

## PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

The special meeting of the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board was held at the administrative offices of the Board, situated at 40 Mountsorrel Street, New Carlisle, Québec, on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at the hour of 8:00 a.m. The following persons were present:

COMMISSIONERS: W. Gifford, Chair  
M. E. Beaulieu (online)  
M. O'Brien(online)  
J. McWhirter (online)  
K. Ward  
D. Hunt(online)

PARENT COMMISSIONER: K. Mackenzie (online)  
R. Steward (online)  
J. Bizeau (online)  
M. Ouellet (online)

DIRECTOR GENERAL: D. Simoneau  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL: J. Bradbury; Director of Adult and Vocational Education  
SECRETARY GENERAL: D. Gauthier

OTHERS: M. Hayes-Dow; Director of Information Technology, School  
Organization and Transportation  
A. Dupuis; Director of Human Resources  
S. Ward; Director of Finance and Material Resources  
D. Foltin; Director of Educational Services

ABSENT: F. Bujold, G. Hayes, D. Bourgouin, R. Mundle, and K. Dickson sent their regrets.

Mr. Gifford, Chair, called this special meeting of the Council of Commissioners to order and welcomed everyone present.

**1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflicts were declared at this time.

## **2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

C25-07-267                      It was moved by K. Ward that the agenda for this special meeting of the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board be approved

CARRIED

### 3. 2025-2026 BUDGET

**WHEREAS** the government, despite repeated promises and assurances that education is its top priority and that it would not cut services in education, has already demanded significant budget cuts from the Education network during the 2024–2025 school year, including:

- approx. \$400 million in building maintenance, in July 2024.
- A hiring freeze, in November 2024.
- approx. \$200 million in cuts in December 2024, on the eve of the December holiday break.
- approx. \$70 million cut from the catch-up plan, on the eve of March break.
- Renovation, expansion, and school construction projects put on hold by the CAQ government.

**WHEREAS** the recent over \$570 million in cuts for 2025-2026 demanded just days before the end of the school year in June 2025 by the government, after staff assignments had been completed, will directly impact services to students; and

**WHEREAS** the draft budgetary rules and parameters communicated by the government on June 12, 2025, would require the Eastern Shores School Board to cut \$ 1 583 711 for 2025-2026; and

**WHEREAS** the draft budgetary rules communicated by the government on June 12, 2025, would further forbid the board from accessing approx. \$ 1 148 045.89 from its own accumulated surplus, which has been acquired through the board's own initiatives and responsible management of the board's resources, for the benefit of its students; and

**WHEREAS** the government only provided for a consultation period of one business day, from June 12, 2025, to June 13, 2025, and indicated in a presentation to staff that it expects to submit the final version of the budgetary rules to the Treasury Board at the end of June, likely for approval in July; and

**WHEREAS** it is not possible to implement budgetary cuts of this scale without significant impacts on direct services to students; and

**WHEREAS** the timing of these announcements, after significant staffing decisions have been made pursuant to deadlines under applicable collective agreements, severely constrains the school board's options to attempt to implement these cuts; and

**WHEREAS** the Council of Commissioners is committed to providing the necessary support to students and protecting students' access to quality educational services; and

**WHEREAS** the Council of Commissioners is responsible for exercising the community's right to management and control of the allocation of funding for minority language education in its territory under s. 23 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, for the benefit of its students and community; and

**WHEREAS** the Council of Commissioners is committed to protecting services and initiatives implemented to respond to the particular needs of its students and to protect community vitality, such as quality enriched French and bilingual education, access to educational services and support for students with special needs in English, and school transportation across a very large territory to ensure access to an English school, cultural and community activities in English; and

**WHEREAS** the proposed changes to the budgetary rules, developed without meaningful consultation of the school network as required by art. 472 of the *Education Act*, are unreasonable.

**WHEREAS** the proposed changes to the budgetary rules unjustifiably constrain the exercise of management and control over the allocation of funding in violation of s. 23 of the *Charter*.

**WHEREAS** s. 279 of the *Education Act* provides that a school board cannot submit a deficit budget without authorization from the Minister.

**WHEREAS** The Eastern Shores School Board has assessed its financial situation and concluded that it is neither feasible nor responsible to fully implement the proposed cuts and prohibition on the use of accumulated surplus funds proposed on June 12, 2025, for 2025-2026 given their expected impact on services to students and in light of its particular circumstances.

C25-07-268      **IT WAS MOVED BY** K. Mackenzie that the Eastern Shores School Board call on the government to revise the draft budgetary rules to withdraw the budget cuts; and

**THAT** the government reinstate the rule allowing school boards to access their accumulated surplus; and

**THAT**, to be adequately prepared in the event that the government were to maintain these unjustified budgetary constraints, that the Council of Commissioners mandate the Administration to request authorization to submit a deficit budget.

CARRIED

4      **ADJOURNMENT AT 8:20 A.M.**

C25-07-269      It was moved by D. Hunt that, there being no further business, the meeting adjourns.  
CARRIED

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Secretary General

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Chairperson