

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Dalewood Middle School

(In Person, Art Room)

September 17, 2025

MINUTES

In Attendance (15 Total). **In Person (15):** Katie Hopkins (Principal), Kevin McHarg (Teacher Rep), Bill Heinrich (Co-Chair), Diana Moscu (Co-Chair), Vanessa Alexander (Treasurer), Katie Davidman (Secretary), Rosalee Van Staalduinen (Voting Member), Natalia Gonzalez (Voting Member), Sweni Sabaratram (Voting Member), Allison Henderson (Voting Member), Susanna Galbraith (Voting Member), Andrea Ara (Voting Member), Alison Simpson, Nikol Pisticaric, Kara Jessop. **In Attendance Virtually (0):** No one.

Regrets: Christine Lootsma, Rodrigo Venturelli, Jasmine Gaskin, Rachel Roper.

Agenda Item	Comments
Opening	The meeting was called to order around 630pm with quorum. We opened with introductions, land acknowledgment (with a highlighting of the meaning of the wampum belt) and the singing of Oh Canada.
Notice of Minutes	The Minutes for the June 18, 2025 meeting were circulated ahead of this meeting.
The Agenda	The agenda was circulated, it was agreed that we would start with elections
Elections and Announcements	<p>Principal Hopkins outlined the election process and there was a brief discussion of the roles and responsibilities of different positions.</p> <p>Last year's executive was nominated and acclaimed to their roles, recognizing the change that Andrea Ara has stepped down from the role of Co-Chair. Bill then invited someone to join him as Co-Chair for succession planning purposes, this being his last year as Chair. Diana Moscu volunteered.</p> <p>Outcome: Co-Chairs: Bill Heinrich & Diana Moscu Secretary: Katie Davidman Treasurer: Vanessa Alexander Members at Large: Alison Henderson, Susanna Galbraith, Sweny Sabaratram, Andrea Ara, Natalia Gonzalez, Rosalee Van Staalduinen.</p>
Principal's Report	<p>Katie Hopkins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Report</u>• <u>Slide Deck</u>• Principal Hopkins emphasized the theme of belonging, which will be a focus of the upcoming PA day.• She expressed gratitude for the positive start to the year, her second September as Principal• There will be donations to subsidize graduate spirit wear <p>Discussion:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pizza coupon codes for the Meet the Teachers fundraiser on Sept 25th are for home use • See further updates from the Principal that arose below in the discussion during the Teacher's Report
Teacher's Report	<p>Kevin McHarg Reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's a great energy in the school at start-up, students are engaged, positive vibes • The school musical will be Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Auditions start next week, roles set by late October/early November, then rehearsals start. There will also be non-singing roles, a tech team, and set design roles. • Band and choir will start up in the next few weeks • Ongoing activities: Safe Space club, library helpers, 3-pitch, X-country Oct 7, Terry Fox assembly and walk friday 26th • In October, 730am open volleyball will start up again <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is bussing for the x country meet at Christie Lake. • Senior teams are Grades 7/8; Junior teams Grades 6/7 • Concern was expressed about students not being able to hear the morning announcements. Ms. Hopkins will ensure that the info is also made available on the TV screen in the school lobby, and on the online Dalewood Calendar • Thanks was expressed to Ms. Newton for communicating about the pizza sales • Volunteering Update: Ms. Hopkins shared that 13 people have offered to be school volunteers. She will connect with them. She'll check how often the Vulnerable Sector Check is needed, it might be annually now. • Could a parent still become a member at large after today? The guidelines might say that first meeting attendance is required but we could use discretion and allow for that. • School Improvement Plan: there was a request for it to be shared next meeting. Ms. Hopkins shared that she is in the needs assessment stage, gathering belonging data now, and can likely share that next meeting • Book Drive: Ms. Hopkins could use help with sorting the library books being donated: Natalia, Susanna and Katie D offered to help • Maker Space: Mr. Adeney to start up again and would likely accept donations
Comments from Interested Parents	<p>Bill invited parents to share what brought them to Council and what is important to them as we reflect on goals for Council this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison – giving back; planning a signature event • Natalia – the respectful collaborative environment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea – an event like the carnival night she’s experienced that brought people out and created community, ideally in the fall to bond earlier • Katie Hopkins – community and inviting voices we don’t hear • Rosalie – tap more broadly into parent voices, engage them meaningfully, advise and support principal in learning plan • Diana – new to the school system, interested in the diverse skill set of parents, interested in a networking event where kids and parents can learn about different fields and types of work. Kevin McHarg shared that we do some of this for the kids so could expand on this • Nikol – has been in Home & School at Cootes, values opportunities to connect with others in person through activities such as play and sports. One idea is a craft fair and sale with products made by kids • Katie D. – asks does the grant constrain us? We noted that it can likely be flexible to accommodate the sorts of things we are imagining. We are a Council and not a Home & School so there are constraints to keep in mind. • Alison S. – the garden project. Ms. Hopkins relayed that facilities accidentally ran over the garden over the summer. The plan is to fix it. Alison shared that the initial event of creating the garden was lovely. A student garden club was suggested. • Sweny – believes in parent involvement and community and hopes we can all reach out to more parents who haven’t yet been involved • Kara – appreciates the communication from the Council • Susanna – here to help and support the good work being done • Idea to have a Council booth at the Meet the Teacher evening on the 25th: Natalia, Katie D and Alison S agreed to staff the table. We agreed it could also have spiritwear and other info.
Summary of Parent Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Council members are invited to the October 14th HWDSB School Council start up event. Please RSVP by October 7, 2025 by scanning the QR code on the flyer or visiting: hwdsb.info/SCstartupRSVP • Organizing Books, date TBD: Natalia, Susanna and Katie D • Booth at Meet the Teachers on the 25th: Natalia, KatieD and AlisonS
Next Meetings	<p>The Fall School Council Meeting Dates are:</p> <p>Wednesday October 29, 2025, 6:30pm-7:30pm, Dalewood Art Room</p> <p>Wednesday November 26th, 2025, 6:30pm-7:30pm, Dalewood Art Room</p> <p>Wednesday December 17th (if needed), 2025, 6:30pm-7:30pm, Dalewood Art Room</p>

Adjournment	We adjourned at 7:36pm.
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