

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SCHOOL BOARD

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025 – 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	Pam Gougeon	Z
Claire Beaubien	Z	Sarah Langlois	Z
Sandra Finlay	Z	Eliza McKnight	Z
Richard Gagnon	A	Jody Murray	A
Richard Gosselin	Z	DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE (DC)	
Gary Holliday	Z	Secretary General – Shawn Champigny	P
Joy Humenuik, Vice-chair	Z	Director General – Kandy Mackey	P
Shawn Jersey (arrived at 7:35)	Z	Assistant Director General & Director of Financial Services – Sophie Leduc	Z
Mary-Ellen Kirby	Z	Director of Human Resources – Caroline Dufresne	A
Jonathan Murray	Z	Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services – Emmanuelle Gaudet	Z
Michael Murray, Chair	Z	Director of Complementary Services – Catherine Canzani	Z
Helene Turgeon	Z	Director of Material Resources – Éric Plante	Z

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

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. QUORUM AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner G. Holliday to adopt the Agenda of October 28, 2025 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-12

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Commissioners held on September 23, 2025

WHEREAS a copy of the Minutes of the meeting of September 23, 2025 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 September 23, 2025 as deposited.

Carried unanimously

4. QUESTION PERIOD

P. Maingot

ATA Representative: Communications and response delays from the HR department. What is the response delay from them?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: It was mentioned that these subjects should be handled at the Labour Relations Committee (LRC).

T. Croteau

ATA President: Board Resource Allocation: We have no union member right now. Is that something we can expect?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: Not sure at the moment. We are currently working on this. There have been many issues regarding the budget this year.

M. Roberts

ATA Representative: Accounting program: Numbers fluctuate from year to year. Some people change their minds in August. Should they have a waiting list to help preserve student enrolment?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: The Administrators will look into it. There can be issues with waiting lists. People sometimes look into better alternatives.

L. Mireault

ATA Representative: Some schools have expressed concerns due to budget cuts. Can you shed some light on the process?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: Food programs and special needs are a top priority for us. We recognize the importance of adequate nutrition. We will adopt a budget later in this meeting and a budget update later in the year. We hope to be able to keep up and stay ahead of the changes for the good of the students.

P. Maingot

ATA Representative: Health, safety and transparency: Are Commissioners aware that unions are not allowed access to incident reports?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: This is an administrative process. It is normally addressed through LRC mediation.

M. Roberts

ATA Representative: We feel that different policy changes have been made and our members have not been made aware. Could you enlighten the ATA of the procedure?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: Policies are reviewed on a systematic basis. The administration is charged with the responsibility of implementing the policies. All policies go through the Council meetings. If there is a specific policy that is being inquired about, we can provide you with that information.

M. Roberts

ATA Representative: Does the information get passed on to our members?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: Consultation is passed on to your members.

L. Mireault

ATA Representative: We had the opportunity to work with senior board administrators in schools, which was positive. Is it possible to have more of these meetings?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair: The DG spends a significant amount of time in schools and so do the other senior administrators in student services. By all means, we encourage staff participation.

5. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Chairman M. Murray invited the following Commissioners to present the October 28, 2025 Recognition of Excellence:

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

Butler Elementary School – Terry Fox Challenge (second part)

Commissioner J. Humenuik: October 17, 2025: The second part of the Terry Fox challenge was to raise \$9,000. For this, the two top fundraising students got to shave Principal Morgan's head! But there was an unexpected twist!! Mr. Monette wanted to check the clippers to make sure they worked. An unsuspecting Dylan Bockus, co-coordinator of their Breakfast Club and all-round good sport, volunteered to help with the test. Then, the winners went to work on Principal Morgan's coiffure...



The students also received their rewards for all their hard work raising money for Terry Fox. Their first challenge was to raise \$7,000. For that, they got to tape Principal Morgan to a sheet of plywood. Other ETSB schools also took the time to celebrate Orange Shirt Day.



Knowlton Academy Walks for Truth and Reconciliation

Commissioner J. Murray: Orange Shirt Day: Principal Peter McKelvie reminded students why they were doing this walk, why Every Child Matters. He spoke of survivors, their families and communities and how Orange Shirt Day reminds the country of these children. While they were walking through the Fairy Trail, he asked the students to be silent and think about what they had in their lives to be thankful for.



Knowlton Academy – Teachers Take a Mud Bath for Cancer

KA students set a goal of \$4,000 to make as a donation to the Terry Fox Cancer Research Foundation during a designated time period this fall. The students were promised that if they reached their goal, four teachers would take a mud bath at an assembly for all to see. On Friday, October 17, 2025, Principal Peter McKelvie, teachers Nick Lemaitre, Sarah Lenz, Makayla Foster and Annie Butler all took mud baths surrounded by a cheering audience of students, teachers, parents and supporters on the school's front lawn!



Le Salon du Livre

Commissioner S. Langlois: Cycle 3 elementary students recently had the wonderful opportunity to attend the *Salon du livre*, an experience that truly celebrated the joy and power of reading. Surrounded by stories, authors and books of every kind, the students were inspired to explore new worlds and ideas through the pages they turned. Events like this remind us how important it is to nurture a love of reading at a young age, as it opens minds, fuels imagination and builds lifelong learning habits. The children had an amazing time discovering books, meeting writers and sharing their excitement with friends and teachers. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the dedicated staff and volunteers who accompanied the students and helped make this enriching and joyful experience possible.



6. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

8. REPORTS

8.1 Director General's report

The Director General, K. Mackey had nothing new to report.

8.2 Chair's report

The Chair of the Council of Commissioners, M. Murray, reported the following:

There have been numerous developments on the legal and budgetary fronts since we last met. I thought it would be useful to recapitulate for those who find it challenging to stay current. I should preface these remarks by cautioning you that this is information as of today, but based on recent experience, it may change again by tomorrow.

As reported earlier, the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) and the nine English school boards launched an appeal contesting the budget cuts and manifold conditions and instructions issued by the government since last spring and summer. The basis of our challenge was that the conditions surrounding the cuts would result in significant damage to the education of our students and infringed on school board rights to management and control. Figures in the hundreds of millions of dollars were flung around with reckless abandon, both reductions to education budgets, and reinvestment in education on multiple conditions. This was all in addition to a hiring freeze imposed well over a year ago, budget compressions announced in March of 2025, and further compressions imposed in May 2025.

The first step in the legal process of challenging the government was to apply for a stay or suspension of the announced measures until the courts could hear the case. Personnel from the English school boards worked through the summer to prepare the evidence required to support our application for a stay. It was a monumental task to amass enough specific evidence to disprove the government's claims that the budget cuts were not really reductions but merely control of growth and to demonstrate the significant damage to good educational practices and meeting student needs. Happily, our teams performed outstandingly.

On October 13, 2025, the eve of the first day of hearings on the application for the stay, the Attorney General of Quebec deposited a letter with the court, making its provisions public information and binding on the government. It stipulates that for English school boards only, restrictions on the transfer and use of restricted fundings were withdrawn and would remain suspended until the Supreme Court of Canada rules on Bill 40. This means English school boards are free to use the funds granted under dedicated and protected measures as they see fit. This flexibility is a huge benefit to managing our budgets and mitigating the impact of cuts on staff and support for students. The Attorney General of Quebec asked whether these concessions were sufficient to allow the School Boards to drop their challenge, but there remained too many unresolved issues to permit us to do so at that point. Arguments in the case were heard on October 14th and 15th 2025, but judgment has not been rendered.

On October 23rd 2025, the recently appointed Minister of Education, Sonia Lebel, announced the waiver of many of the conditions we opposed, including the cap on the total number of employees, and many limitations on the use of funds. The rigid constraints were transformed into guidelines and a new approach favoring flexibility was announced. Boards may even request permission to deposit deficit budgets if they can demonstrate harm to student learning. However, budgets as established prior to the June and July cuts remain as limits on this flexibility unless such permission is obtained. The new approach applies equally to French School Service Centres and English School Boards.

This announcement is essentially a capitulation by the government on almost all the micromanaging that we found objectionable. As of October 24th 2025, QESBA and the nine English boards withdrew the request for a stay but maintain the challenge to the remaining restrictions on management including the prohibition on using surpluses to balance budgets. The arguments on merit of this case will be heard sometime in the coming months. There is no concession on our part concerning constitutional protections of management rights, the administrative processes violated during the many confusing announcements or the lack of meaningful consultation. There was no public opposition voiced by any part of the French education network following the announcement of any of the budget cuts or imposition of excessive constraints on management, but they benefit directly. We are convinced that taking this challenge to the courts is the reason for the broad changes that apply equally to the French school service centres.

I want to applaud the initiative of the Appalachian Teachers Association, our local union along with many of their counterparts in filing grievances concerning the impact of budget cuts and new rules. This collective action was another means of pressuring the government to reconsider the impact on students.

The English School Boards and our association, QESBA, also took note of the new Bill 1 recently deposited at the National Assembly. One of its provisions is particularly objectionable, namely that institutions may not use public funds to challenge legislation. This would be a kind of Super-Notwithstanding clause. More extreme yet, the government would have the right to sue personally any member of any board who votes for such a challenge. This is simply intimidation. While the government acknowledges no double standard in using public funds to support and defend its legislation, it clearly dislikes being challenged and more particularly dislikes losing in court as it has repeatedly over Bill 40 and other legislation challenged by some or all of the English school boards. While many parts of Quebec Society oppose this new bill on political and cultural grounds, we may need to return to the courts to defend our opposition to this provision alone.

School Boards may hire more personnel, but this is not funded. These announcements are more window dressing.

I want to take this opportunity to specifically thank our administrative team for the effort made above and beyond reasonable expectations to support the QESBA and its members in our legal challenges. Without their professionalism and detailed knowledge, our legal team would have lacked the specific examples of harm to students and unreasonable demands on personnel that the government measures represented. They merit our heartfelt appreciation.

Should any government representative care to consider this reality, it demonstrates one of the many values of a strong well-organized administrative cadre. Previous Government budget reductions as well as the hiring freeze appear to reflect an attitude that the administration has no value, and its cost can be indefinitely reduced.

9. ADVISORY COMMITTEES' REPORTS

9.1 Executive Committee

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

- Staffing report;
- Shortages in personnel;
- Challenges in recruitment;
- Ad Hoc Committee;
- Spring Conference;
- QESBA challenges.

9.2 Governance and Ethics Committee

The Chair of the Governance and Ethics Committee, Commissioner G. Barnett presented the topics discussed at the October 21, 2025 meeting:

- Advisory Committee Reports – Audit, Educational Services, Human Resources & Transportation;
- General Advisory Committee Charter;
- Advisory Committee Etiquette;
- Budget management;
- Ad Hoc Governance & Ethics Committee Mandate.

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025.

9.3 Audit Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee, Commissioner J. Humenuik presented the following resolutions:

9.3.1 Finance

9.3.1.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-13

Adoption of the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) Budget

WHEREAS in accordance with the Education Act (chapter I-13.3), the Eastern Townships School Board must adopt and transmit the operating budget, the investment and the debt service to the Minister of Education (MEQ) for the 2025-2026 school year;

WHEREAS this budget provides for a balanced budget;

WHEREAS the school tax proceeds in the amount of \$5,580,470 was determined as follows:

- an adjusted standardized assessment of taxable real property of \$25,000 or less in the amount of \$12,233,276;
- a number of 16,769 taxable properties over \$25,000, and;
- the assessment rate of \$0,08423 per \$100 set by the Minister for the 2025-2026 school tax;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner R. Gosselin that the operating budget, the investment and debt service providing revenues of \$133,609,479 and expenditures of \$133,609,479 be approved and forwarded to the MEQ.

Adopted unanimously

9.3.1.2 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-14

2025-2026 Statement of School Taxes Remaining Due and Owing

WHEREAS the Director of Financial Services presented the following summary regarding the statement of the school taxes remaining due and owing by owners;

WHEREAS the payment of the 2nd installment does not come due until November and consequently these amounts are included in the total school taxes not yet collected;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner J. Humenuik to approve the statement of the school taxes remaining due and owing by owners.

Adopted unanimously

9.3.2 Material Resources

9.3.2.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-15

North Hatley Elementary School – Exterior stairs, siding, fencing and fire doors

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* approved a budget of \$198,688 for the project stated above, under the program *TMA – Travaux de Maintien d'Actif 2024-2025 Mesure: 50627*;

WHEREAS three (3) companies were invited to bid on the project;

WHEREAS one (1) bid was received by the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) by the date and time specified;

WHEREAS the project will allow the work to include repairing the exterior stairs, installing new siding, replacing fencing and upgrading fire doors to meet safety standards;

WHEREAS the lowest bid in the amount of \$56,316 (excluding taxes), was received from the company *Millenium Agents Manufacturiers Inc.*;

WHEREAS after reviewing the bid, the assigned professional firm of *BIGIS Experts Conseil inc.* has recommended the company *Millenium Agents Manufacturiers Inc.* the lowest bidder in conformity, to do the work for the amount of \$92,202 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

9.3.2.2 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-16

List of Proposed Projects under the Program « *Maintien des bâtiments 2025-2026 (Mesure 50621)* »

WHEREAS with these measures, the *ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ)* aims at financing work in order to maintain and/or renovate all of the School Board's buildings dedicated to educational and administrative purposes;

WHEREAS the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) has prepared a priority list of investment projects to be proposed to the *MEQ* for authorization according to the program *Maintien des bâtiments 2025-2026 (Mesure 50621)*;

WHEREAS the following table indicates the list of projects:

Establishment	Budget	Project
Knowlton Academy	\$350,000	Masonry Repair (Phase I)
Pope Memorial Elementary School	\$500,000	Ventilation – Replacement of Air Exchanger
St. Francis Elementary School	\$1,250,000	Elevator and Handicap Accessibility Needs
Massey-Vanier High School	\$200,000	Lighting System Update
Massey-Vanier High School	\$200,000	Ventilation & Heating System Upgrade
Marguerite Knapp	\$245,463	Structural Renovation

WHEREAS each project and/or project's budget could be slightly adjusted for balancing purposes;

WHEREAS the said list of the proposed priorities presented at the Executive Committee on October 28, 2025 could be subject to adjustments following possible events;

WHEREAS commissioners will be informed of all changes that could occur before going forward with the projects in question;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner G. Holliday 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 November 4, 2025.

9.4 Educational Advisory Committee (ESAC)

The Chair of the Educational Advisory Committee, Commissioner M.E. Kirby mentioned the topics discussed at the October 7, 2024 meeting:

- ESAC Mandate;
- Firewall Replacement Resolution, presented by S. Hamel;
- Certification & Graduation rate presentation and results.

The Chair also presented the following resolution:

9.4.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-17

Agreement for Integrated Educational Services from Resonance Montreal Inc. (formerly Montreal Oral School for the Deaf)

WHEREAS certain students within the Eastern Townships School Board have hearing loss or impairments;

WHEREAS Resonance Montreal Inc. formerly known as Montreal Oral School for the Deaf (MOSD) has been mandated by the Ministry of Education (MEQ) to organize and implement a superregional service to provide guidance and support to all English school boards who are educating students with hearing loss;

WHEREAS the agreement for integrated educational services from Resonance Montreal Inc. for the 2025-2026 school year includes services to a total of twenty-one (21) students and their school team;

WHEREAS the total cost for these services for the 2025-2026 school year is \$77,103;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E. Kirby to proceed with the agreement 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 Complementary Educational Services can also sign.

Adopted unanimously

The Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services, E. Gaudet presented the following resolution:

9.4.2 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-18 Firewall replacement

WHEREAS our current firewall system has reached its end-of-life, necessitating a replacement to maintain optimal network security and performance;

WHEREAS maintaining a robust and up-to-date firewall is a critical component of our overall cybersecurity strategy, essential for protecting sensitive data and critical network infrastructure from external threats;

WHEREAS ICT has conducted a thorough evaluation of available solutions and has recommended the renewal and installation of a new, state-of-the-art firewall system that meets the organization's current and future security requirements;

WHEREAS the estimated cost for the purchase, installation and initial configuration of the recommended firewall system is Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000);

WHEREAS the necessary funds for this essential security upgrade have been allocated for in the current fiscal year's ICT budget (Mesure 50793);

WHEREAS Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) is part of a call for tender with the *Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales (CAG)* according to the ministry requirements;

WHEREAS all purchases will be done according to the *ETSB Purchase policy* and government requirements;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner M. E. Kirby to authorize the Director General or the Director of Instructional Technology and Pedagogical Services to sign any documentation related to the acquisition of equipment and related items, up to an amount of \$65,000 for the 2025-2026 school year, effective immediately.

Adopted unanimously

The date of the next ESAC meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2025.

9.5 Communications Advisory Committee

The date of the next CAC meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2025.

9.6 Human Resources Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Human Resources Advisory Committee, Commissioner C. Beaubien mentioned the topics discussed at the October 7, 2025 meeting:

- New Human Resources Advisory Committee Structure (link with CSP);

- HRAC Mandate;
- HRAC policies and time frame;
- Prioritize policies to review.

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2025.

9.7 Transportation Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee, Commissioner H. Turgeon presented the following resolution:

9.7.1 Resolution No. ETSB 25-10-19 2025-2026 School Bus Bids

WHEREAS the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) owns and operates a fleet of school buses;

WHEREAS to maintain a dependable fleet and keep repair costs down, it is necessary to replace buses on a regular basis;

WHEREAS the *ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ)* has established parameters for the replacement of buses and has monies for this purpose;

WHEREAS the requirements related to the mandatory electrification of school buses have been repealed from the *Règlement sur les véhicules routiers affectés au transport des élèves*, without any conditions;

WHEREAS this aims to give school transportation providers the option to renew or expand their fleet with either gas-powered or electric school buses;

WHEREAS the ETSB has fourteen (14) buses which will meet these parameters by June 30th 2026, and therefore will need to be replaced;

IT WAS MOVED BY Commissioner H. Turgeon that the Eastern Townships School Board make a request to the *MEQ* to purchase fourteen (14) new buses.

Adopted unanimously

The Chair also mentioned the topics discussed at the October 7, 2025 meeting:

- Lion situation;
- Update of committee mandate;
- 2025-2026 topics;
- Review of Communications policies (not for this year – updated in 2020);
- Statistics for January (time on bus, number on bus).

The date of the next TAC meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2026.

9.8 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The date of the next SEAC meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2025.

10. PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Central Parents' Advisory Committee, Commissioner S. Langlois mentioned the topics discussed at the October 8, 2025 meeting that was held in person at the board office:

- Many new members;
- New Chair: Ashley Brus;
- Vice-Chair: Sarah Langlois;
- Hybrid meetings will continue to help the presence of members.

The date of the next Parents' Committee meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2025.

11. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Commissioner J. Humenuik, representing the Student Advisory Committee reported the following:

High Schools CSAC: The meeting was in person at AGRHS. Committee norms were reviewed. There was an enlightening discussion on student council and what is happening in our schools, such as actions to move forward to attain their goals and dreams. The meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025.

Elementary Schools CSAC: Heroes' Memorial for western sectors. Students realized the importance of being listened to and felt they were heard. We got great feedback from them. It was a great process.

12. QESBA

Legal:

- The request for a stay in the budget rules was dropped after the Government conceded on all the most essential items;
- Joy Humenuik was officially confirmed as a member of the Board of Directors of QESBA.

Board of Directors:

- Proposal under Bill 93 to permit school boards off the Island of Montreal to voluntarily elect to delegate their tax collections to the body that does that for both French and English education on the Island of Montreal;
- Requirements for teachers to submit lesson plans. Evaluations are to occur every two years rather than annually;
- QESBA is creating a governance handbook in partnership with Discitus, the management consultant. It would cover roles and mandates, oversight and risk management;
- Forming a student advisory committee composed of two (2) students from each board;

- There is a MEC-DGs committee to address employee shortages, difficulties in recruiting and qualification of staff.

Annual General Meeting:

- Professional Development session on October 26, 2025 on Indigenous Education with a second session later in the year.

13. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Commissioner C. Beaubien:

Alexander Galt Regional High School – Open House

Open to parents & Grade 5-6 Elementary School Feeder Schools. One of the optional programs that were made official this year was the Hunting & Fishing Class taught by Hayden. There was lots of enthusiasm. The renovations were well done, which brought nice changes to the school. There was also a presentation from teachers, which was done in their classroom, where they are in their own element. Last time, the presentation was in the auditorium entrance.

Terry Fox Run

It was a well-participated activity by NHES & ACES at Dreamland Park in North Hatley. It ended with the Ice Challenge where the Principal was 'baptized' with an iced water bucket. They raised over \$2,400. They came out as a devoted and triumphant school in this cause.

Fundraising

The course of action schools have taken to finance their activities offered to students due to governmental cuts was also pointed out. The students came up with various ways to reach out to establishments and parents in organizing various fundraisers (dance, online auction, bazaar, fundraising, etc.). This work is asking for more personal time from the staff in order to help coordinate the activities. Hats off to all of them and thank you all for caring.

Commissioner M. E. Kirby:

On September 25th 2025, I attended the launch meeting of a roundtable initiated and led by Townshippers Association. This working group will focus on the *Haut St. Francois MRC* and its English-speaking population. Participants included several community members and representatives from many health and social service providers in the territory such as the *CIUSSS-CHUS* and mental health networks, family support centres, shelters, food banks, youth centres, etc.

While there is a significant English-speaking population in the HSF, they are drastically underrepresented in the clientele accessing these services. The aim of the roundtable is to ascertain why this is so and to help the service providers better connect with the English-speaking population.

The ETSB was well represented at this table by our Eaton Valley CLC coordinator, Jenny Menard; Tiffany Blinn, social worker from Alexander Galt and myself. Additionally, I believe Melanie Thompson from SAE will be joining us at subsequent meetings.

We discussed many issues surrounding the services (or lack thereof) available to the MRC's English-speaking citizens and identified some barriers that could be addressed. This will be followed by focus groups and surveys to give us a clearer picture of the reasons for low engagement by the target population. We will meet again in early December to examine ways to move forward, these steps will likely look quite different for each organization.

It was a productive first meeting and I will report to the Council of Commissioners on further meetings and any developments that may arise from our findings.

Commissioner J. Humenuik:

Bryan Laprise has been very involved in our CSACs and we thank you.

Commissioner G. Barnett:

**Lennoxville Vocational Training Centre (LVTC) Governing Board
(September 24, 2025)**

Members: As all Governing Boards do at the first meeting, LVTC established the composition of the Board:

- ✓ Chair – Jennifer Garfat;
- ✓ Vice-Chair – Claude Charron
- ✓ Secretary – Andria Westover
- ✓ Teacher, Professional and Support Staff Representatives.

Human Resources Situation: The tenured teachers put on surplus have been relocated. One to SVI, One to Richmond, One to RAC, One to 24 Juin and One to CBM online. The HR situation remains difficult due to cutbacks and the MEQ ETC targets. How these targets are generated remains a mystery and all staff are included in the target. Offensive Construction Instructors are not included, nor any instructors financed by the private sector. Townshippers has money for Job Links support, but may have to hire instructors.

Budget: The rules were just received but questions remain unanswered such as the value of an ETC, what is centralized or not. The revised budget is expected for the November meeting. If any equipment must be replaced, a

request must be made to RAC for permission or not since the MOA total Board budget is limited to \$460K.

Fundraising: There was a long discussion on this and finding financing for scholarships. It was said that maybe ETSB should have a Foundation which could interest alumnae.

Topics for November: These include the Educational Project, Anti-Bullying & Anti-Violence Plan, revised Codes of Conduct (Students, Teachers), revised Emergency Measures, Director Selection Criteria, Better School Operation and Service Delivery, Local Programs and LVTC Standards.

Étudiant Temps Plein (ETPs): These have continuously increased recently: 22-23: 130, 23-24: 186, 24-25: 245.

Alexander Galt Regional High School Governing Board – October 6, 2025

Establishment: The first meeting concerned several housekeeping issues such as the Board positions, Rules of Internal Procedures, Conflict of Interest and Meeting schedules. The new Chair is Lisa Comeau. A Secretary will be appointed at a later meeting.

Cell phones: The AGRHS Code of Conduct includes a section on cell phone use and the Cell Phone Policy Handbook covers this topic in detail. Their cell phones and all personal mobile devices use is prohibited after the first morning bell until the dismissal bell. These are to be kept in their lockers. Exceptions can be made for medical, pedagogical, personal and family difficulties or learning issue reasons. For emergencies during the school day, there is a school phone that can be used. For abusive use, there is a four-step disciplinary protocol. The cell phone control is going much better and the teachers say that the atmosphere is better.

Bill 56: The AGRHS Intimidation and Violence Report showed 40% of the total events being verbal intimidation and 30% physical violence. The school has a 15-page Anti-Violence and Anti-Bullying Action Plan to address the issue. The data shows that bullying at all levels is above Canadian norms. Some 16% feel very safe at school, whereas 26% do not feel very safe. Others are on the fence.

Evaluation of Learning: This Standards and Procedures covers 12 pages.

Vaping: There are detectors in the bathrooms and this is an issue on the buses as well.

Chromebooks: Students are charged for willful damage and loss of chargers, but not for accidental damage.

Lennoxville Elementary School Governing Board – October 20, 2025

Educational Project: The Principal presented the Educational Project which serves these students: 60% Mother Tongue is English, 35% Mother Tongue is French and 5% other languages and ethnics. The school has 17 classes from Pre-K to Grade 6 and includes numerous academic programs and an important component is Outdoor Education in French. Some 15% of the students have IEPs, 10% have intervention supports and 20% are coded. Their areas of focus are French, Healthy Lifestyle, Sense of Belonging and Literacy.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): The initiative is under development as the goal to adjust learning for students. The objective is to move away from a list of rules to an atmosphere of expectations. The core expectations are Inclusion, Safety, Accountability and Responsibility with respect for Space, Self, Others and Learning. It requires the identification of possible places for conflict with a list of expectations for each hot spot.

Playground: LES was surprised that it came up for renewal in the matching grant initiative. The school will invite an expert to examine their situation. The PPO is already fundraising.

Standards & Procedures: The GB examined the document. They also discussed the Code of Ethics and the necessity for volunteers to have a background check.

Finance: LES received a \$10K cheque from the Presbyterian Church. Other groups also contribute financially. These funds are used to subsidize items like trips, food, nutrition, hot lunches and children in need.

Eastern Townships Adult General Education (ETAGE) Governing Board – October 20, 2025

Statistics: They already have over 800 registrations this year, which is very high. A few examples (2025-2026 vs 2024-2025):

- ✓ Online is at 51 vs 36;
- ✓ With schedule – SVI Francization (NH/CBM) is at 39 vs 34;
- ✓ New Horizons is at 113 vs 119;
- ✓ Campus Brome-Missisquoi is at 66 vs 72;
- ✓ Distance Education is at 230 vs 251;
- ✓ SVI LVTC is at 250 vs NA.

Distance Education

Although this will be discontinued on December 12, 2025, a day Virtual School will be established with multiple teachers to serve any current DE students and any future students in the ETSB territory. Other school boards have decided to operate their own DE system.

Francization: This has recommenced to continue to serve the community after the November 24, 2024 termination due to a funding change. To recover past investments, this service recommenced this year. It is going well.

Social Vocational Instruction (SVI): This is a big growth service. For example, Retirement Home Employees are often clients and several other clients are well represented. ETAGE is not currently planning to expand but wants first to assess the quality and effectiveness of their program. SVI and Francization help stabilize the budget and subsidize classes with registrations below the 17 required to break even.

ETC cap: This Full-Time Equivalent cap handicaps the ETAGE services that depend on demand because it does not permit hiring necessary personnel whatsoever. There was considerable discussion about the impact, but it was just announced today (October 22, 2025) that this cap has been removed but with no extra funding. This financial measure was a nightmare to manage.

Facilities: The installation of the new ETAGE facilities at the Board Office is underway.

Finance: The Director has requested Professional Development regarding finance to take advantage of all possibilities.

Commissioner G. Holliday:

St. Francis Elementary School Governing Board & PPO meeting

The school really stepped up trying to cover the lack of funding by finding new and good fundraisers to be able to keep extracurricular activities. CSAC was very impressive as well and it was great to visit the schools.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

None.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

T. Croteau

ATA President:

With the cuts this year, are there replacements for head teachers when released?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair:

Not aware if we have cut these kinds of positions. HR will take a look at the impact.

T. Croteau

ATA Representative:

ETSB does not have the same shortage problems as other SB/CSS. Should we increase tenureship so we can keep our dedicated teachers in the ETSB?

M. Murray

ETSB Chair:

The administration is very sensitive to this. We have to have a pragmatic and conceptual approach. We are burdened to some extent with part-time positions. Some other schools have grouped but we have refused to do this. We do not always have the luxury of hiring full-time teachers. Some teachers prefer part time which fits better with their personal life.

T. Croteau

ATA President:

Specification that High Schools is where we see a lower tenureship. We support keeping smaller schools open.

M. Murray

ETSB Chair:

Thank you for the clarification.

17. GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION

There was no governance and communication.

18. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner J. Murray at 8:31 p.m.

Shawn Champigny
Secretary General

Michael Murray
Chairman

SC/gm
10.28.2025