

Alta Vista School Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 21, 2025
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Welcome and Introduction

Chair Melissa Extross called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented. Motioned by Caryn and seconded by Abrar.

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Minutes from February, March, and April were reviewed and approved. Motioned by Dave and seconded by Caryn.

Chair's Report (Melissa Extross)

○ **Grounds Renewal Update:**

Given the ongoing Elementary Program Review, council could not pursue grounds renewal projects this school year. However, the board recently announced that it will begin covering the cost of playground structures, which opens the opportunity to submit two applications next year: one for the kindergarten yard and one to upgrade the deteriorating primary structure.

It was noted that the primary structure is mounted on a wooden platform that has become rotten and must be removed for safety reasons. This presents an opportunity to consider a comprehensive plan that addresses not just structures, but also shade and drainage issues, particularly near Doors H and I where muddiness persists.

Pricing for the kindergarten yard project is still pending. Communication with Kurt has been challenging, and Melissa will follow up by email to obtain updated figures.

○ **Grant for Charles Hulse and Arch Street Schools:**

Alta Vista Council has traditionally issued grants to Charles Hulse and Arch Street as part of community support. Both schools now have their own councils, and AV Council proposes to issue future grants directly to these new councils, rather than the schools themselves.

Council agreed that this approach aligns with the grant's intended purpose (enrichment activities), provided the new councils are formally set up with constitutions and bank accounts. It was suggested that Alta Vista Council offer

support and guidance based on its own experience, should the new councils have questions.

Melissa will reach out to the Charles Hulse and Arch Street councils to confirm their readiness to receive the grant and discuss logistics.

○ **Lunch Program Options – Barburrito and Freshii:**

Melissa raised the idea of exploring additional lunch offerings. While pizza continues to be the strongest performer in terms of funds raised, Subway, though popular with some, sees fewer orders, possibly due to pricing.

BarBurrito and Freshii are being considered as either replacements or additions to the current lunch rotation. While pricing is comparable to Subway, the concern is that these options may not align with children's tastes and could impact participation.

Council leaned toward adding a third lunch option rather than replacing an existing one but flagged the risk of volunteer burnout. The need for more coordinators and helpers was emphasized. Another consideration was whether adding more options might cannibalize pizza or Subway sales.

Next steps include:

- Melissa will contact BarBurrito and Freshii to gather more details on delivery options and pricing.
- A parent survey will be distributed to gauge interest in new lunch options and gather feedback on current offerings, including volunteer availability.

Review of Attendance and Removal of Members:

No removals or changes were required this month.

Administrative Report (Alina Orlea, Principal)

○ **School and Facilities Updates:**

- Refreshing of the kindergarten wing is underway. Two classrooms are complete, with three remaining.
- Asphalt resurfacing is scheduled for this summer.
- A planned heating upgrade has been postponed until 2026. This delay affects classroom configurations, as certain spaces must remain open for future equipment installation. Alina will seek clarification from the board regarding the postponement.

- The primary play structure will be removed this summer due to rotting of the supporting plaque. As part of the renovation, the supporting plaque and play structure will be replaced, the sandpit will be reinforced and they will create a defined boundary around it.
- Grade 4 classes will move to the portables next year. Intermediate students were not assigned to portables due to the layout of the building, and support personnel needs.
- **Staffing:**
 - Staffing assignments remain fluid, with many teachers moving between schools. Final assignments cannot be shared until they are confirmed at the start of the school year.
 - A fourth kindergarten class has been added due to a rise in registrations.
- **Operations and Transitions:**
 - Kindergarten Info Night took place in early May and was well attended. Melissa shared that it had the largest turnout in the past two years, some families came in hesitant to register with the OCDSB due to concerns about the Elementary Program Review. However, after touring the school and speaking with staff and Melissa, several parents felt reassured and comfortable registering their children at AVPS.
 - High school transitions are underway. Staff are coordinating with nearby schools for visits.
 - Incoming Grade 7 students will visit AVPS on June 13 for a transition orientation.
 - A Grade 7 vaccination clinic will take place on June 4.
 - A reminder was shared for families to complete field trip permission forms online; email/phone confirmations alone are not acceptable.
- **Graduation Planning:**

Grade 8 graduation is being planned by a parent committee. Grade 7 parents are being asked to assist with the leaving ceremony and have been provided with relevant documents. Some decorations from prior years are available in storage.
- **Curriculum:**

- EQAO testing for Grades 3 and 6 is scheduled for next week.
- Teachers are planning a variety of end-of-year activities.

Teacher's Report (Teacher Representative)

Kindergarten:

- Students are exploring the life cycle of butterflies, including live caterpillars in the classroom.
- They've also planted grass for their house models and participated in a soccer skills workshop.
- Science students from the University of Ottawa led a dinosaur fossil workshop.
- Weekly Music Circles with Ms. Karen continue.
- Junglesport was a major highlight, with obstacle courses promoting physical activity and perseverance.

Primary (Grades 1–3):

- The last Grade 3 class is completing the Swim to Survive program this week.
- Primary classes attended the Ottawa Children's Festival.
- EF2A and EF2B explored animals through art. EF1C students observed living things outside.
- EF1B conducted water absorption experiments.
- All classes enjoyed Jungle Sport and participated in Earth Day activities.

Junior (Grades 4–6):

- Grade 3 and 4 Book Club Fair Open House featured themes such as autism, dyslexia, hearing impairment, and the Special Olympics.
- Grade 3 and 4 students attended a Bike Rodeo and completed symmetry projects.
- 4A held a student-led mock election after researching political platforms, thank you to Ms. Brown and her students!
- State Presidential Basketball: Junior co-ed team placed 3rd, boys team placed 2nd.
- Grade 4s participated in Scientists in Schools and Junior dance workshops with Luv2Groove.

- In Core French, Mme. Sudayan led a hands-on lesson on animal anatomy and veterinary skills.

Intermediate (Grades 7–8):

- Students created a new mural in the library using grant funds.
- Intermediate girls participated in the State Presidential Basketball Tournament.

Treasurer's Update (Kathy Wrye)

Financial Summary:

- Current Bank Account Balance: \$22,307.77
- Adjusted Council Account Balance: \$46,183.32
- Remaining Available: \$1,954

Funding Requests (Approved Unanimously):

1. Indigenous Club – \$400 for medicine bag materials
2. Kindergarten – \$120 for Tetris Tumble oversized outdoor toy
3. Kindergarten – \$255 for Giant Polydron Octoplay Set

Total Approved: \$775

No questions or concerns were raised regarding the funding requests.

8. Committee and Event Updates

Deals on Wheels (Ahmed):

All bikes sold; the event raised \$228 for Council.

Spring Fair (Melissa):

Happening Saturday. A strong planning effort is underway. The silent auction team (Kathy, Shawn, Dave, Sara, and Claire) secured over \$11,000 in donations. Class baskets have been collected and look beautiful (Thanks you Elizabeth!) Additional volunteers are needed, especially for the afternoon shift.

Staff Appreciation Brunch (Melissa/Kathy):

Scheduled for June 5. An email will be sent next week. Two volunteers are needed for setup and cleanup.

Alta Vista Garage Sale (Kathy):

Council will send out an email gauging interest in renting tables. Attendees can bring their

own tables or rent one from Council. Sign-ups are required a week in advance for insurance purposes. Coffee and muffins will be sold in the morning, with a potential BBQ in the afternoon.

Family Dance (Jen):

Stephanie Hindle will send out a call for someone to organize a bake sale during the dance (June 12).

Discussion Items and New Business

June Council Social:

Council members discussed hosting a year-end social gathering at The Black Pug on Kilborn.

Reminders:

- Spring Fair: May 24
- Staff Appreciation Brunch: June 5
- Family Dance: June 12
- Awesome Alta Vista Garage Sale: June 14
- Final Pizza Monday: June 16
- Final Sub Friday: June 20
- Last Day of School: June 27

Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 18, 2025 (In Person)