École Merton School

5554 Robinson Avenue, Côte-Saint-Luc, QC H4V 2P8

Governing Board Meeting #6 (via Microsoft TEAMS)
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Present: Christy Tannous, Steven Merling, Marissa Lydynia, Eddie Winkler, Josh Gonshor, Nathalie Guitta, Georgia Gotsis, Angeliki Eftaxias, Romain Goubel, Kimberley Davey, Carol Meindl, Gesell Dufeal, Paola Samuel, Evi Altman

Absent: Frederic Elbaz

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting began at 7:04 pm

2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Adopted by Marissa seconded by Nathalie

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 13, 2026 MEETING**

Approved by Ms. Eftaxias seconded by Romain, unanimous

4. **ELECTION OF A SECRETARY**

Eddie volunteered, no other volunteers

**Marissa continued as secretary from Agenda item 7 forward, including moving back to item 6.4 at the end of the meeting*

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6.1 Change of GB meeting dates for May and June

May 19th is not feasible – May 20st chosen as replacement date

June 16th is Grade 6 Grad – June 9th tentatively selected, may move if needed around grad or other decision dates required

Vote to change dates: Moved by Romain, 2nd by Ms Davey, unanimous

6.2 Approval of the 2025-2026 School Budget

Ms Tannous explained the different funds.

Highlight on Donations budget from fund 4, sometimes move to another budget space to allow more ready access for various needs rather than working within constraints of that budget item.

i. **Action** to find out what carry forward amounts remained from School Year 24/25 as amounts were blank on the presented budget – Ms Tannous will follow this up

ii. Question raised around Merton Magic Fund balance, will money be spent on the guidance of the GB only or by poll to the parent/staff body at large

iii. Also need to confirm balance outstanding

iv. Ms Tannous suggested that as a GB, we should be speaking with the parent body as polling broadly could become challenging to manage

v. **Action** Ms Tannous will also speak with the school board to get suggestions of common ways to spend larger donations

vi. Consideration for discussion – ideas for items we may not otherwise receive money for via standard budget/funding processes

Topic of the Governing Board budget of $250 came up and how to utilize it

i. Historically, we've given this back in towards graduation

ii. Ms Gotsis said this has been the practice for ages, also covered Book and award for student achievement, this was funded by EMSB-PC but this budget item no longer exists.

iii. Ms Gesell advised $250 historically has been used to buy gift cards for Grad

Continued to review remainder of budget without significant discussion around other topics

School fees shown briefly, this item is to be voted on at end of the year for upcoming school year

Asked if any budget shortfalls of concern.

i. Ultimately there will likely be some shortfalls but feel all core needs will be able to be covered or can source options via the EMSB

ii. H&S advised that if there would be any crucial shortfall, some funds can be made available to assist

Motion to approve 25/26 School budget

Moved by Ms Eftaxias, seconded by Ms Gotsis, unanimous

6.3 B.A.S.E information and ECAs

Motion required from GB to put forward official request to EMSB to form B.A.S.E daycare

Next step: need to poll the parents for morning service, need at least 10 parents to register and we can be allocated this service.

Question asked if current ASA staff will be retained under BASE daycare.

i. Ultimately if they meet the certification requirements

ii. They could then apply for the role but wouldn't be guaranteed the position

Activities:

iii. The educators (Becky & Amanda) are trained to run activities

    1. Steve asked, if they have the necessary certifications, would Ms Tannous help advocate for their position remaining at Merton

    2. Ms Tannous advised, can put the request out, but these are unionized roles and works purely on seniority

iv. Outside vendor hosted activities are provided sometimes, usually sport-based activities

v. H&S can still run activities after school as well

vi. Steve asked about prior conversations with Mr Lee around activities, our understanding was that B.A.S.E would run daycare services & he would contract for afterschool activities

vii. Ms Tannous advised smaller number of activities typically provided, but if parents voice significant interest, this can be explored with Ms Tannous

viii. Eddie asked about profit from activities relative to manpower shortage, profit would be surpassed by staff cost to run these activities so not a viable source of fundraising

ix. Nathalie asked about hiring in advance to setup activities and training needs going in to new school year. Ms Tannous advised if we're lucky we may get someone to start in August but no control over this as owned by the school board

x. Deferred to Question Period: Heidi to provide insights on moves to BASE Daycare model

xi. For morning early-drop offs: is it firm start time. Ms Tannous confirmed it's open until regular supervision begins

    1. Potential concern raised around usage of classrooms as it may impede teachers who choose to arrive early to prepare classrooms for the day.

2. Ms Tannous advised this wouldn't be the case, the most common locations would be the gym or a classroom not currently in use.

xii. Heidi asked by exception to provide overview and handle Q&A on B.A.S.E Daycare experience transitioning from ASA

1. Overall fairly easy transition and happy with the services provided
2. Extracurricular activities: another setup was put in place to support this which worked, item parked during this topic for later discussion

Motion to request that EMSB B.A.S.E to be the Daycare provider at Merton School.

Moved by Nathalie, seconded by Eddie, unanimous

6.4 Selection criteria for the appointment of Merton Principal 2026-2027

The item was discussed at the end of the meeting. Ms. Tannous excused herself from the discussion. It was agreed that the form, in its current format, would be circulated to members, who may add any additional criteria they deem appropriate.

7. REPORTS

7.1 **GB Chair's Report (S. Merling)**

Steven shared that he had met with Mr. Lee prior to his departure from Merton for a meaningful career opportunity at Royal West Academy. Mr. Lee assured him that the transition to Ms. Tannous would be seamless, as he left everything well-organized. Steven expressed enthusiasm about welcoming Ms. Tannous and hopes she will remain at Merton for many years.

7.2 Principal's Report (C. Tannous)

Ms. Tannous introduced herself, outlining her personal and professional background. She has been working in school administration since 2014 in both elementary and high school settings. Although her title is currently "Interim Principal," she expressed her desire to remain at Merton long term, contingent on staff stability within the EMSB.

She noted that she is presently observing, learning the needs of the school, and has already begun reading to younger classes (something she hopes to continue).

Since her arrival, the school has had a busy schedule, including:

- Olympic Week
- Staff Appreciation Week
- 100th Day of School
- A school trip to the Royal West Academy Science Fair

She also reminded the board that Parent-Teacher Interviews (by invitation only) will take place on Thursday, February 26.

7.3 Home and School Report (Evi)

Evi highlighted the excellent communication with Ms. Tannous.

The final ASA semester is underway.

Recent Home & School initiatives include:

- A successful swag fundraiser
- Completion of the Zera Café hamentashen fundraiser

Upcoming fundraisers include pizza kits, chocolate bars, and flowers & herbs.

She thanked all volunteers for their efforts during Staff Appreciation Week and noted that many executive members will not return next year. Recruitment of parents from younger grades will be a priority.

7.4 **Teachers' Reports**

Romain warmly welcomed Ms. Tannous and shared that staff are excited to work with her.

He acknowledged Andrew and Roya for organizing an excellent Olympic Week, including a torch relay, and noted the 100th Day of School celebrations.

Recent and upcoming activities:

- Kindergarten trip to Funtropolis (tomorrow)
- Grades 1 & 2 visit to the Biodome earlier this month
- Grades 5 & 6 returning from a successful winter camp, both in location and programming

He also thanked parents for their kindness during Staff Appreciation Week.

7.5 Community Representative's Report (C. Meindl)

Carol reported that at 3:15 PM today, two members of her board presented a virtual consultation to the National Assembly's Committee on Institutions regarding Bill 1.

She also announced that the next QFHSA Help Desk session will be held on February 23 from 5:00–6:00 PM.

7.6 Regional Delegate's Report (Eddie/Marissa)

Eddie provided summary of key topics covered in this month's Parent Committee meeting

1) Requested that information regarding Parent Event be shared with the entire parent community, intention of session is to educate the parent body more broadly on the purpose of governance and how everyone can help
2) Several additional key items covered, Highlights document attached for reference

7.7 School Commissioner's Report (P. Samuel)

Paola reported that an Environmental Sustainability Committee has been created at the commissioners' meeting and was positively received.

She brought forward a motion, which was approved, for the EMSB to formally recognize International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, with activities that are age appropriate for students.

She noted further discussion led by Joe Ortona concerning Bill 1 and its potential impacts on the English community.

Paola also shared that she has initiated "Diverse Minds," a project in which she reads books to students.

8. QUESTION PERIOD

Heidi Cheung requested that Merton consider implementing a model similar to Edinburgh's, which operates a B.A.S.E daycare alongside its own after school programming.

Ms. Tannous committed to exploring this possibility and discussing it with the principal.

Heidi offered her expertise, noting her involvement in Edinburgh's transition.

9. VARIA

A motion was carried at 9:03 PM to extend the meeting by 15 minutes (moved by Marissa, seconded by Nathalie G.). Unanimous.

The board then returned to the principal selection criteria and agreed to circulate the documentation.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was carried at 9:11 PM

Moved by Steve, seconded by M Romain