

**Alta Vista Public School  
Minutes • School Council  
Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021**

**NB: The meeting took place via Google Meets due to OCDSB COVID-19 protocols**

**1. Welcome and Introductions (Shelly Firth, Chair)**

**2. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes (Shelly Firth, Chair)**

The agenda was approved. The minutes were approved.

**3. Chair's Report (Shelly Firth)**

The winter clothing drive for outerwear for students in Kindergarten to Gr. 8 will resume when students return to school following the current provincial stay-at-home orders. Parents/guardians have asked for reminders.

If a need is identified in the community, please advise School Council.

**4. Administrative Report (Dennis Paré, Principal)**

Learning from home is challenging for staff and the community. AVPS borrowed 10 Chromebooks from Ridgemont High School. One-hundred devices have been loaned to students for at-home learning. Principal Paré will enquire if donations of Chromebooks may be accepted by AVPS.

Construction is ongoing at the school.

February is Black History Month, and the school is preparing to make it an engaging and interactive month (please see Teacher's Report below).

Staffing has started for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Report cards are expected to be available Feb. 11, but that could change with at-home learning being extended. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be revised by Feb. 25.

**5. Teacher's Report (Beth Rutland, Teacher's Representative)**

Christol Barrett-Kilongozi is planning Black History Month challenges that will encourage participation from all grade levels. Each day there will be a different question, and all responses will be entered into a draw daily to win a prize. To that end, and after discussion, Ms. Barrett-Kilongozi requested \$500, which was granted by School Council.

For the Kindergarten program, attendance is high to Google Meets and the students are managing to learn while having some fun; read-alouds, science experiments, building challenges and math learning – all in French.

For the Primary program, students in Mme. Saunders' class (Gr. 3) are preparing plays using breakout rooms and were able to do science experiments to learn about static force. Students in Mme. Rachelle's class (Gr. 2) have been learning about air and water. Students in Ms. Plamenig's class (Grs. 1-3) are learning about space and using jamboard to practise reading/writing. They also had a music lesson using instruments from home, including spoons and a plastic cup.

For the Junior program, students in Mr. Ellis's class (Gr. 5) have been listening to a podcast and are engaged in Knowledgehook Gameshows online in their math class to understand area concepts. Students Ms. Harp's class (Grs. 5-6) start the day with The Morning Show, which helps with presentation skills; one student presents the weather forecast, one student shares last night's hockey scores, and others take turns sharing news stories, neighbourhood news or helpful tips.

For the Intermediate program, students are learning the new online platform Xello. Students in Gr. 8 and their parents/guardians were made aware of the importance of attending the online Welcome to High School Information Sessions. Gr. 8 students will be cooking for their families over the next two weeks.

The Phys. Ed. program has focused on mental health/wellness with student inspiration boards, gratitude activities and acts of kindness. There are also at-home scavenger hunts and virtual detective games.

## **6. Treasurer's Report (Kathleen Wrye)**

We started the 2020-2021 school year with \$37,000 available for this year and next (given limited fundraising). School Council approved approx. \$9,000 at the October 2020 meeting. Since then, \$2,100 has been reimbursed with \$1,500 in invoices to come, which will leave approx. \$27,000 for the remainder of this year and next year.

We received the annual \$500 grant from the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board as well as \$270 from Mabel's Labels and \$50 in interest.

With respect to fundraising, School Council is unable to accept e-transfers; only donations in cash or cheque.

Beth Rutland asked that the funds approved to purchase skating helmets be reassigned for an indoor curling workshop. This request was approved by School Council.

To accommodate the changing learning platforms, requests from educators will be accepted on an ad-hoc basis this year rather than the two-term approach.

Following an extensive discussion about fundraising, including how to help families in need and providing an avenue for donations from the school community, the Fundraising Committee will meet and share proposals at the Feb. 17 meeting.

The merits of donating to AVPS through the Education Foundation of Ottawa was discussed. Donors are able to direct funds to specific schools by inputting the school's name into the message field at the bottom of the donation form.

## **7. New Business**

David Palframan presented his long-term proposal for an arboretum along the northern and eastern perimeters of AVPS. The arboretum will be a collaborate effort involving students and educators, parents/guardians, and the community at large. School Council affirmed their support for this proposal. In response, Mr. Palframan said he would prepare a written proposal for consideration (see Appendix A).

Community events will be tabled to the Feb. 17 meeting.

## **8. Next Meeting**

The next School Council meeting will take place via Google Meets on Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 7 pm. All parents/guardians of the AVPS community are welcome to attend.

## **Appendix A**

January 25, 2021

The Arboretum at Alta Vista Public School – An Eco Project

**Suggestions by:** Dr. David Palframan, MD, FRCP

The generous plot of land occupied by the school represents an opportunity to create a new forest on the north and western perimeters. Inside the 50 to 100 foot band of trees would be a winding walkway with exercise stations every 100 feet or so. The planting could be done geographically – trees of the boreal forest, the maples of Japan, Canada’s flowering fruit trees – or using classifications based on other categories, such as trees for a warming climate, trees of all colours, or conifers of all shapes. The students and staff could be engaged quickly in the search for the best ideas which would be sent to a steering committee.

### **Interesting Questions**

- Could we save money by planting seeds right in the classrooms, then transplanting to a “nursery bed” outside?
- How do we protect the trees and shrubs from bugs and rabbits?
- How do we irrigate the plants and could we rig up watering tubes attached to a solar-powered pump?
- How do we inform and recruit our neighbours?

### **Who Can Help Us**

The School has a lot of expertise already, and Wikipedia and YouTube are great resources. Potential helpers include MP David McGuinty (federal grants), MPP John Fraser (provincial grants), Counsellor Jean Cloutier, the city of Ottawa forester, Ed Lawrence the CBC gardening expert, forestry experts at the Kemptville College, experts from the Ottawa Horticultural Society and experts from the Experimental Farm (after May 1). Most of the brainpower would come from the Alta Vista Public School.

### **Getting Started**

Don’t wait for the perfect plan. Get the general outline set up and start the seeds. Recruit allies in the community and let the most beautiful eco project in Ottawa start rolling!