



# Minutes of Governing Board Meeting Edinburgh Elementary School

Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.  
Virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams

*We would like to acknowledge that Edinburgh School is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka/Mohawk Nation is recognized as the traditional custodians of Tiohtià:ke/Montréal, which has long been a site of meeting and exchange for many First Nations and is currently home to diverse groups of Indigenous and other peoples. We are grateful to live, work, and learn here, and recognize the important role of education in reconciliation and in maintaining connections between the past, present, and future.*

**Present:** Parents: Steven Szabo, Steven Muoio, Johanna Miller, Alessandra Cesari, Robyn Dalton, Anne-Marie Yaworski, Catherine Brault, Jean-Michel Brunet, Geneviève Guay, Geneviève Hébert, Pina Trengia, Abdelghafour El-Hama, Marco DeCrescentis

**Absent:** Karim Aboushaha

**Guest:** Vanessa Gangai

## 1. Welcome

Mr. Sifoni called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and confirmed the virtual presence of both parents and teacher members of the Governing Board of 2023-2024.

## 2. Adoption of agenda

First : Robyn Dalton

Second : Steven Muoio

Motion carries unanimously

## 3. Election of Governing Board Executive

3.1 Chairperson – Anne-Marie Yaworski (second : Steven Muoio)

3.2 Vice-chair – Alessandra Cesari (second : Robin Dalton)

3.3 Secretary – Steven Szabo (second: Alessandra Cesari)

3.4 Treasurer – Robyn Dalton (second: Steven Szabo)

## 4. Approval of Minutes of June 13, 2023

First : Jean-Michel Brunet

Second : Abdelghafour El-Hama

Motion carries unanimously

## 5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes (June 13, 2023)

### 5.1 Uniform Sub-Committee

- Mr. Sifoni provided some background information on the topic of uniforms at Edinburgh
- A uniform sub-committee was formed in June 2023 to analyze the pros and cons of implementing a dress code with uniforms.
- The sub-committee will generate more specific information about what a rollout of a uniform dress code would look like and of course how to propose this to the Edinburgh community (parents).
- Questions that require careful attention are: a. Does this require a vote from the general community and b. What percentage of the community is needed (50% or 75%) to vote in favor of a uniform dress code?
- The following people will participate in the Uniform sub-committee: Johanna Miller (chair), Alessandra Cesari, Anne-Marie Yaworski, Jean-Michel Brunet, and Gaetano Sifoni.
- Joanna will establish the first meeting date by email

## **6. 2023-2024 Annual Report**

- The outgoing GB chair, Rob Fiori, prepared a very comprehensive 2022-2023 Annual Report. It was presented by Mr. Sifoni and was well received by the GB members. The complete report will be posted in the GB section of the Edinburgh school website as per Mr. Sifoni.

## **7. New Business:**

### **7.1 Review of Internal Rules of Operation**

- Mr. Sifoni presented the Internal rules of operation to the members of GB. The basic points to remember are:
  - o members must report any planned absences at a GM meeting to the Chair (Anne-Marie) or Mr. Sifoni.
  - o Guests can attend the meetings (in person or virtual) but cannot participate in the discussion. Guests can ask questions at the question period and it is always preferable for guests to submit questions prior to the start of a GB meeting.
  - o Meeting minutes will include members present and members' regrets (not able to attend)

First : Steven Muoio

Second : Robyn Dalton

Motion carries unanimously

### **7.2 Conflict of interest form**

- Mr. Sifoni requests that all GB members complete the Conflict of Interest form and remit prior to next meeting.

### **7.3 Modular Classrooms Update**

- Mr. Sifoni shared important information about the removal of the modulars which will take place in 3 phases over the course of the next several months.

- It is important to note that the modulares were installed on the site as a means to accommodate a larger number of students at Edinburgh but the 5-year lease is expiring in October 2023.
- Since the number of students at Edinburgh has decreased in comparison to 5 years ago, The EMSB has determined that the modulares are no longer deemed necessary.
- Mr. Sifoni reports that at the present moment, in addition to using the space after school in BASE, the modulares are used for facilitating 'Santé' courses on rainy days when large open spaces for gross motor activities can't take place outside, as well as tutoring sessions
- Mr. Sifoni also reports that Edinburgh's enrolment has since stabilized to the point where there are enough classroom spaces for the number of registered students and that specialty classrooms are available for every subject (dedicated science rooms, music rooms, Resource Room, etc.)
- The removal of the modulares will proceed according to this plan:
  - o Phase 1 (October 30 to November 10, 2023) Dismantling of internal components of modulares, relocating the BASE door to the Kindergarten door
  - o Phase 2 (November 23-24) Removal of modular classrooms with use of cranes
  - o Phase 3 (TBD if Winter break (weather permitting) or during March break) Restoration of the brick wall and repaving where modulares were installed.
- Mr. Sifoni reports that the project manager will be ensuring that the safety of the children will be prioritized during all 3 phases of the removal project. Fencing will be erected to protect students from the worksite activities and the second phase of the project is scheduled to take place on days when the school is closed and or BASE students are on a field trip.

#### **7.4 Upcoming School Trips (Appendix A)**

- Mr. Sifoni presented the list of upcoming school trips which were all approved by the GB
- The cost of certain school trips will be subsidized by the school which will reduce the cost of field trips that parents must pay.

First : Steve Muoio

Second : Steven Szabo

Motion carries unanimously

#### **7.5 Upcoming Fundraisers (Appendix B)**

- GB voted to approve the recent Terry Fox Fundraiser and Carolyn's Toy Drive
- Mr.Sifoni reminded GB members of the rules regarding the selling of lotteries as a means to raise funds. The most important rule is to ensure that children are not being asked to sell raffle tickets for ethical reasons.

First : Anne Marie Yaworski

Second : Robyn Dalton  
Motion carries unanimously

#### **7.6 Community representative(s)**

- The GB would welcome a member of the Edinburgh community to fulfil this position which is currently vacant.

#### **7.7 2023 Open House (November 8)**

- Mr. Sifoni will be promoting the next Open House on social media and asking local daycare providers to distribute flyers. Continuing on the progress of last year where a large banner was installed outside the school, and posters may also be placed inside Montreal-West City Hall.
- Mr. Sifoni asked parents to help spread the word about the event
- Members of the GB to present at the Open House and both Johanna Miller and Vanessa Gangai (H&S) volunteered

#### **7.8 Dates/location of 2023-2024 GB meetings**

- The GB agreed on the following dates/locations of 2023-2024 GB meetings
  - November 16
  - December 14 (in-person weather permitting)
  - February 8
  - March 21
  - April 18
  - May 16
  - June 13 (in-person)

### **8. Reports**

#### **8.1 Principal**

- Mr. Sifoni is pleased to report that the start of the school year has been a success from the pre-Kindergarten up to 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The support from the parent volunteers has been tremendous and much appreciated. Edinburgh's annual Field Day was very popular with the student body and Mr. Cho played a central role in organizing this amazing event. Students from various age groups participated in various field trips (Grade 1s to 45 Degré Nord, Grade 5s to the Kahnawake Cultural Centre prior to our National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, and the Grade 6s visit Bois de Bellerivière . In the area of school safety Mr.Sifoni is reporting that the nice weather outside has permitted school staff to run four successful practice fire evacuations whereby children are accompanied to safety. Edinburgh School's annual Terry Fox fundraising campaign proved to be a success having raised just shy of almost 10 000\$ for cancer research. Mr. Sifoni is eagerly anticipating the next year's campaign with the goal of surpassing this year's amount.

## **8.2 Commissioner**

- Mr. Lalla, our longstanding school commissioner, provided an update on the recent changes being made to the electoral ward boundaries of NDG as well as the EMSB challenge of Bill 40 (the law which has abolished school commissions in the province of Quebec and replaced them with school service centres). Currently, English school in Quebec have maintained their school commission structure thanks in large part to a firm commitment from EMSB leaders' court challenges.

## **8.3 Treasurer**

- M. Brunet is reporting that the Governing Board has a prior year surplus of 83\$ in addition to the annual budget of 250\$.

## **8.4 Parent Delegate (EMSBPC)**

- No report provided by Steven Szabo who was absent from the first meeting of the year at the EMSB Parent's Committee meeting.

## **8.5 Teacher's Report**

- M. Brunet is very pleased to report that the 2023/24 school year is off to a great start and that there are no staff shortages. Edinburgh Elementary School has an excellent team of teaching staff and administrative team members. Furthermore, there have been several successful educational outings completed. Recently cycle 3 students visited GPS Aventure in Mirabel to sharpen their outdoor skills. Using GPS devices and a series of clues laid out in an outdoor trail network, students were challenged to work together to cross a finish line. M. Brunet reports that the students very much enjoyed this experience and are eager to return to this field trip site.
- M. Brunet gave an update on the efforts of the teacher's union to negotiate improved working conditions for the unionized members of the staff at Edinburgh Elementary. Teachers are pressing the government for better services for students and salaries. M. Brunet reports that it is likely that there will be strike days but cannot indicate when and for how long as this is a decision that only the union leaders can make.

## **8.6 Home and School Liaison**

- Ms. Gangai is reporting that the school year is off to a great start with an abundance of Home and School Assn. activities such as the Welcome back barbecue, and various fundraising activities. This year the Home and School Assn will be supporting the Saint Raymond Community Centre by donating all proceeds from the sale of Cookie Dough Packages from Felix and Norton. M. Gangai is pleased to announce that Home and School facilitated the sale of orange shirts in honor of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation which were made by our local indigenous retailer 'Iron Horse Wearhouse'. Additionally, Ms. Gangai is reporting that the Home and School Assn' website has been tweaked to perfection allowing for parents to easily sign up for various activities and programs. It is important to highlight the work of a very tech saavy cohort of parent volunteers who have contributed to ensuring the website is successful! Recently parents were able to register

their child to a themed lunch day provided by the local Jamaican food restaurant Jam Jerk. Finally, Ms. Gangai is proud to announce that Edinburgh Elementary will be hosting monthly Spirit Days. On this occasion, students are invited to show their team spirit by wearing a sports team jersey of their choosing. Spirit days are a great way to celebrate our school and students, let loose, have fun and maintain a positive school community.

### **8.7 BASE**

- Mr. DeCrescentis is very pleased to report that the year is off to an excellent start with an abundance of themed activities scheduled for the young learners at Edinburgh Elementary. The senior students on BASE student council are working hard to assist BASE administrators with the planning of many wonderful activities and they are learning excellent leadership skills. Recently members of the student council facilitated a gratitude ceremony. Mr. DeCrescentis is very proud of this motivated group of students! Young learners from Edinburgh participated in a forum hosted by EcoSchools Canada and Cascades Company to discuss the circular economy. Mr. DeCrescentis reported that our students kept the keynote speakers very busy by asking pertinent and thoughtful questions about the environment and how best to implement waste reduction strategies at school and at home. September and October at BASE are a time of celebrating the harvest and students are busy participating in various activities outside in the gardens alongside school grounds. Upcoming and highly anticipated Halloween activities are being planned at BASE. Children will not want to miss this year's Spooktacular BASE event.

### **9. Varia**

#### **10. Correspondence**

Mr. Sifoni reported that the need for a crossing guard has been expressed by an Edinburgh community member. Mr. Sifoni outlined some of the criteria needed to assign a crossing guard to the corner of Westminster and Northview. As per the community liaison at Police Station 9, there is a lengthy list of administrative steps to take prior to remitting an official application for requesting a crossing guard. The Governing Board will review this topic at the next meeting.

#### **11. Question period**

#### **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm., with thanks.

Respectfully submitted:

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Gaetano Sifoni, Principal

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Anne-Marie Yaworski, Chairperson

## APPENDIX A

### Fundraisers

#### September 2023

- Terry Fox Foundation (direct donation)

#### October 2023

- St Raymond Community Center (warm clothing drive) (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

#### November 2023

- FundScrip gift card sales (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Big Box Greeting Card Fundraiser (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Felix and Norton Cookies Fundraiser (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

#### December 2023

- CTV Spirit of Giving Campaign (online donations & food drive)
- Book Fair (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Carolyn's Toy Drive (online donations & BASE Bazar)

#### February 2024

- Montreal Children's Hospital (Card sale & Student council initiative)

#### March 2024

- Carolyn's Toy Drive (hygiene product collection)

#### April 2024

- The Depot (Food Drive) (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

#### May 2024

- Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation (Matteo Palumbi Fundraiser) (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Edinburgh Garden Club (vegetable / plant sale)
- Spring Fair (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

#### June 2024

- School Supply Fundraiser (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

#### Ongoing

- School Apparel Sale / Themed shirts sale (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Pizza Days / additional lunch offer (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Frozen Yogurt Days (H&S) – *approved 05/23*

## APPENDIX B

### Upcoming Field Trips

Date	Grade	Trip	Maximum cost to parents	Approved
19-Sep	Gr K4/K5	Verger - Jude pomme	\$25.00	15-Sep (e-vote)
19-Sep	Gr 5	Khanawake	*	15-Sep (e-vote)
26-Sep	Gr 1	45 Degré Nord Inc.	\$25.00	15-Sep (e-vote)
5-Oct	Gr 4-6	GMAA Crosscountry	*	15-Sep (e-vote)
6-Oct	Gr 5-6	Bois de Belle Rive	\$25.00	15-Sep (e-vote)
18-Oct	Gr K4-2	Maison Théâtre	*	15-Sep (e-vote)
20-Oct	Gr K4-2	Maison Théâtre	*	15-Sep (e-vote)
15-Nov	Gr K4/K5	Musée des Beaux-Arts	*	
20-Nov	Gr 3-4	CEPSUM	\$25.00	
19-Jan	Gr K4-2	CEPSUM	\$25.00	
25-Mar	Gr 6	Holocaust Museum	*	
3-Apr	Gr K4/K5	Maison Théâtre	*	
8-May	Gr 3-6	GMAA HALO	*	
31-May	Gr 3	La Maison Nivard-De-Saint-Dizier	*	
7-Jun	Gr 6	Bois de Boulogne	\$40.00	