

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

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 Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at the hour of 8:30 a.m. The following persons were present:

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

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

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

OTHERS: A. Dupuis; Director of Human Resources
S. Ward: Director of Finance and Material Resources
D. Foltin: Director of Educational Services

ABSENT: K. Dickson, G. Hayes, R. Mundle, M. Ouellet

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

C25-08-274

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. QESBA'S LEGAL CHALLENGE OF THE 2025-2026 BUDGETARY RULES AND STAY OF APPLICATION

WHEREAS, in addition to various budgetary cuts in 2024-2025, the government announced on June 12, 2025 budgetary cuts that would require the Eastern Shores School Board to cut over \$ 551 620 for 2025-2026 (measure 16032), potentially expose it to a penalty of about \$ 901 546 if it cannot bring its staffing below the new target set by the Minister (measure 16034), and prohibit the board from accessing about \$ 1 163 163 from its accumulated surplus, which would have substantial impacts on direct services to students; and

WHEREAS on July 9, 2025, the Council of Commissioners adopted a resolution calling on the government to withdraw the budgetary cuts and to reinstate the former rules on access to accumulated surplus funds; and

WHEREAS on July 16, 2025, the board received the final budgetary rules approved by the Conseil du trésor, which maintain the above-noted budgetary cuts, but introduce a new measure that would make about \$ 425 800 thousand available to the board to partially offset the cuts (measure 16036), but only if the board complies with restrictive conditions that restrain its management and control, including:

- a. complying with a new staffing target set by the Ministry,
- b. requiring that the board maintain spending on certain government priorities, specifically in funding envelopes called “dedicated and protected measures” that can only be used for highly specific purposes, that may not correspond to the community’s priorities, and
- c. participating in regional and national mutualisation projects; and

WHEREAS dedicated and protected measures have already been declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeal of Québec in its ruling of April 2025 in the Bill 40 case (*Quebec English School Boards Association v Procureur general du Québec*, 2023 QCCS 2965 at paras 294-295, 299, 439, confirmed 2025 QCCA 282 at paras 195-208, 277); and

WHEREAS the conditions attached to the new measures restrict management and control guaranteed by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and would prevent the board from managing its staffing and allocating its funding in a manner that responds to the needs of its students and community; and

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners is committed to protecting services and initiatives that respond to the particular needs of its students and its community; and

WHEREAS the Ministry has required that all school bodies submit their budgets for 2025-2026 by no later than September 26, 2025:

C25-08-275

IT WAS MOVED BY M. E. Beaulieu that the Eastern Shores School Board mandate Power Law to take the necessary steps for the Eastern Shores School Board to join the QESBA’s application to challenge the validity of the budgetary rules and seek a stay of their application.

CARRIED

4 **ADJOURNMENT AT 9:02 A.M.**

C25-08-276

It was moved by K. Ward that, there being no further business, the meeting adjourns.

CARRIED

Secretary General

Chairperson