

Alta Vista School Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 24, 2025
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

1. Welcome and Introduction

Chair Melissa Extross opened the meeting and welcomed attendees to the first School Council meeting of the 2025–26 academic year

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Last Meeting’s Minutes

The minutes from the June 2025 meeting were approved. Motioned by Reuben and seconded by Mara.

4. Chair’s Report (Melissa Extross)

Survey Results:

Melissa provided a brief overview of the year-end survey distributed in June 2025. While the overall response rate was low (45 responses), the Council received meaningful, constructive feedback. In response, the Council has implemented several improvements:

- Events are now being communicated well in advance to encourage higher volunteer turnout.
- A monthly newsletter has been launched to share upcoming events and showcase how Council funds are used in the school.
- Council members were invited to send suggestions for improving the newsletter and other Council communications.

Constitution Review and Vote:

Due to the lack of quorum at the start of the meeting, Melissa tabled the vote on constitutional revisions. The updates will be reviewed by the incoming Council and Chair in October

5. Principal’s Report (Principal Alina Orlea)

Facilities Update:

- The school’s aging infrastructure continues to require attention. The old primary yard structure was removed in 2024, and a new play structure is scheduled for installation in 2026.

- Students are enjoying the newly paved asphalt in the yard.
- New fences have been purchased and are scheduled for installation in October, along with updates to the basketball court.
- Intermediate bathroom plumbing continues to be problematic. Repairs are complex due to asbestos in the walls, requiring specialized contractors. The upstairs bathrooms are currently closed.
- Three portables remain on-site. HVAC installation in the kindergarten rooms has been postponed, with no set completion date.

Staffing:

- AVPS is fully staffed and stable. No class reorganization is planned this year due to increased enrollment.
- The school has three long-term occasional teachers assigned to 3/4 English, 5/6 English, and ESL/Grade 1. The teaching teams remain cohesive.

Curriculum and Assessment:

- Math and literacy assessments are underway
- Kindergarten to Grade 2 students are undergoing cadence assessments.
- Older grades are using tools like DIBELS to evaluate reading fluency and comprehension.
- Truth and Reconciliation Week projects are underway, with more updates to come via email. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 4 will attend an Indigenous theatre performance.
- The school continues to offer specialized instruction in gym and music, which many other schools lack.
- Efforts are ongoing to balance French programming across Core French and Immersion streams. French language assignments are being adjusted by division.
- Intermediate classes have started using a pod-based model in math and English. Rather than grouping students strictly by level, the school uses blended classes with strong collaboration between teachers.

Wellness and Community Engagement:

- A renewed focus on school identity is underway with Alta Vista Day, hallway biking, and mental health programming for Grade 7 and 8.
- Ms. Harp has launched a wellness group for intermediates.
- Planning is in progress for a Grade 7–8 Homework Club, if successful it will be launched in January.
- Clubs are ramping up, including a Grade 5 Garden Club, Indigenous Club, and Cooking Club.
- AVPS is also reinvigorating its sports programming, led by Ms. Connelly and Mme Rutland, with the return of the Athletic Council.
- The Web Crew (a student leadership group) has been active, coordinating Picture Day, creating banners celebrating school identity, and more.

Budget and School Board Context:

- Only half of AVPS’s annual budget has been released to date. The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board is currently under financial oversight, which may impact future allocations.
- No new updates were available on the Elementary Program Review process, but information is expected soon.

6. Teacher’s Report (Mme. Connelly)

Arts and Athletics:

- Band and orchestra have begun, with morning rehearsals underway.
- Intermediate students are participating in Frisbee, football, and cross-country.
- Junior soccer tryouts are ongoing.

Primary Yard Enhancements:

- New equipment (e.g., skipping ropes, balls) has been purchased to compensate for the missing structure, keeping students engaged during recess.

Field Use and Permissions:

- Students regularly walk to a nearby park for outdoor activity. Parents were reminded to submit permission forms to allow this.

Extracurricular Scheduling:

- Teachers are mindful of students' ability to participate in multiple activities. Tryouts and clubs are scheduled before or after school to prevent conflicts.
- The school is maintaining an updated events calendar on its website to help families plan time off to attend school sports and events.

7. Treasurer's Report (Presented by Melissa for Kathy)

Financial Summary (as of August 31, 2025):

- **Total Funds Raised (net):** \$47,702
- **Top 3 Fundraisers:**
 - Pizza Days: \$20,091
 - Spring Fair: \$14,120
 - Movie Nights: \$2,564
- **Teacher/School Requests Funded:** \$42,795
 - Top 5 Initiatives:
 - Library Furniture: \$8,000
 - Luv2Groove Dance Program: \$4,629
 - JungleSport: \$4,000
 - Scientists in Schools: \$3,258
 - Rag & Bone Puppet Theatre: \$3,000
- **Council Operational Spending:** \$6,426
 - Top 3 Expenses:
 - Grants to Arch Street and Charles Hulse: \$2,000
 - New Council Grill: \$1,022
 - Website Maintenance: \$637
- Other notable spending included:
 - Leaving Ceremony costs
 - Folding tables
 - PRO Grant expenses

- Year-end community survey
- **Final Account Balance (August 31, 2025):** \$54,103
- **Opening Balance (2024–25):** \$55,623

Welcome Back BBQ:

- Raised \$1,860

8. Committee and Event Reports

Pizza Days (Caryn):

- Panago will remain the provider based on positive survey feedback.
- Pizza is offered on Mondays, and continues to be a strong fundraiser.

Sub Days (Ana):

- Now includes four options: turkey, ham, veggie, and pizza (pepperoni with marinara sauce).
- Sub days take place on Fridays.

Farm Fresh Fundraiser (Melissa):

- Returning this fall. Families can order fruit and vegetable bundles.
- Orders are due by **October 17, 2025**.

Mazzola Lunch Options:

- Melissa is exploring options with Mazzola to expand lunch offerings at AVPS.

9. Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Council Elections

Principal Alina Orlea led the AGM portion of the meeting. All attendees interested in serving on the 2025–26 Council had completed self-nomination forms. A total of 17 voting members were confirmed.

2025–26 Executive (All Positions Uncontested):

- **Chair:** Melissa Extross
- **Vice Chair:** Heather Cherry
- **Secretary:** Jillian Sudayan
- **Associate Secretary:** Jen Cox

- **Treasurer:** Kathy Falovo
- Anastasia Peacock identified herself as willing to shadow Kathy in her current role as treasurer in order to prepare for when Kathy eventually steps down from the role.

All roles were confirmed by acclamation

10. Discussion Items and New Business

Reminders:

- PD Day: **Friday, September 29, 2025**
- Thanksgiving (School Closed): **Monday, October 13, 2025**
- **Snow Out Blow Out Sale:** Saturday, October 18, 2025

Call for Volunteers – Coordinator Roles Needed:

- **Snow Out Blow Out Sale** (October)
- **Flavours of the World Potluck** (April)
- **Silent Auction** (May)
- **Friday Sub Program:** A new coordinator is needed for 2026–27. Interested individuals will shadow the current coordinator this year and co-lead in 2026 before taking over fully in 2027.

11. Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 (In-Person) in the Library Room 219.