

Alta Vista School Council (AVSC) Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 16, 2024 7-9 pm

1. Welcome and Introduction (Melissa Extross, Chair)

2. Approval of Agenda

Agenda has been approved.

3. Approval of last meeting's minutes

Minutes from September's meeting will be approved in the November meeting

4. Chair's Report (Melissa Extross)

- **Meeting with Kurt Berger – Grounds Renewal**
 - Kurt Berger, an architectural technician, met with two members of council to discuss the aging school grounds and suggested the development of a phased renewal plan. Kurt will draft the phased renewal plan and send it to council for feedback, iteration, and approval.
 - Phase 1 will prioritize the kindergarten yard, aiming for construction in Summer 2025, contingent on successful fundraising.
 - Key priorities for renewal include: - Installing shade structures - Tidying up mulch and improving drainage - Adding a sandbox and creating an outdoor classroom space with a chalkboard and seating - Enhancing the paved area to better suit kindergarten needs
 - Potential grants and sponsorships from local businesses were discussed including the Minor Capital Grant, Matching Grant, and Tree Planting Grant.
 - **A Fundraising Committee**, consisting of three volunteers, will be formed to collaborate with Kurt and organize fundraising efforts.
 - Sarah Charron, David Etmanskie and David Canning volunteered for this committee.
 - Current funds available include \$15,500 in GIC and \$2,000 from pre-COVID council reserves.
 - The committee needs to commit funds by February 2024 to ensure timely progress.
 - Maintaining community interest and momentum will be critical.
 - Marty Carr, who has prior experience fundraising for the kindergarten yard (~\$100,000), will be contacted for advice and insights.
- **Constitution Review Committee**

The school council constitution, last updated in 2020-2021, will be reviewed and updated. Volunteers for this committee include Meera, Dave, and Caryn.

- **Principal Review**

The Executive will conduct a review of the principal. This year marks Dennis Paré's fifth year with the school, making it an important time to evaluate and reflect on the values and attributes desired in a principal.

- **Book Fair Coordination**

- Ownership of the Book Fair has been transferred back to AVPS. While the council has managed the event in recent years, the school will now take over with continued support from the council.
- Chili Night Coordination will still be the responsibility of school council. Chili Night is scheduled for November 28, coinciding with parent-teacher interviews. Sara Gill has volunteered to coordinate the event, including organizing contributions, condiments, and setup/tear-down. Melissa will connect Sarah with Mais (previous coordinator) for guidance.

- **Purdy's Fundraiser**

Purdy's is an important fundraiser for the school. While Purdy's provides marketing materials, a volunteer is needed to handle order sorting and distribution. Mara has volunteered to coordinate the Purdy's fundraiser.

5. Administrative Report (Dennis Paré, Principal)

- **School Updates**

- Construction progress is going well. The parking lot is back in use, and plans are underway to pave the yard. Efforts are being made to collaborate with Kurt Berger on integrating yard improvements.
- A new shed will be acquired, as the current one is shared and insufficient.
- The kindergarten section of the school remains incomplete, with HVAC installation, window replacements, asbestos abatement, and electrical work still pending.
- Although the HVAC units are loud, they have improved temperature regulation in the areas of the school that they are installed in. While there is progress, more updates are needed to enhance the school environment.

- **Staffing Updates and Class Reorganization**

- Staffing was stable until the recent reorganization, which resulted in a 1.0 FTE reduction due to district pressures.
- Class consolidations were necessary, with significant student movements, affecting classes from EF2A to EF6/7A.

- These changes have been disruptive and challenging for the school community, but educators and staff are working hard to adapt, ensure a smooth transition and are provide as much support as possible.

- **Alta Vista Safe Schools Committee**

Gloria will provide an update at the next meeting regarding the committee's initiatives and focus areas.

- **Elementary Program Review Update**

- The school board has engaged broadly and decided to slow down the review process to ensure thoroughness.
- The program proposal is expected to be delivered in Winter 2025, followed by community engagement from winter to spring.
- Implementation planning will occur next year, with more details to follow.

- **Active Transportation Collaboration**

Dennis Paré will be meeting with EnviroCentre next Friday to explore active transportation support. This partnership may help address transportation concerns and contribute to the school remodel efforts.

6. Teacher's Report (Stephanie Hindle, Teacher's Representative)

- **Update on School Activities**

Kindergarten:

- The kindergarten team welcomed Mrs. Karen Adams back, who visited classrooms to lead music circles. Students learned songs, explored instruments, and discussed rhythm, melody, and harmony
- They also engaged with important school events, including discussions about the significance of Orange Shirt Day, participating in the Terry Fox Run, and learning about safety both at school and on the bus.
- Students dived into fall-themed activities, observed seasonal changes, and explored sensory bins filled with leaves, acorns, pumpkins, and sunflower seeds—items collected and donated by the school community.

- **Primary (Grades 1-3):**

- Grade 1: Students enjoyed play-based learning, where games were integrated into language activities, fostering both learning and fun.
- Grade 2: In Social Studies, students celebrated different cultures, including a special focus on Rosh Hashanah. They explored science concepts by making butter and learning about liquids and solids. Hands-on math activities with manipulatives made learning exciting and interactive.

- Grade 3/4A: Students took a trip to Grasshopper Hill Park and the Alta Vista Fire Station, enriching their learning through community exploration.
- **Junior (Grades 4-6)**
 - A group of 80 Grade 4-6 students participated in Cross-Country Running at Mooney's Bay on October 10, proudly representing Alta Vista.
 - EF67A worked on Robert Munsch plays, where students brought stories to life by strategizing characters, lines, costumes, and scenes. Performances were shared with younger classes.
 - Upcoming Junior events
 - Junior Boys Soccer Tournament: October 24
 - Junior Girls Soccer Tournament: October 25
- **Intermediate (Grades 7-8)**
 - R78 students enjoyed art games and took on leadership roles by teaching football drills in gym class.
 - Two Alta Vista teams participated in an ultimate frisbee tournament on October 2. One team earned first place in their division, bringing pride to the school.
- **School Wide**
 - The Terry Fox Run took place on October 1, with students across all grades participating to support this annual tradition.
 - Upcoming events include:
 - Halloween Spirit Day on October 31 (no weapons permitted as part of costumes).
 - Remembrance Day Assembly on November 11.
 - Winter Music Night, date to be determined.

7. Treasurer's Update (Kathy Wrye, Treasurer)

Financial update

- Fiscal year ends on August 31. Year-end report provided to the Board based on financial income statements, with all revenue and expenses taken into account. Started the 2023-24 year with \$49k, ending the year with \$55k.
- Noted the Council policy on transportation costs – Council has agreed to pay for sport/team transport (i.e. cross country, ultimate frisbee). However, if the transport is needed for class-specific events, council will pay for those that need the support.
- Proposed \$4,000 for standing items in 2024-25 budget – approved by Council, no objections

- **October Funding Requests:**

- Dramatic Play set for Kinder \$2,500 - approved
- Luv2Groove Dance workshop for juniors \$3,175 – approved
- Luv2Groove Dance workshop for primary \$1,810 – approved

- Starr Gymnastics \$670 – approved
- Scientist in the School (grade 2) \$800 – approved
- Scientist in the School (primary) \$1000 – approved

- Ultimate Frisbee Team Entry Fee \$300 – approved
- 2 Cross Country Meet Buses (Junior) \$625 – approved
- 1 Cross Country Bus (intermediate) \$360 – approved
- PE Equipment \$2,500 – approved
- Rocks and Rings Curling Program (Grades 3-6) \$600 – approved
- Land Acknowledgement Workshop \$500 – approved
- Jungle Sport \$4000 – approved
- Science Program Consumable \$1,500 – approved
- Cooking/Kitchen Skill Group \$500 – approved
- French Library Books \$800 – approved

8. Committee/Event reports and updates

- **Farm Fresh Fundraiser (Melissa)**
This fundraiser closed a week before the meeting. Received almost 100 orders, raising \$2,600, of which the school keeps 40%.

- **Pizza Days (Caryn)**
Caryn is still on for running the Monday Pizza Program again this year. We will be using the same vendor as last year, Panago. However, they increased in prices this year. This will squeeze some of the profits made.

- **Sub Days (Ana)**
Ana is still on for running the Friday Submarine Days Program again this year.

- **Family Movie Night (Dean)**
Dean is still on for running Movie Nights this year. First movie night of the year will be on October 25, 2024, with funds going to Athletic Council.

9. Discussion Items and New business

Advocacy efforts for electric school buses were initiated by starting a petition, which was shared at a climate rally. Although the petition to the Ottawa District School Board did not explicitly mention electric school buses, there is an ongoing request for support by signing the petition.

11. Next meeting: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 (Virtual)