

MINUTES

George L. Armstrong Elementary School Council

Thursday February 20th, 2025 | 6PM Meeting called to order by B. Fraser

In Attendance

Name	Email		Voting
Sophie Heijselaar	sheijselaar@gmail.com	Co-chair	Y
Britney Fraser	britney.culm@gmail.com	Co-chair	Y
Alicia Noel-Eisenberger	allthingspurple@gmail.com	Secretary	Y
Vacant		Treasurer	Y
Brian Playfair	bplayfai@hwdsb.on.ca	Acting Principal	
Jennifer Sired	jsired@hwdsb.on.ca	Vice Principal	
Paula Wardle	pwardle@hwdsb.on.ca	Teacher Rep	
Carrie Gerdes	carriemschultz@gmail.com	Member	Y
Christine Turcotte	chrissycarlile@gmail.com	Member	Y
Andrew Carreiro	andrewcarreiro@gmail.com	Member	Y
Carly Hepworth	cjh316@icloud.com	Member	Y
Regrets:			
Elisha Cobb	chriselishacoughler1@hotmail.com	Member	Y

Opening Land acknowledgement

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board acknowledges our presence on ancestral Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Confederacy land as determined by the Dish with One Spoon treaty. The intent of this agreement is for all nations sharing this territory to do so responsibly, respectfully and sustainably in perpetuity. We respect the longstanding relationships with the local Indigenous communities, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from January 16th, 2024 were circulated prior to the meeting.
Minutes approved as circulated. Moved by C. Gerdes. Seconded by S. Heijselaar.

Principal's Report – B. Playfair

February Staff Meeting

- Focus on HWDSB mental health strategy for students
- Includes strategies for managing student behaviour (support vs. consequences)
- Discover antecedents to behaviour

Report Cards

- Will be sent home Thursday February 20th

PA Day

- February 28th, 2025 is a PA Day
- Staff will spend half-day participating in province-wide training on anti-semitism
- Second half of the day will focus on HWDSB mental health strategy

Admin Update

- Welcome to B. Playfair, Acting Principal from January to April 2025
- B. Playfair has 35 years with HWDSB
- Welcome to J. Sired, permanent Vice Principal
- J. Sired joins GLA from the Peel District School Board

Teacher's Report – P. Wardle

Athletics

- Basketball has wrapped up for the season
- All participants demonstrated great sportsmanship and had a lot of fun!

Clubs

- Kilometer Club, Lego Club and Art Club continue and remain very popular with students

Music Club

- Run by C. Silverglen
- Students exploring music as it relates to Black History Month and understanding racism
- Performances planned for school assembly February 27th, 2025 as well as Earth Day

Chocolate Fundraiser

- Organized by L. Wong and D. Mullin
- Hoping to raise \$4000-\$5000 for purchase of electronics and technology

Snow Hills

- Large snow hills on school grounds pose a hazard when students climb on them
- Snow hills can be icy, risk of falling causing broken bones, head injuries
- Staff find it challenging to manage as Aftercare Programs allow climbing on snow hills
- Staff asking for families to support messaging to stay off snow hills
- Action Item: B. Playfair to send email to families re: staying off snow hills

Snow Clearing

- Following large snowfall, families found access to school property and sidewalks challenging as snow not effectively cleared
- Families also expressing difficulty passing by Kindergarten playground on East 19th due to many families lingering after drop-off
- Unclear who is responsible/who to contact with concerns re: snow removal
- Area Facilities Supervisor responsible for snow removal contact in their area
- Contract company responsible for gates, pathways
- Sidewalks are responsibility of City of Hamilton
- School entrances to street is the responsibility of Caretaking
- Action Item: B. Playfair to send email to families re: refrain from lingering after Kindergarten drop off

Council Updates

Fundraiser Updates

- Terra Greenhouse Pointsettias (Completed December 2024)
 - o Leads: S. Heijselaar, B. Fraser
- Terra Greenhouse Spring Flowers (? April 2025)
 - o Lead: B. Fraser
 - o Support: C. Gerdes, A. Noel-Eisenberger, C. Turcotte
 - o Terra not participating in fundraiser this spring
 - o Instead, Terra has offered a 20% discount for a bulk purchase
 - o Action Item: B. Fraser will organize sub-committee meeting for planning
- Spring Gift Basket Raffle (with Spring Carnival- date TBD)
 - o Lead: S. Heijselaar
 - o Support: B. Fraser
 - o Change to Silent Auction of Artisan gift baskets to be held during Spring Carnival
- Ice Cream Day (with Primary Play Day- TBD)
 - o Lead: C. Gerdes
 - o Support: S. Heijselaar, A. Noel-Eisenberger
 - o Freezies for Play Day not part of fundraising- School Council to purchase
- Little Caesar's Pizza Kits (Completed February 2025)
 - o Lead: A. Noel-Eisenberger
 - o Support: A. Carreiro, C. Turcotte, C. Hepworth
 - o Raised \$1208
 - o Action Item: A. Noel-Eisenberger to discuss with sub-committee how bonus kits will be used (i.e. incentives)
- Chocolate Fundraiser
 - o Leads: D. Mullin and L. Wong
 - Currently underway, running February – March

Fund Allocations

- Action Item: J. Sired, B. Fraser to confirm current balance of School Council fund
- Funds raised this year cannot roll over and must be spent by August 31st, 2025
- School Council receives \$500 yearly from Ministry for "parent engagement"
- Council members voted to prioritize how funds will be spent
 1. Lego Wall for Learning Commons (7'x5' ~\$650)
 2. MathUp licenses for grade 5 teachers (~\$850 each)

3. Playground painting (~\$1000)
 4. Furniture for Cozy Corner in Learning Commons (many options ~\$500-\$1700)
 5. Pedestal for Learning Commons catalogue (~\$100)
 6. Tricycles for Kindergarten (~\$300-\$500 each)
- Action Item: B. Playfair to send contact info to B. Fraser re: playground painting company
 - Action Item: B. Playfair, B. Fraser to move forward with purchasing MathUp license(s), Playground painting
 - Any remaining funds will go to Lego Wall, Cozy Corner furniture
 - Re: MathUp license
 - o Possibility of free trial with purchase of a license
 - o Currently 1.5 grade 5 classes
 - o Principal can request historical EQOA data
 - o Currently EQOA testing done on laptops, previously done on paper
 - o Concern expressed re: digital platform allows for only “right” vs. “wrong” answer
 - o Paper testing allowed students to show process and possibility obtain partial marks
 - o Is it possible to request paper testing for GLA students?
 - Re: Lego in Learning Commons
 - o Donations of Lego are welcome

Spring Open House

- Tentative date Thursday May 8th, 2025

Education Week

- First week of May
- School Council planning buffet breakfast for staff
- Tentative date Tuesday May 6th, 2025
- Action Item: B. Fraser, S. Heijselaar add Education Week Breakfast planning to April agenda

Carnival

- Tentative date Thursday May 8th, 2025 (to be held in conjunction with Spring Open House)
- Action Item: P. Wardle to follow up re: pulling Carnival supplies from storage
- Carnival Sub-committee Meeting
 - o Thursday March 20th 6:00-7:30pm at Town Hall (581 Concession Street)
- Food Trucks for Carnival? (Sunny the Ice Cream Man, Dirty South, Green Machine, Johnny Blonde)
- Action Item: B. Playfair will follow up re: regulations for Food Trucks

Budget/Treasurer's Report

Deferred

New Business

School Council Meeting Dates

- April meeting moved to April 24th 6-7:30pm
- May 15th 6-7:30pm
- Tentative meeting June 19th 6-7:30pm to discuss School Council plan for September 2025 and how to spend remaining funds from 2024/2025

Kindergarten Advancement Ceremony

- Action Item: B. Playfair will follow-up re: Kindergarten performance and invite parents?

Morning Drop-off

- Staff noticing an improvement in parents/families allowing students to walk to class inside the school
- Allows students to develop independence
- Thank you from Staff

Email Communication

- B. Playfair will send out email to families every 2-3 weeks with updates

Next Meeting

Date Thursday April 24th, 2025 | 6-7:30 PM, Staff Room or Virtual