École Merton School

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

Governing Board Meeting #1 (via Microsoft TEAMS)
Tuesday, October 13, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Present: Christy Tannous, Josh Gonshor, Nathalie Guitta, Lauren Tatner, Jarred Coxford, Matt Karpman (alt.) Gesell Dufeal, Chérine Mikail, Tania Siconolfi, Sandra Longo, Nathalie Favière (alt.), Paola Samuel

Regrets: Steven Merling

1. Welcome and Call to Order

With quorum established at 7:03pm, Christy Tannous called the meeting to order until the election of the chair. Members of the Governing Board introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. Approved by: Josh Gonshor Seconded by: Nathalie Guitta, carried unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes of June 9, 2026

Approved by Gesell Dufeal. Seconded by Cherine Mikail. Approved unanimously.

4. Election of Governing Board Positions

4.1. Chair
Steve Merling self-nominated. All in favour. Elected.
Josh Gonshor elected as vice-chair to run the meetings when chair is absent.
With the newly nominated chair absent, Josh Gonshor took over from Ms. Tannous and chaired the meeting.

4.2. Secretary
This role will be on a rotation basis among the parent members of GB. Jarred Coxford volunteered to serve at secretary for the meeting

4.3. Treasurer
Lauren Tatner was elected.

4.4. Parent delegate alternate
Nathalie Guitta (Parent Delegate, elected at the AGA)
Matt Carpman elected as Alternate Parent Delegate

5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1. Hot Lunch Supplier Only EMSB-approved vendors may be used. Members shared mixed feedback on the current supplier (Merenda), with Doral noted as offering more appetizing meals. A subcommittee led by Lauren Tatner and Nathalie Guitta will survey families and review the supplier.

5.2. Merton Magic Discussion deferred until budgets are in place. A subcommittee of Steve Merling, Matt Carpman and Jarred Coxford was formed.

6. New Business

6.1. Internal Rules of Conduct and Procedures Term limits were discussed. The Governing Board's internal rules remain unchanged. Moved by: Matt Carpman Seconded by: Lauren Tatner Carried. One vote against.

6.2. Governing Board Meeting Format (2026–2027) The current format was maintained: five meetings per year, held virtually at 7:00 pm, cameras on. Moved by: Nathalie Favière Seconded by: Cherine Mikail carried unanimously.

6.3. The Governing Board granted blanket approval for day outings, delegating decisions to the Principal so teachers can plan ahead. Moved by: Nathalie Guitta Seconded by: Matt Karpman Carried unanimously. The Cycle 1 outing to Théâtre Desjardins on November 16 was approved. Moved by: Nathalie Guitta Seconded by: Jarred Coxford Carried unanimously.

6.4 Cycle 3 Overnight Trip – Camp Jouvence (February 8–9, 2027) The overnight trip was approved. Moved by: Nathalie Guitta Seconded by: Tania Siconolfi Carried unanimously.

6.5. Budget Updates - nothing to approve. Budgets were cut by about 20% last year and about 10–12% this year. Government cuts at the EMSB specifically affect English-language schools.

6.6. BASE Transition The HopHop app is being considered to have children ready for pickup. EcoArt (Grades 4–6) runs Wednesdays 3–4 pm and Sportlife (Grades 3–4) Fridays 4–5 pm after Karate. Sports equipment was purchased for the gym. Parents asked what BASE programming is available to weigh against enrichment options.

6.7. After-School and Enrichment Activities

6.7.1 GMAA play days (November 19, Grades 5–6) and the Halo Race in May (Grades 4–6) were approved. Moved by: Matt Karpman Seconded by: Jarred Coxford Carried unanimously.

6.7.2 Enrichment includes Wonder Works (K-3) and Battle of the Books (4-6). Enrichment is offered during the regular school day for gifted and exceptional students. Marks of 90% and above in English, French and Math.

6.7.3 Concerns were raised about the process for after-school sports, including futsal for older grades, and parent dissatisfaction with enrichment. A subcommittee of Nathalie Guitta, Jarred Coxford, Matt Carpman and Lauren Tatner will gather input and share it with the administration. A motion to allow after-school activities at a cost was approved. Moved by: Josh Gonshor Seconded by: Matt Karpman Carried unanimously.

6.7.4 For the Homework Assistance Program, teachers will identify students who need support. Plans will be finalized once budgets are confirmed; the Governing Board may release Merton Magic funds to start sooner.

6.8 Pedagogical Day – October 26 The ped day, approved earlier by online vote, was ratified for the minutes. Moved by: Nathalie Guitta Seconded by: Josh Gonshor Carried unanimously.

6.9 Renovations The outdoor water and sewer issue was addressed on the October 16 ped day. Crawlspace infrastructure work is planned for summer 2027, and the junior bathrooms will be redone from April 2028 through the summer.

6.10. Meeting Dates (2026–2027) The next meeting is set for November 17, 2026.

7. Reports

7.1 Chair's Report: Presented by Josh Gonshor on behalf of Steve Merling, addressing parent concerns about after-school programming, enrichment and academics. Providing optimism towards working with administration to rectify concerns.

7.2 Principal's Report: Ms. Tannous expressed her enthusiasm for joining Merton and her open-door policy for parents, and looks forward to working collaboratively.

7.3 BASE Technician's Report: Ms. Longo is taking parent concerns seriously and continues to adapt to the school community. BASE ped day fees will require Governing Board approval. The activity list has been shared with families.

7.4 Teachers' Report: Teachers expressed unequivocal support for Ms. Tannous and concern regarding recent sentiments toward her, along with a message of optimism.

7.5 Home & School Report: Thanks were extended to Friday lunch volunteers; bringing back Souvlaki George is being explored. A free coffee morning will be held, and the first public meeting is Monday, November 9. Budget, graduation and fundraising updates were shared.

7.6 Regional Delegate's Report: The first regional meeting is October 22; Ms. Guitta will report back.

7.7. School Commissioner's Report: Ms. Samuel reviewed budget cuts under the CAQ government, expressed cautious optimism regarding the PQ government, and noted lobbying efforts to recover the surplus.

8. Question Period

Members of the public raised support for absent teachers and acknowledged Mrs. Angie's retirement.

A parent clarified that her recent email was not a petition but was sent in a spirit of collaboration, and expressed concern about the basketball program not continuing and students not feeling part of the school. The Principal responded that decisions are made in the students' best interest within existing constraints, and that she supports sports.

A parent requested the BASE schedule as far in advance as possible and offered to help facilitate.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:50pm. Moved by: Nathalie Guitta Seconded by: Tania Siconolfi. Carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 17, 2026 – 7pm virtually.