COMMISSION SCOLAIRE
Eastern Townships
SCHOOL BOARD

Moving ahead. Together. | Aller de l'avant. Ensemble.

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2025 – 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

COMMISSIONERS		PARENT COMMISSIONERS	
Gordon Barnett	Z	Pam Gougeon	Z
Claire Beaubien	P	Sarah Langlois	Z
Sandra Finlay	Z	Eliza McKnight	Z
Richard Gagnon	A	Jody Murray	Z
Richard Gosselin	Z	**DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)**	
Gary Holliday	Z	Secretary General – Shawn Champigny	Z
Joy Humenuik, Vice-chair	Z	Director General – Kandy Mackey	Z
Shawn Jersey	Z	Assistant Director General & Director of Financial Services – Sophie Leduc	Z
Mary-Ellen Kirby	Z	Director of Human Resources – Caroline Dufresne	Z
Jonathan Murray	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services – Emmanuelle Gaudet	Z
Michael Murray, Chair	Z	Director of Complementary Services – Catherine Canzani	Z
Helene Turgeon	Z	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 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 September 23, 2025 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AUGUST 26, 2025

Resolution No. ETSB 25-09-08
Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Commissioners held on August 26, 2025

WHEREAS a copy of the Minutes of the meeting of August 26, 2025 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 meeting held on August 26, 2025 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

4. QUESTION PERIOD

T. Croteau
ATA President: It was mentioned in the CBC news article that ETSB had already made collaborations. Could you elaborate on which services and for which centres?

M. Murray
Chair: We have joint bussing with *Centre des services scolaire Val-des-Cerfs* (*CSSVDC*), shared adult and vocational centres as well as co-managed facilities in Sutton, Lennoxville and Sherbrooke. Collaboration has already helped soften the impact of funding cuts.

A. Brody
ATA Representative: The old model health and safety committee has been dissolved. Would you know when is the date of the first meeting for the new model?

M. Murray
Chair: This is an administrative function. At this level, we are not fully informed about dates and meetings. Someone will get back to you within the next few days.

P. Maingot
ATA Representative: Is the ETSB budget accessible yet?

M. Murray
Chair: No, since we are still waiting on some information. The deadline for school boards has been extended to October 30, 2025 with ETSB aiming to adopt its budget on October 28, 2025..

P. Maingot
ATA Representative: What are the potential clawbacks?

M. Murray
Chair: We will present the budget as best as we can with whatever conditional elements it may still contain.

T. Croteau
ATA President: Teachers would like to know the Commissioner's feelings about the *ETP*s (*Équivalent temps plein*/ Full time employees). What is the allotment number for the ETSB?

M. Murray
Chair: Not sure, but around 1,050, which is apparently a moving target. Replacements for sick leaves, maternity leaves, crisis that may arise all add to the number of *ETP*s.

P. Maingot
ATA Representative: The ATA often receives questions from its members. We would like clearly defined information on which positions are tasked with decision-making and how accountability is measured.

M. Murray
Chair: We do have that specific information. There is a distinction of roles applied. Almost every administrator wears multiple hats. They overlap and intersect so much that there are no clear boundaries. Administrators support the Commissioners regarding policies, guidelines and procedures. ETSB is a small board so Administrative positions are not precise. We rely more on collaboration.

T. Croteau
ATA President: Does the School Board have insurance on the actual devices that are given to staff members? Employees are being charged a flat fee of $100 when something breaks.

M. Murray
Chair: I am not aware of the details, but we can get it to you. The question of repair is always a contentious one. It depends on what the repair is. The Secretary General, Mr. Champigny can provide this information.

5. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Chairman M. Murray invited the following Commissioners to present the September 23, 2025 Recognition of Excellence:

This month the Council of Commissioners and Senior Administrators of the Eastern Townships School Board would like to signal the following:

Carrying Terry's Legacy Together at ETSB

Commissioner M. E. Kirby: This September, schools across our School Board proudly embraced the legacy of Terry Fox by taking part in the annual Terry Fox Runs. Students, staff, families and community members united with enthusiasm, collaboration and determination to pay tribute to Terry's courage and perseverance.

Through the commitment of our schools and the generosity of our community, thousands of dollars were gathered in support of cancer research. We warmly thank the parents who participated and the coaches and organizers whose efforts made these events a success.

Together, we honour not only Terry's memory but also the strength of our schools and community in creating a meaningful impact.

A.D.S. Elementary Celebrates the Inauguration of the Buddy Bench

Commissioner S. Finlay: The event took place on Friday, September 19, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. and was filled with smiles, joy and a true sense of community. A.D.S. Elementary School proudly unveiled its new **Buddy Bench**, made possible thanks to the support of our partners and the dedication of our community.

Students, staff, parents and special guests including Mr. André Bachand, Provincial MNA for Richmond, the Mayor, *CIUSSS de L'Estrie*, through their *Les Éclaireurs* program, The Town of Danville and *MRC des Sources* as well as community partners and Governing Board members came together to celebrate this symbol of kindness, empathy and inclusion. The Buddy Bench will now serve as a place where children can find friendship and feel supported on the playground.

This bench represents much more than a simple piece of furniture on our playground — it reflects our commitment to student well-being, which is at the heart of our Educational Project. It is a safe and welcoming place where anyone can come when they need a friend, a moment of comfort, or someone to listen.

Students have signed a pledge to use this bench with respect and to support their peers. Our teachers, educators and support staff have played a key role as well, leading these discussions and modeling the values the bench represents.

I'd now like to share with you **the Buddy Bench Promise** our students have signed:

I promise to use the Buddy Bench with kindness and respect.
I will sit on the bench if I feel lonely or need a friend.

I will invite others to play if I see them sitting on the bench.
I will include everyone, and never make fun of someone for using the bench.
I will remember that the bench is a place for friendship, caring, and kindness.
This project could not happen without the support of local partners:

We are truly thankful to everyone who contributed to this project and joined us for the celebration. A special thanks goes to Isabelle Lodge for her invaluable help in organizing this wonderful event. This project is a beautiful reminder of how much stronger our schools and communities become when we work together for our children.

We hope the community will also use this bench while visiting our grounds on weekends.

Phelps Helps launches Building Bright Futures Fundraising Campaign

Commissioner C. Beaubien: September 10, 2025: Phelps Helps launches its Building Bright Futures Capital Campaign! With a goal of $550,000, this campaign will fund the move into our new, dedicated youth space – one that will allow us to enhance our existing programming and better meet the needs of the community. The project represents a major investment in the future of Stanstead's youth, ensuring they have a safe and inspiring environment to learn, grow and belong.

6. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

8. REPORTS

8.1 Director General's report

The Director General, K. Mackey reported the following:

As we begin the fall season, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the progress our students make throughout their journey with the ETSB - especially as we celebrate National Education Support Staff Week. The data is both humbling and inspiring.

When our students first arrive in Kindergarten, the Quebec Survey on Child Development in Kindergarten results show that our five-year-olds are more vulnerable in all five areas of development compared to their peers in the *Estrie Centre de services scolaire* and other English school boards. In fact, their vulnerability rates are between 7% and 18% higher than their counterparts. In other words, they begin their educational journey with greater needs.

And yet, thanks to the dedication and expertise of our staff, our students make remarkable progress. Our most recent seven-year cohort graduation and qualification rate stands at 75.6% - just shy of the Estrie rate. Even more noteworthy, among our students with special needs, 66% graduate with a certificate or diploma. This tells a powerful story: our staff provide the support, interventions and encouragement students need to thrive, and our students rise to the challenge.

This success is not achieved by any one group alone, but by the collective efforts of all our employees. Teachers, professionals, administrators and our support staff all contribute to creating the conditions where students can believe in themselves and succeed. That is why it is so fitting to share these results during National Education Support Staff Week: they remind us of the essential role support staff play in helping students reach their potential.

Our support staff - whether in classrooms, offices, cafeterias, libraries or on buses - play a vital role in student success. Their daily work, often behind the scenes, ensures that students feel safe, cared for, and ready to learn. We thank them for their dedication, for believing in our students, and for the difference they make each day.

As a Council, we can be proud of the collective impact of our employees across the ETSB. Together, they are helping students overcome early challenges and preparing them for futures filled with opportunity.

8.2 Chair's report

The Chair of the Council of Commissioners, M. Murray had nothing new to report.

9. ADVISORY COMMITTEES' REPORTS

9.1 Executive Committee

The Chair of the Executive Committee, Commissioner M. Murray mentioned that the topics discussed at the Executive meeting will also be addressed at tonight's Council of Commissioners. Also, it was mentioned that Mr. Michael Murray and Ms. Joy Humenuik were elected to represent ETSB on the QESBA board.

9.2 Governance and Ethics Committee

The Chair of the Governance and Ethics Committee, Commissioner G. Barnett mentioned the topics discussed at the September 16, 2025 meeting:

- Audit Advisory Committee Report – presented by J. Humenuik;
- Communication Advisory Committee Report – presented by Jody Murray;
- Educational Services Advisory Committee Report – presented by M. E. Kirby;
- General Advisory Committee Charter;
- Session with Noel Burke (discussion);
- Discitus Training (feedback);
- Commissioner Onboarding Ad Hoc Committee;
- G & E Working Committee Members (Mandate & Bylaws/Policies).

The date of the next meeting will most likely be held on October 21, 2025.

9.3 Audit Advisory Committee

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

9.3.1 Finance

9.3.1.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-09-09
Sawyerville Elementary School – Authorization for Signature of Surveyor's Report – 51 Cookshire Street, Cookshire-Eaton

WHEREAS the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) requires the signature of a surveyor's report for the property located at 51, Cookshire Street, Cookshire-Eaton;

WHEREAS it is necessary to designate a representative authorized to perform all necessary steps to complete the signature of the said report on behalf of the ETSB;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E Kirby that Mr. André Benoit be designated and duly authorized, on behalf of the ETSB, to perform all necessary actions for the signature of the surveyor's report related to the property at 51, Cookshire Street, Cookshire-Eaton;

IT WAS FURTHER MOVED that Mr. André Benoit be authorized to sign any and all associated documentation required for this purpose.

Carried unanimously

9.3.1.2 Resolution No. ETSB 25-09-10
Butler Elementary School – Replacement of domestic hot water piping and fittings

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of $371,861 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB – Maintien des bâtiments 2021-2022 Mesure: 50621*;

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 (ETSB) by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the project will allow the replacement of existing domestic hot water piping and fittings to ensure safe, efficient and code-compliant hot water distribution;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of $177,000 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Construction Michel Dufresne et Fils.*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *ADSP Architecture + Design.* has recommended the company *Construction Michel Dufresne et Fils.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of $287,473 including taxes and professional fees;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Humenuik 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

The date of the next Audit Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

9.4 Educational Advisory Committee (ESAC)

The Chair of the Educational Advisory Committee, Commissioner M.E. Kirby mentioned the topics discussed at the September 2, 2025 meeting:

- New Advisory Committee Structure;

- 2025-2026 Topics for discussion;
- ESAC Policies.

The date of the next ESAC meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

9.5 Communications Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Communications Advisory Committee, Commissioner Jody Murray mentioned the topics discussed at the September 2, 2025 meeting:

- Update of committee mandate;
- 2025-2026 Topics;
- Review of Communications policies (proposed timeline);
- New visuals were shared to reiterate the importance of parent involvement, presence at the annual general assemblies and the composition of Governing Boards.

The date of the next CAC meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2025.

9.6 Human Resources Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Human Resources Advisory Committee, Commissioner C. Beaubien mentioned that the date of the next meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

9.7 Transportation Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee, Commissioner H. Turgeon mentioned the following:

Physical buses are back on the road this week. Some bus drivers had health issues. We are trying to get full regular service soon.

The date of the next TAC meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

9.8 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The SEAC Chair and Parent Commissioner, E. McKnight mentioned that the date of the next SEAC meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2025.

10. PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Central Parents' Advisory Committee, Commissioner S. Langlois mentioned that the date of the next Parents' Committee meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2025.

11. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Commissioner J. Humenuik, representing the Student Advisory Committee reported the following.

- Elections for President, Vice President & Secretary were made;

- Cellphone ban – positive feedback; students are adapting;
- School sharing: Terry Fox – some students and teachers will go to lengths to get people to participate;
- Topics for the 2025-2026 school year;
- Next meeting is in person with the students.

12. QESBA

Chair M. Murray mentioned that we have come off a very active summer with the budget compressions. QESBA and the nine (9) English School Boards are participating in a stay. Some boards have surpluses they counted on, but are now prohibited by ministerial decree from using it. The appellants (us), provided evidence that the courts would need. The government has until October 2, 2025 to do the same thing. All parties have until October 10, 2025 to add more information. We are optimistic that we might get a stay before we are required to deposit our budgets.

QESBA also required the names of representatives of our School Board. This year, these will be Michael Murray and Joy Humenuik.

13. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Commissioner C. Beaubien: Tis the season of the General School Assemblies and the election of Governing Board (GB) members, which I attended two weeks ago (3 assemblies). What I have noticed:

- ✓ The increase of the parent's attendance, but when it was specified in the invitation that food would be offered, the attendance improved;
- ✓ Hardly any declination for nomination to be part of the GB or the PPO & H&S;
- ✓ The involvement of the parents' committees in helping out with fundraising, on top of the one initiated by schools, to provide yearlong activities for the students;
- ✓ More information needs to be shared about the importance of the Central Parents' Committee (CPC) and have a representative from the GB (a parent).

I also talked with the social worker for Sunnyside, Sawyerville and St-Francis Elementary Schools, Geneviève Plamondon.

Following one of his restaurant renovations, he donated some of the benches/tables (booth) were donated to the North Hatley Elementary School cafeteria. Students enjoy lunching in their new 'The Bobcat Café'. Different owners for the Sherbrooke region, and if any renovation is to take place, these booths are a great 'free acquirement'.

And I discussed with two (2) home owners who wanted to pay their taxes to ETSB (switch it from the French school).

And last, I attended the Open House BBQ of Phelps Helps. They shared their vision for a new acquired space with a fundraising, so that 'Building Bright Futures' campaign can begin and put in motion the renovation. It will increase participation by 15% i.e. over 450 students. But what is also important to mention is that this program is offered to all students of the community; whether they go to the French or English Elementary or High schools - the youth from 6 to 35 years old. This is a good example how, in a community, School Board and *Centre de services scolaire* could offer joint services to their youth!

Commissioner M. E. Kirby: Also emphasized that Phelps Helps is a very interesting campaign = matching donation campaign. The more money they raise, Phelps Helps will match the amount.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

None.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

T. Croteau
ATA President: We were wondering if the Council meetings can be attended in person and if so, where will the people actually sit? How does this happen?

M. Murray
Chair: The majority of the meetings are hybrid. We need a representative at the Board, as required by law. However, we do not have public advisory committee meetings.

P. Maingot
ATA Representative: Special needs: Are there cuts to special needs? Staff missing?

M. Murray:
Chair: Most of your comments would fall into the Human Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC). Even though we filled all the vacancies in the professionals, we are still struggling within the limits of those resources.

T. Croteau
ATA President: For the past ETSB budgets, is there a place we can find those? Is there information on legal services for the Board we have access to? If there's more spending, who approves it?

M. Murray:
Chair: The money is mostly in schools for professional development, specialists positions are largely decentralized. The school administrations decide in consultation with the staff council of how the potential budgets will be spent. This is all decided locally. We have to consider all the categories (bus drivers, support staff, teachers, classroom personnel, etc.).

T. Croteau
ATA President: Is this for the actual legal fees with the consulting firms? Is this decided at the beginning of the school year?

M. Murray
Chair: The school has a decentralized process. Is there more planning that needs to be done? A budget is a plan. The budget process was also explained. If the legal expense is not used, that reduces the amount of spending. Grievances are extremely expensive to contest. No part of our school budget goes to support QESBA legal initiatives.

17. GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION

There was no governance and communication.

18. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner P. Gougeon at 8:04 p.m.

Shawn Champigny
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

SC/gm
09.26.2025