

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ENGLISH MONTREAL SCHOOL BOARD

A Special Board Meeting of the English Montreal School Board has taken place on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. in the Laurence Patterson Room, 6000 Fielding Avenue, Montreal.

Commissioners Present

Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair
Mr. James Kromida, Vice-Chair
Ms. Maria Corsi, Commissioner
Ms. Chelsea Craig, Commissioner – via TEAMS
Mr. Julien Feldman, Commissioner – via TEAMS
Ms. Jessica Houde-Woytiuk, Parent Commissioner – via TEAMS
Ms. Paula Kilian, Commissioner
Ms. Julie Kristof, Parent Commissioner
Mr. Pietro Mercuri, Commissioner
Ms. Sharon Nelson, Commissioner
Ms. Susan Perera, Commissioner
Ms. Merika Ramundo, Parent Commissioner – via TEAMS
Ms. Jennifer Rutt, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Paola Samuel, Commissioner

Commissioners Not Present

Mr. Mario Pietrangelo, Commissioner

Administrators Present

Mr. Nicholas Katalifos, Director General
Ms. Pela Nickoletopoulos, Assistant Director General, Education
Me Jack Chadirdjian, Assistant Director General, Administration
Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General

Ms. Darlene Kehyayan, Regional Director, East
Ms. Angela Spagnolo, Regional Director, AEVS
Ms. Gail Callender, Assistant Director, Student Services
Mr. Mario Cardin, Director, Material Resources
Ms. Radia Dehimi, Assistant Director, Material Resources
Ms. Livia Nassivera, Director, Financial Services
Ms. Sabrina Petrocco, Assistant Director, Student Services
Mr. Tony Pita, Assistant Director, Educational Services
Ms. Anna Sanalitro, Director, Educational Services
Ms. Ann Watson, Director, Human Resources
Ms. Marilyn Ramlakhan, Assistant Director, Human Resources
Mr. Mauro Zampini, Director, School Organization
Mr. Michael Cohen, Manager, Marketing and Communications
Ms. Brigida Sellato, Consultant, Secretariat General

There were 5 members of the public present.

1.	<u>Land Acknowledgement</u> 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. 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: • 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. We offer this acknowledgement as a first step and public commitment to our ongoing process towards reconciliation and justice for Indigenous peoples and communities.
2.	<u>Confirmation of Notice of the Meeting</u> The Secretary General, Me Nathalie Lauzière, confirmed that proper notice of this meeting was given.
3.	<u>Approval of Agenda</u> IT WAS MOVED BY MS. SHARON NELSON AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved, as presented. Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted (Mr. J. Feldman not present for the vote) <u>Resolution # 26-06-30-3</u>
4.	<u>Question Period</u> A question from Tara Kleen-Perez was addressed by the Chair, Mr. Joe Ortona, regarding the following: ➤ Special Education Staffing Plan
	Mr. Julien Feldman joined the meeting at 7:31 p.m.
5.	<u>Special Education Sector Staffing Changes for 2026-2027</u> WHEREAS clause 7-3.24 and 7-3.25 of the S18-FEESP-CSN Collective Agreement states that, no later than August 20th of each fiscal year, the Board shall adopt a Staffing Plan in the Special Education Sector; WHEREAS the Board must submit a draft staffing plan to the Union for consultation five (5) days before it is adopted; WHEREAS the Council received a 210-page document containing granular information on the draft staffing plan in advance of the June 16, 2026, meeting; WHEREAS the Council requested additional information to ensure that it could make an informed decision on the critical issue of ensuring that the Board's staffing plan provides for adequate staff to support our students with special needs;

WHEREAS the Council did in fact receive additional information on the draft staffing plan after June 16, 2026, to enable the Council to make an informed decision in the best interest of the community it serves, given budgetary compressions;

WHEREAS it is standard practice to remove positions in special needs in June and re-create them near or after the start of the school year when student enrolment and needs are known, since the Board may add positions after August 20th, but cannot remove positions after that date;

WHEREAS, in order to implement a schedule change or to move a position to a different school, the collective agreement requires that a position be “abolished” and “re-created” with the new schedule or location, such that the number of “abolished” positions does not accurately reflect the real effect of the staffing plan;

WHEREAS the government is unfortunately maintaining the prohibition on using the Board’s accumulated surplus for 2026-2027;

WHEREAS the proposed staffing plan seeks to provide the Board with the resources to create positions where they are needed to respond to students’ needs at and after the start of the 2026-2027 school year, and to use its limited resources efficiently, in a context of budgetary compressions;

WHEREAS almost all of the positions removed by the staffing plan were vacant, thereby minimizing impacts on current employees to only about 14 non-permanent employees who will be placed on priority lists in compliance with the collective agreement;

WHEREAS the message communicated in *The Gazette*’s article of June 16, 2026, to the effect that the Board would be implementing major cuts in staff to support students with special needs is not accurate in light of the above-noted context;

WHEREAS the concerned Union was consulted;

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. SHARON NELSON THAT the Staffing Plan for the Special Education Sector personnel for the 2026-2027 school year, be approved as per the documentation submitted at the meeting of June 16, 2026.

Ms. Maria Corsi proposed the following amendment:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council be given a detailed update on special education staffing in the fall, including a revised assessment of special education staffing needs based on final enrollment numbers, class compositions, remaining vacancies, and identified gaps in services to special needs students, and that the Administration develop and implement an action plan to increase the chances that all vacant positions are staffed.

Vote on amendment: 14-0-0

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION INCLUDING AMENDMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. SHARON NELSON AND RESOLVED THAT the Staffing Plan for the Special Education Sector personnel for the 2026-2027 school year, be approved as per the documentation submitted at the meeting of June 16, 2026.

IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that Council be given a detailed update on special education staffing in the fall, including a revised assessment of special education staffing needs based on final enrollment numbers, class compositions, remaining vacancies, and identified gaps in services to special needs students, and that the Administration develop and implement an action plan to increase the chances that all vacant positions are staffed.

Vote: 11-3-0, Adopted (Ms. J. Kristof, Ms. J. Rutt and Ms. J. Houde-Woytiuk voted against)

Resolution # 26-06-30-5

	Ms. Jessica Houde-Woytiuk left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.
6.	<u>Revised Budget 2025-2026</u> WHEREAS Section 277 of the <i>Education Act</i> (Chapter I-13.3) stipulates that the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) shall adopt its Operating, Capital Investment, and Debt Service Budget for the 2025-2026 school year and transmit same to the Minister of Education; WHEREAS the Minister of Education may authorize a school board to adopt a budget whose expenses exceed revenues pursuant to section 279 of the <i>Education Act</i>; WHEREAS on June 19, 2025, the Ministry indicated that no request for a deficit budget based on the new budgetary compressions would be accepted; WHEREAS on October 28, 2025, the EMSB requested authorization from the Ministry to adopt an Operating, Capital Investment and Debt Service Budget providing for expenses exceeding revenues by \$7,818,268 by letters of October 28, 2025, addressed to the Minister and the <i>Direction générale des politiques budgétaires et du financement des réseaux</i> of the Ministry; WHEREAS on October 29, 2025, the Council of Commissioners adopted an Operating, Capital Investment and Debt Service Budget providing for expenses exceeding revenues by \$7,818,268, subject to receiving ministerial approval; WHEREAS on March 12, 2026, the Minister of Education refused the EMSB's request for authorization to adopt a deficit budget and required the EMSB to submit a new budget by April 14, 2026; WHEREAS on April 21, 2026, the Council of Commissioners requested authorization from the Minister of Education to adopt an Operating, Capital Investment and Debt Service Budget providing for expenses exceeding revenues by \$2,648,779; WHEREAS on June 17, 2026, the Ministry of Education refused the EMSB's request for authorization to adopt a deficit budget and required the EMSB to submit a new budget by June 30, 2026; IT WAS MOVED BY MR. JAMES KROMIDA AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT, as recommended by the CMAC/RAC Committee, the Operating, Capital Investment and Debt Service Budget providing for Revenues of \$459,997,523 and Expenditures of \$459,997,523 be adopted and transmitted to the Minister of Education, as outlined in the documentation submitted at the meeting. Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted (Ms. J. Houde-Woytiuk absent for the vote) <u>Resolution # 26-06-30-6</u>
7.	<u>Adjournment</u> IT WAS MOVED BY MS. JENNIFER RUTT AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:58 p.m. Vote: 13-0-0, Adopted (Ms. J. Houde-Woytiuk not present for the vote) <u>Resolution # 26-06-30-7</u>
	Signed in Montreal, _____ _____ Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair _____ Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General