

MINUTES

Honoré Mercier Governing Board

Monday, February 6, 2023 | Meeting called to order by Verena Garofalo
Virtual Meeting, 6 PM

In Attendance

Verena Garofalo (GB Chair)	X	Veronica Graniero (Staff – Teaching)	X
Tony Campione (GB)	X	Andrew Martinez (Staff – Teaching)	X
Lisa Ida (GB)	X	Peter Tsatoumas (Staff – Teaching)	X
Angelo Irrera (GB Treasurer)	X	Nancy Cantini (HS – Public)	X
Robert Panetta (GB)	R	Maria Scicchitano (HS – Public)	X
Merika Ramundo (GB)	X	Diego Di Stefano (Public)	X
Jennifer Uniat (GB)	X	Sally Behjoudi (Public)	X
Lino Faratro (Alternate GB)	X	Anna (Public)	X
Sonia Ranellucci (Alternate GB)	X	Peter (Public)	X
Daniela Buttino (Staff -Daycare)	X	Ariana Holowka (Public)	X
Administration:		Commissioner, Ward 8:	
Sonia Marotta, Principal	X	Mario Pietrangelo	R

X = present

R = Regrets

Additions to the Agenda

No additions to the agenda.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda called by Merika Ramundo, seconded by Lisa Ida. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Approval of Adoption of the Minutes December 12, 2022

Motion to approve the December 2022 adoption of the meeting minutes called by Angelo Irrera, seconded by Sonia Ranellucci. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Chair's Review

- **Selection criteria for appointment of a principal** – deadline to submit is March 14, 2023. Miss Marotta will leave the meeting once all points on the agenda are addressed (post question/varia period) to allow for this discussion.

- **Follow up on Next Level Hockey Program**

Initial follow up discussions prompted by **concerns/complaints** raised by parents and **letter** presented to governing board regarding many important issues. Productive initial meeting (2 weeks ago) with Miss Marotta, Verena Garofalo, Tony Campione and Mr. Peter to further discuss issues related to insurance, safety of players, values (communication), service/program offered (focus on skill development vs skill development and games, certifications, ...Miss Marotta was able to answer many questions at this initial meeting. Outcome of this meeting was to follow up with a meeting with Michael.

2nd follow up meeting with Michael to be held on Thursday (Verena, Miss Marotta, Tony, faculty member) to address outstanding questions and to ensure that expectations will be met for the program while keeping in mind the values are in line with Honoré Mercier Community. Example of some concerns raised: initial program offered in 1st year focused on skill development (30 hours/set price) vs 2nd year was split between skill development and games (15/15). Issues related to safety, incorporation, training/certification. These will be discussed further with Michael for a better understanding and make sure we can continue with his program in a positive direction. To be continued and reported back to GB.

In addition, a **suggestion** will be made for Michael to **meet and represent to GB** to ensure that we move ahead in the right direction making sure all questions are addressed by HM parents and community.

Confirmation that legal team of the EMSB (lawyer) met with Michel regarding the program before it was addressed by GB.

To be continued.

Principals' Report

Sexuality Education Plan

- Gender identity issue brought up – was a topic at another school (EMSB high school). Appropriateness of topic questioned and on how this will be addressed at HM should it arise in the plan/raised by students in classroom
- School support staff (nurse/psychologist) guide responses/content for sensitive issues
- Currently questions brought up by students in classroom well managed by teachers and social support staff
- Taboo or sensitive questions may require further guidance from EMSB for appropriate responses
- Education Minister sends guidelines and topics to be covered. School teachers and support staff plan out details
- Any parents who have issues or concerns with topics can contact Miss Marotta via email. She can suggest right contact at EMSB for further follow up.

Safe School Plan

- Workshops offered to parents – working with school commissioner Mario Pietrangelo – format and details still to be determined (e.g. workshop on internet safety for parents). Upcoming.

- Mentoring program – continuation of program from last year with Miss Dimitra. Techniques and guidance – kids showing maturity level given opportunity to mentor younger classmates (recess, lunch) – led by Nadia Marcogliese (school behavioral technician)
- Program tailored to maturity level/readiness for leadership and needs of students
- Mentoring program also assisted by Miss Daniela
- In Daycare, some students are involved in helping younger classmates. Successful initiative. Long term program

ACGC (New at EMSB)

- Focus to sensitize students to different careers in the classroom (Cycle 3) (e.g. exposure to career fairs, guest speakers, class discussions)
- English and French teachers will work together to cover all the topics and develop content (similar functioning to Sexuality Education Plan)
- Positive response to the addition of the program at the school (Ministry of Education Mandate)

**Motion to approve school safety plan called by Merika Ramundo, seconded by Peter Tsatoumas .
Passed unanimously. Motion carried.**

**Motion to approve sexuality education plan called by Merika Ramundo, seconded by Lisa Ida.
Passed unanimously. Motion carried.**

**Motion to approve the ACGC documents called by Angelo Irrera, seconded by Tony Campione.
Passed unanimously. Motion carried.**

Special thank you from Miss Marotta to Home and School, parent volunteers and Miss Daniela for the successful pancake breakfast.

Teachers' Report

Music Report (Veronica Graniero)

- **CBC Music competition** – very successful - Honoré Mercier ranked between 4th and 10th position out of 189 schools
- **Holiday concert**
 - available online for parents who were not able to attend
 - special thank you to all parents for the donation of canned good
 - congratulations given to Miss Veronica for an excellent holiday concert
- **Passed field trip to OSM (Gr 5 and 6)** – « Les mathématiques de la musique »
 - overall experience appreciated by students
- **Upcoming field trip to OSM (Gr 3 and 4) in March**
 - parents to receive details shortly

Physical Education Report (Andrew Martinez and Peter Tsatoumas)

- **Grade 6 Winer Camp** field trip (upcoming – end of February)
-56 out of 71 students will participate
- **Basketball Program** (Cycle 3) – extension of Phys. Ed. Program
- **Fitness Room** (set up in a bigger room & additional equipment)
-Gr 4-5-6 use the fitness room during health class
-Students exposed to different workouts than in gymnasium (e.g. bikes, resistance training,)
-Fitness room also used for extracurricular activities during lunch (e.g. fitness class given by Mr. Peter and Mr. Andrew)
- **Winter Carnival Camp** (in next few weeks/weather dependent)
-Sign-up sheet soon available for teachers to select time slot for activities (pre k to Gr 6)
-Activities: sliding at park, games, sled races
-Specific activity for Gr 3-6: snowshoeing at Delorme Park
-Parents will be well informed beforehand to ensure students appropriately dressed

Daycare Report (Daniel Buttino)

- **Tax Receipts**
-Currently collecting fees for daycare and lunch for month of December (deadline for payment to receive tax receipt for 2022)
-Preparing tax receipts - ready week of February 20th on the Mozaic Parent Portal
-Any outstanding dues will be carried over to next year's tax receipts
- **Registrations** for daycare for next year – almost completed
- **Montreal Children's Fundraiser** (December 2022 – selling cookies/cupcakes over 3-week period) – sent donation (approx. \$1600)

Home and School Report

Nancy Cantini reported on

- **Scholastic Book Fair** (November 2022) – Reported profit of 1718.13\$
- **Staff Appreciation Week (Upcoming)**
-Lunch catered from Ciociaro's
-Bagels and cream cheese donated from HM parent/St Viateur Bagel
-Many other treats in the works

Maria Scicchitano reported on

- **Chocolate Drive** (passed activity)
-Raised \$12 665 (Grade 6 portion \$3173.44 – will go towards their graduation, remainder goes to the other grades)

- **Teacher Appreciation** (Upcoming)
 - Request for parents to donate store bought baked goods (planned for Thursday)
- **Pancake breakfast** (passed event)
 - Very successful
 - Special thank you to Miss Daniela for all her help in setting up and serving

Treasurer's Report (Angelo Ribera)

- Started year with 889\$
- Year to date expenses \$542 (remaining 346\$ with one outstanding invoicing to be submitted)
- Forecast of 200\$ for remainder of the year

Commissioner's Report (Mario Pietrangelo)

- Miss Marotta reported that Mr. Pietrangelo sends his regrets
- Updates to be brought forth next meeting

Central Parents Committee Report (Merika Ramundo)

EMSB Parents Committee (PC) summary

January meeting

- Bill 96 information session (Merika can send document to any parents who wish to see it). Representatives from the Quebec Community Groups Network presented on Bill 96 implications on social services including Education. They explored the various articles that affect English education and how it can affect the Anglophone community generally. The PC will be moving forward on drafting a letter to be sent to the government. GBs will be asked to participate. Other links of interest:
 - Open letter to David Lametti regarding C13;
 - The QCGN Language Rights Page; and,
 - The link to sign up for the Daily Briefing.
- Parents received conflicting information regarding school trips outside of Canada. The administration and the Legal Department have put together guidelines for the schools to follow with regard to trips abroad. The guidelines have been distributed recently to principals.

February meeting

- Budget building process for 2023-2024:
 - Financial Services consulting with PC and GBs on the budget building process this winter/spring. Adoption of numerous activities will occur in June.
 - Way of getting feedback as to what the local community thinks is important in terms of where movies are spent. What does the community want? What do they value?
 - Not a rubber stamping activity – GBs and PCs are asked to reflect on needs and use guiding principles to work with the administration to outline resource needs.
- School calendars:

- Pela Nickoletopoulos, Assistant Regional Director mentioned that GBs should be seeing the calendar for next academic year soon. Pela would be sending a note out to principals to ask them to consider parents / GB input before the local school calendar is set in stone.
- Parents Committee put forward a motion for the EMSB to consider a series of recommendations regarding the proposed school calendar for 2023-2024.
 - Schedule a ped day after Halloween on November 1.
 - No half ped days.
 - Winter break and March break to be the same at all 5 service centers and school boards on the island of Montreal. Pela mentioned that the 5 centers and boards have met and that this was being addressed. In principle, all have agreed to set the same dates for these breaks.
 - Note “equalization days” so that the same subjects are not always missed if the school has Mondays and Fridays as ped days.
- **Bullying:**
 - PC passed a resolution to ask the EMSB to make bullying training sessions mandatory for all staff
- **PC events:**
 - Timeframe: week of May 28 - June 4, 2023 (to run in conjunction with the U.N.'s Global Day of Parents on June 1).
 - Keynote - Sunday, May 28 or Sunday, June 4, 2023. Afternoon 2-3 hours. Hybrid - onsite + live streamed + recorded to be posted at a later date. Light refreshments will be served (e.g. coffee, tea, juice, muffins, cookies, etc.) and daycare services are available on-site (needs to be requested when the guest RSVPs).
 - Lunch & Learn Series - Monday, May 29 to Friday, June 2, 2023.
 - 30 to 45 mins, launched at noon, one per day
 - Theme: Communications! Related topics could include special needs, artificial intelligence, Inclusion, accessibility, social media, healthy relationships, misinformation, health & wellness, technology, hands-on learning (trade school!), bullying/cyberbullying, mindfulness, peer relations, empathy, motivation, and engagement, etc. If you know of any speakers or sponsorship opportunities, please let Merika know.

Next Governing Board Meeting Date

- The following meeting date was proposed:
 - Thursday, March 16 at 7:00 p.m. in person
 - Suggestion to alternate times for next meetings (6pm and 7pm)

Question Period/Varia

- **Registration Numbers Update**
 - lower than expected - 1 new pre-k class and 1 kdg class
 - enrollment period ongoing
 - Grade 6 cohort leaving (big cohort of 3 classes)
- **Why are raffles not permitted to raise funds?**
 - Not permitted as it encourages students to gamble (EMSB guideline)
- **Time per week allocated for physical education?**
 - Currently HM has 1 hour per week vs Pearson School Board which has 2 ½ hours per week (over 3 days/week)

- **Group discussion regarding increasing physical activity /benefit for promoting school (enrollment)**
 - Would need to review allocated minutes per subject at the school
 - In order to increase physical activity – we would have to reduce time from another specialty (e.g. art)
 - Option for art can be taken over by other teachers as it has been the subject with most turnover in last year’s however need to follow rules from EMSB for time allocation to each teacher and specialty subject
 - Consequence of low enrollment – may lose classroom teachers and specialty teachers in accordance
 - Increasing physical activity time would enable HM to possibly secure specialty teachers. Low enrollment puts positions of Mr. Andrew, Mr. Peter and Miss Veronica in jeopardy. Plan needs to be put in place (see NEXT STEPS below)**
 - HM has been a pioneer in increasing physical education and health (started health booklet) before Ministry and EMSB suggestion for 150 min/week – need to continue with our strengths:
 - Pre-k & kdg: (165 minutes/week)
 - Grades 3-4-5-6 (150 minutes/week) – 2hrs Phys ed & 30 min health class
 - focus to increase minutes for (Cycle 1 students - Gr 1 and 2) – currently 120 minutes (90 minutes actual Phys ed + 30 min. health class). Suggestions for increasing Phys ed to 3x/week + health class**
 - Positive comments to build upon strengths of the school (physical education and music) to showcase them and potentially help promote the school (low enrollment issue) and secure the specialty teachers. Risk of losing 2 out of 3 specialty teachers. Need to think creatively and plan ahead
 - Many benefits of increased physical activity for the students

Evidence of physical activity minutes at other schools or specialty subjects of interest to parents?

- all schools need to follow basic school regulations in terms of time allocation. Each school is different on how they divide the time with respect to their focus
- not aware of any research related to specialty subjects of interests by parents (re: enrollment)

Example from Edinburgh Elementary School (experience from Miss Marotta)

- 3 specialties – art teacher (who was retiring), science and physical education
- did not have a music specialist – taught by person hired by home and school – assisted classroom teacher with music program. Teachers did not feel qualified to grade music
- Solution: took advantage of retiring art teacher and decided to hire a music specialist. Classroom teachers felt more comfortable to take on the art class themselves.
- Solution specific to the school

Conclusion of the discussion is that the focus on Phys Ed and music would be a creative strategy to try to ensure that our specialty teachers remain in HM as well as benefit the students’ health and learning. GB in full support.

Lots of evidence for the benefits of physical activity for students and teachers (reference to workshop speaker at the beginning of the year – suggestion to reach out to the speaker for data)

NEXT STEPS (RE: Proposal to increase physical activity minutes, focusing on Cycle 1)

- 1) Miss Marotta – to review basic school regulations in terms of time allocation (Phys Ed, music, art) and prepare a proposal in accordance. Target date before enrollment report needs to be done.
- 2) Proposal to be reviewed with EMSB HR (ensuring proper time allocation for language FR and ENG within the specialty subject) for approval
- 3) Proposal to be presented at Staff Council (discussion already underway with specialty teachers) for approval
- 4) Proposal presented to GB for final acceptance

- **Beautification fund: application deadline update**
 - reminder to re-visit the application timeline for the fund
 - Miss Marotta to report back to us on application deadline

- **Reminder** regarding meeting with Michael (**Next Level Hockey**) – Thursday, February 9th
-Any questions to be addressed can be sent to Miss Marotta, Tony Campione or Verena Garofalo

Discussion for selection criteria for appointment of a principal

- Discussion specifically for GB members, staff and public (parents)
- Miss Marotta ended the recording and left the meeting (8:30 PM)
- Discussion not included in the minutes

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:00 PM by Tony Campione, seconded by Angelo Irrera. Passed unanimously.

