



**Dunrae Gardens (DG) Governing Board (GB)**  
**Minutes for March 26, 2024**

**Attendance:**

Cathy Auger  
Noémie Battista  
Alison Beck  
Cynthia Canale (Principal)  
Fabiana Ciacciarelli  
Vanessa Contenta  
Despina Kouremenos  
Tina Lanni  
Mélissane Mathieu  
Marie Anne Polonia (Chair)  
Lena Stuart  
Diana Theophilopoulos  
Karolina Weclas

**Regrets:**

Bertin Bateng Tcheunkwa  
Pietro Gasparini

**Guests:**

Miranda O'Reilly  
Ugo Landry-Tolszczuk  
Dimitra Kanavaros  
Kevin Moon  
Melanie Carreira  
Amanda Pounder  
Joel Trudeau  
Demetrios Giannacopoulos, EMSB  
Eleni Kalogerakos  
Demi Mintzas  
Stephanie Catherine Erskine  
Mary Kyres  
Mei Mei Lee

**1. Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 pm.

Given the number of guests, the Chair gave a quick reminder of the rules of GB. She asked the attendees, during the portions of the meeting when they were authorized to speak, not use the chat but instead raise their hands and wait to be called on so that they could ask their questions verbally.



**2. Adoption of the Agenda**

***Motion to adopt the agenda (Noémie Battista, Karolina Weclas)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

**3. Question Period (10 minutes)**

Ugo Landry-Tolszczuk asked about the procedures of the GB and for providing notice of a meeting.

The Chair responded that GB meetings always appear in the monthly calendar provided to parents, and that the rules for and minutes of the GB that are posted on the DG website. As for the sending of documents, they are sent when they are available.

**4. Governing Board Operations**

**4.1. GB Approval of January 30th, 2024 Minutes**

***Motion to approve the minutes of the GB meeting of January 30th, 2024 (Karolina Weclas, Vanessa Contenta)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

**4.2. B.A.S.E. Daycare Program Handbook 2023-2024**

***Motion to approve the B.A.S.E. Program Handbook 2023-2024 (Noemie Battista, Despina Kouremenos)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

**5. Principal's Report (presented by Principal Canale)**

The Principal's Report presented by Principal Canale and the report on field trips presented by Noémie Battista are appended to these minutes as Appendix A.

Despina Kouremenos report on DG's enrichment program is attached as Appendix B.

**6. Business Arising**

**6.1. Educational Project**

Principal Canale explained that the Educational Project is an extremely important document for all EMSB schools. It must be approved by GB and then will be uploaded to the DG website. It is the product of significant work of different individuals, including various members of the staff,



throughout the year in view of assessing DG and the results and experiences of the students as a whole.

It was specifically noted that DG's academic success rate is excellent.

***Motion to approve the Educational Project (Karolina Weclas, Tina Lanni)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

## **6.2. School Pictures Service Provider**

***Motion to approve Green Apple as the school pictures service provider (Diana Theophilopoulos, Fabiana Ciacciarelli)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

## **6.3. School Uniform Providers**

***Motion to approve Top Marks as the school uniform provider (Diana Theophilopoulos, Fabiana Ciacciarelli)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

## **6.4. School Catering Provider**

***Motion to approve Traiteur Merenda as the school catering provider (Diana Theophilopoulos, Fabiana Ciacciarelli)***

***Motion passes unanimously***

## **7. November Parent-Teacher Interviews 2023-2024**

This past year, the November Parent-Teacher Interviews were conducted over one day as opposed to two days. At the time, as this practice was new, the GB agreed to discuss this change later. As a result, at the present meeting, the GB was asked for its feedback regarding the functioning of Parent-Teacher Interviews in November 2023.

While it was recognized that the change in schedule of Parent-Teacher Interviews occurred upon short notice, this could be corrected in future years. It was agreed by all GB members that the November Parent-Teacher Interviews proceeded smoothly, with at least 85% of parents attending. In situations where there was a scheduling conflict, arrangements were made between parents and teachers to meet on an alternate date.

Therefore, the GB expressed its comfort with Parent-Teacher Interviews being held on one day.

## **8. Reports**



### **8.1. Fundraising Reports**

A Teacher Appreciation Week Fundraiser request was sent via email.

### **8.2. Central Parents Committee (CPC) Report**

No report was presented.

### **8.3. Dunrae Gardens Family Association (DGFA) Report**

Diana Theophilopoulos provided a report on behalf of the DGFA. Teacher Appreciation Week was held February 26 to 29. Approximately \$3000 was fundraised from parents. Teachers were provided with gift cards of their choice, a catered meal, and chocolate. Also, baked goods were brought in by parents.

A new session of ECA began after March Break. There are multiple new offerings, and another cooking class was added, now taught by a professional chef instead of Mr. Mike, who was unavailable.

### **8.4. PPO Report**

Vanessa Contenta presented a report on behalf of the PPO. The PPO met prior to March Break and discussed how to inform parents about the PPO and its role. They are planning to hold a meeting in the future.

It was discussed that parents do not realize that they must request to receive communication from the PPO every year, otherwise they do not receive any further communications at all. A request was made to confirm that this was in accordance with legal requirements given the importance of the PPO.

Vanessa Contenta confirmed that the PPO is looking into ways to inform the parent population of the PPO's role.

### **8.5. Marketing Committee**

Noémie Battista was thanked for her efforts to improve DG's social media presence, both in English and in French. It was recognized that this was a huge undertaking, both in terms of time and effort.

Noémie Battista thanked the DGFA and parents for their contributions to Teacher Appreciation Week.

## **9. Varia**

No topics were discussed.



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## 10. Adjournment

***The meeting was adjourned (Karolina Weclas, Vanessa Contenta) at 8:03 pm by unanimous consent.***

***Next meeting will be held virtually.***

Approved by the GB on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alison Beck  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Marie Anne Polonia  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cynthia Canale  
Principal

DRAFT



## APPENDIX A

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AND REPORT ON FIELD TRIPS

**1-Story Telling Event:** February 9th, led by the talented storyteller, Raquel Riviera. With tales centered around nature and peace, Raquel mesmerized our PreK to Grade 1 students, encouraging them to embody various elements of nature such as trees, the sun, and the wind.

#### 2-Black History Month Celebration

Our school was honored to welcome Malik Shaheed on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, a renowned TV host, entertainer, and founder of Youth Stars, for a special Black History Assembly.

Beyond the educational aspect, Malik emphasized the underlying themes of kindness, diversity, and acceptance. These are values that we hold dear at our school, and it was wonderful to see our students learning about their importance and how they can integrate them into their everyday lives.

#### 3-Perseverance week

Hooked-on Schools (Perseverance Week) that took place this year from February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024-February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Perseverance Week allows us to unite as a community to emphasize the importance of determination, grit, and resilience.

#### 4- Report Cards & Parent Teacher Interviews by invitation

Parent-teacher interviews were held Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, by invitation only. Report cards were uploaded on Mosaik.

#### 5-Field Trips (Noemie)

- Since our return from March Break, our students began going on field trips. Cycle 3 students went to CEPsum on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. They participated in multiple physical activities, and this was their first time using the pool after one year. They enjoyed their time with their friends. Fortunately, due to budgets given by the school board, we were able to cover a certain percentage of the bus cost.
- Our cycle students will be going to the Halo race again this year. The date is still to be confirmed May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Our second-grade students are going to “La Maison Théâtre” on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Fortunately, due to budgets given by the school board, students won't be paying anything for the field trip.



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- Quebec City dates have been discussed by the cycle 3 team and chosen. Considering that the ministry exam dates have been differed due to the teacher's strike, the only option of having the trip was in the month of May. We considered the dates that worked with everyone, and we settled on May 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>. There is also another modification since our last discussion. Grade 5 & 6 students will be attending the field trip together although the fifth graders will only be going for one day. The sixth-grade students will be attending the field trip for two days.
  - √ Quick overview of the field trip: Grade 5 & 6 students leave together at 7am on May 15<sup>th</sup>. They will spend most of the day together participating in multiple activities. The fifth-grade students will leave around 5 pm to head home where they will stop at a restaurant for supper on their way home. They should arrive at school in the evening (around 8 pm).
  - √ The sixth-grade students will spend the night in Quebec and they will enjoy another day of activities on May 16<sup>th</sup>. They should return to school in the early evening (around 6 pm).

As we discussed this field trip, there are multiple factors to consider.

1. We want their teachers to attend the field trip as much as possible. This plan works much better with the teachers' schedules.
2. It was a little difficult for some of the fifth-grade students to sleep overnight at camp last October and many of them shared their concerns about that point during the trip.
3. Considering that the sixth graders are our graduating class, it would be nice for them to have some time together before they leave Dunrae Gardens.
4. It allows our cycle 3 students to be together too although it gives each grade a certain independence from one another.



**APPENDIX B**

**ENRICHMENT PROGRAM UPDATES**

GB Meeting-March 26, 2024

Enrichment Program Update (Despina Kouremenos-Resource Teacher)

Our DG Enrichment Program is running with continued success and student engagement.

Some noteworthy results & news that I would like to share with you are the following: Some of our students participating in the Caribou Math International Competition reached international status and were featured in the EMSB social media page.

We had some amazing results that were obtained by our DGS students in the February contest. Notably, one of our Grade 4 students, Michael Marciante, ranked 1st at the school board level (N = 71), provincial (N = 121), national (N = 5713) and YES, international level (N = 8637). I would also like to add that he jumped in rank by a factor of 248 from rank 248 to rank 1.

Another one of our very dedicated Grade 2 students, Izaak Wolfson Trudeau, ranked 1st at the school level and 2nd at the school board level. He also participated in another challenge, the Caribou Calcrostic Contest, during March break. He ranked 1st out of 16 students worldwide in Grade 2!

DG had award certificates printed out for our students and they were also featured on our school instagram page.

We have 2 more Caribou Math sessions left, on April 3rd & May 1st.

In addition to the remarkable results in Caribou Math, our Global Issues Problem Solving group is now in the competition phase. Tomorrow, March 27th, our students have a 2 hour competition online, where they meet other students internationally. Throughout their engagement, student participants have actively researched and applied the six-steps of the creative problem-solving process as they resolved a Future Problem connected to the topics of Tourism, Urbanization, and Antarctica. Successful competitors who qualified to the Affiliate Bowl developed a plan with creative and viable solutions for a future scene on Autonomous Transportation. To celebrate their achievements, these students are invited to the first ever Canadian Affiliate Bowl, which will be hosted at Lauren Hill Academy, Jr. Campus on April 20th from 10am– 5pm. This is an opportunity for them to meet and interact with peers from other EMSB schools who share similar interests.

The Let's Talk Science Competition continues where our grade 6 students have covered 5 chapters in their challenge already.





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The Debating & Public Speaking program will also continue until May. Over the past month, our debaters have presented their public speeches on their selected topic and received feedback. They have learned about the format of Canadian Nationals style debate. Finally, the topic and teams for the debate tournament have been assigned. We will begin our formal in school debate tournaments over the first three weeks of April. Students will debate against their peers while the final team scoring the highest within each school will be invited to the inter-school debate event, tentatively scheduled for May 3rd (Location and time TBA). There are 5 EMSB schools participating.

Destination Imagination with the Grades 2 & 3 students continues as well with our students having had their first design challenge last week. The objective of this class was to:

- Use the creative process to plan, design and build an invention of their choice
- Utilize the skills necessary to brainstorm and communicate effectively as a team

Battle of the Books program:

Our Grades 4-6 readers have continued to make steady progress in covering the books required for the competition. In addition, they covered the rules for creating trivia questions (i.e., quotes and action-based) and have started crafting trivia questions based on collective assessment and in class discussions. These questions will enter the pool of potential questions to be asked during the competition. They have started practicing for the competition by asking the group to answer potential questions within a 1-minute time limit. Students are also learning how to effectively reason and listen to the posed questions. After answering each question, students are required to reflect and discuss their answers. We aim to start simulating the competition by the end of March to carefully select the team members who will participate and represent their school in the EMSB final competition. The within-school competition is scheduled to take place during the week of April 22nd. The final EMSB competition is scheduled for May 17th. The competition will be hosted at Roslyn Elementary School from 9am-11am.

I would like to conclude this Enrichment update by congratulating each participant for their efforts, preparation, and effective engagement in the enrichment program!