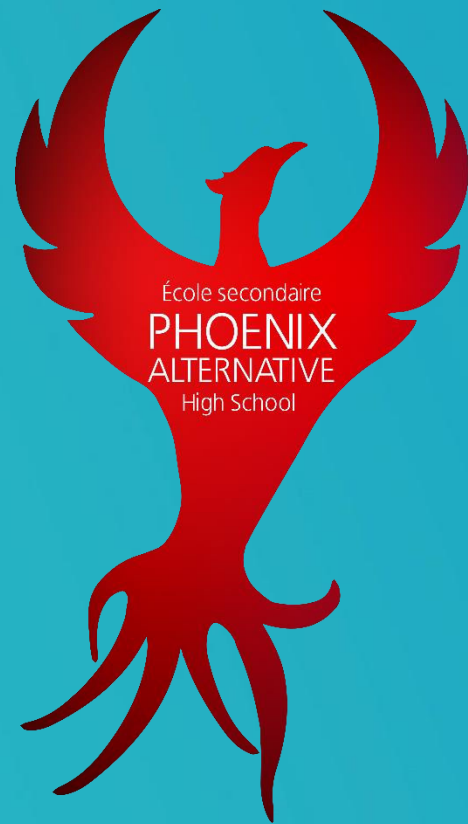


ENGAGE • BUILD • ACHIEVE
ENGAGER • BÂTIR • ACCOMPLIR



Phoenix Alternative High School

EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

2024-2027



PURPOSE AND DEFINITION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT	3
LEGAL FRAMEWORK	3
GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT	4
CONSULTATIONS HELD FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT	4
MISSION.....	5
VISION	5
SCHOOL/CENTRE PROFILE.....	6
CHALLENGES	16
POLICY ORIENTATIONS.....	16
OBJECTIVES.....	16
SCHOOL ORIENTATION 1	17
SCHOOL ORIENTATION 2	18
GOVERNING BOARD ADOPTION	19

PURPOSE AND DEFINITION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

This educational project is a strategic tool through which Phoenix Alternative High School has defined its policy orientations, priority actions, and expected results to inform its community in this regard, with a view to ensuring educational success for all students regardless of age. This educational project reflects the characteristics and needs of the students who attend Phoenix Alternative High School, as well as the community's expectations with regard to education

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Education Act (EA) states that an institution's educational project must consist of the following elements (EA, Sections 37 and 97.1):

1. A description of the context in which the educational institution acts and the main challenges it faces, particularly with respect to academic success and, in the case of a vocational training center, the relevance of the training to regional or national labor market needs;
2. The specific policy orientations of the educational institution and the objectives selected for improving student success;
3. The targets to be achieved by the end of the period covered by the educational project;
4. The indicators to be used to measure achievement of these objectives and targets;
5. The intervals at which the educational project is to be evaluated, determined in collaboration with the school board;

The Educational Project must also:

1. Respect the students', parents' and school staff's freedom of conscience and of religion (EA, Section 37);
2. Cover a period that is harmonized with the period covered by the school board's commitment-to-success plan and the period covered by the MEQ strategic plan (EA, Sections 37.1, 97.2 and 209.1);
3. Where applicable, comply with the terms prescribed by the Minister to govern the coordination of the entire strategic planning process between the educational institutions, the school board and the MEQ (EA, Section 459.3);
4. Be consistent with the school board's commitment-to-success plan (EA, Sections 37 and 97.1).

GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

Committee Members	Roles
Darlene W. Miller	Committee Member Admin
Campbell Riddle	Committee Member Support Staff
Sarah Low	Committee Member Teaching Staff
Kate Holland	Committee Member Support Staff

CONSULTATIONS HELD FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

Consultations	Date	Time	Location	Details (optional)
Teachers	March 17, 2023	11 am	Staff meeting	
Other Staff Members	March 17, 2023	11 am	Staff meeting	
Students	January 26 2023	afternoon	Focus group	
Parents	April 2023		survey	
Governing Board	<u>NA</u>	NA	NA	
Other Stakeholders				

MISSION

To provide a safe, student-centered, learning opportunity for vulnerable and at-risk students who, while academically capable, are experiencing difficulty in their zoned school.

VISION

VISION

The community of Phoenix believes that all students, given respect, support, guidance and compassion, are capable of making positive changes and achieving their personal and academic potential.

CORE VALUES

A positive, nurturing, and respectful relationship with each of our students is the foundation of all that we do. Relationships are not an add-on to the learning experience, but rather, they are a core requirement of our work with our students.

Our approach with students is based on a non-punitive, mentoring philosophy which emphasizes kindness, empathy, patience, respect, and which values the dignity and individuality of our students. We continuously work *with* students so that they can grow and develop as learners and as members of society.

We work with a small group of students in order to establish a caring, safe, empathetic, family-type environment within the class and within the school. We become familiar with each student in order to validate and offer personalized and proactive interventions regarding the student's academic and personal goals.

We understand that adolescence is a time of growth and accept that students will make mistakes. We believe in helping students learn from their mistakes, and that students deserve a non-judgmental fresh start every day.

SCHOOL/CENTRE PROFILE

External Environment

Phoenix Alternative is located in a residential area of Duvernay, Laval. We do not have a specific zone as we accept Secondary 3, 4 and 5 students in the general path, from all of the high schools within the territory of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board. As such, students travel to Phoenix from areas of the Laurentians, Lanaudiere, and Laval. The School Board generally does not provide transportation to the students of Phoenix. The majority of our students reside in the Laval area. However, students do travel from areas such as Lacuhte, Terrebonne, Rosemere and Lake of Two Mountains.

Our central location allows us to benefit from field trip opportunities in the greater Montreal area, the Laurentians and Lanaudiere regions. We value field trips as educational and relationship building opportunities, and try to partake in outside activities at least once a month. The community of Phoenix believes that all students, given respect, support, guidance and compassion, are capable of making positive changes and achieving their personal and academic potential.

The school and our families work with a number of outside agencies and support groups (Youth Protection, CISSS, private Psychologists, and Psychiatrists). In the 2022/2023 school year, 32 of our students (59% of the Phoenix Population) are receiving outside professional help. Because our students are in three geographic areas, the wait time for service varies. As a means of alleviating waiting lists, which may exceed a year, Phoenix has hired a licensed therapist to work with our students twice a week.

Public education in our region, both elementary and secondary, is offered by Commission Scolaire de Laval (French public school board). Private Anglophone secondary education exists in the form of North Star Academy. The nearest CEGEP available in our region is College Montmorency. Vocational and Adult Educational programs are offered both from the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board.

Parental involvement varies from cohort to cohort and by grade level. In general, as students progress from Secondary 3 to Secondary 5, the degree of parental involvement decreases.

The IMSE is made up of the proportion of families with children whose mother does not have a diploma, certificate or grade (which is two-thirds the weight of the index) and the proportion of households whose parents were not employed during the Canadian Census reference week (one third of the weight of the index). The IMSE for Phoenix is currently 6 which is considered intermediate. This index indicates that the geographic area surrounding Phoenix ranks

intermediate with respect to the Socio Economic Index. As students attending Phoenix travel from areas within the School Board, this index does not necessarily represent the reality of our students.

Internal Environment

Phoenix is a Cycle 2 Secondary School, thus all students entering Phoenix are over 13 years of age. Depending on the year, at least 1/3 of our students have a code that permits them to stay in the youth sector up to 21 years of age. During the 2022/2023 school year, 2 of our students were 18 and over. Given the increasing number of coded students entering the school, we expect this number to increase.

Students entering Phoenix are expected to follow the regular Ministry of Education Graduation Pathway. Because of our small size, we do not offer different pathways that are available in many larger high schools: Phoenix does not offer Work Oriented Training, Semi-Skilled, or Active (a secondary 3 derogation for students experiencing academic difficulty). Nor does Phoenix offer Sports or Arts Concentration programs.

Most schools are allocated staff based on the number of registered students. Phoenix staffing and registration does not work in that manner. Rather, we are allocated teachers and accept students to the program until we reach our maximum. For the last 5 years, Phoenix has been allocated 7.61 teachers. Because we have a high number of coded and at-risk students, we have a maximum class size of 20 students. This class maximum is frequently exceeded (as of January 2019 a total of 37.5 % of classes exceed maximum size. This includes 75% of our ELA classes, 50 % of our FSL classes, 50% of our Art classes, 50% of our PE, 50% of our ERC classes, 25% of our History classes, 25% of our Science classes and 20% of our Math classes. For the 2023/2024 school year our allocation was increased to 8.78 teachers.

Our low ratio, and 8.78 teachers, allows us to accept approximately 80 students (including the weighting of coded students). When we factor in the codes of our students, we can generally accept between 50 and 60 students. We frequently begin the year at approximately 75% capacity. We continue to register new students during September and October, and historically, we reach capacity following the first term. Once we reach capacity, students who express an interest in attending are placed on a waiting list. As students leave during the year, we offer places to students on the list, however only in exceptional circumstances are students accepted during Term 3. Given that our staffing has increased to 8.78, we expect to increase the number of students attending Phoenix to 65 for the 2023-2024 school year.

All of the students attending Phoenix were not achieving their potential in their regular zoned school, or in the case of some secondary III students, were not expected to achieve their potential. These students are either referred to Phoenix by their home school personnel, referred by family or friends who have heard of Phoenix, or learn about us from our web site: Phoenix does not advertise to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board population.

All students with their guardians are required to attend an interview where the philosophy and expectations of the school are explained in detail. Students who are accepted to our program are expected to embrace our values. In addition, students accepted into the program all must be academically capable of following the regular Secondary path. Specifically, Secondary 2 students must have passed 2 out of 3 core classes (ELA, FSL or Math).

Phoenix's student population changes approximately 30% - 50% each year as students graduate, enter trades, or leave the school. Thus, from year to year the overall profile of the student body can change dramatically. Given the small data size and the student turn-over, establishing data trends from one year to another is difficult and not always fruitful. We find it more meaningful to establish goals and strategies in the beginning of the year. This allows us to accurately address the needs of the current student body.

Enrollment Statistics for 2022/2023

Mother Tongue: The majority of our students (53%) listed English as their mother tongue during registration. French was listed as mother tongue for 27% of our students, and 20% indicated other languages such as Italian, Greek or Romanian as mother tongue.

Enrollment Numbers: Every year our breakdown by level varies. We try to balance each level so that Secondary 5 students represent 1/3 of the school population. This reduces the overall turnover of the school in September.

Our breakdown of students for 2023/2024 is:

- Secondary III 11
- Secondary IV 26
- Secondary V 19

Indicators Provided by the Ministry of Education and Higher

Success Rate of MEQ Uniform Exams

End of year success rates on the uniform exams can vary greatly from year to year due to the changing nature of our students and our small cohort (15-20 students). The majority of our Secondary 4 students fail the ministry exams the first time they write them (Table 1). Indeed, Secondary 4 Math, Science and the History courses are frequently repeated in summer school and in Secondary 5. Secondary 5 students who have failed the Science, History or Math exams are able to re-write the exams for credit in January, and if still unsuccessful, again in June. Students who fail to graduate often do so because of missing credits from Math, History, and Science.

Table 1: June 2023 MEQ Course Success Rates

Subject	Number of Students	Average (%)	Success (%)
Sec. 4 Math CST (563-414)	21	64.8	66.7
Sec. 4 Science ST (555-444)	24	57.7	41.7
Sec. 4 History (585-404)	21	56	57.1
Sec. 5 ELA (612-536)	19	72.7	100
Sec. 5 FSL (634-504)	23	80.7	95.7

Source: Sec. 4-5 MEQ Results Dashboard in SWLSB Power Bi, extracted on October 25, 2023.

Graduation Statistics

A note about statistics

It should be noted that many (15-25%) of the students in Phoenix who do not have an official code, do suffer from conditions that may have been eligible for codes given earlier identification. Thus, the comparison between coded and non-coded students is often unrealistic. In addition, we have a relatively small cohort size (18 students in secondary 5) which makes statistical comparison problematic.

Graduation Rates

The majority of students entering Phoenix return the following year or, if in Secondary 5, finish the academic year. A number of our students attain the requirements to attend vocational education, but do not graduate with a High School certificate.

2019-2020 -- 19/22 = 86%

2020-2021 -- 14/18 = 78%

2021-2022 - 10/18 = 56%

2022-2023- 12/16 = 75%

Drop-Out Rates

CEGEP and Trade School

2019-2020– 11/21 = 52% went on to CEGEP and 14% went on to a trade

2020-2021– 8/19 = 42% went on to CEGEP and 11% went on to a trade

2020-2021 – 1/13 = 8% went on to CEGEP and 23% went on to a trade

Characteristics Related to Student Success

Coded Students and Students with Mental Health Issues

Several of our non-coded students experience disorders and diagnoses similar to our coded students. However, an overview of the coded students that are accepted offers an understanding of the cohort of that year, as well as the changing needs of the students from year to year.

Currently 5 of our 18 secondary 3 students have a code. Of these 5 students, 3 have a code of 53.

During the 2022/2023 school year we had a total of coded students which represents 28% of the student population (Table 5). The predominant code was a code 53 which is given to students with a psychopathological disorder. The detailed breakdown for codes was:

Corresponding to an increasing number of students with a diagnosed psychopathological diagnosis, we see a growing number of students with mental health issues. Anxiety and depression are reported at high levels in the Tell Them From Me survey. Indeed, 51% of our students are receiving outside professional help (DPJ, Social Worker, Psychologist, and Psychiatrist) for mental health issues.

Table 2. Coded Students in 2022/2023 Per Grade Per Code

	Total Students	Code 53	Code 50	Code 34	Total Codes	Total %
Secondary III	16	3	2		5	31%
Secondary IV	15	8	1		9	60%
Secondary V	18	1	5	1	7	39%
Total		12	8	1	21	42%

Students Receiving outside mental Health/ DPG support

58 % of Phoenix students receive outside support (DPJ, followed by psychologist/psychiatrist or have other social or mental health supports in place.) We collect this data locally.

Tell Them From Me Results October 2022

The Tell Them From Me survey indicated that Phoenix students experience levels of Anxiety and Depression above the Canadian norms.

We continue to accept a growing number of students referred to Phoenix due to their anxiety. The socio-emotional struggle with anxiety continues to be a concern over the past few years at Phoenix Alternative High School.

Anxiety

- 40% of students in this school report having moderate to high levels of anxiety; the Canadian norm for these grades is 27%.
- 53% of the girls and 5% of the boys in this school had moderate to high levels of anxiety. The Canadian norm for girls is 37% and for boys is 17%.

Depression

- 73% of students in this school had moderate to high levels of depression; the Canadian norm for these grades is 25%.
- 59% of the girls and 32% of the boys in this school had moderate to high levels of depression. The Canadian norm for girls is 34% and for boys is 17%.

Literacy level Phoenix

During the 2022/2023 school year we saw an increase of secondary 3 students who struggled with reading comprehension, this had an effect on secondary 3 history results as well as end of year results. The success rate for reading comprehension per level from on the final report card are below. Please note that the critical level refers to students who obtained a result between 0 and 59%, at risk refers to students with a result between 60% and 73% and without risk, a result of 74% to 100%.

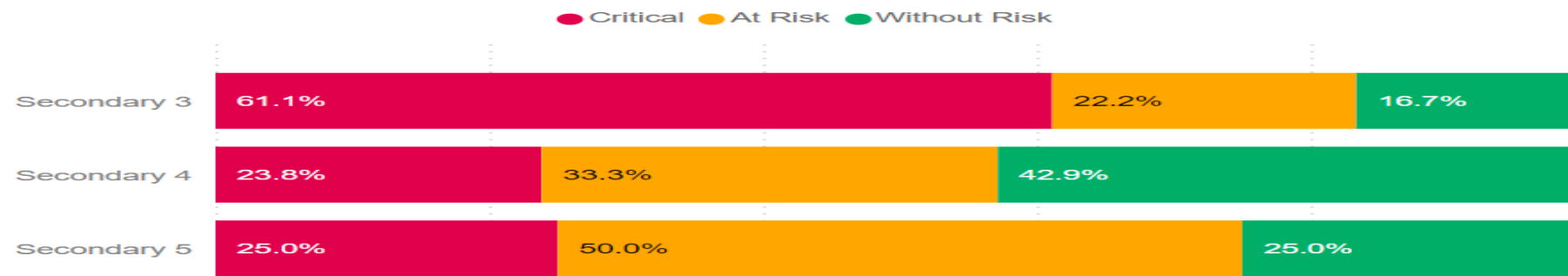


Table 3. June 2023 Summary Success Rates in ELA Reading Comprehension

Sec. 3	38.9%
Sec. 4	76.2%
Sec.5	75%

Source: dVision report titled “Secondary: distribution of results per competency or subject – detailed view”, extracted on October 25, 2023.

During the first and last month of each school year, the ELA teachers will administer and grade a standardized reading comprehension tool (DIBELS). This tool will provide information regarding which students will be targeted for specific in class and resource interventions.

Student Employment During the School Year

31% of our students work an average of 20 hours per week during the school year. Students work for a variety of reasons: some require funds to support themselves or help their family, others work for work experience and or spending money.

School Personnel

Phoenix typically is allocated 7.61 teachers from the school board. In addition we receive 2 full time Special Education Technicians and, depending on the number of codes that year, 25-35 hours of attendant time. We also benefit from a guidance counselor one day per week, and a psychologist for testing purposes on an as-needed basis. The school uses government measures to fund an Art Therapist once per week and a Pet Therapist twice per month. Over the last 4 years only 2 staff have moved/transferred/retired. Thus the permanent staff is stable. The average age of the full time permanent staff is 44.

The leadership style at Phoenix seeks to empower teachers and students to take ownership of their learning as well as the direction of the school. The school principal acts as a part of the greater team, as well as a support for students and staff.

School Organization

The school day begins at 9:30 AM and ends at 3:15 PM. The day is organized into 5 classes of 60 minutes, 5 minutes between classes, no recesses and 30 minute lunch break. All of the student materials are kept in the relative classes, thus reducing time required between classes.

Phoenix only offers the General Path for graduation without advanced courses in Math or Science; Phoenix does not offer Work Oriented, Semi-Skilled, pathways nor does it offer Sports or Arts Concentrations. With the exception of Math, History and Science, classes are multi-level and include a mix of students in Secondary III, IV, and V.

The entire staff (including Special Education Technicians, Art Therapist, and Guidance Counsellor) meets from 8:05 AM to 9:05 AM every other Friday to discuss, and find solutions for students experiencing difficulty. During these meetings, we create action plans for particular students and report on the level of success from the previous week's action plans. In addition, students who are not in obvious difficulty are given a "check-up" on a rotational basis.

School Climate

The staff is committed to supporting our students with their individual struggles and issues, both academic and personal. Staff consistently work together to better serve our population. School climate is a key factor in managing our students' stress and creating relationships that allow for adult to student mentoring.

We work to foster a family climate rooted in respect, relationships, and empathy. In order to foster this climate we:

- Encourage respectful interactions between staff and students
- Maintain positive, genuine, and respectful relationships between staff and students. This is fundamental to how we operate. Any conflict or poor decision, is approached from a perspective of learning from the mistake, and maintaining the relationship.
- Individually check in with each student each morning
- Individually say good-bye to all students at the main exit the end of the day

- Provide conflict resolution skills taught by staff
- Encourage conflict resolution by staff mediation
- Organize Phoenix Family Feasts (Friday lunch together with staff and students where we sample different ethnic cuisines)
- Provide a free, self-serve, healthy breakfast and sandwich bar, every day at breakfast and lunch. Healthy snacks fruits, and nuts are available all day.
- Plan frequent extra and co-curricular trips (approximately 1 per month).

Given that a growing number of students suffer from anxiety, we have implemented a number of procedures to minimize anxiety. We work to reduce student anxiety by:

- Eliminating bells during the day.
- Providing anxiety management strategies by our Special Education Technicians and Art Therapist.
- Introducing guided meditation to all students and providing follow-up groups for those interested.
- Offering Pet Therapy twice a month.
- Making animals available at all times in the French classroom.
- Providing standing desks, bean-bag chairs, couches etc. in many classrooms.
- Allowing students breaks during class where they work in alternative locations or take walks.
- Using internal substitution when teachers are absent, or when necessary, a limited number of external subs that are known to the students.
- Remaining flexible with respect to deadlines for assignments, and allowing for differentiated evaluation where permitted by the MEQ.

Extracurricular Activities:

Extracurricular activities at Phoenix occur mostly within the school day. Students make use of the weight room at lunch as well as before school begins. We leave the school on a monthly basis for activities both co-curricular (art museum, theatre, planetarium) as well as extra-curricular (sugar shack, bowling, movies). All activities that we attend involve the whole-school.

Evaluation Practices

Teachers employ formative and summative assessments with a focus on formative. Many of the teachers provide students the ability to resubmit assignments, take tests over two days, and allow students until the end of the term for missing assignments. Phoenix follows the standard government guidelines for all MEES and School Board examinations.

Student-Staff Relationship

Relationships are the foundation of all that we do at Phoenix. Much of our daily workings are designed to foster these trusting relationships. Thus, in general our relationship with the students is one of mutual respect.

School Institutional Conditions

- For the last two years Phoenix has benefited from multiple government measures including the Small Schools and Small Communities measures. These measures allow us to maintain low school fees (between \$78 and \$100), pay for all outings, school supplies, as well as our school breakfasts, healthy snacks and lunches for students.
- We have a one to one student laptop ratio. Laptops are between 2 years old. All students have access to laptops in each classroom. The majority of teachers integrate technology into their lessons and assignments.
- We have a total of 9 classrooms including a dedicated art room and Science classroom. In addition to the 9 classrooms, there is a library, student lounge, two fitness rooms, a small kitchen, a music room and two small resource rooms. Our building was formerly the School Board offices, and as such does not have a cafeteria or gymnasium. Students use the library and recreation room to eat lunch. Students can purchase a variety of foods (pizza pockets, pogos, bagels with cream cheese, etc) from the office. We have toasters and microwaves available for student use.
- The basement of the building houses the board archives as well as the maintenance union offices. This has little or no effect on our daily functioning.

CHALLENGES

- Student Success in Math, Science and Literacy
- Psychological well-being of Students

POLICY ORIENTATIONS

Support all students by targeting literacy and mental health strategies.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives	Description
Objective 1	To increase student proficiency in the reading competency in ELA
Objective 2	To provide targeted interventions based on individual student needs in order to improve students' ability to self-regulate.

SCHOOL ORIENTATION 1

Improve reading comprehension

MEQ OBJECTIVE / ORIENTATON	SWLSB OBJECTIVE / ORIENTATION	SCHOOL/CENTRE OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR(S)	TARGET(S)	MONITORING
MEQ Orientation 1	SWLSB Orientation 1: Support and increase the success of diverse learners and at-risk students academically, social, and emotionally.	To increase student proficiency in the reading competency in ELA by individual targeted measures.	DIBELS level	To improve the reading test results of students testing below a grade 8 level (DIBELS) by the end of each school year.	ELA teachers with input from other staff members. ELA teachers administer the DIBELS test in the beginning and end of the academic school year.

SCHOOL ORIENTATION 2

Improve mental health strategies.

MEQ OBJECTIVE / ORIENTATON	SWLSB OBJECTIVE / ORIENTATION	SCHOOL/CENTRE OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR(S)	TARGET(S)	MONITORING
MEQ Orientation 1	SWLSB Orientation 1: Support and increase the success of diverse learners and at-risk students academically, social, and emotionally.	To provide targeted interventions based on individual student needs in order to improve students' ability to self-regulate.	Beginning and end of year student survey.	50% of students will increase their ability to self-regulate as well as increase their knowledge and use of self- regulation tools.	School principal and behavior tech. team will ensure that the students are surveyed and that targeted interventions are occurring. Students will be surveyed twice (beginning and end).a year

GOVERNING BOARD ADOPTION

Resolution

G.B. RESOLUTION NUMBER ____NA____ **MOVED THAT** the 2024-2027 Educational Project be adopted as presented on ____NA____.
(date)

Seconded by ____NA____.

Signatures

CHAIRPERSON

PRINCIPAL