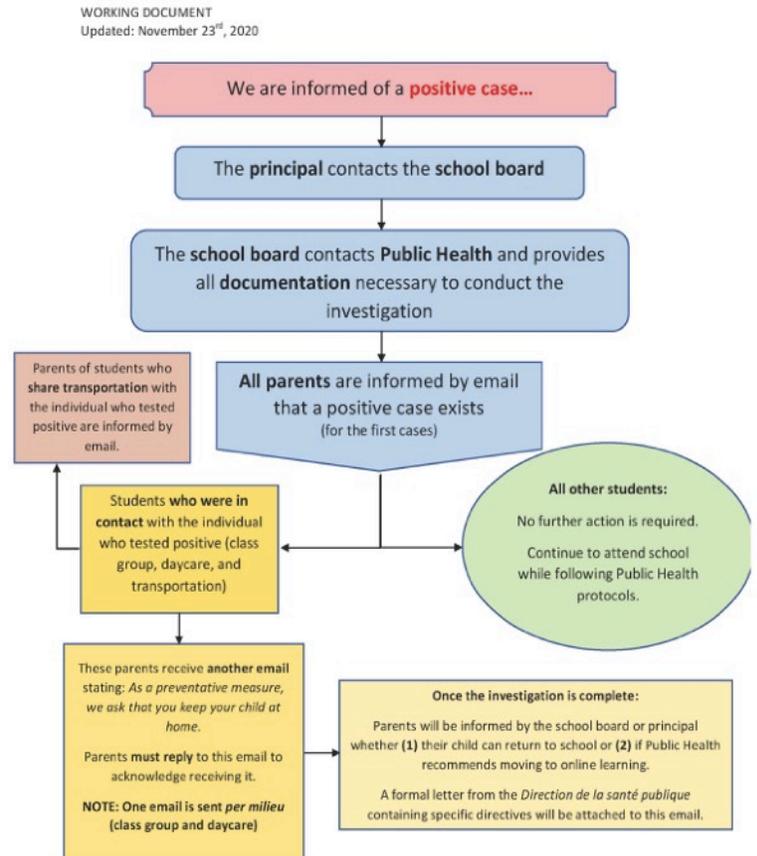
The chart on the right illustrates the process that the school board follows when a positive case is reported that impacts the school/centre community.

In recent days, some of our schools have been declared as having an ‘outbreak’. To clarify, this is declared by the DSPu and corresponds to more than two cases in the same class/group/bubble.

The method of communication for the DSPu and the school board is by email. So please be sure to check regularly for emails from the school board and your child’s school.

**If your child should test positive for COVID-19 over the holidays and you are informed that your child may have been contagious while at school, call the ETSB COVID number at 1-888-381-1196**

For more information on COVID-19, please visit the [Quebec coronavirus](https://www.quebec.ca/quebec-coronavirus) website.



To download the chart, [click here](#).

When an individual in your child’s school/class/bus tests positive, the DSPu recommends:

- That students within the same class/group stay home as a preventative measure while they conduct their investigation.
- Wait for further instructions from the DSPu before going for a test.
- Monitor your child for symptoms.
- If they develop symptoms, follow the instructions on the [quebec.ca](https://www.quebec.ca) website.

## Inclement Weather & Snow Days

When a major storm is forecast, we are monitoring the situation closely. A ‘Storm Watch’ message will be posted on our website and Facebook page. This is a heads up for parents to monitor and check these pages early in the morning to see if classes have been cancelled and schools are closed. Only when there has been a storm watch posted the day before will the school board post whether schools are open or closed. At all other times, we will only post if there is a cancellation or closure. The information is posted early on the ETSB website, Facebook page and media. Check the ETSB website for the list of media that broadcast school closures.

### Q & A on School/Centre Closures

**When weather forecasters are announcing that a major snowstorm is approaching, why doesn't the school board close the schools before the storm arrives?**

*Answer: Please remember that the one element that can never be predicted with 100% accuracy is the weather. This means that the decision to close the school system cannot be taken hours before a storm arrives in our territory for the simple reason that past history has clearly demonstrated that forecasters have been incorrect, particularly in the prediction of snowfall amounts and ice conditions.*

**Who decides and what is the decision making process?**

*Answer: This decision is made once the consultation with bus contractors, designated key drivers, transportation superintendents, senior administrators and other school boards on our territory is completed. A rigorous process begins at 5:00 AM with key ETSB bus drivers and reports from our transporters. By 5:45 AM, consultation with school boards on the ETSB territory in the Estrie, Montérégie and Centre du Québec areas is underway with the final decision being made once many factors have been taken into consideration. The ETSB is continuously following the weather reports, to be ready to put this process into action as the need arises.*

*Due to the vast territory that the ETSB covers, the decision is never an easy one. Weather conditions can be very different in one part of the territory over another. The decision is made taking this into account, but if a parent feels that the conditions in their area are less favourable, they may decide not to send their child to school. Ultimately, it is the parent's decision and the school board respects that decision.*

**What is the latest possible time to decide?**

*Answer: The latest possible time to close the system is 6:15 a.m. After this time, buses have commenced the pick-up of students for transportation to the schools. Once the routes have started, students will not be taken back and dropped off at home.*

**Are Daycares open when schools are closed?**

*Answer: When schools are closed, daycares do not operate and therefore are closed as well.*

## Report Cards and Term Dates

As stated in our last newsletter, this year the reporting schedule for student progress has been revised to include only two rather than three terms. Therefore, the first term will now end on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, with the first report card being available on the [MOZAïK Portal](#) on January 22, 2021.

The second term will now end on June 23, 2021 with the final report card being made available before July 10, 2021.

For more information on the report cards and evaluation please see the following pamphlets from the Ministry of Education for parents.

[Evaluation of Learning 2020-2021 \(PDF\)](#)

## Parent Resources

### *My child is worried; How can I provide support?*

#### Webinar Description

It is not uncommon for children to worry when confronted with new situations or when faced with challenges. This webinar will clarify the difference between feeling worried and anxious versus having an anxiety disorder. We will focus on practical strategies and provide tips for parents on how to support their children in developing coping skills to better manage their anxiety.

#### Date & Time

January 12, 2021 07:00 PM (Montreal time zone)

[Click here to Register](#)



***As 2020 comes to an end, we want to take this opportunity to recognize the tremendous efforts that our students, staff and parents have made this year.***

***Thank you for your perseverance, your understanding and your collaboration.***

***Although your holiday celebrations may not be traditional this year, may they be filled with love, happiness, and peace.***

***Happy Holidays and  
all the best for the New Year.***