

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

ETSB BOARD ROOM

340, SAINT-JEAN-BOSCO

MAGOG, QC. J1X 1K9

MINUTES

Enhanced Literacy and Numeracy – Dropout Prevention – Physical and Mental Health

COMMISSIONERS		PARENT COMMISSIONERS	
Gordon Barnett	Z	Sarah Langlois	Z
Claire Beaubien	Z	Eliza McKnight	Z
Richard Gagnon	Z	Dan Nagle	Z
Richard Gosselin	Z	Helene Turgeon	Z
Gary Holliday	Z	DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)	
Joy Humenuik, Vice-Chair	A	Secretary General – Éric Campbell	P
Shawn Jersey	Z	Director General – Kandy Mackey	P
Mary-Ellen Kirby	Z	Assistant Director General & Director of Financial Services – Sophie Leduc	P
Frank MacGregor	Z	Director of Human Resources – Caroline Dufresne	P
Jonathan Murray	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services – Eva Lettner	Z
Michael Murray, Chair	Z	Director of Complementary Services – Emmanuelle Gaudet	Z
Tina Pezzi-Bilodeau	Z	Director of Material Resources – Éric Plante	P

ZOOM (Z) – MEMBERS PRESENT (P) – MEMBERS ABSENT (A)

OBSERVERS

Holly Bailey, Communications Consultant

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. QUORUM AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner H. Turgeon to adopt the Agenda of March 26, 2024 as modified with the following correction:

9.3.2.1 Heroes' Memorial Elementary School – Replacement of Water Distribution Network.

Carried unanimously

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Resolution No. ETSB 24-03-51

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Commissioners held on February 27, 2024

WHEREAS a copy of the Minutes of the meeting of February 27, 2024 has been given to each Commissioner at least 6 hours before the opening of the meeting, the Secretary General is excused from reading the Minutes.

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner G. Barnett to excuse the Secretary General from reading the Minutes and to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on February 27, 2024 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

4. QUESTION PERIOD

No questions were asked at this time.

5. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Chairman M. Murray invited the following Commissioners to present the March 26, 2024 Recognition of Excellence:

**This month the Council of Commissioners and Senior
Administrators of the Eastern Townships School Board would
like to signal the following:**

The ETSB Celebrates PINK Shirt Day!



[Click to enlarge!](#)

Commissioner S. Langlois: Every year, the people of the Eastern Townships School Board stand in solidarity and denounce any form of bullying on the annual National Pink Shirt Day. On February 28th 2024, students mobilized and stood up to speak about intimidation and prevention in school-wide assemblies and special events. Staff rallied behind them sporting pink as well; a symbol of love, harmony and compassion. Thank you to all who took part and shared their inspiring photos with us here!

ETSB Students Represent at the 58th Finale of the *Jeux du Québec!*

Commissioner G. Holliday: The provincial multisport competition launched with the opening ceremony on March 1st and wrapped up on March 9th 2024. 2,500 young athletes across Quebec aged 12-17 years gathered in Sherbrooke to compete. Regions of Quebec presented teams to compete in various sports like ringuette, fencing and artistic skating to name but a few. All three of our high schools had students who qualified and took part in the *Jeux du Québec* as members of their various regional teams, plus two students in Secondary 1 from Butler Elementary.

Léona Majeau of Richmond Regional High School participated in the games as part of the women's curling team (Curling Laurier Victoriaville) representing the *Centre du Québec*.



Leona Majeau featured 2nd from left and far right in the 2nd picture

Alexander Galt Regional High School had 6 students take part in the *Jeux du Québec*, namely Charles-David Labrie (Karate), Cayden Costello (Gymnastics) and the following athletes who competed in curling, Alexa Dingman, Emma Mayne, Hunter Sarrasin and Xavier Francius.



From left to right: Hunter Sarrasin, Emma Mayne, Alexa Dingman and Xavier Francius.



From left to right: Cayden Costello and Charles-David Labrie

Commissioner G. Holliday: Massey-Vanier High School had 6 students participate in the games; all taking part in curling representing the Richelieu-Yamaska region. The women’s team was comprised of skip Emma Blinn-Giroux, Adalynn Bugyi, Juliette Lizotte, Emilia Zelis and Florence Chalifoux (who previously attended Farnham Elementary and now attends *École Jean-Jacques Bertrand*). The men’s team included Cole Bugyi, Jayden La Roche, along with Bailey La Roche and the team’s skip Alec Bugyi (both in Secondary 1 at Butler Elementary) and teammate Felix Cyr (who attends high school in Saint-Hyacinthe).



Team Richelieu-Yamaska - Students from L to R in top row: Emma Blinn-Giroux, Adalynn Bugyi, Florence Chalifoux, Juliette Lizotte & Emilia Zelis. Bottom row from L to R: Cole Bugyi, Alec Bugyi, Bailey La Roche, Felix Cyr & Jayden La Roche.

Congratulations to all of our athletes who participated in the 58th finale of the *Jeux du Québec* and a special mention goes out to Charles-David Labrie who earned a Gold medal in Karate. You all did us very proud.



Chairman M. Michael: I had lunch on Friday at *l'Entre Deux*, the restaurant at the School of Hotellerie at Campus Brome Missisquoi or CBM. For those of our guests who may not be familiar with that name, it has been adopted by our Centre of Vocational Training in Cowansville that we operate jointly with the School Service Centre Val-des-Cerfs.

The student cooks prepared a visually magnificent buffet under the guidance of chef Mario Boucher. The food was delicious, presented artistically and the array of choices was overwhelming. The baked whole salmon deserves special mention for beautiful presentation, its scales replicated with paper-thin slices of cucumber and radish. The roast beef and maple-glazed roast pork were done to perfection, served to order with a flourish by one of the student cooks.

The dessert table was a gourmet display of temptation with the highlight being the *sucre à crème*. Congratulations to the instructors and the students for such outstanding work. *L'Entre Deux* serves midday meals several times each month to allow cooks, sommeliers and waiters to practise in a real setting. Reservations are essential should you wish to attend. The restaurant, with its wall of windows facing a breathtaking mountain view is worth visiting quite apart from the varied and creative dining experience. Local hotels and restaurants will be fortunate to employ such skilled service personnel and chefs.

6. BUSINESS ARISING

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. REPORTS

8.1 Director General's report

The Director General, K. Mackey reported the following:

This evening, I am pleased to present a report focusing on the Student Engagement pillar within the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB). Over the past few months, I have had the privilege of hearing directly from our students during my visits to various schools and centres. Through initiatives such as the Central Student Advisory Committee, our students have provided invaluable insight into our Commitment-to-Success Plan orientations, concrete actions for us to consider.

The stories shared by our students underscore the importance of their voices in shaping our educational terrain. From the creation of student lounges to organizing events for students, such as carnivals, our students have demonstrated exceptional leadership within their schools and centres. They have also contributed significantly through activities like celebrating staff during Teacher Appreciation Week, leading school-wide assemblies, and participating in student focus groups to provide input on various matters.

Additionally, our students have shared or will soon be sharing their thoughts through the Our School Survey, providing us with valuable feedback on their experiences. These stories, along with the dedicated support of our caring staff, truly highlight the vibrancy of school and centre life within the ETSB.

I am excited to share that we have upcoming opportunities to enrich our students' learning experiences, such as the upcoming eclipse, where they will have the chance to engage with the curriculum in an authentic manner. Furthermore, our welcoming of international students opens our eyes to a multitude of cultures, enriching both student and family lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage anyone interested in hosting international students to reach out to our International Student Program department. This experience not only enriches student life but also enhances the lives of host families, fostering cultural exchange and understanding.

It is evident that engaged students are more likely to excel academically and remain committed to their education. As we approach the final stretch for the school year, let us continue to prioritize student engagement and value their voices. When seeking insights or understanding a situation, let us turn to our students – their perspectives are invaluable guides.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to create a nurturing and engaging learning environment for all our students.

8.2 Chair's report

The Chair of the Council of Commissioners, M. Murray had nothing new to report.

9. ADVISORY COMMITTEES' REPORTS

9.1 Executive Committee

The Chair of the Executive Committee, Commissioner M. Murray mentioned that the topics discussed at tonight's Executive meeting will also be addressed at the Council of Commissioners meeting.

9.2 Governance and Ethics Committee

The Chair of the Governance and Ethics Committee, Commissioner G. Barnett that the date of the next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2024.

9.3 Audit Advisory Committee

The Director of Material Resources, E. Plante presented the following resolutions:

9.3.1 Finance:

None.

9.3.2 Material Resources:

9.3.2.1 Resolution No. ETSB 24-03-52

Heroes' Memorial Elementary School – Replacement of Water Distribution Network

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of \$371,861 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2021-2022 Mesure: 50621*;

WHEREAS the water intake systems are in great need of replacement;

WHEREAS two (2) companies retrieved the project specifications after a public invitation to bid on the project;

WHEREAS two (2) bids were received by the Eastern Townships School Board by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$307,000 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *9116-0093 Québec Inc.*;

WHEREAS all additional funds required to complete the project, will be taken from *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2021-22 program*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *DWB Consultants* has recommended the company *9116-0093 Québec Inc.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$398,809, including taxes and professional fees;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Murray to proceed with the work for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Adopted unanimously

9.3.2.2 Resolution No. ETSB 24-03-53

Ayer's Cliff Elementary School – Parking and Playground Renovation

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of \$600,000 for the project stated above, under the program *MDB - Maintien des bâtiments 2022-2023 Mesure: 50621*;

WHEREAS ten (10) companies retrieved the project specifications after a public invitation to bid on the project;

WHEREAS nine (9) bids were received by the Eastern Townships School Board by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$426,331 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Excavation Robert Pothier*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bids, the assigned professional firm of *FNX-Innov Inc.* has recommended the company *Excavation Robert Pothier* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$566,943, including taxes and professional fees;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner C. Beaubien to proceed with the work for the project stated above; **IT WAS FURTHER MOVED** that the Director General be authorized to sign all associated documentation and that in the absence of the Director General, the Director of Material Resources can also sign.

Adopted unanimously

The date of the next Audit Advisory Committee is scheduled for May 21, 2024.

9.4 Educational Advisory Committee (ESAC)

The Chair of the Educational Advisory Committee, M.E. Kirby mentioned that the date of the next ESAC meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2024.

9.5 Communications Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Communications Advisory Committee, H. Turgeon mentioned that the date for the next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2024.

9.6 Human Resources Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Human Resources Advisory Committee, C. Beaubien presented the following resolution:

9.6.1 Resolution No. ETSB 24-03-54 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Youth Sector Calendars

WHEREAS in conformity with section 8-5.02 of the Local Agreement, the Eastern Townships School Board has consulted with the Appalachian Teachers' Association in the development of the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school calendars for the youth sector;

WHEREAS pursuant to section 193 (7) of the Education Act, the Parents' Committee was consulted on February 7, 2024 and March 13, 2024 on the proposed 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 youth sector calendars;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner C. Beaubien that the Eastern Townships School Board approve the proposed 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school calendars for the youth sector.

Adopted unanimously

The date of the next Human Resources Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2024.

9.7 Transportation Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee, Commissioner G. Holliday mentioned the topics discussed at the March 19, 2024 meeting:

- Bus drivers' recruitment update;
- Marguerite Knapp building – Excavation update and building sign renewal;
- Bus Safety Week – February 2024;
- 2023-2024 School Bus Bids – Phase 2 – Adopted;
- Eclipse – transportation will be delayed in the afternoon.

The date of the next Transportation Advisory Committee meeting is **to be determined**.

9.8 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The Commissioner representing parents for the SEAC, E. McKnight mentioned the topics discussed at the March 20, 2024 meeting:

- 2024-2025 Parent Information Sessions – valuable input on potential topics from the members. Last session will be held on April 27, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. on the topic of the Modified Quebec Education Program. These sessions are open to all ETSB parents who receive information to register and to join the online sessions via email;

- SEAC Website – many ideas gathered to make enhancements to the information already available on the site including plans to make it less text heavy;
- Informative report on *MEQ* codes – presented by the Director of Complementary Services, E. Gaudet.

The date of the next SEAC meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2024

10. PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The Commissioner representing parents, H. Turgeon mentioned the topics discussed at the March 13, 2024 meeting:

- Complementary Educational Services – services provided by professionals, presented by the Director, E. Gaudet;
- Multi-disciplinary teams;
- Vacant positions;
- IEPs;
- Information sessions;
- 2024-2025 and 2024-2025 school calendar – presented by the Director of Human Resources, C. Dufresne;
- DG update;
- *Plan de rattrapage*;
- New communication tool – text messaging tool for urgent emergencies will be put in place;
- Measles vaccinations;
- *RCPAQ (Regroupement des comités de parents autonomes du Québec)*;
- Eclipse.

The date of the next Parents' Committee meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2024.

11. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Commissioner G. Holliday and the Director General, K. Mackey mentioned the following in Commissioner J. Humenuik's absence:

- Carnival Day – great success with lots of positive energy;
- Orientations on Success Plan session – concrete actions will be taken from the survey feedback.

The next Student Advisory Committee meeting will be virtual.

12. QESBA

Court of Appeal Bill 21 – the court rejected the appeal against Bill 21, ruling the notwithstanding clause supersedes any legislation. The court explained that the legislature holds supremacy over the judicial system, allowing it to invoke the notwithstanding clause without judicial intervention.

Section 33 of the Canadian Charter paraphrases a decision of Rights and Freedoms, also called the notwithstanding or override clause, permits federal, provincial or territorial governments to temporarily bypass certain Charter rights. Governments must renew these overrides every five years.

Bill 40, another piece of legislation was discussed. If this Bill is fully passed, it would eliminate all school boards and replace them with 'Service Centres'. It was ruled unconstitutional in its application to English school boards, but the Quebec government is currently appealing the decision.

The decision to appeal is under review. QESBA is intervening; all 9 English school boards are party to the appeal. We are currently awaiting advice from our legal counsel to see if it's worth proceeding.

QESBA has revived its fundraising efforts under the theme 'Every Dollar Counts', urging everyone to donate personally, even if it's just one dollar. The symbolic importance of these contributions alongside the financial goal was highlighted. QESBA estimates needing about three quarters of a million dollars (\$750K) more to support the potential appeal of Bill 21 and Bill 40 to the Supreme Court. This anticipation comes in light of potential unfavourable appellate court judgments or government contestations of favourable ones. Fundraising will begin soon, and we will move forward with it as energetically as possible.

We are looking forward to the Spring Conference, which will take place from May 8th to May 10th 2024. ETSB is hosting it in Bromont (last time was 6 years ago).

Commissioners are meeting virtually with Minister in about 2 weeks. They will address a number of issues raised in writing that we will pursue.

13. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Commissioner G. Barnett:

Eastern Townships Adult General Education (ETAGE) Governing Board Meeting – March 13, 2024

- This meeting was to present an update on the ETAGE interim budget. They are still awaiting MEQ parameters to build the budget.
- The total revenue for envelopes 5, 7 & 8 is \$2.8M and with the 'Mesures' is \$3.4M. ETAGE has also requested \$750K for the *Francisation* program of some 400+ students mainly for the extra teachers.
- Currently there is a \$237K deficit but if they get the *Francisation* money, the budget will be balanced.

Lennoxville Vocational Training Centre (LVTC) Governing Board Meeting – March 22, 2024

- They have been super busy getting Carpentry, Tin-smithing, and Heating and Plumbing up and running at very short notice. The budget is still in revision considering all the elements such as the number of students in each discipline, insurance, space, equipment, supplies, rentals. They had good Board support, and a lot of time was devoted to this project by numerous people.
- SAE (*Services aux Entreprises*) was to coordinate Tin-smithing but LVTC had to take it over and the money will come to them.

- Most of the documents were in French requiring LVTC to translate them to English. They used ChatGPT to speed up the process and this is still in process. For Heating and Plumbing, there are 7 books with only 2 in English for example.
- Tin-smithing is located in a rented space on Winder Street, Lennoxville. There are 22 students and the course is set to end in July. Since both LVTC and CBM (Campus Brome-Missisquoi) applied for Carpentry and the Ministry wouldn't finance 2 sites, this is given in Magog to finish in June for 44 students. Heating and Plumbing (1680h) in collaboration with CSS *Sherbrooke* is already complete at 44 students, but they are waiting until April because there is not enough space at LVTC, even with a reduction in machining space.
- An 'Offensive in Health' was announced at the end of January for LPN and AEP and they managed to get space in a new CHSLD in Granby.
- LVTC has been lucky in finding people to teach in English.
- Since federal prisons in Quebec have to offer courses in English as well as French, LVTC is exploring the possibility of delivering various courses in a RAC and semi-skilled context. The prisons already have workshops.
- Since ETSB is the only Board to have its own bus system, LVTC is looking at the possibility to develop Driver Training and Mechanics courses and the facilities that would be needed.
- They are also looking at the need for Industrial Painting, Stone Cutting and Computing support. Stone Cutting would be in collaboration with *Haut Cantons* since their territory covers the Stanstead area, but the Director is in Lac Megantic while ETSB is much closer.
- LVTC also has a 10-minute interview of all the recent activity by the Centre.
- The new Townshippers Executive Director, Denis Kotsoros, addressed the group and said that his initial focus will be on the economics of Anglo unemployment and service to the community.

Court challenges recent CAQ bills

- With the recent CAQ bills, there is a dark cloud hanging over the Anglophone community. The Task Force on Linguistic Policy was formed to contest these laws which affect all Anglophone individual charter rights. They wish to inform the people about this serious impact and are seeking support from the Anglophone community to spread the word.

- The following are links to the Task Force site and the two videos of their two Zoom meetings that cover the impact of the bills, the legal implications, and the court challenge:
- Task Force on Linguistic Policy website:
<https://protectourrights.ca/>
- Task Force video for February 13, 2024:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/ZzKaVvWJi1mY-PyAzdPvCuqolXi94S_kskDfvuT0Wmzd2p54sindk2SnURZjsJX.LCvcKgZldA1LBczi
Passcode: m&Z79RbG
- Task Force video for March 7, 2024:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/D2XkHf_J2sNteAKGI1Qvq3bzxt9BnY8KzIO177NtzFMZKUTpmxWfbTB0cbWteso2.FEfm_lhtnWPU2cY
Passcode: ?+w*86v.

Commissioner C. Beaubien:

I had the chance to volunteer at the *Jeux du Québec* and was stationed at *Le Phare* where the Estrie athletes, coaches and missionaries were staying. My shift was to help during supper time from 4:30 to 9:00 p.m. I had a chance to meet many athletes from various regions and could relay the event to TVA news I saw that night to the athletes that were interviewed the next day. Lots of our athletes won medals. A very well-organized event!

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

None.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

15.1 QESBA – Thank you letter for contribution

QESBA Executive Director, David Meloche sent ETSB Commissioners a thank you letter for their contribution expressing gratitude for a previous generous contribution towards challenging Bill 40 legally. This donation is expected to boost the momentum for the legal fund campaign. No funds were taken from the School Board. It was clarified that the donations came from personal resources of all 16 commissioners, including the Chair, rather than the school board funds.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

Megan Seline

Knowlton Resident:

When is the Council of Commissioners elections date?

Michael Murray

Chair:

All eleven elected commissioners are up for reelection on November 3, 2024.

17. GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION

None.

18. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner R. Gagnon at 7:47 p.m.

Eric Campbell
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

EC/gm
03.26.2024