

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ENGLISH MONTREAL SCHOOL BOARD

A Special Board Meeting of the English Montreal School Board has taken place on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. in the Laurence Patterson Room, 6000 Fielding Avenue.

Commissioners Present

Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair
Mr. James Kromida, Vice-Chair
Mr. Mario Benvolante, Commissioner – via TEAMS
Mr. Agostino Cannavino, Commissioner
Ms. Maria Corsi, Parent Commissioner
Ms. Sophie De Vito, Commissioner
Mr. Jamie Fabian, Commissioner – via TEAMS
Ms. Rosemarie Federico, Parent Commissioner – via TEAMS
Mr. Julien Feldman, Commissioner
Ms. Ellie Israel, Commissioner
Mr. Joseph Lalla, Commissioner
Mr. Pietro Mercuri, Commissioner
Mr. Mario Pietrangelo, Commissioner
Mr. Tony Speranza, Parent Commissioner

Commissioners Not Present

Mr. Daniel Tatone, Parent Commissioner

Administrators Present:

Mr. Nicholas Katalifos, Director General
Ms. Pelagia Nickoletopoulos, Assistant Director General, Education
Mr. Jack Chadirdjian, Assistant Director General, Administration, Acting Secretary General
Mr. Mike Cohen, Manager, Marketing & Communications
Ms. Brigida Sellato, Consultant, Secretariat General

1.	<p><u>Land Acknowledgement</u></p> <p>The Chair acknowledged that the English Montreal School Board is located on the traditional ancestral and unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka. We are grateful to live, learn, and work in Tiohtià:ke 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. As a School Board, it is important that we acknowledge the historic and ongoing role of educational institutions in perpetuating injustices against indigenous communities. We are committed to educating staff and students about the true history and current realities of the indigenous peoples of what we now call Canada. Celebrating the cultures contributions and knowledge of the many First Nations Inuit and Métis communities, listening to and amplifying indigenous voices and partnering with local indigenous community members. We offer this acknowledgement as a first step and public commitment to our ongoing process towards reconciliation and justice for indigenous peoples and communities.</p>
2.	<p><u>Confirmation of Notice of the Meeting</u></p> <p>The Acting Secretary General, Me Jack Chadirdjian, confirmed that proper notice of this meeting was given.</p>
3.	<p><u>Approval of Agenda</u></p> <p>IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PIETRO MERCURI AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.</p> <p>Vote: 14-0-0, Adopted</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Resolution # 24-04-10-3</u></p>
4.	<p><u>Question Period</u></p> <p>No questions were submitted.</p>
	<p>On a motion by Mr. Tony Speranza the meeting moved In Camera at 7:03 p.m.</p> <p>The meeting returned from In Camera at 7:47 p.m.</p>
5.	<p><u>Consideration of Legal Strategy Regarding Recent Court Ruling</u></p> <p>WHEREAS the English Montreal School Board initiated legal proceedings on October 21, 2019, challenging provisions of Bill 21, <i>An Act respecting the laicity of the State</i>, SQ 2019, c 12 (Bill 21) on the basis that it violates minority language education rights under s. 23 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> ("<i>Charter</i>") and violates the equal protection of rights for women and men under s. 28 of the <i>Charter</i>;</p> <p>WHEREAS the Superior Court of Québec's judgment rendered April 20, 2021, granted the EMSB's application on s. 23 of the <i>Charter</i> and dismissed its application on s. 28 of the <i>Charter</i>;</p> <p>WHEREAS the Attorney General of Québec appealed the Superior Court judgment notably on the conclusions regarding s. 23 of the <i>Charter</i>, and the EMSB cross-appealed on the violation of s. 28 of the <i>Charter</i>;</p> <p>WHEREAS on February 29, 2024, the Quebec Court of Appeal granted the Attorney General of Québec's appeal and dismissed the EMSB's cross-appeal, finding that Bill 21 did not violate s. 23 or s. 28 of the <i>Charter</i>;</p>

Main Motion

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. JAMES KROMIDA THAT the English Montreal School Board Council of Commissioners mandate the legal firm, Power Law, to file on its behalf an application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and if granted, an appeal, of the Quebec Court of Appeal’s judgment of February 29, 2024, on Bill 21.

Amendment

It was proposed by Mr. Agostino Cannavino that the Council of Commissioners be advised of the legal fees in increments of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00).

Vote: 3-11-0, Motion Defeated

In favor	M. Bentrovato, A. Cannavino, J. Lalla
Against	J. Ortona, J. Kromida, M. Corsi, S. De Vito, J. Fabian, R. Federico, J. Feldman, E. Israel, P. Mercuri, M. Pietrangelo, T. Speranza
Abstained	

Vote on Main Motion

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. JAMES KROMIDA AND RESOLVED THAT the English Montreal School Board Council of Commissioners mandate the legal firm, Power Law, to file on its behalf an application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and if granted, an appeal, of the Quebec Court of Appeal’s judgment of February 29, 2024, on Bill 21.

Vote: 12-1-1, Adopted

In favor	J. Ortona, J. Kromida, M. Corsi, S. De Vito, J. Fabian, R. Federico, J. Feldman, E. Israel, J. Lalla, P. Mercuri, M. Pietrangelo, T. Speranza
Against	A. Cannavino
Abstained	M. Bentrovato

Resolution # 24-04-10-5

6. **Adjournment**

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. MARIO PIETRANGELO AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Vote: 14-0-0, Adopted

Resolution # 24-04-10-6

Signed in Montreal, _____

Mr. Joe Ortona, Chair

Me Jack Chadirdjian, Acting Secretary General