Cedarcrest Elementary School
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Commission scolaire English-Montréal
English Montreal School Board

CEDARCREST SCHOOL
Governing Board Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2025

Attendees - Members: Maria Argyriou, Raymond Ayas, Lorraine Bélanger, Otis Delaney, Claudie Laplante, Jennifer Marsan, Jessica Sabatini, Khadija Shabbir, Georgia Stamatopoulos, Stephanie Vezina-Tulli

Absentees – Members: Julie Buckland

Public in Attendance: Sharon Sharma, Mohammad

1. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was held in person/virtual. The meeting started at TIME

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions or changes made.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion to adopt today's Agenda was put forth by Georgia Stamatopoulos, seconded by Raymond Ayas and carried by members in attendance.

4. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING DATE

Minutes were approved.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the November 5th Meeting Minutes was put forth by Stephanie Vezine-Tulli, seconded by Jennifer Marsan and carried by members in attendance.

6. BUSINESS ISSUES

a. Internal Rules

- Reviewed draft distributed by email
- Discussed adding online meeting decorum rules. Agreed to table formal rules.
- Amendment made: All requests for agenda additions must be submitted via email to the Chair to ensure transparency and provide accountability.

Motion to approve the internal rules with the amendment was put forth by Georgia Stamatopoulos, seconded by Stephanie Vezine-Tulli and carried by members in attendance.

b. Budget Review

- Fund 5 (Caretaking):
  - Allocation: $12,208; Expenses: $5,670; Remaining: $6,538.
  - Recent expense: Classroom blinds (~$1,500).
  - Remaining funds will cover cleaning supplies and paper products; contingency support available from regional director if needed.
- Operating Budget:
  - Allocation: $17,264; Expenses: $8,485; Remaining: $8,779.
  - Covers office operations and furniture; calculated per capita (~$5–$6 per student).
- Fund 3 (Student Fees):
  - Revenue: $26,080; Expenses: $22,790; Accumulated deficit: $11,335.
  - Discussion clarified this deficit is cumulative over multiple years due to unpaid fees; collection is challenging as schools cannot withhold report cards or field trips.
  - Georgia explained unpaid balances remain until all siblings graduate; then transferred to board-level debt.
  - Raymond asked if these should be classified as debt rather than deficit and whether old debts are ever written off. Otis confirmed they follow students into high school; no forgiveness policy exists.
- Lunch Supervision:
  - Deficit: $68,321, largely due to COVID-era staffing costs and refunds when services were canceled but salaries paid.
  - Georgia explained refunds were issued to parents while salaries continued, creating structural deficits.
- Overall Deficit: Approx. $82,000 across accounts.
- Governing Board account: $192 (normally $250; likely reduced by 10%).
- Jessica raised concern about provincial funding cuts (21% per student), confirmed by Mr. Delaney as a government-wide reduction. The 2026-2027 budget will be presented in the spring.

c. Educational Project Review

- Objective 1: Increase Cycle 3 math proficiency from 73% to 81% by 2027–28.
  - Strategies:

        - Tutoring for at-risk students (Cycle 1–3).
        - Problem-solving workbooks separate from class materials.
        - Enrichment activities: weekend boot camps, lunch homework programs.
        - Use of Learn Quebec tutoring resources.
        - Classroom strategies: highlighting keywords, scaffolding, chunking information, and teaching consistent problem-solving routines.
    - Teachers suggested adding vocabulary support and random problem-solving tasks to activate prior knowledge.
    - Jessica recommended exploring approved problem-solving curricula for consistency across grades.
- Objective 2: Maintain English reading/writing success rates (96% and 93%).
- Objective 3: Improve French reading proficiency from 77% to 85%.
    - Strategies:
        - Emphasis on phonics in early years (Pre-K, K).
        - Targeted tutoring and homework programs.
        - UFLI program for Cycle 2.
        - Focus on non-readers and comprehension skills.

Mr. Delaney will circulate full action plan and teacher recommendations.

d. Grant

- Grant application due January 15 for $10,000 (natural play zone).
- Jessica proposed forming a parent focus group for a multi-year eco plan (yard improvements, gardens, composting).
- Discussion:
    - Plan should remain high-level to accommodate future admin changes.
    - Jennifer noted interdependence between short-term and long-term plans.
    - Maria cautioned against over-investing effort before grant approval; Jessica emphasized need for a roadmap regardless of grant outcome.

Group agreed to proceed with multi-year eco plan; no formal motion required.

e. Extra Time

- The Board previously allocated extra time to Drama (Cycle 2) and Science (Cycle 3). A proposal was raised to shift some time to Music, citing strong parent interest and educational benefits.
- Music is considered valuable, but challenges include staffing constraints, lack of dedicated space, and costs for instruments.
- Reallocation is not feasible without reducing science time, which would affect retaining a strong science teacher that Cedarcrest wants to keep.
- Suggested alternatives: partner with McGill, introduce a choir program, offer music for younger grades, or start small pilot initiatives.
- Consensus: No changes this year; principal will continue to explore McGill partnership and a lunchtime choir program.

f. Soccer

- Session 1 for older students has been successful with strong participation and positive feedback. Registrations for session 2 with older kids has been sent out.
- Benefits compared to prior year: Better engagement and safety for younger students compared to last year.
- Challenges compared to prior year: Currently only the older kids have access to the activity.
- Alternative suggested: Rotate age groups instead of adding a new session.
- Decision was to have Session 3 (after spring break) for younger students, so the younger kids have access to soccer as well and to improve supervision.

g. Dress Code

- The Board revisited the school dress code policy. A motion was introduced to add gray shirts as an option alongside white for the 2026–27 school year.
- White shirts stain easily and are difficult to maintain, especially for younger students.
- Gym shirts were also discussed as the gym teachers would like to adopt a more visible color for students when they are off school grounds to improve safety and supervision during outings.
- Burgundy was suggested but deemed harder to source consistently.
- School photo uniformity was raised as a minor drawback, but consensus was that practicality outweighs this concern.
- For the gym shirt, supplier availability for light blue or orange shirts will need confirmation before implementation.
- Communication of this change will be sent to parents well in advance to allow time to adjust

Motion to approve the adding grey t-shirts to the school dress code was put forth by Jennifer Marsan, seconded by Stephanie Vezine-Tulli and carried by members in attendance.

h. Lunch Time

- Discussion about concerns that the current 25-minute lunch period feels rushed, limiting time for eating and social interaction.
- As options are limited as lunch period cannot be extended, and additional staff is not feasible, Jennifer will review staffing distribution with Georgia to assess feasibility. The Board agreed to revisit the topic after analyzing supervision and scheduling impacts.
- Proposal remains under consideration pending resource review.

i. Parent Teacher Interviews

- 10 minutes is insufficient for IEP discussions as parents lack input before signing.
- Parents need a longer interview to address all concerns properly
- Some suggested a separate meeting with the resource teacher.
- Principal asked to consult staff and report back by March with options.

Motion to approve asking the principal to consult with staff and return with a response by March was put forth by Jessica Sabatini, seconded by Raymond Ayas and carried by members in attendance.

7. REPORTS

a. Principal's Report: Mr. Delnay

- Exploring partnership with McGill for music program and instrument instruction.
- Reinforced illness protocols (gastro, strep); reminder for parents to keep sick children home.
- Holiday activities planned: Breakfast with Santa, Lauryn Hill Dance Troupe performance, sing-along, and staff luncheon.
- Teacher retirement: Mina Bilios recognized for exceptional service; farewell dinner held.
- Food and hygiene drive completed successfully; donations will be delivered to Moisson Montréal.

Teachers:

b. Teacher's Report

- No updates to report

c. Commissioner's Report

- No report

d. EMSB Parents Committee Report: Jessica Sabatini

- Petition for crossing guard rules for high schools; link to be shared with parents.
- Ongoing concerns about budget transparency.

e. Daycare Report: Georgia Stamatopoulos

Handbook amendments:

- Registration: Accounts must be in good standing from the previous year; otherwise, registration will not be permitted. Parents/guardians must provide daycare staff with a minimum of five (5) days' notice for any changes to the child's status or file.
- Fee Structure: A sporadic student who attends an additional period on a weekly recurring basis will be reclassified as a regular user, and regular daycare rates will apply.
- Payment: Payment must be made by the 15th of each month for services rendered during the previous month. Except for June, payment must be made no later than June 23rd.
- Late Payments: Parents must follow the procedure outlined in the handbook to avoid bad debts and uncollected monies.
- Refunds: No refunds for daily absences, vacations, or schedule changes unless written notice is provided to the Daycare Technician at least five (5) days in advance. Failure to provide notice will result in full charges for originally scheduled days.
- Illness and Emergencies: Call the parent/guardian immediately in case of emergencies.
- Parent Agreement Form: Signed Parent Agreement Form must be attached to the child's Daycare Registration Form.

f. Home & School Report: Jennifier Marsan

- Breakfast with Santa scheduled for next week.
- Book sale completed successfully.
- Felix & Norton fundraiser approved for February.
- Other events noted: variety show and bowling activity.

8. QUESTION PERIOD

- No questions

9. Next meeting

- Date of next meeting: January 21, 2026

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Minutes By: Jennifer Marsan

Signature: Chair, NAME