

Menno Simons School Council Meeting



Date: Thursday, December 8, 2022
Time: 7:04pm to pm
Meeting Room: Virtual
Facilitator: Lori Kruger (Chair)
Timekeeper: Lori Kruger (Chair)
Minute Taker: Grant Fong (Vice Chair)
Attendees: Lori Kruger, Ann Pan, Dayle Vienneau, Grant Fong, Lorelei Bexte, Sharon Postma, Stephanie Schroeder, Shay Robertson

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES	SPEAKER
1. Welcome, Call to order, absence for apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:04 pm – Greetings from Lori. Call to order. Thank you for coming 7:04 pm – Lori K opened in prayer 	Lori K
2. Roll call.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted roll call. – tracked virtual attendees. 	Ann P
3. Open Orders of Business: Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion to approve the minutes for Oct 27, 2022 meeting Second: Grant F, all in favour Passed Minutes for Oct 27, 2022 	Lori K
4. New Business: Principals Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals Report posted below, see Appendix 1 <p>Questions?</p> <p>Stephanie: Should we anticipate that the half-day Fridays continue for the next school year?</p> <p>Dayle: I'm waiting to get more feedback from families but more than likely they will continue.</p> <p>Shay: I'm hearing that there are less class times each week in different subjects. I just want confirmation that things aren't missing and that academic minutes required for each subject are being met.</p>	Dayle Vienneau Stephanie Schroeder Shay Robertson

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES	SPEAKER
	<p>Dayle: Yes, there was some tweaking as we moved time from three periods into the Monday through Thursday time, so a few blocks are missing but now all the blocks times are longer.</p> <p>Shay: I've heard that cell phones are now OK for kids during recess?</p> <p>Dayle: If they go off campus we can't control their cell phone use. If they are at school on campus on the field or in the building, cell phones are still not allowed.</p> <p>Shay: I just also want to say that I read Joanna Wiens book and I was thankful to receive it as a parent last year.</p> <p>Sharon: I just want to say that we personally love the half day Fridays.</p> <p>Lori: Personally Seth enjoys the half day, as a parent I do feel it's challenging for parents to break up their days on Friday. I know that there is a bigger picture with students, teachers, and families.</p> <p>Shay: I would agree with that as well, I also have a student that enjoys being at school with her friends.</p>	<p>Lori Kruger</p> <p>Sharon Postma</p>
<p>5. New Business: Update from Palliser</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palliser Report posted below, see Appendix 2 	<p>Lorelei Bexte</p>
<p>6. New Business: Update from Lara Montgomery, Executive Board Chair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No update as representative from Society was unable to attend. 	
<p>7. New Business: Update from School Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lori has handed in her resignation as she has started a new job so this will be her last meeting • Ice Rink have been set up! A big thank you to our set-up and maintenance volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steve, Travis, Jonah, Sidney, Jason & Grant came down to the school on Nov 12 to put together the rink ○ Grant met with his maintenance crew Travis, Tylor, Howie & Zhihai and they look forward to maintaining the rink over the season. • Grant just wanted to acknowledge and thank Lori for everything these past few years. 	<p>Lori Kruger</p> <p>Grant Fong</p>
<p>8. Outstanding tabled actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No outstanding tabled actions 	
<p>9. New tabled actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new tabled actions 	
<p>10. Adjournment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting closed at 7:44 pm • Next Meeting Thursday, December 8, 2022 	

Admin Report for PSC Dec 8, 2022



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT - November 2022

What's Happening?

- Did you know?? Menno Staff Collective Resume
 - 240 years of teaching experience
 - Admin team has 11 years of administration experience
 - Degrees in: education, art, physical education, religious education, children's mental health, reading, sociology, social welfare, psychology, finance, Canadian history, English Lit, Intercultural studies, music, special ed, and a masters degree in literacy
 - prayer/hope for the year: a community that cares for each other (build community and be community), that our students seek God, find their identity in Christ, and recognize their gifts & value. That our students know God's love.
- 216 students
- School Theme Verse
 - "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." - Joshua 1:9
- School Life
 - Busy! Awesome!
 - Chapels, field trips, athletics, spirit days, service projects, etc.
 - Serve Day in JH - Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Dream Centre, Samaritan's Purse (Operation Shoebox)
 - Art program - Cassidy Mueller (Siu) - society funded
 - Palliser switched over to a new learning management system and with that came some bumps that interfered with communication and our ability to run some of our programs, but slowly... slowly things are starting to fall into place. Thank you for your patience!
 - Intentional about telling our story - started with inviting Joanne Wiens (previous principal) to meet with the staff in August and share the history of how the school came to be. Joanne then joined us again as the society board met in September with pastors from our three supporting churches (First Mennonite, Trinity Mennonite, and Foothills Mennonite). It was the first time since I have been back that we had so many stakeholders together in one room sharing dreams of how our relationship can look and how we can support each other moving forward. Then for our Peace Festival in early November, Joanne returned as our guest speaker to share about being a peacemaker. Together, these experiences have been good reminders of what makes Menno unique and allows us to move forward without losing those key values. Our teaching practices, our students, our building → all change and grow over the years, but our focus on being peacemakers and offering an inclusive program has not changed.
- Friday afternoons
 - Attendance stronger as students are not pulled out for the afternoon

- Staff PD: team meetings, new curriculum, ELL, Cultures of Thinking book study, parent (IPP) meetings
- Before/After school care program continues to grow → still room available for any families who may need childcare
- Overall, the year has a really nice feel to it. We have a strong team who support each other well.

Looking ahead...

- Christmas concert coming up on December 15
- Christmas Spirit Week - December 16 - 23
 - December 16 - PJ Day
 - December 19 - Holiday Headgear
 - Hats, headbands, tuques, etc. with Christmas theme (elf, santa, reindeer...)
 - December 20 - Clash of Christmas Colours (with a class prize!)
 - Each homeroom will select a colour: red, green, or white
 - The class that participates the most (and perhaps the most creatively), will win a pizza party from Mme. Vienneau
 - December 21 - Winter Wonderland
 - Dress as a Christmas character, item, or in a Christmas colour)
 - December 22 - Ugly Christmas Sweater
 - Wear your favourite ugly Christmas sweater
 - December 23 - Candy Cane
 - Wear red and white

Spring musical to be announced in the new year (Grades 6-9 participate)

School Calendar for 2023/24: Not official yet, but looks like school will start after the September long weekend (September 5, 2023), Christmas break will be December 23, 2023 -January 7, 2024, Spring break will be March 23, 2024 - April 7, 2024 - Easter is in this break, and the last day of school will be June 26, 2024.

School Goals/Focus

- Learning environment and relationships between community and agencies with the school
 - Focus on relationships (student, teacher, community)
 - Identity in Christ
 - Cultural identity
 - Physical and mental health initiatives
- Literacy/Numeracy
 - ELL focus - learning new strategies to support these students
 - Division 1 Literacy intervention assessments and strategies
 - Updating our books in classrooms
 - Funding from the government that has been put into curriculum resources in these areas, small group pull outs, etc.
- Absence due to illness, thankfully we have been able to keep our percentages relatively low.

Appendix 2 Board Trustee Report

Menno School Council Meeting December 8, 2022

Board Highlights from the November 29, 2022 Meeting:

Audited Financial Statements 2021-2022: The Audit Committee met with the audit company, KPMG LLP on November 23, 2022, and reviewed the audited financial statements for the 2021-2022 school year. At the Committee's recommendation, the Board accepted the auditor's report at the November 29, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Board. The audited financial statements will be sent to the Alberta Government and are available on the division website.

Palliser Home Education Program: The Board received a report on the enrollment and success of the division's Home Education program. The division continues to focus on this program of excellence. The Home Education teacher offers personalized support for all kinds of learners and develops a sense of community. The division continues to work on growing a quality program that benefits all students' learning.

On-line learning: Online learning student registration data was also presented. In 2020-2021, 625 students were learning online and 566 transitioned to Palliser schools and 92 transitioned to PBB at the end of the year. In 2021-2022 there were 227 students learning online with 172 returning to Palliser schools at the end of the year and 9 transitioning to PBB. The summary of analysis for this data over the past two school years shows that with students who went online, the majority came back to Palliser Schools.

Attendance Data at Palliser Schools: The division is tracking absences due to illness rates. Palliser will continue participating in the Alberta Public Health Surveillance and Infrastructure Reporting which monitors weekly absenteeism. In keeping with the protocol and request by Alberta Health Services (AHS), schools will report to AHS when the absence rate due to illness reaches ten percent of the student population. Alberta Health Services will make recommendations to schools if additional measures are warranted. To date, AHS has made no recommendations. Daily health reporting and illness guidance documents will be available on the division website in the near future.

Indigenous Success Coordinator Meets Board of Trustees: Kylie Fineday was introduced to the Board of Trustees at the November 29, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Board. Kylie began in her role as Indigenous Success Coordinator in October 2022 and has since been building relationships with schools and learning where they are on their journey of Indigenous knowledge. Kylie is happy to support the continued efforts toward Indigenous education and inclusivity. The Board was pleased to meet Kylie in person and welcomed her to the division.

School Draft Calendar: On November 30, 2022, the draft 2023/2024 Calendar has been shared with Principals, School Council Chairs, and our local ATA President. A survey has been sent to each stakeholder group to collect their feedback. Feedback is requested back by December 23, 2022.

Letter from the Minister to all Alberta Parents and Guardians is attached

Any questions or concerns please contact Lorelei Bexte (403) 485-0823.



ALBERTA
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Red Deer-North*

November 24, 2022

Letter to Parents – Ensuring access to education for all students

Dear Alberta parents and guardians:

We know we have asked a lot of you in the past couple of years. Since March 2020 parents and families have been told with little to no notice that students would be required to move to learning at-home or online. We have heard first-hand from students, parents, and teachers that learning disruptions over the course of the past couple of years have impacted the mental health and wellbeing of students, significantly impacted learning development, and has placed financial burdens and additional stress on working parents and families.

In recent months, parents have approached our office with uncertainty and questions, concerned that their child's education may once again be impacted by transitions to at-home learning. School authorities have sought clarity related to their ability to bring in health measures that may limit access to education, given there are currently no health orders to support these decisions. Today I have announced new regulation, effective November 24, 2022, that will protect student's access to in-person learning. This includes:

- Ensuring access to in-person learning for grades 1 to 12 students despite any instances of operational issues caused by rates of student and/or teacher absenteeism.
- Affirming that a student cannot be denied in-person education by their school authority due to their personal decision to wear or not wear a mask. This applies to all students.

We know that all Alberta families are facing increased costs due to rising inflation affecting mortgages, fuel costs, electricity, heating and food. These changes will ensure parents can continue to work to support their families without the added burden of finding and paying for childcare during the school day.

This will also ensure that all students have access to specialized supports provided in a school environment. We know that isolation in recent years has increased youth mental health issues and that these students need access to supports provided at school.

Our teachers have worked hard to ensure students who may have fallen behind grade level due to the instability in learning environments have the additional supports they need in the classroom. By protecting in-person learning students will be provided with stability.

As has always been the case, the *Public Health Act* provides the overarching direction on all public health matters, and it would continue to prevail over the *Education Act* and associated regulations in a future public health emergency.

We hope that with this new regulatory change comes more predictable and stable circumstances, an increase in the mental wellbeing of our students, and the preservation of in-person quality learning opportunities for students.

Sincerely,

Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Education