

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, JULY 22, 2025 – 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

COMMISSIONERS		PARENT COMMISSIONERS	
Gordon Barnett	Z	Pam Gougeon	A
Claire Beaubien	P	Sarah Langlois	Z
Sandra Finlay	Z	Eliza McKnight	Z
Richard Gagnon	Z	Jody Murray	Z
Richard Gosselin	A	DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)	
Gary Holliday	A	Secretary General – Shawn Champigny	P
Joy Humenuik, Vice-president	Z	Director General – Kandy Mackey	P
Shawn Jersey	A	Assistant Director General & Director of Financial Services – Sophie Leduc	Z
Mary-Ellen Kirby	Z	Director of Human Resources – Caroline Dufresne	A
Jonathan Murray	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services – Emmanuelle Gaudet	A
Michael Murray, Chair	Z	Director of Complementary Services – Catherine Canzani	A
Helene Turgeon	A	Director of Material Resources – Éric Plante	P

ZOOM (Z) – MEMBERS PRESENT (P) – MEMBERS ABSENT (A)

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:47p.m.

2. **QUORUM AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner Jody Murray to adopt the Agenda of July 22, 2025 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

3. **COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES 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.

Carried unanimously

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner J. Humenuik presented the following resolutions:

4.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-07-112

Parkview Elementary School – Drainage & Playground Improvement

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of \$750,000 for the project of the gymnasium renovation, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2022-2023 Mesure: 50621*;

WHEREAS the project of the gymnasium renovation will be canceled to allow the project stated above to occur, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2022-2023 Mesure: 50621*;

WHEREAS the *MEQ* approved a budget of \$100,000 for playground improvement under the program *EMB – Embellissement des cours d'écoles 2023-2024 Mesure: 50530*;

WHEREAS the *Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB)* approved a budget of \$10,000 for playground improvement under the program *RTB – Réfection et Transformation des Bâtiments 2024-2025 Mesure: 50624*;

WHEREAS Parkview Elementary School has raised \$10,000 from the community for playground improvement;

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

WHEREAS one (1) bid was received by the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS this project will address the important drainage issue of the playground combined with the playground embellishment project;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$319,640 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Excavation G.A.L inc.*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *St-Georges Structure et Civil inc.* has recommended the company *Excavation G.A.L inc.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$557,622 including taxes, professional fees and playground modules;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner Jody Murray to proceed with the work for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Carried unanimously

4.2 Resolution No. ETSB 25-07-113

Parkview Elementary School – Suspended ceiling and Emergency lights

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of \$1,067,385 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2022-2023 Mesure: 50621*;

WHEREAS phase one (1) and two (2) consisted of the renovation of the administration offices and the asbestos removal;

WHEREAS the project has a balance of \$189,708;

WHEREAS the *MEQ* approved a budget of \$253,262 for the project stated above, under the program *TMA – Travaux de Maintien d'Actif 2024-2025: Mesure: 50627*;

WHEREAS the overall amount available for the combined project is \$442,970;

WHEREAS five (5) 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 (ETSB) by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$285,288 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Groupe Ultra inc.*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *Desnommée Architectes* has recommended the company *Groupe Ultra inc.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$395,697 including taxes and professional fees;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Murray to proceed with the work for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Carried unanimously

4.3 Resolution No. ETSB 25-07-114
Sherbrooke Elementary School – Small gym ceiling reconstruction

WHEREAS the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) has dedicated a budget of \$96,000 for the project stated above where monies are planned to be taken under the *RTB – Réfection et Transformation des Bâtiments 2024-25*;

WHEREAS three (3) companies received the project specifications after an invitation to bid on the project;

WHEREAS three (3) bids were received by the ETSB by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the ceiling of the small gymnasium needs to be brought up to fire standards;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$77,500 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Phoenix Intervention Après Sinistre inc.*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *1628 inc.* has recommended the company *Phoenix Intervention Après Sinistre inc.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$95,683 including taxes and professional fees;

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

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E Kirby to proceed with the work for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Carried unanimously

5. QESBA

The ETSB Chair, M. Murray presented the information on the budgetary issues.

The Director General, K. Mackey presented the following resolution:

5.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-07-115

QESBA – 2025-2026 Eastern Townships School Board budget

WHEREAS in addition to various budgetary cuts in 2024-2025, the Government of Quebec announced on June 12, 2025 budgetary cuts that would require the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) to cut over \$3 million for the 2025-2026 school year (measure 16032) and potentially expose it to a penalty of about \$3 million if it cannot bring its staffing below the new target set by the Minister (measure 16034), which would have substantial impacts on direct services to students;

WHEREAS on July 8, 2025 the ETSB adopted a resolution calling on the Government of Quebec and the Ministry of Education to revise the draft budgetary rules to significantly reduce the scope of the imposed compressions and deferring adoption of its budget;

WHEREAS on July 16, 2025, ETSB received the final budgetary rules approved by the *Conseil du trésor*, which maintain the above-noted budgetary cuts, but introduce a new measure that would make about \$2,4 million available to the ETSB to partially offset the cuts (measure 16036), but only if the ETSB complies with restrictive conditions that restrain its management and control, including:

- (a) le respect de la cible d'heures rémunérées allouée;*
- (b) la priorité accordée aux mesures d'économie administratives n'ayant pas pour effet d'affecter les services directs aux élèves;*
- (c) le respect des priorités ministérielles;*
- (d) l'engagement à participer à la mise en place de mesures de performance telles que la mutualisation régionale ou nationale de services administratifs.*

WHEREAS dedicated and protected measures have already been declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeal of Québec in its ruling of April 2025 in the Bill 40 case (Quebec English School Boards Association v Procureur general du Québec, 2023 QCCS 2965 at paras 294-295, 299, 439, confirmed 2025 QCCA 282 at paras 195-208, 277);

WHEREAS the conditions attached to the new measures restrict management and control guaranteed by section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would prevent the ETSB from managing its staffing and allocating its funding in a manner that responds to the needs of its students and community;

WHEREAS the ETSB is committed to protecting services and initiatives that respond to the particular needs of its students and its community;

WHEREAS the Ministry has required that all school bodies submit their budgets for 2025-2026 by no later than September 26, 2025;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Humenuik that the ETSB participate in the legal proceedings to be initiated by the QESBA, mandating Power Law to challenge the validity of the budgetary rules and to seek a stay of their application;

IT WAS FURTHER MOVED that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Carried unanimously – One abstention

IT WAS FURTHER MOVED BY Commissioner E. McKnight to mandate Mark Power to represent the ETSB.

Carried unanimously – One abstention

6. QUESTION PERIOD

A question was posed about the context and an explanation of the budget resolution. The deadline to adopt a school board budget is September 24, 2025. If the stay is obtained, it will give ETSB the liberty to manage budget cuts based on Section 23 (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms).

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner M. E. Kirby at 7:12 p.m.

Shawn Champigny
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

SC/gm
07.22.2025