

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ENGLISH MONTREAL SCHOOL BOARD

A Special Board Meeting of the English Montreal School Board has taken place on Monday, August 11, 2025, at 12:30 P.M. via Teams.

Commissioners Present

Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair
Ms. Maria Corsi, Commissioner
Ms. Chelsea Craig, Commissioner
Mr. Julien Feldman, Commissioner
Ms. Julie Kristoff, Parent Commissioner
Mr. Pietro Mercuri, Commissioner
Ms. Sharon Nelson, Commissioner
Ms. Susan Perera, Commissioner
Ms. Merika Ramundo, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Jennifer Rutt, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Paola Samuel, Commissioner

Commissioners Not Present

Mr. James Kromida, Vice-Chair
Ms. Jessica Houde-Woytiuk, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Paula Kilian, Commissioner
Mr. Mario Pietrangelo, Commissioner

Administrators Present

Mr. Nicholas Katalifos, Director General
Me Jack Chadirdjian, Assistant Director General, Administration
Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General

Ms. Darlene Kehyayan, Regional Director, East
Ms. Angela Spagnolo, Regional Director, AEVS
Mr. Mario Cardin, Director, Material Resources
Ms. Myrienne Lusignan, Assistant Director, Educational Services
Ms. Livia Nassivera, Director, Financial Services
Ms. Julie René de Cotret, Director, Student Services
Ms. Marilyn Ramlakhan, Assistant Director, Human Resources
Ms. Anna Sanalidro, Director, Educational Services
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"> • Educating staff and students about the true history and current realities of the Indigenous Peoples of what we now call Canada. • Celebrating the cultures, contributions, and knowledge of the many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. • Listening to and amplifying Indigenous voices. • And partnering with local Indigenous community members. <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>Confirmation of Notice of the Meeting</u></p> <p>The Secretary General, Me Nathalie Lauzière, confirmed that proper notice of this meeting was given.</p>
3.	<p><u>Approval of Agenda</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. CHELSEA CRAIG AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.</p> <p>Vote: 10-0-0, Adopted (Ms. Jennifer Rutt not present for the vote)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-08-11-3</u></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"> ➤ In Camera session from previous meeting ➤ Cost of court challenge regarding budget cuts
	<p>Ms. Jennifer Rutt joined the meeting at 12:39 p.m.</p>
5.	<p><u>Resolution to Join the QESBA's Legal Challenge to 2025-2026 Budgetary Rules and Seek a Stay of Application</u></p> <p>WHEREAS, in addition to various budgetary cuts in 2024-2025, the government announced on June 12, 2025 budgetary cuts that would require the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) to cut about \$10.6 million for 2025-2026 (Measure 16032), potentially expose it to a penalty of about \$10.4 million if it cannot bring its staffing below the new target set by the Minister (Measure 16034), and prohibit the Board from accessing about \$7.8 million from its accumulated surplus, which would have substantial impacts on direct services to students;</p> <p>WHEREAS on July 9, 2025, the EMSB Council of commissioners adopted a resolution calling on the government to withdraw the budgetary cuts and to reinstate the former rules on access to accumulated surplus funds;</p>

	<p>WHEREAS on July 16, 2025, the Board received the final budgetary rules approved by the <i>Conseil du trésor</i>, which maintain the above-noted budgetary cuts, but introduce a new Measure that would make about \$9.6 million available to the Board to partially offset the cuts (Measure 16036), but only if the Board complies with restrictive conditions that restrain its management and control, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) complying with a new staffing target set by the Ministry, (b) requiring that the Board maintain spending on certain government priorities, specifically in funding envelopes called “dedicated and protected Measures” that can only be used for highly specific purposes, that may not correspond to the community’s priorities, and (c) participating in regional and national mutualisation projects. <p>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 (<i>Quebec English School Boards Association v Procureur général du Québec</i>, 2023 QCCS 2965 at paras 294-295, 299, 439, confirmed 2025 QCCA 282 at paras 195-208, 277);</p> <p>WHEREAS the Board does not currently anticipate being able to comply with the new staffing target set by the Ministry based on the information available to it and the Ministry failed to respond to requests for clarifications on the calculation method for the new staffing target prior to relevant deadlines in collective agreements, which prevented appropriate planning of staffing and may render the Board both ineligible for the new Measure 16036 and subject to the full cuts required by Measures 16032 and 16034;</p> <p>WHEREAS the conditions attached to the new Measures restrict management and control guaranteed by section 23 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> and would prevent the Board from managing its staffing and allocating its funding in a manner that responds to the needs of its students and community;</p> <p>WHEREAS the EMSB Council of Commissioners is committed to protecting services and initiatives that respond to the particular needs of its students and its community;</p> <p>WHEREAS the Ministry has required that all school bodies submit their budgets for 2025-2026 by no later than September 26, 2025;</p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PIETRO MERCURI AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) Council of Commissioners mandates Power Law to take the necessary steps for the EMSB to join the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) application to challenge the validity of the budgetary rules and seek a stay of their application.</p> <p>Vote: 11-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-08-11-5</u></p>
	<p>On a motion by Ms. Chelsea Craig, the meeting moved In Camera at 12:37 p.m.</p> <p>The meeting returned from the In Camera session at 12:51 p.m.</p>
6.	<p><u>Adjournment</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PAOLA SAMUEL AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 12:56 p.m.</p> <p>Vote: 11-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 25-08-11-6</u></p>
	<p>Signed in Montreal, _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General</p>