

Alta Vista School Council (AVSC) Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 20, 2024
7:00–8:30 PM (Virtual)

1. Welcome and Introduction (Melissa Extross, Chair)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Melissa Extross

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Minutes from the October and September meeting were approved.

4. Chair's Report (Melissa Extross)

- **PRO Grant**

Nicole Gibeau volunteered to organize an event for the PRO Grant, focusing on social media and online literacy for parents. She is awaiting quotes from Paul Davis and The White Hatter and will provide updates at the December meeting, including a potential funding request to cover the difference between the speaker's fee and the grant limit.

- **Grounds Renewal Update**

- Melissa/Principal Pare reached out to Kurt Berger regarding the grounds renewal plan. While no updates were available for this meeting, progress is expected by December.
- A meeting with Marty Carr is scheduled to discuss previous experiences with grounds renewal, fundraising, and lessons learned.
- Construction is unlikely next year, with the focus shifting to outreach and fundraising efforts.

- **Alta Vista Outdoor Rink (RinkRatz)**

Riaz Mohammed joined the meeting and shared an update on volunteer opportunities for maintaining the community rink. Various roles are available, including ice maintenance, flooding, volunteer coordination, and event planning. Without additional volunteers, the rink may not operate this upcoming season. Interested individuals can contact the rink team via Facebook or email.

5. Administrative Report (Dennis Paré, Principal)

- **Traffic Safety**

The EnviroCentre conducted a site visit to review the traffic around the school and the school's traffic calming measures. During their site visit, representatives from EnviroCentre highlighted specific areas of concern. They drafted recommendations and will work with the City of Ottawa to update signage and conduct enforcement blitzes to address parking and driving concerns.

- **Construction Update**

Some classrooms, including the kindergarten area and educator maker space, are awaiting HVAC updates. Current heating systems are manually managed, with further upgrades planned for next summer as this work requires window replacements.

- **School Priorities Learning Plan**

The school will embark on developing a School Priorities Learning Plan with a dual focus on math and wellness. Work on these priorities will commence with a team of educators collaborating on strategies.

- **Alta Vista Safe Schools Committee**

The committee has recruited student representatives (Grades 7 and 8) and parent volunteers have been identified. Their first meeting is upcoming.

6. Teacher's Report (Seline Herz-Fischler, Teacher Representative)

- **Kindergarten**

The kindergarten classes had an engaging month filled with learning and collaboration.

- Students welcomed representatives from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario on November 20, who introduced them to the workings of a dairy farm. Students learned how cows produce milk, explored the tools involved, and discussed where their food comes from.
- A new reading buddy program has started, pairing kindergarten students with junior-grade students to support oral language development, reading skills, and peer relationship building. Teachers expressed gratitude to the junior team for supporting this initiative.
- The kindergarten team is preparing for their role as hosts of the November 22nd movie night. Families are encouraged to contribute baked goods to support the bake sale, with proceeds going towards future classroom resources.
- A special workshop led by University of Ottawa science graduates captivated students with hands-on experiments exploring liquids, solids, and gases. Activities included texture investigations, mixing experiments, and a chemical reaction that launched a small "rocket."

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

Primary classes participated in various enriching activities this month:

- Students in Grades 1-3 danced with Mr. X from Luv2Groove last week in workshops funded by the council, promoting physical activity and creativity.
- EF2A, EF2B, and EF23A participated in a vermicomposting workshop led by Ms. Audra, learning about worms and their role in composting.
- On Remembrance Day, primary classes welcomed Commander Ryan Bell from the Navy, who discussed the three branches of the military, the role of animals in wartime, and the significance of the poppy.
- EF23A celebrated a mix of cultural and seasonal events, including Diwali, Halloween festivities, and lessons on mixtures and solutions.

- **Junior (Grades 4-6)**

Junior students had a productive and activity-filled month:

- The junior boys' soccer team placed second in their regional tournament, a notable achievement for the school. The junior girls' teams also participated with competitive spirit, thanks to two parent volunteer coaches.
- Students enjoyed Halloween celebrations, including pumpkin painting, and are now preparing for upcoming Bordenball tournaments on December 4, 5, 10, and 11.
- Various extracurricular opportunities are now available for junior students, including the Dungeons & Dragons Club, the new Art Club, and the Indigenous Club. Students are also participating in intramural sports as part of the tryout process for competitive teams.
- The school has received its third Learning for Sustainable Futures grant. Past projects included vermicomposters and hydroponic systems, with this year's focus being on expanding these sustainability initiatives.

- **Intermediate (Grades 7-8)**

Intermediate students have been busy with academic and extracurricular activities:

- The cooking club expressed gratitude for council funding, which supported a cheeseburger preparation activity.
- Grade 8 students worked on creative and educational projects, such as designing cities in geography, using historical events to study integers in math, and creating a "web of life" to illustrate ecosystem interdependence.
- Preparations for High School are underway, with parents advised to check Google Classrooms and emails for course selection information starting in the new year.
- Fundraising efforts are ongoing for the band and orchestra's year-end music trip to Toronto. Parents of student musicians may be asked to assist with baking sales in the coming weeks.

- Intermediate volleyball teams are practicing for their upcoming tournaments.
- **School-Wide Activities**
 - The school participated in Remembrance Day activities, including a meaningful assembly and a display in the front entry.
 - November is Holocaust Education Month, with teachers introducing age-appropriate stories, read-alouds, and presentations to foster understanding and reflection.

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

- **Bank Balance**
 - Current balance: \$48,773.72
 - Total allocated (to date): \$27,551
 - Amount available for requests: \$26,072
- **Recent Fundraisers**
 - Movie Night/Bake Sale: \$415
 - Farm Fresh: \$1,014
 - Mable's labels: \$291
 - Snow Out Blow Out: \$169
 - Purdy's: \$500 (to date)
- **Funding Requests**

The following funding requests were reviewed and approved by the council, reflecting a wide range of enrichment activities and classroom needs across grade levels:

- **Rag and Bone Theatre Workshops - \$3,000**
 - This will provide seven days of interactive workshops for all students from kindergarten to Grade 6.
 - The workshops will culminate in a performance of the *Hat Trick* show, tailored for different age groups: 30 minutes for kindergarten and 1 hour 15 minutes for older students.
- **Vermicomposting Workshop - \$350**
 - A hands-on learning experience for students to understand the role of worms in composting and sustainability.

- **Outdoor Portable Speaker for Kindergarten** - \$275
 - A portable speaker to support outdoor learning and activities for kindergarten students.
- **uOttawa Maker Mobile Workshop** - \$350
 - This workshop will bring STEM-focused activities directly to the school, offering interactive experiences in technology, engineering, and design for students.
- **Lego Club for At-Risk Students** - \$500
 - Funding will go towards purchasing discounted Lego sets to establish a Lego Club.
 - The school has agreed to accept donations of Lego from parents, which can be dropped off at the office.
- **Dance Workshops for Intermediate and Junior Students** - \$2,825
 - This includes Momentum Moves workshops for intermediate students, promoting physical activity and creativity through dance.
- **Annual Grants for Arch Street and Charles Hulse Schools**
 - Council approved annual grants of \$1,000 each to Arch Street Public School and Charles Hulse Public School, continuing its commitment to supporting neighboring schools with enrichment and equity-focused initiatives.
 - These grants are intended to help address the unique needs of each school without requiring additional oversight or detailed reporting to council by the schools.
 - The funds can be used at the discretion of the recipient schools to support activities or resources that benefit their students.

8. Committee/Event Reports and Updates

- **Farm Fresh**
Orders will be delivered November 27. Pickup required within 24 hours.
- **Movie Night**
Scheduled for November 22, hosted by the kindergarten team.
- **Gifts of Giving**
Collections are underway for donations. Volunteers and additional items are still needed.
- **Purdy's Fundraiser**
Sales are ongoing, with a deadline of November 26.

9. Discussion Items and New Business

- **Translating Council Communications**
The council discussed the importance of making its communications more

inclusive and accessible by translating materials into additional languages, starting with French and Arabic. This initiative aims to better engage and inform the diverse school community. Council will explore translating materials into French and Arabic starting next term.

- As the initiative rolls out, council will identify parent volunteers fluent in French and Arabic to review and vet translations for accuracy and cultural appropriateness.
 - Council identified that adding translations would increase the time required to prepare communications, as materials will need to be translated, reviewed, and finalized before distribution.
 - While initial efforts will focus on French and Arabic, the council will explore adding other languages based on community needs and volunteer availability.
- **Event Coordinators Needed**
Council is seeking volunteers to lead the Flavours of the World, Spring Fair Silent Auction, and Family Dance events in 2025.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18, 2024, in the school library (room 219) followed by a social at O'Brien's Roadhouse afterwards.