

Alta Vista School Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 18, 2025
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

1. Welcome and Introduction

Chair Melissa Extross welcomed attendees to the final council meeting of the 2024–25 school year, noting that this meeting does not mark the end of the council’s term. All current council members are expected to attend the first meeting of the new school year in September.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Last Meeting’s Minutes

The minutes from the May 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved. Motioned by Shawn and seconded by Aaron.

4. Chair’s Report (Melissa Extross)

Grounds Renewal Update:

The price for the kindergarten yard renewal came in significantly higher than anticipated, approximately \$100,000. This increase is due in large part to the board retracting previously committed funding for this project. Melissa is in active discussions with the board to try to reduce the price and has committed to working with the fundraising committee to explore grant options, including accepting support from Councillor Marty Carr to identify external funding sources.

The current primary structure will be demolished over the summer. A new and improved structure is scheduled for installation in 2026. Council noted that despite the delay, the new design looks promising.

Follow-Up on Charles Hulse and Arch Street Meeting:

Kathy and Melissa met with the secretary and treasurer of the Arch Street School Council. The council, established in January 2025, was receptive to feedback and shared that they are currently working to finalize their bank account setup. They requested that any future grants from Alta Vista be issued directly to their council. This aligns with Alta Vista’s vision of supporting neighboring schools’ independent governance and enrichment activities.

Food Program Review and Survey Planning:

Melissa and Abrar met with Ms. Sond to explore alternative lunch options. While the

income per order was modest (approximately 50 cents), the vendors offered well-organized, pre-labeled packaging that would require significantly less volunteer effort.

Council is preparing a survey to gather feedback on lunch programs. It will be distributed in English but will include introductory headers in Arabic and French to support participation by families facing language barriers.

Traffic and Safety Around School:

There has been a notable increase in traffic congestion near the school, exacerbated by nearby construction. Thanks to advocacy by Marty Carr, a new crossing guard has been posted at Alta Vista and Heron. Parents were encouraged to report any safety or traffic issues through the city's official complaint process.

Event Permits for 2025–26:

All school permits for next year's events have already been submitted and approved, ensuring a smooth planning process for the coming school year.

Request for Additional Funds- Hulse Graduation:

Alta Vista Council received a request from Charles Hulse for an additional \$500 to support their graduation. Council declined the request due to budget constraints and concerns about setting a precedent, especially if Arch Street were to request additional funding as well.

Constitution Review:

An ad hoc committee has completed a terminology review of the constitution. The executive team is now reviewing outdated procedural elements. A revised version will be circulated to the full council by the end of August, with the aim of allowing time for feedback and a formal vote at the September 24 meeting.

5. Administrative Report (Alina Orlea, Principal)

School and Facilities Updates:

Significant construction is scheduled for the summer, and the building will be off-limits beginning the second week of July. There have been multiple requests to reposition bike racks, which will be addressed as part of summer planning.

Four classrooms will be relocated for the upcoming school year. Grade 7 students will now be situated on the main floor, and classes will be reorganized to ensure that core English students are placed near their French Immersion peers. These decisions reflect a broader effort to improve accessibility and connection across streams.

Andrew Fleck Childcare will be relocating to Charles Hulse. The city has been informed, and crossing guard support will be provided during construction.

Staffing:

Staffing updates are ongoing. Some teachers will be leaving, and new staff will join the school in the fall. Incoming staff cannot be announced until September. Additional EA support has been secured to increase services for students with vision impairments.

Curriculum and Student Supports:

Report cards are complete and will be released to parents on Thursday, June 26. Over the past several months, staff have been working through identification processes for students with IEPs to ensure they are placed in the most supportive learning environments.

Four transition days will be offered this summer for new students with additional needs. Ginny and Lisa will connect with families to offer school tours and help ease the transition.

Community and Operations:

- The Grade 8 Leaving Ceremony will take place Tuesday, June 24.
- Kindergarten classrooms have been repainted.
- Alina noted that she has many ideas for the year ahead and expressed gratitude for the warm welcome she received this year.
- A final email will be sent to families with dates for checking the lost and found. Unclaimed items will be donated after Friday.
- Class lists will be shared the weekend before school starts.
- The school office will close on June 27 and reopen one week before the start of the new school year.

6. Teacher's Report (Stephanie Hindle)**Kindergarten:**

The ABC Countdown to Summer has brought excitement and engagement to the classrooms, with themed activities like A for Art Day, D for Dance Party, I for Ice Cream, and M for Magic. A guest magician delighted the children, and students are eagerly awaiting S for Singing and W for Water Play.

Students also enjoyed a field trip to the Science and Technology Museum, where they explored the exhibits and attended a "Zap, Zoom, Kaboom" science show. On June 11, SK students from the Ants and Bumblebee classes participated in a heartwarming outreach event at Billings Lodge Retirement Community, led by longtime entertainer and former AVPS parent Paddy Stewart. The intergenerational program fostered joyful connections between students and seniors.

Primary (Grades 1–3):

- EF1B: Designed a community called "Arcadia" as part of a classroom project.
- A Primary Chess Club has been meeting once a week to learn and play chess.
- 2A and 2B created art inspired by Barbara Reid.
- Marvin the Magician visited primary classes.
- EF23A explored animal adaptations and participated in a Nouvelle-France simulation with costumes and trading games.
- Students also learned about dinosaurs with a Carleton University presenter.

Junior (Grades 4–6):

- Grade 4: Field trip to the Canadian Museum of Nature.
- Grade 6: End-of-year trip to Montreal.
- Track and Field: Regional meet scheduled for June 20.

Intermediate (Grades 7–8):

- Girls soccer tournament: Strong performance, with two ties and two losses, many near-goals and great team effort.
- Classes attended two events at Lansdowne: a Blackjacks basketball game and an international volleyball match between Japan and the Netherlands.
- AVPS Intermediate Track Meet had ideal weather and included several exciting moments.
- R78 and LDSIP students ran a French-language café, practicing language skills while managing transactions.
- Grade 8 Leaving Ceremony is set for June 24. Grade 7 parents will host the cake and coffee reception, while Grade 8 parents are collaborating with staff to update the tradition of a post-ceremony party during school hours. Council is encouraged to include a Leaving Ceremony Committee to start planning early next year.
- The schoolwide talent show featured musical performances, puppetry, and magic. Lots of talent at Alta Vista!

7. Treasurer's Report (Kathy Wrye)

Financial Summary:

- Current Bank Account Balance: \$60,837.43
- Adjusted Council Account Balance: \$54,556.23
- Total Allocations to Date: \$52,444
- Remaining Available: \$1,179
- Total Funds Raised for 2025–26: \$47,392

A full financial report was shared in print with Council

Voting Item – Tetris Tumble Cost Overrun:

The kindergarten team purchased the Tetris Tumble toy approved at the last meeting from a different vendor, resulting in a higher cost than originally approved (three times the cost). Council discussed whether to reimburse the full amount or only the original approved amount. The consensus was to remind teachers of the process for funding approvals and reimburse only the previously approved total.

8. Committee and Event Updates

Spring Fair (Melissa):

The event was well-organized and successful.

Staff Appreciation Brunch (Kathy):

The brunch was well received, and staff expressed appreciation.

Volunteer Breakfast:

A warm and delicious gathering. Council extended thanks to all teachers.

Garage Sale:

Cancelled due to convoluted insurance issues. Because sellers keep proceeds and the items were used, additional insurance was required and not covered under council’s existing policy. Council will revisit the event next year if insurance logistics can be resolved.

Family Dance (Jen):

A great success. The night ended with a spontaneous game of “The Floor is Lava,” which was a crowd favorite.

Family Movie Night (Dean):

Also a success. Two new practices helped:

1. Having teachers sign up in advance to lead the bake sale.
2. Counting money at the end of the night for accuracy.

However, technical issues (cords, DVD players) were a recurring problem. Council discussed assigning a school-based tech lead or a parent volunteer next year. If unresolved, new technology purchases may be required. An inventory of what's needed will be prepared and added to the September agenda.

Trophies:

The current end-of-year trophy is out of engraving space. Council engraved the final spot this year but now needs to either extend the base or purchase a new one. Extending the base costs approximately \$500. A call will go out to the school community for a skilled woodworking parent to assist.

Reminders:

- No more pizza Mondays or sub Fridays, please send lunch!
- Council Table Volunteers needed at the Welcome Back BBQ in September
- Stay alert for grant and funding opportunities for the kindergarten yard renewal, costs are unlikely to decrease.

9. Discussion Items and New Business

- Summer Wishes:
Melissa thanked the council and school community for a wonderful year and wished everyone a happy summer.
- Upcoming Events and Dates:
 - Grade 8 Leaving Ceremony: June 24
 - Final Sub Friday: June 20
 - Last Day of School: June 27

10. Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 (In Person)