MINUTES

Honoré Mercier Elementary School Governing Board

Monday, November 10, 2025 @ 6:35 PM | *Meeting called to order by* Merika Ramundo

In Attendance

Cynthia Canale - Principal	X	Verena Garofalo - Chair	R
Marco De Crescentis	X	Sally Behjoudi	X
Angela DiLella	X	Lino Faratro	X
Laurie Giangaspero	X	Giuseppe Fazzari	X
Veronica Graniero	X	Merika Ramundo – **Replacement Chair**	X
Elisa Infusini	X	Sonia Ranellucci	X
Andrew Martinez	X	Saffiran Ali (Alternate)	R
Nancy Omobono	X	Adriana Giannini (Alternate)	X
Mario Pietrangelo	R	Felicia Spadafino	XP

X = Present / R = Regrets / XP = Present Public

Assign minute-taking duties: Adriana Giannini

Assign time-keeper duties: Giuseppe Fazzari

1. Additions to Agenda

14.1 Movie Night raffle

14.2 Grade 6 caterer

14.3 Annual H&S Raffle - raffle at the Christmas concert?

2. Approval of the Agenda

2.1 A correction was made to the previous minutes, section 6 – Teacher's Report. The price per team for the Volleyball Tournament should read $25 per team and not $500 per team.

2.2 Motion to Approve the amended minutes: Giuseppe Fazzari, seconded by Veronica Graniero

Motion Passed – Unanimously

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1 Governing Board members to approve of the amended minutes from October 15, 2025.

4. Business Arising

4.1 Selection of a GB Secretary:

- No GB secretary has been appointed. Adriana will act as a delegate and take the minutes for this meeting. The meeting is also recorded using Teams AI notes.
- Given that no formal secretary has been elected, it is proposed by the replacement chair that the responsibility of minute-taking for future meetings be assumed by parent members, on a rotational basis. All members are in agreeance and, as a result, a motion is brought forward to amend item 6 in the internal rules (see Annex 1).

4.2 HM Promo video 2026, what was Staff Council's opinion?

- Ms. Canale reports that the idea of a promotional video received positive feedback at Staff Council.
- The best time to film general footage outdoors (ex. kids getting on/off the school bus, playing in the yard, etc.) would be in the spring and would allow time for editing during the summer months before open house in the fall.
- It is suggested that a longer video be made for the website, as well as smaller edited clips to share at different moments on social media. The video length should remain under 2,5 minutes, with dynamic content, music and transitions to maintain viewer engagement. Branding with specific years should be avoided as to reuse the video for years to come.
- Parents and staff are asked to look for videographers and obtain cost estimates over the next month. The next steps will be to evaluate the different options and create a project timeline.

4.3 Money raised/donated for outdoor classroom – any ideas from Staff Council? What would they like/need that fits in the budget?

- *The topic was also discussed in the Principal's Report below (section 6.7).* Staff proposed various ideas in line with the school's beautification and outdoor classroom initiatives:
    - Refreshing the staircase artwork
    - Outdoor murals (which would require permission from the School Board)
    - Murals in the staircase (by an artist and with participation from the students)
    - Painting the lockers
- Members question if the school is painted at a regular frequency. The teachers indicate that the school was last painted approximately 10 years ago by volunteers and with donated paint.
- The definition of beautification is questioned and all agree that any improvements to the building aesthetic and improvements to the yard fall under beautification.
- Parents on GB are in agreeance with the various ideas proposed by the staff. Some indicate that new outdoor features can enhance curb-appeal and improve the schoolyard for the students. Others indicate that improvements to the indoors would enhance motivation and mood on a daily basis. The ideas will therefore be looked into further at Staff Council and narrowed down.

4.4 HM GB Internal Rules of Management for the 2025-2026 year

- A first motion is brought forward to change the GB composition from 7 parents to 6 parents.

- A second motion is brought forward to approve the Internal Rules of Management with the changed phrasing proposed in section 4.1. (see Annex 1).

  Motion to approve: Joey Fazzari, seconded by Lino Faratro. **Motions passed unanimously.**

5. Home & School Report

5.1 Felicia presented three Home and School fundraising requests/motions:

1. Raphie Rockstar Magic Show: Raphie the magician would like to sell merchandise at the January 24th, 2026 event and 50 % of earnings will be given to Home & School.
   Motion to approve: Veronica Graniero, seconded by Sally Behjoudi. **Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Bookfair: The annual bake sale is proposed and will run for the duration of the bookfair on Novembre 20th, all proceeds will go to Home & School.
   Motion to approve: Sonia Ranellucci and Nancy Omobono. **Motion passed unanimously.**
3. McDonald's Christmas Breakfast & Winter Wonderland: For a second consecutive year, H&S proposes to hold the Winter Wonderland on December 18th during school hours. A McDonald's breakfast will be given to each student (H&S is looking into a gluten free option), for a total cost of $500. Students will visit the Winter Wonderland during the day and it will be open to parents from 3-6 pm by appointment via a Google Form, so that families can take their picture with Santa. There will be no fixed cost for taking the picture, but families may leave a donation, which will go to Home & School for future activities.
   Motion to approve: Lino Faratro, seconded by Nancy Omobono. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5.2 Felicia presented the committee's other ideas, to take place on December 18th:

- One hour per cycle will be reserved for the breakfast and will be followed by an activity (cookie decorating or an ornament craft) in the gym. Lafrenaie can provide each student with a cookie and frosting for $1,50/student.
- The staff liked the idea but proposed a different schedule: 30 min for breakfast for each cycle, followed by recess, followed by the 30 min craft activity. Holding recess in between will enable smoother transitions for students, parent volunteers can clear the breakfast tables and setup the activity during that time. The ornament craft seems like the simpler option to avoid having to look into alternatives due to allergies, cleaning the tables to handle food and students will have a keepsake.
- Ms. Nancy also proposed that the PK and K students participate with the others in the gym but should have a separate space with their teachers.

5.3 End of Year Family Event (Color Run)

- Home & School would like to hold another end of year family event and proposed a Color Run, where tickets would be sold at a cost of $5 per person and everyone wears their own white t-shirt.
- Mr. Andrew presented the staff's point of view following a debriefing of lessons learned following last years' event. While the event was very successful, many factors should be considered and can impact the future event if not planned properly (ex. cannot be held if raining or drizzling as the powder will turn to paste, the powder did leave some residue in the yard and its vicinity, residue on neighboring yards can be worse if windy, the people throwing the powder need to follow specific procedure for safety, etc.).

- Ms. Canale added that such an event also prevents people from using the washrooms afterwards, which is not ideal in a group gathering when washrooms should be accessible.
- The staff proposed an alternative idea, a glow run. The event would start at a later time after sundown, but would be a similar activity with less cleanup and restrictions if the weather is not ideal.
- Mr. Marco mentioned that the school already has approximately 200 foam glow sticks that were donated and which can be used for the event.

6. Principals' Report

6.1 Emergency Preparedness

- We have successfully completed all four mandated school fire drills for this term. Two drills were conducted during class time, one during lunch with different monitors on duty, and the final drill after school with a separate group of supervising staff members. All drills were completed efficiently and safely.
- Our next step will be to conduct our first lockdown practice. Teachers have been informed and are preparing their students accordingly.

6.2 Toy Drive for a Cause

- Once again, we will be collecting toys for the Briana Toy Drive. The staff unanimously agreed to continue supporting this meaningful initiative. This annual drive has become a cherished tradition within our school community, allowing students to experience the joy of giving.
- A motion is put forward to hold the annual Toy drive starting tomorrow and until December 8th, where parents can donate a new toy.
  Motion to approve: Laurie Giangaspero and Elisa Infusini. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6.3 "Tell Them From Me" Survey

- As part of the annual Tell Them From Me initiative, students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 will complete the survey. The goal is to gather feedback on topics such as bullying, sense of belonging, and overall student well-being.
- The survey is anonymous, allowing students to respond truthfully and comfortably. The survey coordinator, along with classroom teachers, will review and explain the questionnaire to ensure that all students understand each question before responding.

6.4 School Filters

- All school air filters were changed last week. Everything is functioning well and up to standard.

6.5 Open House

- A heartfelt thank you to our staff, Home and School Association, Governing Board members, students, and Raphie for their collective efforts in promoting our school during the recent Open House.
- The event was a great success, 20 families signed up for follow-up calls during our registration period, and we are hopeful that this number will continue to grow.

6.6 October Halloween Haunted House

- A big thank you to our Home and School Association and parent volunteers for transforming our school library into an enchanted forest for the Halloween Haunted House. Your creativity, time,

and hard work were greatly appreciated and helped create a magical experience for our students.

6.7 Outdoor Classroom & School Beautification

- As discussed at our last Governing Board meeting, I brought this topic to both our Staff Council and the larger staff group for feedback.
- After brainstorming, it was determined that establishing a full outdoor classroom may not be financially feasible at this time due to budgetary constraints. However, several creative beautification ideas were proposed, including:
    - Refreshing the Staircase Artwork – The existing art on the stairs is fading and scratched. Redoing it would enhance our school's atmosphere.
    - Creating a Mural – Similar to projects at Dunrae Gardens and Michaëlle-Jean schools, a mural could be created if funding allows. A theme would need to be selected. Alternatively, artwork could be displayed inside the stairwell if outdoor costs are prohibitive.
    - Painting the Lockers – This would brighten the school environment; however, we would first need approval from the school board (Materials Resources Department).

6.8 Parent-Teacher Interviews

- Our first parent-teacher interview will take place on Thursday, November 20, 2025. A detailed memo will be sent home in the coming days.
- Interviews will run from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and parents will receive a booking link to schedule appointments. All interviews will be held in person.

6.9 Pedagogical Day – Friday, November 21, 2025

- As teachers will be taking their compensation day on Friday, there will be no school for students. However, daycare services will remain open as usual.

6.10 Cold Weather and Outdoor Attire

- As colder weather approaches, we remind parents to ensure their children are dressed warmly for outdoor play. Students should wear appropriate coats, boots, hats, and gloves.
- For safety reasons, students should not wear running shoes when the schoolyard is covered in snow or ice. Thank you for your cooperation in helping keep our students safe, warm, and comfortable during outdoor activities.

7. Teacher's Report

7.1 Grade 6 graduation

- Ms. Angie and Mme Elisa summarized what has been planned for the grade 6 grads so far:
    - As in previous years, Santina Conti, an Honore Mercier alumni, will design the grade 6 yearbooks. Cost: $600
    - DJ Mike will be the DJ at the graduation celebration. Cost: $500, which includes music and a photobooth
    - These are the quotes received from Footzone for the grade 6 hoodies:
        - $36 +tax (youth sizes) / $40 + TX (adult sizes) – with zipper
        - $33 +Tx (youth sizes) / $34 (adult sizes) – without zipper

        - The grade 6 teachers proposed going with the zipper option, as students tend to wear their hoodies until end of June when it is hot
        - The total cost will be approximately $1 700 with the zipper option
    - The annual grade 6 breakfast at Vincent's will include a typical full breakfast (ex. eggs, pancakes, fruit, etc.). Cost: $15/plate. Approx. 40 people are expected, including students and staff, for a total cost of $600.
    - Total for the above-mentioned costs plus catering from Milano's (see section 5.6) is just under $5 000
    - Other costs to foresee: yearbook printing (approximately $21/book)
    - The graduation ceremony will take place on June 18th 2026.

7.2 CBC Music competition

- Ms. Veronica informed GB that filming will take place on Wednesday with the music lunch club (grades 4,5 and 6), followed by filming on Thursday for grades 1 and 2.

7.3 Christmas Concert

- A motion is brought forward to charge an entrance fee of $5/ticket for the upcoming December 17th music concert. Parents may also be asked to bring non-perishable food items.
  Motion to approve: Sonia Ranellucci, seconded by Lino Faratro. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7.4 Grade 6 Winter Camp

- Mr. Andrew presented the details of the 2026 Grade 6 winter camp and a motion is brought forward to participate given the following details:
    - The cost will be $217+tx /student (same as last year), or $249.55 tax included
    - The rate for accompanying teachers will be 50% of the student price, $108,50 +tax
    - It is estimated that one bus is needed and will cost $758 for one way (similar to last year), for a total of $1 516
    - The trip will be 2 nights, 3 days and will be held January 28th-January 30th 2026
    - Students will be back at school on Friday before dismissal

  Motion to approve: Joey Fazzari, seconded by Sonia Ranellucci. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7.5 Lester B. Pearson Phys-Ed Workshops

- Mr. Andrew informed GB that starting December 8th, students from Lester B. Pearson will be coming once a month to hold small activities/workshops for the K4 and K5 students.
- The activities are meant to promote inclusion, teamwork and leadership skills.

7.6 Transition to High-School

- Ms. Canale reported that the transition to high school program will resume.
- Workshops will be planned in 2026; dates are being discussed with teachers.

8. BASE Report

8.1 Mr. Marco reports that BASE currently has 120 registered students. This number does not include sporadic attendees.

8.2 The BASE September and October report is presented:

Routine:

- Attendance
- Snack
- Homework – No homework Fridays
- Activity
- Free play/Transition

September:

- Introduced back to school theme *Discovering inner superhero* (the theme was introduced to encourage self-reflection and build confidence)
- Every Friday had a theme-oriented activity called *Super Fridays*
    - Superhero snack treat – design our favorite super hero colors (Sept 5)
    - Super party sponsored by Home & School with inflatables and theme cake from Lafrenaie (Sept 19)
    - Superhero bingo with prizes (Sept 26)
- Had our first Ped day on September 10th – Apple Picking

October:

- Gratitude Ceremony
    - Introduced grade 6 student presentations. Prepared a google slide presentation on the importance of gratitude and thanksgiving
    - Throughout the week students prepared maple cinnamon muffins and a harvest soup
    - On October 17th we had a thanksgiving celebration together
- Harvest Festival
    - Planting focus
    - This year's choice flowers were daffodils. All students in BASE planted a bulb
    - Senior students grade 4/5/6 learned the mechanics of the nutria tower and planted Basil
- Introduced Friday Frenzy
    - Ball hockey
    - BASE Baker
    - Sculpting
- Halloween Spooktacular
    - In preparation students made chocolate cupcakes decorated like witches
    - Grade 6 presented the origins of Halloween and celebrations
    - Dance party with DJ MTL
- Ped Day October 27th:
    - Animation Kidz / Gym / Science / Game stations
    - Mr. Marco mentions that the ECAs organized by Animation Kidz are well coordinated

8.3 Mr. Marco presented what is coming up in November:

Focus themes:

- Remembrance Day
- Kindness Day (Nov 13th is World Kindness Day)

3 Ped Days:

- Nov 20 ...Boulzeye