

Province of Quebec
Western Quebec School Board

Minutes of the **extraordinary Council of Commissioners** meeting held on August 13, 2025, on TEAMS, at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Labadie, Commissioners Cornforth, Giannakoulis, Goldsbrough, Garner, Moore, Killeen, Parent-Commissioners Fortier, Bouchard, Rhéault and James.

REGRETS: Commissioners Brushey, Green, McCrank, Bélanger

PERSONNEL: Director of Complementary Services L. Falasconi, Director of Human Resources A. Paquin, Director of Buildings and Information Technology S. El Ouezzani, Contract Compliance Officer A. Gendron, and Head of Administrative Management R. Vincent.

The Director General, Mr. G. Singfield, the Secretary General, Mr. E. Keon, and the Assistant Director General / Director of Human Resources, Mr. P. Proulx, were also present.

- Land acknowledgement by: Parent-Commissioner Fortier

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m.

C-25/26-1 Adoption of Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Cornforth and seconded by Commissioner Garner that the agenda be adopted as presented.

Carried unanimously

C-25/26-2 Validity of the Budgetary Rules

WHEREAS, in addition to various budgetary cuts in 2024-2025, the government announced on June 12, 2025 budgetary cuts that would require the Western Québec School Board to cut over \$3,666,040 for 2025-2026 (Measure 16032), potentially expose it to a penalty of approximately \$3,544,723 if it cannot bring its staffing below the new target set by the Minister (Measure 16034), and prohibit the board from accessing \$1,929,810 from its accumulated surplus, which would have substantial impacts on direct services to students;

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 approximately \$3,335,829 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 Ministry,
- (b) requiring that the board maintain spending on certain government priorities, specifically in funding envelopes referred to as “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 mutualization projects.

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 général du Québec*, 2023 QCCS 2965 at paras 294-295, 299, 439, confirmed 2025 QCCA 282 at paras 195-208, 277);

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;

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

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

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Western Québec School Board mandates Power Law to take the necessary steps for the Western Québec School Board to join the QESBA application to challenge the validity of the budgetary rules and seek a stay of their application.

For: 12

Abstention : 1

Against: 0

Motion Carried

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.