



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE CENTRAL QUÉBEC
CENTRAL QUÉBEC SCHOOL BOARD

**RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS
OF THE COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS**

(Adopted August 22, 2003)

(Revised April 22, 2005, November 14, 2008, June 12, 2013, January 21, 2015)

Note: The masculine gender is used throughout this document for the sake of conciseness and is meant to be inclusive of both genders.

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PREAMBLE

The following rules of order and procedures for meetings of the Council of Commissioners of the Central Québec School Board are based on the Act Respecting School Elections, the Education Act and Robert's Rules of Order.

These procedures are designed to facilitate effective decision-making and to achieve consensus within a reasonable amount of time.

The members of the Council of Commissioners will have recourse to Robert's Rules of Order for any rule or regulation not covered in this policy. However, the Act Respecting School Elections and the Education Act take precedence over either this policy or Robert's Rules of Order.

The term of office of appointed Commissioners shall not exceed four years. (E.A. 143)

PROCEDURES FOR MEETINGS

1.0 PREPARATION OF AGENDA

- 1.1 The agenda is prepared by the Director General and the Secretary General and is reviewed with the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 1.2 To have an item placed on the agenda; Council members are encouraged to address their requests to the Chair no later than one week and one day prior to the meeting.
- 1.3 Administrators should direct their requests to place items on the agenda to the Director General or to the Secretary General within the time frame stated in 1.2.
- 1.4 Whenever possible, documents relative to an item on the agenda of a meeting should be sent at the same time as the agenda in order to facilitate decision-making. It is therefore important that an individual who adds an item to the agenda ensures that the document is forwarded to the Secretary General before the agenda and associated documents are sent out. In exceptional circumstances, when no document is immediately available, an individual who wishes to place an item on the agenda will provide the Secretary General with a brief one-paragraph description of the point to be discussed.
- 1.5 In the interest of expediency, questions relating to a specific incident or matter of personal interest may often be responded to directly by the Director General or a Director of Service outside of Council of Commissioner's meetings.



1.6 The Board agenda will normally be structured as follows:

Call to Order

Approval of the agenda

Public question period

Question Period for Students

Correspondence from Students

Approval of the Minutes

Business Arising from the Minutes

Chair's Report

Director General's Report including

Up-date on Strategic Planning

Labour Relations Committees (senior staff of service, senior staff of schools, teachers, professionals and support staff)

New Business

Committee Reports

a) Executive Committee

b) Parents' Committee

c) Special Needs Advisory Committee

d) Transport Advisory Committees

e) Audit Committee

f) Evaluation of the Director General

g) Ethics and Governance Committee

h) Human Resources Committee

i) Any ad hoc committee as formed by the Council

Quebec English School Boards Association

Next meetings

Question period – public

Question period – commissioners

In-camera (as required)

Adjournment

1.7 Normally, board meetings will be held from 7:00 p.m. to no later than 10:30 p.m. Should there be a need to extend the meeting, it will be upon resolution.

1.8 The agenda, along with supporting documents, including draft resolutions with legal references and explanatory notes, and other written material will be sent by email and placed on SharePoint no later than one week preceding the meeting. Additional information may be sent by email up to 36 hours prior to the meeting if necessary.

1.9 Items may be added to the agenda at the meeting if it is the will and pleasure of the Council of Commissioners. Should a resolution arise from this agenda item, a 2/3 majority vote will be required in order for the Council to consider the motion.



2.0 MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS

2.1 Recording of minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Council of Commissioners constitute a record of the meeting.

The minutes will consist of but not be limited to:

Date, time, and place of the meeting

Presence, absence and attendance by telephone or videoconference (as well as the time of arrival or departure of members)

Whether the meeting is regular or special

Chair and secretary of the meeting

Approval of minutes

Mention of loss of quorum during the meeting

All motions/resolutions voted upon, the result of the vote and the names of the commissioners voting for or against or who abstained from voting/ or the names of Commissioners who were temporarily absent from the meetings

Brief description of reports and/or information items

Brief description of presentations made during the public and commissioners' question periods.

Time of adjournment

2.2 Reading of the minutes

The Secretary General is excused from reading the minutes provided that a copy thereof has been received by each member present at least six hours before the opening of the meeting at which they are to be approved.

2.3 Adoption of minutes

Draft minutes of the previous meeting are submitted to the Council of Commissioners for approval. Members are asked to give typographical errors to the Secretary General prior to the meeting.

2.4 Distribution of approved minutes

The approved minutes, having been signed by the Chair of the meeting and the Secretary General, are posted on the School Board's web site.



3.0 IN-CAMERA MEETINGS

The decisions made in an in-camera sessions and, where appropriate, the factors considered in determining to hold the meeting in-camera should be recorded.

- The Secretary General and the Director General should be part of the Meeting to keep the minutes unless circumstances require that they also be absent. In their absence, the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate record of the meeting is kept;
- Before going in-camera, the Chairperson will ask any members attending the meeting via videoconference or by phone to ensure that the conversation cannot be overheard by any other person;
- It is the responsibility of the Commissioner participating via videoconference or by phone to disclose the presence of any third parties who might be able to overhear the conversation;
- If it is not possible for the Commissioner participating via videoconference or by phone to participate in the in-camera discussion in complete confidentiality, the Commissioner will be disconnected until the end of the in-camera session;
- The School Board will re-contact the Commissioner when the in-camera session is finished.

4.0 RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

- 4.1 Only duly elected members of the Council of Commissioners, the Director General and persons authorized by either the Chair or the Director General may participate in deliberations of the Council.
- 4.2 Every member has a right to be convened to all meetings and to be present. Each member may submit, support, defend or debate any proposal deemed appropriate by the Chair. Each member also has the right to ask pertinent questions, to intervene in a debate and to be a candidate for posts that the Council of Commissioners intends to fill. Parent Commissioners are not entitled to vote at meetings of the Council of Commissioners or at the Executive Committee, or to be appointed Chair or Vice-chair of the School Board. Exception: All commissioners have the right to vote for the co-opted commissioners.
- 4.3 Co-optation must enable persons whose competence and qualifications are considered complementary to those of the Commissioners or useful for the administration of the School Board.
- 4.4 Every Council member is entitled to raise a question of privilege if he deems that a rule has not been observed or if order or decorum has not been ensured.
- 4.5 Commissioners have authority only when acting as members of the Council of Commissioners legally in session. The Council shall not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of any individual board member except when such statements or actions are in pursuance of specific instructions by the Council. (See also the Commissioners' Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct)



- 4.6 Discussion of a topic, which has already been disposed of by the Council, is not permissible at the same meeting unless moved by someone who voted with the prevailing majority on the original vote. A two-thirds majority vote is required to reconsider the question.
- 4.7 An individual may speak only after being acknowledged by the Chair. The speaker must address the Chair; he may not address another Council member nor answer a question by another member without first being acknowledged by the Chair.
- 4.8 The right to speak is granted in order of request.
- 4.9 Once the Chair feels that a subject has been discussed for a reasonable length of time and in order to close the debate, he will ask each member to speak briefly on the question, the last speaker being the mover of the motion.
- 4.10 The speaker may be interrupted by the Chair or another Council member on a question of privilege, on a point of order or for a matter to be discussed in committee. Furthermore, the Chair may interrupt or terminate an individual's speaking privilege if the speaker's comments are disruptive, obscene, or insulting.
- 4.11 Every member has a duty to respect the order and silence required for the proper functioning of the meeting.
- 4.12 Every member must avoid private conversations, unnecessary departures, noise, disorder and distractions such as the use of cell phones or other means of communication.
- 4.13 An attack (physical or verbal) against a person is unacceptable.
- 4.14 It is the responsibility of a member to notify the Secretary General as soon as possible whether or not they will attend a Council meeting.
- 4.15 Commissioners may attend meetings by telephone or video-conference as stipulated in the By-law Governing Attendance at Council Meetings by Telephone or Video-conference. Attendance by videoconference or by phone should normally be offered to those Commissioners living further than 75 km from the School Board. Any method used to participate in a Council of Commissioners' meeting should ensure that all commissioners have equal access to one another. A commissioner cannot serve as an interpreter for another.
- 4.16 According to the Act Respecting School Elections, section 193:

"The term of a commissioner who fails to attend three consecutive regular sittings of the council of commissioners ends at the close of the following sitting unless the commissioner attends that sitting."



The council may, at that sitting, grant the commissioner a period of grace until the next regular council sitting if he was in fact unable to attend the sittings. In such a case, the commissioner's term ends on the day of that next sitting, if he is not in attendance.

The council may also in due time order that a commissioner's failure to attend sittings of the council for serious reasons beyond his control that cause no prejudice to the electors of the school board or the commissioner's electoral division, does not entail the end of his term.

The first three paragraphs do not apply if the commissioner is unable to attend the sittings by reason of the provisional execution of a judgment declaring his disqualification or ouster from office."

- 4.17 In order to be named to sit on a committee, a commissioner must be present; physically, by telephone, or by video-conference at the meeting or have signified his interest in sitting on a committee in writing to either the Director General or the Secretary General prior to the meeting.

5.0 RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE CHAIR

- 5.1 The Chair exercises the rights and exercises the duties provided for in the Education Act, this policy, and "Robert's Rules of Order".
- 5.2 Specifically, the Chair shall:
- 5.2.1 Ensure that proceedings are conducted in an orderly fashion, with an appropriate degree of decorum and conduct the meeting in an impartial manner.
 - 5.2.2 Determine whether proposals and questions can be entertained.
 - 5.2.3 Give a warning for inappropriate behavior, ask for an apology, and propose sanctions to the Council, if required, at the time of the incident.
 - 5.2.4 Call for a brief break at his discretion.
 - 5.2.5 Be an ex-officio member of all legally constituted committees and/or ad hoc committees of the Council.
 - 5.2.6 Have the right to intervene in his capacity as a Council member. In such a case, he will relinquish the Chair and be replaced by the Vice-Chair or any other member of the Council.
 - 5.2.7 Have the right to require a member to leave the meeting temporarily for just cause subject to an appeal of his decision.
 - 5.2.8 The Chair can vote on all issues at Council meetings and has the casting vote in the event of a tie.
- 5.3 The Chair must entertain an appeal resulting from the decision of the chair.



6.0 QUESTION PERIODS

6.1 Public

The Council of Commissioners will entertain questions and statements from interested parties at each session. In order to maintain order and to respond to questions:

- 6.1.1 The agenda for the meetings of the Council of Commissioners will provide for two (2) question periods, one immediately after the approval of the agenda, and one at the end of the meeting.
- 6.1.2 The first question period may be limited to a maximum of twenty (20) minutes and the second question period may be limited to a maximum of ten minutes. At the discretion of the Chair, either question period may be extended.
- 6.1.3 Speakers are asked to limit their initial presentation to five (5) minutes. Speakers must identify themselves, state what organization they represent (when applicable) and address the Chair.
- 6.1.4 The Chair may redirect any question to a member of the School Board administration or to another member of the Council of Commissioners who wishes to respond.
- 6.1.5 A question or statement may be included or appended to the minutes when presented in writing. The subject of oral questions will be recorded and responses may also be included with the minutes.
- 6.1.6 When a question cannot be answered at the time of asking, the Chair will request a member of the administration to obtain the necessary information so that the question may be answered at the next meeting of the Council of Commissioners.

6.2 Commissioners

- 6.2.1 The agenda for the meetings of the Council of Commissioners will provide for one question period for commissioners at the end of the meeting.
- 6.2.2 All questions are addressed to the Chair.
- 6.2.3 Any question requiring a decision must be placed on the agenda either prior to the meeting or for a future meeting and a draft resolution provided to the Secretary General as stipulated in section 1.0.
- 6.2.4 The Chair may redirect any question to a member of the School Board administration or to another member of the Council of Commissioners who is able to respond.
- 6.2.5 When a question cannot be answered at the time of asking, members of the Administrative Council will research the question and respond at the following meeting in agenda item "Business Arising from the Minutes".



6.2.6 The subject of questions will be recorded and responses may also be included in the minutes.

6.3 **Students**

The agenda for the meetings of the Council of Commissioners will provide for one question period for students at the beginning of the meeting. Sections 6.2.2 to 6.2.6 apply to questions asked by students.

7.0 **ABUSE OF RULES OF ORDER**

7.1 When a participant contravenes the rules, especially those relating to order, the Chair will issue a warning and subsequently may impose, or may ask the Council to impose, one or several sanctions:

7.2 Possible sanctions may include:

- Request to withdraw certain comments;
- Request for an apology;
- Withdraw right to speak at the meeting;
- Motion of censure;
- Request to leave the meeting.

7.3 The incident may also be referred for study and recommendation to the Review Committee formed under the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for the Commissioners of the Central Québec School Board. A motion to impose a penalty against a member requires a simple majority vote.

8.0 **DEFINITIONS**

8.1 **Question of privilege**

A question of privilege may be raised when a member believes that his reputation or that of another member of the Council is endangered or to complain about physical conditions of the meeting room or other similar circumstances.

8.2 **Point of order**

A point of order may be raised if a member considers that an inexact expression has been used, that an argument already dispensed with has been reintroduced or if a rule of procedure has been violated.

8.3 **Calling the Question**

Calling the question is a motion asking the assembly to vote on the motion being debated. If it is accepted by a majority vote, then the motion being debated is voted upon immediately. If it is rejected, the debate continues.



8.4 **Amendments**

An amendment may be proposed at any time during the discussion of a main motion.

An amendment can itself be amended, in which case the amendment to the amendment takes precedence over the amendment.

8.5 **Motion**

A proposal for action, in particular, a formal proposal made by the Council of Commissioners (e.g. *I move the adoption of the following resolution*".)

8.6 **Resolution**

A formal expression of opinion, will or intent adopted by the Council of Commissioners.

9.0 **REVIEW**

9.1 At its first public meeting of each school year, the Council of Commissioners will examine the Rules of Order and Procedure.

9.2 The Rules of Order will be amended from time to time as is necessary.

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