

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ENGLISH MONTREAL SCHOOL BOARD

A special meeting of the English Montreal School Board was held in the Laurence Patterson Room, 6000 Fielding Avenue, on Monday, May 13, 2019 at 7:00pm.

Commissioners Present

Ms. Angela Mancini, Chairman
Me Joe Ortona, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Agostino Cannavino, Commissioner
Mr. Julien Feldman, Commissioner
Mr. Norm Gharibian, Parent Commissioner
Mr. James Kromida, Commissioner
Mr. Joseph Lalla, Commissioner
Me Patricia Lattanzio, Commissioner
Ms. Sylvia Lo Bianco, Commissioner
Mr. Pietro Mercuri, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Mubeenah Mughal, Parent Commissioner
Mr. Rosario Ortona, Commissioner
Mr. Bernie Praw, Commissioner
Mr. Andrew Ross, Parent Commissioner

Absent

Mr. M. Antal, Commissioner

Present:

Ms. A. M. Matheson, Director General
Me B. Duhême, Deputy Director General, Administration Division
Ms. E. Alfonsi, Deputy Director General, Education Division
Me Nathalie Lauzière, Secretary General
Me L. Roy, Director of Legal Services
Ms. P. Nickoletopoulos, Regional Director, West
Mr. J. Pevec, Regional Director, East
Mr. C. Della Rocca, Director of Adult Education and Vocational Services
Ms. S. Furfaro, Director of Educational and Technology Services
Ms. A. Watson, Director of Human Resources
Mr. J. Vitantonio, Assistant Director of Human Resources
Mr. M. Cardin, Director of Material Resources
Ms. S. Léveillé, Director of School Organization
Mr. L. Lewis, Director of Student Services
Ms. B. Sellato, Communications Consultant

Approximately 120 members of the public were present.

1.	<p><u>Proper Notice of Meeting</u></p> <p>It was reported that the notice calling this special meeting had been forwarded by the Secretary General to all Members of Council via email.</p>
2.	<p><u>Approval of Agenda</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MR. J. LALLA AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.</p> <p>VOTE: 13-0-0, (Mr. J. Kromida not present for the vote)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution #19-05-13-2</u></p>
3.	<p><u>Overview and Reaction to the Education Minister’s Letter to the EMSB – dated May 8th and received May 9th</u></p> <p>The Chairman, Ms. A. Mancini gave the members of the public a brief overview of the recent events since the inception of the request from the CSPI and the Ministry.</p>
	<p>Mr. J. Kromida entered the meeting at 7:09 pm.</p>
4.	<p><u>Question Period/Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Francesco, Fortugno - Parent Governing Board Vice-Chair of John Paul I and Governing Board Chair of Laurier Macdonald High School</u> He expressed concerns over the lack of planning by the government regarding the growth in the French sector. He would like to have members of the Governing Board be part of the negotiations.</p> <p><u>Francesca Pitruzzello - Parent Governing Board Chair of Gerald McShane</u> She expressed concern regarding the uncertainty of the students and staff. The removal of activities and programs offered to the students is detrimental to their success. She is open to cohabitation although it is not ideal to have Elementary and High School students together. She asked for the confirmation of classes being requested and that it is time to address Bill 101.</p> <p><u>Laura Fortin - Parent of Gerald McShane</u> She is concerned over the fact that the school is the only facility in Montreal North offering the Sport-Études program and students are travelling from far to attend. She feels that trading a school with French Board sounds like a better idea so as not to impact the younger students.</p> <p><u>Laura Zuanigh Marra - Parent of General Vanier</u> She is concerned that a decision is made at the detriment of the students which is a serious impact of the relocation to students and families. She would like if students with special needs are given the time to prepare for cohabitation.</p> <p><u>Sylvia Spinello - Parent of Gerald McShane</u> She is concerned that her son, who has a development delay will regress if he is moved. She chose Gerald McShane for the programs that helped her son improve.</p> <p><u>Joe Biunno - Parent of Lester B. Pearson</u> He feels that the Government has to reconsider.</p> <p><u>Maria Corsi - Parent of Pierre De Coubertin</u> She asked the council if they are exploring legal challenges. She has started a Save our East End Schools movement which has over 700 followers.</p> <p><u>Giovanni Petrecca - Parent of Pierre De Coubertin</u> He is concerned that the CSPI is not transparent with their documents i.e. posting of their documents on their</p>

website. He asked if anyone from the EMSB has asked for the additional detailed information.

George Casagrain - Parent of Gerald Mcshane

The school was chosen because of the immersion program.

Sandra Simonetti - Parent Honoré Mercier

She worries that if it was done once he will do it again. What happens to class sizes and staff? She expressed that if parents want more French the Board needs to do something that will attract them.

Giovanni Sardo - Parent of Gerald McShane

He is concerned that there were no discussions before this point. What are the options/solutions going forward?

Matt Sherman - Parent of Gerald McShane

He is invested in the community and concerned about the investment in the community.

Enza Ciampanelli - Parent of Gerald McShane

A school is not a building, a school is a spirit made by parents, students and the community. She expressed that cohabitation would work well and they are open to it.

Joseph Paglia - Parent of East Hill

He represents about 1000 parents who signed an online petition to swap a building or build a new building in RDP.

Nina Arcuri - Parent of Gerald McShane

She expressed that the Board should be a model of cohabitation and integration. What will happen in the long term when these students go to High School? She feels that the Government is using this as a larger agenda to remove English Language Rights.

5. Education Minister's Letter to EMSB dated May 8th and received May 9th

- Follow-up Plan

The Members of Council made comments and remarks on the recent announcements from the Minister and Mr. A. Ross informed the members present that the EMSBPC and Parent Commissioners discussions are underway to have a mobilization plan. They will be working with all stakeholders mobilizing to stand up in solidarity with the West and East schools. EPCA has sided with the EMSBPC and will abdicate to the Government on its behalf.

Mr. J. Lalla informed members that the Board has experience moving our special needs population.

Mr. J. Ortona challenged the limit of two (2) minutes to be waved for speaking, for the Council Members who wish to speak.

Vote: 10-1-1 Adopted (Ms. M. Mughal and Mr. A. Ross not present for the vote)

In favor	Mr. A. Cannavino, Mr. J. Feldman, Mr. N. Gharibian, Mr. J. Kromida, Mr. J. Lalla, Mrs P. Lattanzio, Mr. P. Mercuri, Mr. R. Ortona, Mr. B. Praw, Mr J. Ortona
Against	Ms. S. Lo Bianco
Abstain	Ms. A. Mancini
Not Present for vote	Ms. M. Mughal, Mr. A. Ross

Resolution #19-05-13-5

Ms. M. Mughal stated that just recently Westmount Park students were moved and no mention of special needs was made. There are special needs children in all schools who will be adversely affected.

- Communication Plan
There was no discussion.

6.

Question Period

Antonio Zaruso - Governing Board Parent of General Vanier

A way to keep these communities alive must be found.

Dr. Fiarenzo Vetrone - Parent of General Vanier

He asked council to create solutions.

Benny Berneti - Governing Board Chair of Lester B. Pearson

He asked how a swap of schools can happen without consulting the affected school and the community.

If Lester B. Pearson is moved how will they be able to grow with the current program of Sport-Études.

Francesco Mazzariello - Governing Board Vice-Chair of Lester B. Pearson

He is concerned that not only are the Elementary students hurting but the High School students are hurting and have a lot of anxiety.

Assunta Iasenzaniro - Parent of General Vanier

Will the EMSB work together as a united front and how will you put aside your political gains? How will you come up with solutions?

On a motion from Mr. A. Cannavino the meeting was extended at 10:30 p.m., all were in favor.

Valentino Perri - Parent of General Vanier

Where are the solutions?

Tania Di Re & Mark Piacente - Parents of General Vanier

Is there a contingency plan.

Ellie Israel - Former Commissioner

Why allow the transfer of schools to the French Board – why not swap schools?

Maria Garcia - Parent of Gerald McShane

Is there a platform to allow parents to vote on the different options?

Michael Shafter - Spokesperson A Better Montreal (ABM)

He supports the cohabitation proposal. Please don't transfer or trade schools when it is the responsibility of the government to take care of the education system.

Evy Arvanitakis - Parent of General Vanier

If the Minister has promised money why does not just invest them in new schools for the French system.

Caleigh Saucier - Governing Board Chair of Parkdale

She supports neighbors in the East End. When is the School Board going to reinvest in small schools to increase enrollment.

Anna de Michele - Parent/PPO Chair of General Vanier

It is unfair for children to be stuck in this situation. If the school has been granted a Pre-K and students are already registered, what happens to those children and parents that may not have a place to go in September?

