

Province of Quebec
Western Quebec School Board

Minutes of the **extraordinary Council of Commissioners** meeting held on September 23, 2025, on TEAMS, 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Labadie, Commissioners Brushey, Bélanger, Cornforth, Giannakoulis, Goldsbrough, Green, Moore, McCrank, Killeen, Richard, Parent-Commissioner Fortier, Bouchard, Rheault and James.

REGRETS: Commissioner Garner

PERSONNEL: Director of Finance M. Lupien, Director of Buildings and Information Technology S. El Ouezzani, Director of Education S. Aitken, Director of Complementary Services L. Falasconi, 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.

Call to order: 6:32 p.m.

- Land acknowledgement by: Commissioner Cornforth

C-25/26-10

Adoption of Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Green and seconded by Parent-Commissioner Bouchard that the agenda be adopted as presented.

Carried unanimously

Update on the Stay

Chair Labadie addressed the Council and invited the Director General to provide an update on the status of the Stay. The update included recent discussions involving the Director General, QESBA, the Ministry, the Deputy Minister of Finance, and the newly appointed Minister of Education.

Budget Presentation

Following the update, the Director General gave the floor to Ms. Lupien, Director of Finance, to present the budget in detail to the Council.

Adoption of WQSB Budget 2025-2026

WHEREAS on July 16, 2025, the board received the final budgetary rules approved by the *Conseil du trésor*, which maintain cuts of \$3,666,040 million for the Western Québec School Board for the 2025-2026 school year, but introduce a new measure that would make approximately \$ 3,335,829 million available to the board to partially offset the cuts, 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 mutualisation projects;

WHEREAS the government’s assignment of funds as 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);

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 government has prohibited the use of the accumulated surplus to balance budgets;

WHEREAS 10% of the ministry measures for schools were used to balance the budget instead of the accumulated surplus;

WHEREAS the Western Québec School Board is committed to protecting services and initiatives that respond to the particular needs of its students and its community;

WHEREAS the Québec English School Board Association has put forward a court application to challenge the validity of the restrictions to school board management of budgetary rules, and to seek a stay of their application;

WHEREAS Council adopted a motion (res. # C-25/26-2) to have the Western Québec School Board join the QESBA application;

WHEREAS a court decision on the application for a stay is expected on October 16

WHEREAS the Ministry has required that all school bodies submit their budgets for 2025-2026 by no later than October 30, 2025;

WHEREAS the next regular meeting of Council will take place on October 28, 2025;

It was MOVED by Commissioner Killeen and SECONDED by Parent-Commissioner Bouchard THAT the adoption of the 2025–2026 WQSB budget be **postponed definitely** to the Regular Meeting of the Council of Commissioners scheduled for **October 28, 2025, at 6:30 PM.**

Adjournment

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.