



Minutes of Governing Board Meeting Edinburgh Elementary School

Thursday, November 16, 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, Joseph Lalla

Guests: Vanessa Gangai, Kate Shingler

1. Welcome

Mr. Sifoni called the meeting to order at 7:04 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. Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2023

M. Brunet requests to clarify in the minutes that it was in fact cycle 3 students who attended the outing to GPS Nord.

First : Jean-Michel Brunet

Second : Steven Muoio

Motion carries unanimously

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes (October 19, 2023)

A member of the Edinburgh community has expressed concern for the safety of pedestrians especially students walking to and from school. GB members shared their concerns about safety on the surrounding streets of Edinburgh (intersections at both sides of the elevated section of Westminster affectionately referred to as the “hump”, and intersections immediately adjacent to Edinburgh school grounds). Fellow meeting guest Kate Shingler reported that past efforts to place a crossing guard on Westminster were unsuccessful with previous police station administration. Steven Szabo has volunteered to make an application to the local police station in order to have a crossing guard available to accompany students at an intersection close to Edinburgh.

5. New Business

5.1 School budget update

Mr. Sifoni presented details of the school budget to the GB. The school budget can be divided into many different allotments with specific criteria. All schools receive various budgetary allotments from the Ministry dedicated to specific initiatives (i.e., to hire tutors to support international students, students with special needs, and tutors to help students with homework). Other funds are allocated to support initiatives that create inspiring learning environments, invite guest speakers, offer workshops or subsidize field trips to local museums and cultural experiences, etc.). Other areas of the budget help promote literacy initiatives, including the purchase of books for the library especially children in preschool and Grade 1, and offer support to parents in the form of workshops and community events.

Mr. Sifoni reported that the priorities for improvements to the building have remained unchanged. Recently engineers have been to Edinburgh to strategize moving forward with repairs and improvements to the building.

Mr. Sifoni concluded the school budget update by thanking the Montreal West Charity Golf tournament organizers for the donation of 600\$ to the Edinburgh School. Funds will be directed to the students in various forms amongst others will be hosting various speakers during Black History month this year.

5.2 Annual Report on the Educational Project

Mr. Sifoni presents an in-depth report on the new educational project which will be in operation for the period of 2023-2027. The development of the educational project was developed with input from multiple stakeholders (parents, students, Governing Board members, etc.) The process included several meetings resulting in setting targets and outlining goals to accomplish. The final stage of development will be presenting the Educational Project

for approval to the Governing Board by the end of January 2024 so that it may be submitted to the Ministry and uploaded to our website.

5.3 Uniform Sub committee update

Johanna Miller provided an update on the work that has been done so far. The Uniform Sub Committee is in the process of developing the framework required to issue a proposal to adopt a uniform at Edinburgh. The Uniform Sub committee's current objectives are to understand what the experience has been at other schools that have adopted a uniform. A questionnaire was proposed as a useful tool to generate information about parents' experiences with regard to the uniform dress code. The sub-committee will be mindful of the importance of ensuring competitive pricing and recognize that a uniform dress code should not result in increased costs for parents to dress their children for school.

5.4 Last day of class for Grade 6 students

Mr. Sifoni requested that the GB approve a change of schedule to the Grade 6 calendar year. The last day of class for the entire school is June 21, 2024. Mr. Sifoni proposed to allow students in grade 6 to finish their final year of elementary school on June 20, 2024, which is the same date as the Graduation ceremony and festivities.

First: Robyn Dalton

Second: Johanna Miller

Motion carries unanimously

5.5 Preschool Standards and Procedures

Mr. Sifoni shared the Preschool (K4-K5) Standards and Procedures document with members of the Governing Board. The document outlines the tool that teachers can use for evaluating student's participation in K4 and K5. The document is available on the school website, along with those of the other Cycles under the Standards and Procedures heading of the "parents" section of the website.

5.6 Base Handbook

Mr. Sifoni reports that the BASE handbook has been updated to include the small change in the daily fee from 8.95\$ to 9.20\$ per day.

Motion approved

First: Johanna Miller

Second: Steven Muoio

5.6 Upcoming school trips

No new trips to approve at this time.

5.7 Upcoming fundraisers

The Grad committee will be raising funds for the end-of-year celebration at the upcoming movie night hosted by the Home and School Association. The purchase of raffle tickets and the sale of bracelets made by the students will count towards fundraising efforts.

Motion approved:

First: Robyn Dalton

Second: Steven Muioio

6. Reports

6.1 Principal's Report

Mr. Sifoni reports that the mechanisms are in place for the removal of the modulars as per the schedule presented to GB at the last meeting. Halloween festivities this year included the highly anticipated Classroom Bingo with 3 classrooms winning the grand prize of the Pizza Lunch. Remembrance Day activities at Edinburgh consisted of a guided walk-through Montreal-West with Dr. Robert Drummond and participation at a ceremony at the War Memorial near Montreal West City Hall for the grade 6 students. Mr. Sifoni reports that the members of the Canadian Armed Forces gave a presentation to students in the gymnasium and various items were on display for students to observe and reflect upon. The latest assembly hosted by Mr. Sifoni touched on topics of teamwork and kindness, the difference between term 1 and term 2, anxiety about report cards, the student code of conduct, and the use of blue slips as a form of communication with parents of students found to be violating school policies.

6.2 Commissioner's Report

No report

6.3 Treasurer's Report

Edinburgh's Governing Board has received their annual allocation of \$250. There is also a rollover of \$82 from previous years for a total of \$332. The Governing Board agreed to once again fund the purchase of prizes for winners of the Science Fair in the form of Indigo Gift Cards totaling \$150. The remaining balance is currently \$182.

6.4 Parent delegate at the EMSB Parents Committee

Steven Szabo was present at the last meeting before the holiday break on Thursday December 7th, 2023. The beginning of the meeting was a social event to mark the holidays. Topics discussed soon after were in no particular order: a. the nomination of a PC member to the Advisory Committee of Special Education Services, b. discussion of strategies to catch up on missed school days led by Mme. Nathalie Lacroix Regional Director East, c. modes of consultation of parents as related to the Educational Plan consultation process in each individual school, d. a school report from Dunrae Gardens about the large mural painted on the side of the school by renowned local artist, e. evolution of Bill 96, bill 23 as it influences life in the EMSB, f. clarifications received by chair of PC about certificates of eligibility, g. presentation on the utility of artificial intelligence in the classroom by the EMSB Director of Educational Services.

6.5 Teacher's Report

M. Brunet provided the teacher's report on recent activity at Edinburgh and these are the salient features of his report:

- a. An excellent collaboration amongst school staff resulted in the celebration of Halloween marked by wonderful works of art adorning school walls. Mme. Stephane and Mme. Catherine's idea of having the common theme of monsters was well received by the students. During the recent Open House a wonderful display of children's art work from all age levels centred on this theme and created a special and memorable ambiance.
- b. The Grade 5 and 6 French classes have been working with Fusion Jeunesse creating an enriching learning experience at Edinburgh school centred on media and journalism. Students were tasked with creating a newscast and students were assigned various roles and tasks. This activity allowed students to delve into many aspects of media and journalism in a very interactive manner.
- c. M. Brunet wished to thank parents at Edinburgh for accommodating the changes to the parent-teacher interview dates which are necessary given the strike actions of the teacher's unions. M. Brunet acknowledged that there will be difficult moments ahead as the union will seek to put pressure on the Ministry of Education as they advocate for improved working conditions for their union members working at Edinburgh school and all across Quebec.
- d. In conjunction with Alvéole Quebec grade 3 students at Edinburgh had the opportunity to learn and discover all about bees and the importance of bees in our environment. There have been 2 workshops and the feedback from the students has been excellent.

6.6 Base

Mr. Marco reports on the numerous and creative activities that took place at BASE in October such as the Halloween festivities, ped day activities organized by Enfants and co, and the

preparations for launching the annual Spirit of Giving campaign. Mr. Marco emphasized the valuable contribution of the BASE student council for showing leadership and initiative with the planning of BASE activities. Mr. Marco spoke about the importance of integrating physical activity into BASE activities through Sports Fridays, Latin Dance, and gymnastics. BASE activities for Remembrance Day centred around discussions on peace and empathy. Mr. Marco is reporting that BASE will be launching an Edinburgh Eatery in December whereby students at BASE will be converting the gym into a pastry and coffee shop. Students will have the opportunity to prepare baked goods and offer those items for sale with proceeds going towards Carolyn's Toy Drive. The date for the eatery is set for December 14, 2023.

6.7 Home and School Association

Ms. Gangai reports on the many different activities organized by the Home and School Association of Edinburgh School. The movie night will be back with much anticipation. Families will have the chance to watch a movie in the gym on a large screen, enjoy snacks and purchase bracelets made by the grade 6 students. The Fundscrip fundraiser and the sale of Mr Felix and Norton cookie dough will go ahead as planned. Home and School will be hosting a lunch for the staff on December 1st. A book fair is also being planned whereby parents will be able to support their school's library by purchasing books from the Babar bookstore. H and School will be hosting a holiday lunch on December 20.

7. Question Period

The GB took a question from the public from Edinburgh parent Kate Shingler about the use of blue slips to communicate between staff and parents. A productive discussion about the use of the blue slips ensued. Mr. Sifoni and the representatives of the school team explained the rationale and perceived improvements since implementing this system and everyone agreed that ultimately, Edinburgh school staff will continue to also employ strategies that promote positive learning environments with an emphasis on engaging parents in the process of promoting academic achievement of their children and fostering positive values in their children consistent with the Edinburgh way.

8. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted:

Gaetano Sifoni, Principal

Anne-Marie Yaworski, Chairperson

APPENDIX A

Fundraisers

September 2023

- Terry Fox Foundation (direct donation) – *approved 10/19*

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*
- Friendship Bracelets (Grad Committee) – *approved 11/16*
- Raffle Tickets (Grad Committee) – *approved 11/16*

December 2023

- CTV Spirit of Giving Campaign (online donations & food drive) – *approved 10/19*
- Book Fair (H&S) – *approved 05/23*
- Carolyn's Toy Drive (online donations & BASE Bazar) – *approved 10/19*

February 2024

- Montreal Children's Hospital (Card sale & Student council initiative) – *approved 10/19*

March 2024

- Carolyn's Toy Drive (hygiene product collection) – *approved 10/19*

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) – *approved 10/19*
- 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*