

Abraham Erb Public School
School Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 15th Jan. 2025, 19:00 EDT

Attendees:

From the school(2): Jodie Hancox-Meyer, Shelley Carey

Parents and Community Member(8): Ankit Sharma, Doris JP Li, Ivy JC Cui, Taru Malhotra, Sirisha Puli, Vaidhehi Kumar, Viridiana Rodriguez, Miranda Evans

(Taken by Doris JP Li)

Meeting Summary

- **Principal's Retirement (Jan 31, 2025):** After 30.5 years in education and 2.5 years at Abraham Erb School, the Principal Meyer announced retirement. No successor named yet.
 - **The Teachers' Report** shared student achievements, including field trips, French Immersion projects, and procedural writing exercises.
 - **The Principal's Report** provided updates on fundraising, upcoming dental screenings, and the Strong Start literacy program. Significant board-level changes included a new interim WRDSB director and ongoing virtual caregiver sessions.
 - **The Treasurer's Report:** No income or expenditures for January.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for February 19th 2025.
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Topics & Highlights

1. Teachers reports (attached for reference)

- **Field Trip:** Grade 6 students visited Heidelberg Outdoor Education Center for a biodiversity unit, learning about trees and animal bones.
- **French Immersion:** Grade 2 students created their first slideshow on family celebrations, supported by older students. Grade 3 students performed and recorded "Labrador Ahn Gali"
- **Writing Activities:** Grade 1 and 2 students focused on procedural writing, culminating in a hot chocolate-making activity.
- **Museum Trip:** Grades 4-6 students planned to visit a museum for coding activities.
- **Learn-to-Skate:** Grade 1 students completed skating sessions at Rim Park.
- **Library Initiative:** "Express Your Shelf" display where students showcase their favorite books.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for more details.

2. Principal's reports (attached for reference)

School Updates:

- **Winter Variety Show (Dec 19):** Successful event with full student participation.
- **Week of Giving (Dec):** Raised \$417 and collected 200+ food items, toys, toiletries, and winter wear for local families in need.
- **Dental Screening (Jan 21):** For JK, SK, and Grade 2 students.
- **Strong Start Program (Jan 6):** Literacy support for primary students with volunteer tutors.
- **French Immersion Registration:** Open for Grade 1 students for the September 2025 intake.

Board Updates:

- **PD Day (Jan 17):** No school. Staff focus on assessment and evaluation.
- **Kindergarten Registration:** Over a dozen new JK students registered within the first few days.
- **Psychology Department Sessions:** Hosting "Lunch and Learn" virtual session for caregivers in January.
- **Leadership Change:** Jeewan Channicka stepped down as WRDSB Director of Education (Dec 5), Scott Miller is the interim director.

Province Updates:

- **Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant:** Applications due Jan 24; funding for parent engagement initiatives.
- **Ontario Government Investment (\$4.6M):** Supporting student social and emotional development programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters, Roots of Empathy, and Kids Help Phone.

Personal Announcement:

- **Retirement Announcement (Jan 31, 2025):** After **30.5 years in education**, stepping down from the principal role.

Please refer to **Appendix 2** for more details.

3. Treasurer's Report

- **Financial Report:** No major financial activity in December.
- **Anti-Bullying Magic Show:** Committed \$1,600.35 for the event.
- **PRO Grant Application:** Suggested using the grant to fund Cultural Awareness Week in February.

6.Next meeting and agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for February 19th and the co-chairs, secretary, treasurer, and Jodie will have a quick online meeting about a week before to put the agenda together.

Appendix 1

Teachers' Report for School Council

Wednesday, January 15th, 2025

Before the winter holidays in December, Mr. Snyder and the Grade 6 from room 19 had a field trip to Heidelberg Outdoor Education Center. We learned about how to identify various types of trees, example examined samples of bones of animals in order to classify and identify them and got a chance to feed seeds to check it is by hand, although the ticket is did not seem very hungry that day, this was the end of our biodiversity unit for science.

The Grade 2 in French Immersion have been working hard to create their very first slide show about an important celebration in their family. They have been learning patience since computers don't always want them to work for them and helping one another with their work. Our big buddies in Grade 5/6 French Immersion also help them to learn how to add pictures and practice reading the slides aloud before presenting them next week.

In Mrs. Barlow's Class, Grade 1/2. They are working on procedural writing. Students are learning how to use the words first, next, then and finally to create a step by step, sorry, to create a step by step writing piece, some samples are how to brush your teeth, how to take care of your pets, how to make a snowman and to celebrate the end of the writing unit, they will write out the steps on how to make hot chocolate. They will actually make hot chocolate for everyone in the classroom to enjoy.

Rooms 16, 18, 19, and 29(Grades 4, 5, and 6 from upstairs): We'll be going to the museum later this month to explore coding with Ozobots, which should be super fun.

The Grades 3 French Immersion students presented and recorded a French play titled "Labrador Ahn Gali". The class had a wonderful time learning their lines, dressing up in costumes and using dramatic expressions to bring the story to life.

Grade 1s just finished their final Learn-to-Skate session at Rim Park, what an amazing experience for them. It was very neat to see how far the children progress from the first session to the 4th session. Not only are they learning the physical act of skating, but also skills like patience and perseverance. That was Ms. Monette's, Mrs. Barlow's, and Ms Watson's class.

Library News – "Express Your Shelf"

Finally, from the library, Mrs. Mueller, the Abraham Erb Library presents "*Express Your Shelf*" which students pick their favorite books from the library. They create a sign either themselves or one of their faiths to get their own exclusive display in the library. We currently have about 20 students signed up to set up their very own display about the book that they are reading. We are advertising for more submissions this week. Due to the privacy policy, their first name only and their classroom is indicated on any of the signs that they create in the library at but missus miller will take a photo and the students will get a photo of their presentation to take home to show their parents as well.

Appendix 2

Principal's Report for School Council

Wednesday, January 15th, 2025

School

We had a great turnout for our Winter Variety Show on December 19th. Every student had the opportunity to perform some sort of musical or dramatic number and the kids were really excited and proud of themselves. This type of event takes a lot of work to prepare for and our staff worked hard collaboratively to make it come together beautifully.

During of Week of Giving in December, we were able to collect \$417 through our online "Slice of Nice" along with almost 200 food items. These both went to support our local Food for Kids program, a program which many WRDSB students and their families depend on. In addition, we collected many new toys, toiletry items and new hats and mittens during the Week of Giving. These went to support families in need to Waterloo. We are blessed each year to have so much support for this initiative.

On January 21st all JKs, SKs and grade 2 students will have a dental screening done by the Region of Waterloo Public Health Dental Program. All families impacted have been informed and families have the information in order to opt out if they wish.

We have started our Strong Start program as of January 6th. We have a team of dedicated volunteers coming in to work one-on-one with some of our youngest primary students on basic literacy skills. Our site coordinator this year is teacher Laura Barlow and we are thankful for her time and energy in getting this program up and running again.

Registration for French Immersion is currently open for families of grade 1 students to register their interest in their child starting into the French Immersion program in September for grade 2. All grade 1 families have received information about this. Families also have the option to choose additional FI schools in the region that they'd be interested in having their child go to for grade 2 if they don't get chosen in the lottery and get a spot at Abraham Erb (in which case they would have to provide their own transportation).

Board

This Friday, January 17th is the next WRDSB Professional Activity Day. Staff will be working on a variety of assessment and evaluation activities. The Extended Day program will be operating but on a reduced time frame (this should already have been communicated to those families).

Registration for new Kindergarten students has begun! We are excited to share that within the first couple of days of the online registration system being open, we already have over a dozen new JK students in the portal.

The WRDSB Psychology Department is continuing to offer virtual "Lunch and Learn" sessions during the month of January for interested caregivers. More information including topics and links to participate can be found on the WRDSB website.

Our WRDSB Director of Education, Jeewan Channicka, is no longer our director effective December 5th. Scott Miller has stepped into the role of WRDSB director while the Board considers its next steps.

Province

All schools across the province received notification recently about the 2024-2025 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant. This money is given to the Board to be used in ways which promote parent engagement in their children's schools. There is an application required to be considered for this grant and it is due soon, on January 24th. The amount each successful school receives varies from year to year and is based on the total amount the Board receives and the number of schools that apply. I believe that we will be discussing some ideas on how to potentially apply for some PRO grant money later in the agenda tonight.

The government of Ontario has recently invested 4.6 million dollars to help schools

equip students with social and emotional skills, foster stronger connections amongst students and promote safe, respectful and inclusive school environments. Specifically, the funding will be used to support some already-existing programs and initiatives such as the Big Brothers and Big Sisters in-school mentorship program, the Roots of Empathy Program, Kids Help Phone and a number of others as well. More information about this funding can be found on the Ontario Ministry of Education website.

Additional News

After 30.5 years in education, I have decided to start the next chapter in my life - retirement. My retirement will be effective on January 31st, 2025. I have been blessed to teach thousands of incredible students and lead hundreds of amazing staff during my time with the WRDSB. I feel so blessed to have had the chance to lead the Abraham Erb school community for the last 2 and a half years. Indeed, this is a very special school.

At this point in time, I have no additional information about who will take over the Principal role at Abraham Erb, but trust that that information will be available at some point soon and shared with the staff, students and families.

It has been an honour to work with you, our dedicated School Council members, and I thank you for your commitment to the students and school. I will miss everyone!