

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
ENGLISH MONTREAL SCHOOL BOARD

A Regular Meeting of the English Montreal School Board has taken place on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 7:00 P.M. in the Laurence Patterson Room, 6000 Fielding Avenue, Montreal.

Commissioners Present

Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair  
Ms. Maria Corsi, Commissioner  
Ms. Chelsea Craig, Commissioner  
Mr. Julien Feldman, Commissioner  
Ms. Jessica Houde-Woytiuk, Parent Commissioner  
Ms. Paula Kilian, Commissioner  
Ms. Julie Kristof, Parent Commissioner  
Mr. Pietro Mercuri, Commissioner  
Ms. Sharon Nelson, Commissioner  
Ms. Susan Perera, Commissioner  
Mr. Mario Pietrangelo, Commissioner  
Ms. Merika Ramundo, Parent Commissioner  
Ms. Jennifer Rutt, Parent Commissioner

Commissioners Not Present

Mr. James Kromida, Vice-Chair  
Ms. Paola Samuel, Commissioner

Administrators Present

Mr. Nicholas Katalifos, Director General  
Ms. Pelagia Nickoletopoulos, Assistant Director General, Education  
Me Jack Chadirdjian, Assistant Director General, Administration (Regrets)  
Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General

Mr. Jimmy Giannacopoulos, Regional Director, West  
Ms. Darlene Kehyayan, Regional Director, East  
Ms. Angela Spagnolo, Regional Director, AEVS  
Mr. Mario Cardin, Director, Material Resources  
Ms. Radia Dehimi, Assistant Director, Material Resources  
Ms. Sandra Léveillé, Director, School Organization  
Ms. Livia Nassivera, Director, Financial Services  
Ms. Julie René de Cotret, Director, Student Services  
Ms. Anna Sanalidro, Director, Educational Services  
Me Magdalena Sokol, Director, Legal Services  
Mr. Charalambos Thomas, Director, Information Technology Services  
Ms. Ann Watson, Director, Human Resources  
Ms. Marilyn Ramlakhan, Assistant Director, Human Resources  
Mr. Michael Cohen, Manager, Marketing and Communications  
Ms. Brigida Sellato, Consultant, Secretariat General

1.	<p><u>Land Acknowledgement</u></p> <p>We/I would like to acknowledge that the English Montreal School Board is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka*. We are grateful to live, learn, and work in Tiohtiá:ke*, which has long been a site of meeting and exchange for many First Nations, and is currently home to diverse groups of Indigenous and other peoples.</p> <p>As a School Board, it is important that we acknowledge the historic and ongoing role of educational institutions in perpetuating injustices against Indigenous communities. We are committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating staff and students about the true history and current realities of the Indigenous Peoples of what we now call Canada.</li> <li>• Celebrating the cultures, contributions, and knowledge of the many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.</li> <li>• Listening to and amplifying Indigenous voices.</li> <li>• And partnering with local Indigenous community members.</li> </ul> <p>We offer this acknowledgement as a first step and public commitment to our ongoing process towards reconciliation and justice for Indigenous peoples and communities.</p>
2.	<p><u>Nomination of Elle Rapkowski as Student of the Month</u></p> <p>The Student of the Month for May is Elle Rapkowski, a Grade 11 student from Westmount High School. Elle has been a vital member of the Westmount High School Student Council for the last 4 years and in her final year, is serving as Co-President. Elle is involved in many school activities including playing vital roles in the creation and implementation of our annual Wacky Olympics, Family Breakfast, Carnival and Hope Week activities. Elle has also been an integral part of the Westmount High School Knights Program since Grade 8, which works to combat bullying in the school. Across the EMSB, Elle is known as a member of EMSAC, the English Montreal Student Advisory Committee and in her free time, she plays baseball and teaches swimming. Congratulations Elle!</p>
3.	<p><u>Olympes de la Parole Canada – 2024-2025 EMSB Participants</u></p> <p>Students from Marymount Academy International and Vincent Massey Collegiate were presented with certificates for their participation in the Olympes de la Parole Canada.</p>
4.	<p><u>Question Period</u></p> <p>Questions from Mr. Chris Eustace were read and addressed by the Chair, Mr. Joe Ortona, regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Education Minister's Response to QESBA Request</li> <li>➤ Status on Bill 40 Case</li> </ul>
5.	<p><u>Approval of Agenda</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. MARIA CORSI AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.</p> <p>Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-05-27-5</u></p>

6.	<p><u>Adoption of Minutes</u></p> <p><u>6.1. Regular Board Meeting held on April 29, 2025</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. CHELSEA CRAIG AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on April 29, 2025, be approved as presented.</p> <p>Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-05-27-6.1</u></p> <p><u>6.2. Special Board Meeting held on May 13, 2025</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. JULIE KRISTOF AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on May 13, 2025, be approved as presented.</p> <p>Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-05-27-6.2</u></p>
7.	<p><u>Business Arising Out of Minutes</u></p> <p>None.</p>
8.	<p><u>Chair's Report</u></p> <p>Presented by the Chair, Mr. Joe Ortona:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No report</li> </ul>
9.	<p><u>Director General's Report</u></p> <p>Presented by the Director General, Mr. Nicholas Katalifos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The 2025 Spring/Summer Edition of the Inspirations Newspaper is ready to be shared. The Inspirations Newspaper is Montreal's one and only newspaper dedicated to promoting inclusion and well-being. The Spring/Summer issue is packed with powerful stories of resilience, creativity, empowerment and local resources that support our community. The newspaper can also be read on our website;</li> <li>➤ On behalf of the Vice Chief of Defense Staff ESP (Employer Support Program) Team for the Canadian Armed Forces, Lieutenant-Colonel Joe Nuñez, MMM, CD was at Vincent Massey Collegiate (VMC) on May 26<sup>th</sup> for a very special presentation recognizing staff who supported teacher Vincent Gagnon for his deployment to Latvia and other assignments. The ESP assists reservists when they are requesting time off for training or deployments and employers of reservists to better understand the value of the skills and experiences that their employee will gain through the trainings and deployments. Three members of the EMSB personnel were nominated for recognition: VMC Principal Franca Cristiano, Human Resources Director Ann Watson and Human Resources Assistant Director Angela Vaudry. This was done in the presence of Mr. Gagnon's Secondary I students;</li> <li>➤ The final EMSB Battle of the Books, Junior Competition took place on May 16<sup>th</sup> at Roslyn Elementary School. Over the past few weeks amongst the many EMSB primary students, readers have actively been practicing answering questions for two rounds of the book reading competition. Congratulations to the team at Roslyn for coming up on top!</li> <li>➤ Multicultural Day took place at LaurenHill Academy's Junior Campus on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The student-led initiative was supported through the guidance and collaboration of youth stars with the aim of creating a vibrant celebration of unity, cultural awareness and inclusivity led by the voices and passion of the students themselves;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Annual Literacy Fair was held at James Lyng Adult Education Centre bringing students together for a fun day focused on the power of reading;</li> <li>➤ The St. Laurent Adult Education Centre's Annual Career Fair took place on May 14<sup>th</sup> exposing students to different employment options;</li> <li>➤ The Laurier Macdonald Career Centre held its open house on May 14<sup>th</sup>, an event that takes place every year drawing large crowds to the Des Grandes-Prairies Campus. There was an outdoor car show, barbering students were giving free haircuts, aesthetics, hairdressing and welding classes were also on display. There were two fashion shows presented by the students which were emceed by our very own Joe Cacchione. Proceeds went to the Inspirations Newspaper and its mental health initiatives;</li> <li>➤ Montreal Alouettes star wide receiver Tyson Philpot made a special visit to the St. Pius X Career Centre on May 6<sup>th</sup> to learn more about its culinary program. He was greeted by Principal, Alice Sideropoulos, her team and chef instructors Raimondo Calandrino and Gerry Cristiano who helped him familiarize himself with the kitchen and made a pizza;</li> <li>➤ The Quebec Skills Olympics took place in Quebec City from May 7<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. This is the largest event dedicated to vocational and technical training in Quebec. Inspired by the Olympic Games, the Skills Olympics offers an exceptional showcase of skilled trades and tangible models of success. Competitors from 93 vocational centres and cegeps throughout the province participated in the competition. The EMSB is immensely proud of its competitors, a formidable team with nine students competing from 9 different vocational training programs. Three of the nine EMSB students received Medals of Excellence for their high standing in their competition. The Skills Olympics showcases our programs, the dedication of our teachers and the incredible support of our in-school administrators who always have the students' success at the core of everything they do on a daily basis. Congratulations to everyone from AEVS!</li> </ul>
10.	<p><u>School Tax Revenue for 2025-2026</u></p> <p><b>WHEREAS</b> as per the Act to establish a Single School Tax Rate, SQ 2019, c5, the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) must forward to the Comité de gestion de la taxe scolaire de l'île de Montréal (CGTSIM), by resolution of its Council of Commissioners, a request requiring the payment of the amount for financing local needs;</p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PIETRO MERCURI AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the English Montreal School Board requests that the Comité de gestion de la taxe scolaire de l'île de Montréal (CGTSIM) transfer to the EMSB the maximum amount of school tax revenue for financing local needs for the 2025-2026 fiscal year;</p> <p>IT WAS FURTHER UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the CGTSIM.</p> <p>Vote: 12-0-0, Adopted (Ms. Chelsea Craig not present for the vote)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-05-27-10</u></p>
11.	<p><u>Confirmation of Board Level Administrator</u></p> <p>This item was presented by the Director General, Mr. Nick Katalifos, for information. The Director General confirmed the following Board Level Administrator in their assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Myrianne Lusignan, Assistant Director of Educational Services</li> </ul>
12.	<p><u>Update on F.A.C.E. School</u></p> <p>The Chair, Mr. Joe Ortona, gave an update on F.A.C.E. School. Mr. Ortona explained that there has been no news from any of the statements made publicly by the EMSB or from any of the protests or mobilization that has come on behalf of the parents, staff and students. We are asking the Minister to consider other options and to reflect on the best interests of the students and the educational experience that they have at F.A.C.E. School.</p>

13. Committee Reports

13.1 ACSES (Advisory Committee on Special Education Services)

Item presented by the Parent Commissioner of the Committee, Ms. Julie Kristof:

- There has been no meeting since the last report. The next meeting is scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

13.2 Transportation and Safety Advisory Committee

Item presented by the Chair of the Committee, Mr. Pietro Mercuri:

- There has been no meeting since the last report.

13.3 EMSBPC (English Montreal School Board Parents' Committee)

Item presented by Parent Commissioner, Ms. Jennifer Rutt:

- The committee discussed the ongoing concerns about road safety. It was suggested to create a sub-committee within the Parents' Committee to offer guidelines and best practices for road safety;
- The Parents' Committee accepted the proposed Three-Year Plan for the Allocation and Destination of Immovables for 2025-2028 with the following recommendations:
  - The EMSB continues to find usefulness in its surplus properties to benefit the communities;
  - That the produced numbers of individual schools not be published in the document;
  - To ensure that the numbers are up to date with the current Ministry guidelines within high school.
- The committee spoke about the importance of snow days with regard to emergency procedures, the banning of cellphones in schools and also discussed the issues regarding F.A.C.E. School.

13.4 Governance and Ethics Committee

Item presented by the Chair of the Committee, Mr. Mario Pietrangelo:

- There has been no meeting since the last report. The next meeting is scheduled for May 28<sup>th</sup>.

13.5 Audit Committee

Item presented by the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Paula Kilian:

- There has been no meeting since the last report. The next meeting is scheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup>.

13.6 Human Resources Committee

Item presented by the Chair of the Committee, Mr. Mario Pietrangelo:

The last meeting took place on May 1<sup>st</sup> where the committee adopted the staffing plans.

13.7 CGTSIM (Comité de gestion de la taxe scolaire de l'île de Montréal)

Item presented by the Representative Member on the Committee, Mr. Joe Ortona:

- There has been no meeting since the last report. The next meeting is scheduled for May 28<sup>th</sup>.

### 13.8 EMSAC (English Montreal Student Advisory Committee)

Item presented by the Chair of the Board, Mr. Joe Ortona:

- The last EMSAC meeting of the year took place at Royal West Academy. At the end of the meeting, everyone was given a certificate from the Board along with a book;
- The committee discussed the mandate on cellphones. The students had many questions : How will it be implemented? When exactly will it come into force? Will cellphones even be allowed on school grounds? Will exceptions be made for students with special needs?
- Students expressed concern about the lack of effort shown for the workshops during the Democracy Summit Debrief. The workshops could have been more bilingual, in some cases the language barrier impeded some students from participating. Some expressed that the registration process was a challenge. One student went to Quebec City to present the Minister of Education with two motions that came from the Summit. One being that the number of students sitting on the Governing Board be equal to the number of adults in order to ensure a better balance of power among the various members. The second motion presented was to better address safety in our schools through concrete application of rules and to establish appropriate educational consequences;
- Each school gave extensive reports about the things that were going on in their schools and one thing that was discussed was the future of F.A.C.E. There are two students from F.A.C.E. who sit on EMSAC who expressed their concern for their school and highlighted the importance of the school. They also went to Quebec City to advocate for their school. In fact, a resolution was adopted by EMSAC to urge the Government to halt any plans for its closure and instead to invest in its continued success as a vital and unique educational institution;
- Mr. Ortona wished EMSAC members a great summer vacation and looks forward to seeing the returning students next year.

### 14. Commissioners' Report

Item presented by Commissioner, Mr. Mario Pietrangelo:

- The music teacher from Pierre de Coubertin Elementary School recorded a video of her choir students and sent it to the Esteriore Brothers, an international group known for their music and performance. Their first show was held in 2019 on Italian television where they had over 8 million viewers. The Esteriore Brothers showed up today at the school, met with the music teacher and gave a little performance with the children. The children were invited to participate in their show on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Item presented by Commissioner, Ms. Maria Corsi:

- Ms. Corsi had the pleasure of attending the F.A.C.E. Strings Concert on May 1<sup>st</sup> featuring the F.A.C.E. junior and intermediate orchestras, senior orchestra and the F.A.C.E. symphony orchestras. It showcased the incredible talent of all students ranging from Grade 4 to Secondary 5, and led by very dedicated music teachers;
- Ms. Corsi also attended the junior and senior Spring Concert at Rosemount High School on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 9<sup>th</sup> featuring a range of musical pieces performed by the junior wind ensembles, junior jazz ensemble, the youth band, senior jazz band, class act ensemble and symphonic winds. All the students were cheering on their peers, it was a beautiful performance;
- Ms. Corsi attended a special presentation at Vincent Massey Collegiate recognizing VMC teacher, Mr. Vincent Gagnon, for his deployment to Latvia. His students were very enthusiastic and curious about his deployments and his role as reservist in the military;
- Ms. Corsi attended the Ted Ed student talk on May 14<sup>th</sup> at Royal West Academy featuring student speakers from across the EMSB including Vincent Massey Collegiate. All the students were very engaging and self-confident speakers. Their public speaking skills are very impressive;

- On May 29<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Corsi will be joining the members of the Bancroft Governing Board in a meeting with the Plateau–Mont-Royal borough councillors to discuss student pedestrian safety. This has been a concern for the Bancroft Community for quite some time and we're looking forward to a productive meeting leading to concrete measures to improve student safety;
- Ms. Corsi is delighted to have been invited to attend the 2025 graduation ceremony at Rosemount High School on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

Item presented by Commissioner, Ms. Chelsea Craig:

- May is Jewish Heritage Month. It is an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the rich history and contributions of the Jewish community in Montreal and also across the country. Ward 2, Ms. Craig's ward, has a large Jewish and Filipino community. June also marks Filipino Heritage Month. Ms. Craig was honored to have been invited to a security meeting with Chief of Police Fady Dagher and members of the Filipino community and representatives to discuss the ongoing security concerns after the Lapu Lapu tragedy in Vancouver. The discussions really showed that the Police have been thinking about the Filipino community and the extensive events that they host during the entire month of June. The Police pointed out that unlike other cities, Montreal doesn't allow cars into the park and are installing bollards in every entry. The community is hyper aware and is working to ensure that everyone feels safe to celebrate Filipino Heritage Month;
- Ms. Craig had the pleasure of attending the volunteer recognition ceremony at Merton Elementary School alongside Commissioner, Ms. Paolo Samuel and chairman, Mr. Ortona. It was a wonderful celebratory event. Ms. Craig extends her congratulations to Mr. Mike Bunn, an outstanding educator from Marymount Academy;
- On May 8<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Craig alongside Commissioner Ms. Merika Ramundo visited McGill University for the Voices of Olympia. There were six schools participating, four were private schools and two were EMSB schools. It is the team from Marymount Academy who took home the biggest prize. It truly demonstrates the education that is provided within our schools. Congratulations to the girls at Marymount!
- On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Coronation Elementary School hosted its annual talent show which was also a fundraiser. Congratulations to all the students who performed and made this event such a vibrant celebration;
- On May 26<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Craig and Mr. Ortona hosted a town hall at Marymount Academy where they answered some questions about the EMSB and the programs that are offered in our schools. Thank you to everyone who attended;
- Alongside many other Commissioners, Ms. Craig attended the QESBA conference in St. Sauveur. It was a great event with many educators and stakeholders present, and to see everybody so passionate about our school boards. Ms. Craig will be Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee for the 2026 QESBA Spring Conference that will take place at the Château Frontenac in Quebec City, hoping to have about 310 participants;
- Ms. Craig congratulated Ms. Anna Gainey, Member of Parliament for NDG–Westmount and for Ward 2, on her re-election. Ms. Gainey was also nominated as Secretary of State to Youth and Children, we will be working with her frequently in the future. A special congratulations to Anthony Housefather who continues to be a champion for our community, who stands up for the English-speaking community.

Item presented by Commissioner, Ms. Paula Kilian:

- On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Federal Elections were held. The MPs elected in Ward 9 are Anthony Housefather, Rachel Bendayan and Marjorie Michel;
- On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ms. Kilian alongside Ms. Nelson and Mr. Feldman attended the EMSB Chorale concert at Oscar Peterson Hall. The music was lovely and the students sang beautifully;
- On May 13<sup>th</sup>, Royal West Academy hosted the Student Ted Ed talks. The students presented thought-provoking subjects;

- From May 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Kilian attended the QESBA Spring Conference. It opened with a rousing musical performance by students from Pontiac High School of the Western Quebec School Board. They sang and danced to hits from the musical Grease. The EMSB team of Jessica Houde-Woytiuk, Jennifer Rutt and Joe Ortona carried home first place in Family Feud. There were many options for workshops. Ms. Kilian attended a particularly interesting one by Marion Sandilands about how the various Bills like 21, 96 and especially Bill 40 are unconstitutional. It was reassuring to be at this conference with over 300 attendees from the nine Quebec school boards, who are all united in opposition to Bill 40;
- The highlight of the past month was the event at Carlyle Elementary School on May 20<sup>th</sup> which commemorated the 105th anniversary of this lovely school in Town of Mount Royal. Parents, alumni and former staff were in attendance;
- Our students graduating high school next month will be turning 18 within the next year. Each one will receive a letter from Élections Québec advising them that they will be on the electoral list for Federal and Provincial and by default on the French school service centre list. The letter includes a phone number to call to change to the English School Board list. We urge everyone who has contact with our students graduating high school to explain to them how important it is to have their names changed to the English Boards.

Item presented by Commissioner, Mr. Pietro Mercuri:

- On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mr. Mercuri had the pleasure of attending the Cérémonie des bourses de la persévérance scolaire which was held at La Maison du citoyen in Pointe-aux-Trembles. One student from each school in the Rivière-des-Prairies–Pointe-aux-Trembles borough was given a \$100 bursary, from both the Centre de services scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île as well as the EMSB. Congratulations to three EMSB students who received the bursary of \$100: Milena Passalacqua from Michelangelo International Elementary School, Jaxon Pisano from East Hill Elementary School and Samantha Di Giacomo from Leonardo Da Vinci Academy. Mr. Mercuri thanked Mr. Ortona for being present and for offering the students and the staff members some very inspiring words of encouragement. Many thanks also to the borough of Rivière-des-Prairies–Pointe-aux-Trembles.

Item presented by Commissioner, Ms. Sharon Nelson:

- On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ms. Nelson attended the Spring Gala Concert. She took a moment to wish the best to Ms. Patricia Abbott who has been with the school board for 35 years and is now retiring. As the music director, Ms. Abbott impacted the students over time. Many students came to sing along with her and were very sad to see her go. It is a testament to what the EMSB exudes not only to the professionals but to the students as well. Congratulations to Ms. Abbott for her dedication over the years;
- As a result of a little scare at St. Monica School, a red flag came up that the school does not have any intercom, something that the schools will be addressing and improving;
- Ms. Nelson attended the Spring Conference in St. Sauveur and was really impressed by the 9 school boards and how engaged people were in English Education in Quebec;
- On May 20<sup>th</sup>, we had the opportunity to thank all the administrators, staff and teachers for their years of service, pointing out our very own Brigida Sellato, a testament to 25 years of service. It was a wonderful event to witness;
- Ms. Nelson looks forward to the upcoming graduation ceremonies in June and preemptively wished all the grads all the best in their next endeavors.

15. Other Business

None.



16.	<p><u>Adjournment</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. JENNIFER RUTT AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:20 p.m.</p> <p>Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted</p> <p><u>Resolution # 25-05-27-16</u></p>
	<p>Signed in Montreal, _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General</p>