

## Mary Johnston Public School - School Council - Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

**Start time:** 6:30 pm

**Location:** MJPS Sensory Room

Erika Bryant  
Adrienne Brown  
Sarah Bester  
Sameera Banduk  
Nada Basir  
Yasmin Shamji

Paul Reinheimer  
Dianne Lapierre  
Kara Botelho  
Miriam Benarroch-Altman  
Leah Thomas  
Masha Kuznetsova

Gillian Delanghe  
Alanna Hacking  
Beatrice Peralta  
Kevin Labyt  
Samantha Hirsch

Principal: Marcus Hoare (virtual)

Staff representative: Janice Taylor

### **Welcome**

Highlights since returning from winter break:

- Mr H has met with someone from a micro forest company; we have the opportunity to have a micro forest - 500m sq flat space that's a no-mow zone, densely packed forest, variety of trees. No cost or work for MJ. We would need a team for maintaining the trees for about a year. Shouldn't be an issue. Perhaps this could be blended in with our outdoor learning space. Could also do 250m sq out front, 250 out back, as an option. Planting time possible for October.
- Mme McManus is running the annual Family Day Food Drive from Monday Feb 9th - Fri Feb 13th. Her class will take it on. Communication to whole school coming.
- February 4th is Winter Walk Day. We need to register MJ and then we get entered to win a prize for participating; students can also register and participate for prizes. Marcus could use a volunteer to help with that.
- Term 1 report cards are in the works. Will be sent home mid February.

### **Council Matters**

Pizza update - Alanna

- Everything going smoothly; just two volunteer spots to fill between now and March Break.

### Spirit Wear - Leah

- Easy to set up; using the same company as before.
- Janice: Perhaps we can tie it in to the art night so we can have samples available for people to see sizes, etc. – maybe even order on site.
- What about a used pass-it-on MJ Spirit Wear as well; run it at the same time, sharing things that are too small. OR consider doing that at the end of the school year at the end of year event.
- For new items next school year, we will plan to set orders up in September so people have Spirit Wear for the whole school year. Possibly add to May agenda.

### Helping other families

- Sameera: What about a toy drive? Think in terms of coat drive - maybe have donations, people can pick toys, swap items, share unused toys and pass them on.

### Art Night

- Thursday, March 5th
- There is a staff committee collecting data from all classes.
- Goal: every class will contribute an art piece, a performance, some type of art component as a class (or classes combined) and have those items put on display and there is an opportunity for a raffle to occur, for art pieces to be raffled off.
- Money collected will be used to help students in need at MJ; maybe to help offset costs for field trips, provide needed items, etc.
- The staff wondered if there were community members who could contribute. Maybe local musicians?
- Mme Daley is taking on the choir. It will perform on the art night.
- Makerspace for families to create something night-of.
- From council, they're asking - 1: some funds for paint, canvas, art supplies for classes; 2: volunteers to run rooms/stations or to perform.

### PRO Grant - Sameera

- Approved for \$500 to put towards STEM fair

### STEM Fair - Nada

- Need to create a committee, about 3 people to help with planning.
- Date finalized for Wed April 15th.
- We can send out a call for volunteers on School Day and/or in Sameera's new update newsletter.
- Students can pick any science project/subject they want to investigate. They will be provided a board to help present their research, etc. – this is to be completed at home.
- Dianne: is this something that could be prepared so kids can present during the school day as well? So classes can circulate and kids can see all the projects.
- Janice: maybe the family night to present is before; following day is presented during school hours.

- Plan: set up on 15th, then doors open to show community, then leave set up for other students for next day. Tear down at end of day on the 16th.
- Open to all grades.
- Maybe some committee members could volunteer some lunchtimes to help kids who may not have the opportunity to work on projects at home. Facilitate a safe space to work on their projects at MJ and provide some materials.
- There will be an information assembly at school to inform students what it's all about.
- Projects would also be good tasks for in class when students are finished with their work. (Instead of "free time").
- No additional funds needed.

#### Grade 5-6 year-end trip

- Location selected: Hidden Acres
- Now we need approval from the Superintendent before going forward.

#### Year-End Event

- What does the event look like this year?
- A foam party would cost \$1130 if we wanted to go ahead with it. So the question is prioritizing fundraising vs foam party.
- Opportunity for bonus fundraising: raise X number of dollars, Mr. H. goes into the foam party, etc. Add a donation box for extra money.
- Pie in the face - pay to pie.
- Once we decide on budget, Adrienne and Erika will book food trucks, activities, etc.
- Raffle baskets: Kara, Sarah and Alanna will spearhead the raffle baskets this year.

#### Finances - Sarah Bester

- Move-a-thon - last year we raised about \$2000, this year only about \$600.
- Poinsettias raised about \$800.
- Overall: we make about \$6000 revenue at the end of the year.
- Keep in mind how much we're making, how much surplus we have at end of the year (less this year so far than projected).

#### OLAF

- Do we have an amount we'd like to add each year? What's our goal?
- So far there is a budget submitted to facilities for the project.
- The Superintendent visited on Monday.
- Now we are waiting for contractors to come back with plans.
- Facilities will also have some funds to contribute for construction, safety measures, etc. (from government grants)

**Motion:** Approve \$1500 for the budget for the 2026 year end event (to cover foam party and other expenses)

Moved by: Paul

Seconded by: Sameera  
Motion passed.

Grade 6 graduation - Dianne

- School-sanctioned festivities. Will confirm some ideas by next meeting.
- \$600 budget allocated

## **Further Discussions**

Active Transportation Committee - Paul

- Paul has formed an Active Transportation committee. He's looking for more volunteers.
- Paul emailed the City Councillor about a new path so kids don't have to cross through parking lot. Waiting for a response.
- Other ideas, such as covered bike racks, to be discussed at future meeting.

Art Committee - Paul

- Still exploring bringing an artist in to paint interactive art around the school. Paul will be visiting another school with lots of art to get a feel for what they have done.

New Student info group - Paul

- Still looking for feedback on his email from December
- Goal: intro email for new families / students
- Maybe make a video of what a day at school in kindergarten looks like, starring Mr. H. as the kindergartner.

Kindergarten Info Night

- Will become kindie day this year. Opening kindie wing/classrooms during the day for people to visit. Biggest benefit: the optics of what it actually looks like during the day.  
Date TBD, end of May.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026