

Kanétskare School Council

Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2025

Members present:

Chair: Jennifer Walsom
Vice-Chair: Cindy Stranak
Principal: Joanne Hall

Regrets:

Secretary: Katherine Hollands
Treasurer: Carly Felton
Teacher: Janine Durajlija
Eisham Abdulkarim
Megan d'Andrade-Bush
Louai Moghrabi
Jennifer Castle-Timms
Jennifer Coon
Natacha da Silva
Esme Rambert
Tiffany Herron
Tom Flood
Pam Ekins

Voting Members: Jennifer Wallace, Helen Burnett-Nichols, Meaghan Eisenberg, Darina Vasek

1) Welcome, Land Acknowledgement & Attendance

Darina Vasek read the land acknowledgement, and attendance was taken.

- **January minutes** were distributed prior to this meeting. Helen Burnett-Nichols made a motion to approve the minutes, Meaghan Eisenberg seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.
- There was 1 addition and 1 item removed on tonight's **meeting agenda**
 - Janine Durajlija is unable to attend tonight so the teachers report has been removed from the agenda.
 - Ryan McHaffie from Hamilton Recreation Division is in attendance so a Hamilton Recreation report was added where the teachers report was.
- Jennifer Wallace made a motion to approve the agenda with amendments, Meaghan Eisenberg seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

2) Meeting Agenda

- **Principal Placement Survey** – due by April 25. Jennifer Walsom as School Council Chair was asked to fill out the optional survey by the HWDSB School Board. She is seeking feedback from Council to assist her in answering the questions on the survey.

- The survey is asking about Community Priorities, School Improvement Plan Priorities and Desired Principal Qualities and Attributes.
- There was discussion about the numerous programs and initiatives that Principal Hall has implemented and supported at the school since her arrival last January.
- It was identified that we would like to retain Principal Hall and the questions should be answered with that goal in mind.
- **Volunteer Policy Consultation** – can be found on the engage website. You must create an account or login in order to fill it out. <https://www.engagehwdsb.ca/login>
 - Survey is open until April 17.
- **PRO Grant Update** – Principal Hall and Cindy Stranak have been working on organizing a speaker for a PRO Grant event. Principal Hall was able to find funding to supplement the PRO Grant and School Council Startup Fund in order to bring speaker Aubrey Noronha to the school. He will be doing 2 presentations, 1 to students and 1 to parents. They are currently working on securing a date, tentatively mid-late April. They are setting up a meeting with Aubrey in the next couple of weeks where the date(s) will be set. At the meeting, Principal Hall will be telling Aubrey the school challenges and climate so he can tailor his anti racism and mental health discussion to our school.
- **Book Drive** – Esme Rambert is leading the school initiative; she was unable to attend tonight's meeting so Principal Hall gave a brief update. There are lots of books coming in and approximately \$700 has been donated through the school cash online link – thank you to everyone who has donated. There is 1 more day and communication has gone out to remind parents. Once the drive has wrapped up, parent volunteers will be sorting the books with a focus on the teacher's wish list that were created earlier this school year. The money donations will be used to buy books specifically identified for novel studies on that list.
- **50th Anniversary Celebration** – Helen Burnett-Nichols is on the sub committee and provided an update. The meeting scheduled for Wednesday Feb 21 has been rescheduled due to a number of people not being able to attend. The group plans to meet in 2 weeks. The group will provide an update at the March meeting.
- **By-Laws Review and Update** – The current by-laws were approved in 2018. At the most basic level the name needs to be updated from Ryerson to Kanétskare. Beyond that, they should be reviewed to ensure they reflect the latest version of the HWDSB School Council Handbook and the Ontario School Council Guide. Jennifer Walsom has offered, and it was agreed that she would do a first pass and bring it back to the group in March for further discussion.

3) Principal's Report

Principal Hall reported:

- The **outdoor lighting** discussed at previous meetings has been fixed. The issue was the timer was not working properly.
- **Field consent forms** – the school has received approximately 80% back. There will be 1 more reminder to go out. Once the school has done their due diligence in notifying

parents of the field being off school property (it belongs to the City of Hamilton and not the School Board), all students will be allowed on the field. The City and School Board will be meeting to discuss setting up an agreement for the future.

- **Attendance and lates** are an issue at the school. Some kids have 50+ or more days absence on their first term report cards. This negatively impacts student success. Principal Hall and her team have worked on initiatives like setting up a private prayer room for students so they don't need to go home at lunch and looking at ways the school can support kids who are fasting through Ramadan (ie. activities to get them out of the classroom while other kids are eating lunch).
- **Power of Words** activity was done throughout the school today. It was tied into the 7 grandfather teachings (Anishinaabe guiding principles). The activity was to push toothpaste out of the tube and then try to get it back in.
- **Clubs / Sports** – Good news. Lunchtime sports club is thriving. Principal Hall is seeing lots of positive social interaction and kids are cleaning up after club is over. The healthy action team held a hot dog fundraiser for the nutrition program. A huge thank you to the suppliers who donated the hot dogs and buns. Thanks to them 100% of funds, approximately \$400 went directly to the program.
- 10 **iPads** have been purchased thanks to school donations.
- There is a **PD day next Friday Feb 28**. Staff will be focused on anti-racism and the school improvement plan.
- The **staffing process** for the 2025-26 year is starting, updates will be provided at the April meeting.

4) Hamilton Recreation Report

Ryan McHaffie shared:

- Hamilton Recreation will be **attending meetings** going forward. Ryan or another team member will be in attendance to provide Rec Center updates and answer any questions.
- **Spring Recreation Programs** start April 7. Spring programs will be available for review on March 5, 2025. Registration opens starting on March 19.
- **Employment 411** – is a free job readiness program for youth (starting age 14). It will be running from 9-5 for 5 days over the March Break and includes first aid and high 5 certifications.

5) PIC Update

Cindy Stranak shared an update from the February Meeting.

- Transportation cancelled their presentation, in its place the new **System Navigator** from the Human Rights office presented to PIC. The newly created role addresses gaps for equity populations. There is 1 person in this role, they specifically support students and their families in a culturally responsive way by acting a bridge between the family and school. The person started in November 2024 and meets families in their homes as well as attending school meetings with families.

- PIC is helping to arrange a HWDSB wide **Wellness Fair** on Saturday May 31 from 9:30am-2pm. There will be refreshments and workshops for families based on kids age centered around team building and healthy habits. This is in support of the recent cell phone ban and vaping policies (PPM128) introduced this year.

6) Future Business

- **Inviting Trustee, Elizabeth Wong** - she was unable to attend tonight's meeting. The March date was provided to her, a follow-up will be sent closer to the date.
- **Graduation Planning** – Graduation is being planned for Thursday June 19. The date and some details have been shared to the grade 8 parents. Last year, the school planned the details for both the ceremony and reception. Parents assisted with organizing food for the reception. The school is hopeful they (parents) can take on this role again this year.

7) Adjournment

The next meeting will be March 27 at 6pm.