

Kanétskare School Council
Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2025

Members present:

Chair: Jennifer Walsom
Vice-Chair: Cindy Stranak
Secretary: Katherine Hollands
Principal: Joanne Hall
Teacher: Janine Durajlija

Regrets:

Treasurer: Carly Felton
Eisham Abdulkarim
Megan d'Andrade-Bush
Louai Moghrabi
Jennifer Wallace

Voting Members: Helen Burnett-Nichols, Jennifer Castle-Timms, Jennifer Coon, Natacha da Silva, Meaghan Eisenberg, Pam Ekins, Tanya Jurkovic (as proxy for Tom Flood), Tiffany Herron, Esme Rambert, Darina Vasek

1) Welcome, Land Acknowledgement & Attendance

Cindy Stranak read the land acknowledgement, and attendance was taken.

- November minutes were distributed prior to this meeting. There was one outstanding correction, which has now been made. Cindy Stranak made a motion to approve the minutes, Pam Ekins seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.
- There were two additions to be made to tonight's meeting agenda
 - exterior lighting at the NE corner of the school along the pathway (Joanne confirmed that this item has already been added as a work order for the school)
 - an update was requested about how the cell policy implementation was going (Joanne will add this topic to her Principal's Report)

2) Meeting Agenda

Natacha da Silva moved to approve the agenda, Meaghan Eisenberg seconded the motion, and tonight's meeting agenda was passed.

- School Council email: kanetskareSC@hwdsb.on.ca

- Parent Reaching Out Grant (PRO Grant)

Cindy confirmed that Kanetskare's application for the PRO Grant was successful, and due to a higher number of applicants, the total grant amount the school has received is \$900.

A conversation followed about which speaker the council would like to spend the funds on. Natacha suggested that to streamline the booking process, council should approach Mr Aubry Noronha (hellohope.ca) with our current budget and see if he can offer a smaller presentation. A consensus was reached that council will approach Mr Noronha and make him aware that instead of 3 presentations, our budget would allow for a single parent-focused presentation. Cindy will reach out to Mr Noronha regarding potential topics for discussion. If Mr Noronha cannot accommodate our request, council would like to approach Dr. Sheri Nsamenang, a clinical and health psychologist in the Children's Exercise and Nutrition Centre at McMaster Children's Hospital, to speak to families about the mental health impacts of screen time.

- Fundraising

- Library: Indigo Literacy Grant Application – closes Feb 28

Cindy updated council that Kanetskare will not be submitting an application this year, due to the onerous information-gathering required and the short turn-around time. However, information can still be collected using the existing application in the hopes of streamlining the process for next year's application. Tanya mentioned that another source of funding might be the Adopt-a-School initiative through Indigo, which funds a local school each year. Cindy also shared that Jennifer Wallace sent her information about Dyslexia Canada. They offer an application for free books for students with dyslexia. We missed the application deadline for this year but have it on our calendar for next year.

- Book Drive – General Interest & Novel Studies

Esme provided an update on the book drive & direct donation letter. It has become apparent that while General Interest Books can be donated by families, the easiest way to create to build a Novel Studies section of books for students to use is through monetary donations, as the logistics of collecting the appropriate number of books of various titles is too complicated to rely on unforeseen book donations. As a result, this year's Direct Donation letter asks for a donation of funds that will be used to purchase Novel Studies Books, with any leftover funds being put towards library furniture. This Direct Donation Letter will be combined with a call for help in collecting General Interest Books. There are two categories of books we are looking to gather for this Book Drive:

- General Interest Books – Jenn Castle-Timms confirmed that the scholastic funds raised at the book fair have been used to purchase general interest books as per a list provided by staff. Families will also receive a letter asking for donations of any books they are happy to part with (these will then be vetted by staff). Families will be directed to either send their donated books into school with students, or to drop them off

at the front office during school hours. The communication to families will specifically ask for “ ‘tween category’ graphic novels and chapter books” so that students have a greater selection of general interest books to choose from in the library.

- Novel Studies Books – this year’s Direct Donation initiative will be part of the Book Drive. In addition to asking for used General Interest Books, the Direct Donation letter will attempt to raise funds to purchase novel studies books based on the list provided by staff, with extra funds being put towards library furnishings. The benefit of housing the novel studies books in the library, instead of in classrooms, is that then these books would be available to more than one classroom.

Ideas for the name of the Book Drive/Direct Donation could be “Give Read Grow” or “Building Pages, Building Minds”.

- Direct Donation - Revisit

As mentioned above, this year’s Direct Donation letter has become part of the overall Book Drive. See details above.

- 50th School Anniversary Celebration – Sub-Committee, Proposal & Discussion

Joanne updated council that she has arranged for several interior renovations to take place at the school, including painting hallways and classrooms, and new hallway flooring. This, in addition to how much planning will be required for this event, means that it may make more sense to hold the 50th Anniversary celebration in October of 2025. This will allow all attendees to enjoy the refreshed look of the school, and will provide the sub-committee with additional planning time. Sub-committee members agreed to having the event in the fall.

The time capsule that will be opened in time for this celebration must be removed from the school and opened with the Archives staff in order to vet the capsules contents. The contents of the time capsule will be on display for the community to see at the anniversary celebration.

Esme provided an update to council that the sub-committee is hoping to create a sort of Music Festival for the anniversary event, in the hopes of drawing in not only students and families, but also community members. With live music, concessions, and perhaps even event-specific school-themed merchandise available, the committee is hoping to make this a meaningful fundraising event.

Some outstanding items to confirm while planning this event include the timing of the HAAA park renovation, what permits might be required from the City, and what approvals would be required from the School Board. Joanne will reach out to the Board’s Risk Management department to start a dialogue on this topic.

Joanne said that the School Board has a PR department that could assist with event communications, but that this can also be communicated via social media to neighbourhood groups. Council also suggested that it would be worthwhile to reach out

to local media such as the Hamilton Spectator and CHCH News, as they would likely be interested in picking up the story.

Esme asked Joanne if there is any budget that the school could contribute to this event. Joanne will investigate. There is a possibility of some funds being available if there is justification that the school will see real benefits from this event. Tanya suggested that additional funding might be available by contacting our local Council member, and the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association (KNA).

During a discussion about whether a stage would be required, Cindy suggested reaching out to local businesses with experience in this area, such as Picks & Sticks to see if they might have any contacts in this area.

3) Principal's Report

Joanne reported that this afternoon there were reports of a cyberattack that hit Powerschool, the software that the School Board uses. As of 5pm, the Board has shut everything down, meaning the school will have no access to anything online, including WiFi and all data access. The Board will provide an update next week as more information becomes available.

Joanne also reported that after returning from her leave and discovering an ice rink on the school field, she had concerns around safety. Further investigation led to conversations with the City of Hamilton and the School Board. It turns out there is no formalized agreement between the Board and the City regarding shared use of the space, and therefore no clear parameters around sharing the space. While a formalized agreement is negotiated, students are allowed to use the field during school hours. Part of the agreement going forward will involve communication (via email, letters, and website posts) to families communicating that the field is technically not school property and that consent forms will need to be signed in order for students to continue to use the space. This communication is planned for next week, pending the impact of the cyberattack.

4) Teacher's Report

Janine Durajlija provided an update that staff have been working on completing report cards, which will be sent home soon, and that the school is extremely busy with various clubs (a few new clubs have been added – crocheting, sewing, and knitting) and intramurals, which have been hugely successful with the students.

Janine shared that planning is underway for a talent show and end-of-year trip planning. The Gr 6 classes will be going to the Warplane Museum. The Grades 7 & 8 trips are still in the planning stages. The Grade 8 trip will probably be to Toronto again this year.

The date for Grade 8 Graduation has been set for June 19th, and graduation photos are scheduled for February 5th and 6th.

5) PIC Update

Cindy noted that there was a PIC networking event in January, so there is no new information to share. The next PIC meeting will include a conversation about transportation, which covers both bussing and school timetables.

6) Future Business

- By-laws review and update
No new information to share.
- Inviting Trustee, Elizabeth Wong, to a future meeting
No new information to share.

7) Adjournment

The next meeting will be Feb 20th at 6pm. This meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.