

Prince of Wales School Council Meeting Wednesday January 15th, 2026



MEETING MINUTES

In-Person attendees: Miranda Wu, Decon Tambly, Christy & Cam Berscht, Jenn & Ryan Heagy, Kym Holt, Jessica & Greg Aimer, Brittany Voigt, Andrea Anderson, Kathryn Myrniyk, Maigon Bree, Steph & Dan Walreden, Marcia Birkgt, Amanda Grant, Christine Konoza, Brenna Clarkson, Donna McLenaghan, Lindsay Thompson

Virtual attendees: Dana Manzer, Brendan & Ali, Nate Birse, Kristen Milne, Rich, Dale Dirkse, Julie Thiessen, Nikky Paskin, C.C. Leah Kirk, Keisha & Sylvester & David Walden.

Welcome to tonight's Council Meeting!

It is now (**6:33pm**) and I would like to call this meeting to order. Thank you for taking the time to join us tonight in person and virtually. There will be a Friends of Parkland way meeting after adjournment.

2. WELCOME, LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND INTRODUCTIONS

Played recording of Land Acknowledgement.

The Calgary Board of Education acknowledges the traditional territories and oral practices of the Treaty 7 Nations, including the Siksikaitsitapi (Sig-sig-kaits-sits-a-pi), comprised of the Siksika (Sig-si-gah), the Kainai (Guy-nah), the Piikani (Bee-gah-nee), and the Amskapi Piikani (Ahm-skah-pee Bee-gah-nee) Nations. We acknowledge the Tsuut'ina (Soot-tenna) Nation, the Îyârhe Nakoda (Ae-yar-hay Na-koh-da), comprised of the Chiniki (Chin-ih-kee), Bearspaw, and Goodstoney Nations, the Métis Nation within Alberta, and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of southern Alberta.

We want to welcome everyone here tonight! As a parent of a student here at PoW, you are automatically a voting member of this School Council. Here we discuss what's happening in the school and how we can advise and support our learning community.

For those attending on Teams, Ryan will be your tech support tonight. Please remain muted, but you are welcome to keep your cameras on if you wish. If you have questions or comments, feel free to use the chat to notify Ryan and he'll unmute you when able so you can share. We will post links in the chat throughout the evening if needed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda for this evening has been posted to the School website.
(Go to: *Get Involved* → *School Council* → *Meeting Agendas & Minutes*)

Motion (Kym Holt) **and Seconded** (Andrea Anderson). ***Motion is carried.***

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

November's meeting minutes have been posted on the School website.
(Go to: *Get Involved* → *School Council* → *Meeting Agendas & Minutes*)

Motion (Samantha) and Seconded (Jen Heagy). *Motion is carried.*

5. Wilma Hansen Presentation

Presenter: Principal Brent Banack

Time: Approx. 45–60 minutes

Opening & Context

- Principal Johnson opened the meeting and introduced the presentation.
- The primary change discussed was the redesignation of Parkland students to Wilma Hansen for Grades 5 and 6.
- Principal Banack noted that many families are also exploring alternative programs, most of which are also middle schools, and encouraged families to learn what middle school environments can offer.
- He clarified that his remarks would focus specifically on Wilma Hansen.

Enrollment & Designation

- Wilma Hansen serves Legacy, Deer Run, and Queensland.
- Designation has already begun, with three Grade 5–6 classes currently formed.
- Previously two classes; now expanded to three combined Grade 5/6 classes.
- Total school population is approximately 380 students, with ~80 students in Grades 5 and 6.

Class Configuration & Staffing

- Combined classes allow for collaboration and class sizes of approximately 24–25 students.
- Mid-term placements may be added to maintain manageable class sizes.
- Grade 5–6 students primarily work with:
 - Homeroom teacher (English, Math, Social Studies, Art)
 - Music specialist
 - Physical Education specialist
- For specific subject expertise (e.g., Grade 6 topics), students may rotate into another classroom with a teacher who has specialized training.

Classroom Learning & Projects

- Strong emphasis on experiential and project-based learning, including:
 - *Roots of Empathy*: students learn about child development, emotions, and empathy through observing a “baby teacher” across the year.
 - Descriptive writing projects, *Novel in a Day*, and Orange Shirt Day activities.
- Leadership (Principal and Vice-Principal) move beyond supervisory roles into direct teaching opportunities, allowing Grade 5–6 students to build relationships with school leadership.
- Grade 5–6 students remain primarily in their classrooms rather than moving every bell, supporting supervision and consistency.

Outdoor & Land-Based Learning

- Fish Creek Park is within walking distance and used regularly for learning.
- Flexible scheduling allows extended time outdoors rather than rigid bell-based instruction.
- Community projects include:

- Walks to Fish Creek
- Partnerships with a nearby seniors' residence
- Land-based learning activities

Enrichment, Clubs & Special Activities

- Access to specialized spaces (construction shop, band room) enables a wide range of clubs and extracurriculars.
- Grade 5–6 students are not isolated; the goal is to build a community within the school, not “a class tucked away.”

Signature Programs & Events

- First Chapter Fridays: guest readers including staff, authors, athletes, and community figures (e.g., Brett “The Hitman” Hart).
- Theme Days: holiday-linked themes, Detective Days, magician visits.
- Sports Teams (Grade 6):
 - Mix of cut and non-cut teams
 - Intentional scheduling so students cut from one team can still participate on no-cut days.
- School dances and theme events occur during the school day to reduce risk and ensure supervision (DJ, quiet reading rooms, board games available).

Student Safety, Behaviour & Well-Being

- Grade 5–6 students are located upstairs and enter through the same main doors as other students.
- Students have their own lockers; locker-related issues are minimal (typically ~2 complaints per year).
- Hallways are actively monitored; Science is the primary shared class space with older students.
- Lunch and recess supervision is increased, with Grade 5–6 students supervised:
 - From classroom to lunch
 - During lunch
 - Outside at recess (back field area)

Schedule & Daily Routines

- The school operates on six instructional blocks.
- Lunch occurs later in the day (~1:00 pm), which students learn to manage.
- Teachers maintain flexibility with snacks during learning time.
- Students receive:
 - 55 minutes of PE daily, plus recess
 - Access to outdoor activities (e.g., Gaga ball; no traditional playground)
- Rotational schedule:
 - A-Day / B-Day rotation
 - Fridays alternate and include 14 additional minutes of lunch

Behaviour Management, Discipline & Safeguards

Discipline Approach

- Discipline is consistent with district practices and grounded in progressive discipline.
- Focus is on education and correction, not punishment alone.

- When progressive discipline is ineffective, transfers or fresh starts may be considered.
- Wilma Hansen both sends and receives students as part of district-wide alternative programming.

Bullying

- Bullying is treated seriously and is not unique to Wilma Hansen.
- Early reporting is critical; issues often escalate because concerns are raised months later.
- Students are taught:
 - To report concerns early
 - That seeking help is not “ratting”
 - They are not responsible for others’ behaviour
- Emphasis on building confidence and ensuring every student feels safe.

Vaping, Substances & Searches

- Vaping is the most common issue; weapons are not a significant concern.
- Bathrooms are checked approximately every 15 minutes.
- Searches are not random and require reasonable grounds.
- Administrators have authority to conduct searches when justified.
- Most vaping incidents involve experimentation rather than habitual use.

Grade 5–6 Integration with Older Students

- Structured separation is maintained:
 - Grade 5–6 are upstairs
 - Separate lunch and recess schedules
 - No shared change rooms or gym times
- Interaction with older students is limited to hallways and supervised spaces.
- Buddy systems and leadership opportunities promote positive cross-grade culture.

Learning Supports & Inclusive Education

- Dedicated Student Services Teacher supports:
 - IPPs
 - English Language Learners
 - Direct collaboration with classroom teachers
- Extensive transition planning with feeder elementary schools.
- Focus on both:
 - Giving students a fresh start
 - Using existing data to support continuity
- Regular collaborative meetings:
 - Pedagogy meetings
 - Grade-team collaborative response meetings (every ~3 weeks)
 - Identification and support of students needing additional assistance

School Climate & Belonging

- Leadership stability has improved school culture and student pride.
- Core principle: every student should have at least one adult in the building who knows them well.
- Staff retention is strong; many teachers have remained long-term.

Data & Performance

- Alberta Assurance Survey showed:
 - 13% increase in students feeling safe at school
- Some declines noted:
 - Quality of education (-9%)
 - Student engagement (-8%)
- Contextual factors:
 - Small sample sizes
 - Only Grade 7 students participate in Alberta surveys
 - One cohort experienced significant teacher turnover
- CBE survey results differ due to broader student participation.
- Grade 9 PATs show improvement, particularly a ~17% increase in Social Studies.

School Structure, Class Sizes & Staffing

- Projected enrollment around 387 students.
- Legacy and Deer Run are primary feeders.
- Potential future impact from a new Catholic school in Legacy.
- If enrollment increases to four classes, grades may shift to straight grades.
- Average class size:
 - Grades 5–6: ~24+
 - Junior High: up to ~36
- Staffing is generally stable; some new hires due to transfers.

Programming, Enrichment & Extracurriculars

- Facilities include:
 - Drama space
 - Construction lab
 - Art rooms
- Events:
 - Renaissance Fair
 - Science Fair (Grade 9)
 - Space Fair (dedicated themed rooms)
- Music instruction provided by a specialist.
- Grade 5–6 students participate in the most field trips.
- The Parent Council frequently funds bussing for whole-class trips.

School Culture, Leadership & Community Engagement

- Core language shift: holding students to their capabilities, not just accountable.
- Emphasis on belief in students' capacity to meet expectations.
- Parent-school conversations can be difficult but are approached with support and clarity.
- Strong fundraising through casinos.
- The volunteer base is growing but remains a goal area.
- Open house plans include:
 - Daytime student tours
 - Evening parent sessions
 - Spring timing to reduce bussing costs

- School productions involve broad participation (e.g., 80 students in school play).
- Families are encouraged to engage through classroom visits and programs like First Chapter Fridays.

Family Logistics & Practical Information

- No after-school care or third-party providers.
- Students typically bus home immediately after school.
- Provincial no-cell-phone legislation applies; progressive discipline used.
- Apple Watches permitted in school mode.
- Personal devices may require specific approval forms.
- Students in alternative programs may return to Wilma Hansen at designated transition points, not mid-year

6. PRINCIPAL/STAFF REPORT: Administrative Update (Poppy Johnson) *15/25 minutes

- N/A

7. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Chair Report (Miranda W) *10 minutes

- Parent Engagement Grant Money of \$500 (to support the councils in fulfilling legislated responsibilities in the education system and enhancing parental involvement and engagement. Christy has reached out to her contact from last year (Roberta) to ask her about other classes she offers so we can start the conversation. If anyone here tonight would like to suggest any ideas for a parent engagement night or reach out to any contacts you have please do so and let me know. We would like to hopefully book someone for April.
- If your interested in joining the Grade 4 committee please let me know as we are hoping to do something special for the grade 4 students at their park 96 day (Miranda, Christy and Jessica)
- Committee Opportunities:
 - Fun Lunch Coordinator, Staff Appreciation Team, Safety & Wellness Committee.
 - New Incentive: Fill a vacant council role and receive two front-row seats to *one* spring performance. Also extended to current active council executives.

Email us anytime at: powcouncil@gmail.com if you are interested and want more details about these roles.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer (Andrea) *10 minutes

- Fundraising Update: The Christmas dance generated \$550 in concession revenue. Expenses included \$170 in concession costs, two months of bank fees, and an \$80 Microsoft Teams subscription.

Volunteer Coordinators (Leah & Jessica) *5 minutes

- Healthy Hunger Sorting: <https://bit.ly/HealthyHunger2025>
- Volunteer Readers - Jessica to create program signup for Math/Reading helpers
- This month is health hunger and fun lunches.
- Readers and Classroom Helpers: Volunteers are welcome to assist at 8:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. We are working to create a SignUpGenius schedule so that volunteer availability is clearly visible in advance.

When sign-ups occur informally or on the same day via email, coordination becomes difficult and requests can be missed by the classrooms that need support most.

- Power Hour - TBD
- Movie Night - TBD

Events & Programs (Christie B) *10/15 minutes

- Winterwonderland Family dance recap: Net proceeds were \$661 after expenses, despite attendance being approximately 200 people lower than the Halloween dance.
- Movie Night: A movie night has been approved to take place at the school to support school engagement. The event is scheduled for February 26, with no school the following day. Suggestions are being collected in the chat. Permission forms are expected to go out during the first week of February. The Okotoks Theatre has offered to pre-pop the popcorn, at a cost comparable to purchasing supplies directly.
- Family Movie Night (Thursday Feb 26th 6:30-8:30pm)
- Upcoming Calendar & Fundraising: A calendar outlining upcoming dates and fundraising activities will be distributed in February. Anyone wishing to add items should submit them in advance.
- Staff Appreciation: Plans include random acts of kindness for staff, including a pizza lunch around report card time. A staff pizza lunch is scheduled for the first Friday in February.

Grade 5/6 Celebration (Leah) *8 minutes

- Grade 6 Concession: The Grade 6 concession at the dance generated \$379.32. A sincere thank you to the Ohler family, who generously donated the candy bags in full—this significantly increased our profit by eliminating a major expense. Given that this dance had lower attendance than usual, the results were very strong. While revenue was approximately \$230 lower than last year, this was achieved with roughly half the number of sales, making the outcome particularly positive.
- Hoping to meet with the committee in February to start some planning and theme ideas for the celebration which will include both grades. Will likely plan for the BBQ at Park 96 as we have done previously. Funds may be needed to help cover the cost of this including the legacy gift but we will do our best to spend wisely.

Book Fair (Marcia & Samantha) *5 minutes

- Fall Book Fair: The fall book fair was a significant success, achieving our highest sales to date at \$6,594.50. The previous record was approximately \$700 lower, despite the school having 129 more students at that time. After all expenses were paid, the library received \$3,047.14 in Scholastic dollars.
- We are planning on bringing back the fish tank this spring. (we asked parents via anonymous questionnaire if they wanted to see the fish tank return and it was a resounding yes)
- The fish tank coin drop was particularly popular, with 1,256 quarters collected, totaling \$314. Based on feedback collected through an anonymous parent questionnaire, there was overwhelming support for bringing back the fish tank, and it will return this spring.
- Upcoming Book Fair: The next book fair is scheduled for March 16–20, with set-up planned for March 13. We anticipate similar levels of participation and will require a strong volunteer turnout to ensure another successful event. Families are encouraged to mark their calendars for March 19 and March 20, which are expected to be our busiest days.

Key Communicator (Kym) *5 minutes

- Upcoming COSC meeting on Jan 21st. I just got this email from Grace and want to get some feedback from our council before I go to that meeting next week. Please note for the Roundtable Discussion agenda item, school council representatives will be assigned to a table based on school/ward. This will provide you an opportunity to connect with other school councils who share the same trustee. During this discussion, we will gather feedback, that will be shared with school councils at a later date, on the following questions:
 - What is important to your school community?
 - What creates a community at your school?
 - What are the most important topics for your school council?

10. UPCOMING SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING DATES:

- February 19th (Thursday)
- March (No meeting)

11. IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

- Wednesday January 28th Fun Lunch & Disney Dress-up Day
- Friday January 30th (No School)

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at (8:20pm).

The next meeting is on February 19th at 6:30 p.m.

Motion (Alyson Hygge) Seconded (Andrea Anderson). *Motion is carried.*

There will be a Friends of Parkland way meeting after adjournment