

Mary Johnston Public School - School Council - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Start time: 6:30 pm

Location: MJPS Library

In attendance:

Erika Bryant
Sameera Banduk
Adrienne Brown
Paul Reinheimer

MJ Davidson
Ellen Dobson
Dianne Lapierre
Gillian Delanghe

Beatrice Peralta
Nada Basir
Samie Hirsch
Samin Shokri

Principal: **Marcus Hoare**

Staff representative: **Janice Taylor**

Welcome

Principal's Welcome and Update

- There was a goal associated with the Booster Juice fundraiser for covering track and field buses, which has been met. Buses will be covered. Excess money fundraised will be used for something else in the school, TBD.
- Reminder that Mike Poulin (Empowered Lacrosse) is coming in June. \$800 cost (previously approved by Council)
- Mme Daley ran a talent show, which was fun for the whole school.
- Jump Rope For Heart was a success. School's goal was met, and Mr. H. will be pried in the face as a reward for the students' fundraising efforts.
- Grade 5 and 6 camp is on today through Friday. Mr. H. attended this morning and everyone was having a great time already. Very impressed with Hidden Acres location.
- Staff planning for next school year is ongoing. We have a new enrollment count on June 1, which might affect changes as well. Final staff numbers and class assignments will depend on final enrollment numbers in the fall.
- EAs will be the same for next year.

Council Matters

Financial Update - From Sarah (not in attendance)

- No updates

Newsletter

- Another Council newsletter was distributed last week. Well received once again.

Voting Matters

- Sameera and Erika would like to offer coffee the first week of school next year. Ideally in the new outdoor learning space, or otherwise outside the front one day. Can also provide school information at the table (how to join Council, school rules, etc.)
- Similarly, they would like to run a volunteer appreciation tea at the end of this school year. We have lots of volunteers (Council, Strong Start, Pizza and so on). They would like to recognize and thank volunteers with a casual drop in event.
- For both events, asking up to \$300 to cover food and beverage.

Motion: Council provides \$300 to cover volunteer appreciation event and first week of school coffee.

Moved: Erika

Seconded: Dianne

Motion passed.

- Paul suggests having the grade 6 students create a tile project to leave a memory behind in the school when they graduate. He's estimating about \$3 per small tile per grade 6. This would also require approval for having a framed item hung on the wall, etc. (from facilities). There are safety concerns to this one.
- Alternative idea: painting drop ceiling tiles?
- Paul will aim to get a canvas as the easiest, quickest option. Students will get a section to paint and leave their mark and the canvas can be hung up in the school afterwards.

Motion: Approve \$100 for two canvases and maybe some paint to cover the grade 6 project.

Moved: Paul

Seconded: Sameera

Motion passed.

- Paul also contacted a bike maintenance and repair person to come and lead sessions with older students (Matteo - Cycle Repair Waterloo Region). \$150/hour. Kids would bring their own bikes. He would run two one-hour sessions.
- Could we find some neighbourhood volunteers to run it instead?
- Ask: \$50 for supplies if we find volunteers. Otherwise, \$350 to cover Matteo and some supplies.
- Marcus would like to move ahead with this. It's a good opportunity to have some structure and learn something useful at a time of year when some kids are struggling with less structured time.
- Consider grades 4-6.

Motion: Approve \$350 for the Active Transportation Committee to cover a bike repair workshop for grades 4-6 this June.

Moved by: Paul

Seconded: MJ

Motion passed.

STEM Fair

- Lots of positive feedback. Thank you, Nada, for leading the event.
- Hope to see even more participation next year now that kids know what the event is all about.
- Nada: Appreciate everyone who jumped in and helped out. Open to feedback for next year so we can grow and build!

End of Year Event - Erika

- Paul is making a carnival game; there will be other lawn games as well.
- Foam Party will run for one hour.
- Kara has initiated organizing the class raffle baskets..
- Erika is calling for staff volunteers to be pied in the face (ticketed draw to win the opportunity to be pied at the end of a school day).
- Can we sweep the tarmac where the foam party will be? To clear leftover winter gravel.
- Temporary tattoos and face paint will be on again.
- Can we recruit grade 6s to do temporary tattoos? Janice will organize this.
- Dianne: Centennial sells their raffle tickets on School Day. Is that a possibility for MJ? She will report back how this works after Centennial's event next week.

Art and Artwork update from Paul

- An artist came and walked around MJ. A survey was created for students to ask where they would like a mural to go; it hasn't been distributed yet. The artist is available to come in and paint when we are ready.
- Chalk It Up! Program asking kids to use chalk all over the tarmac, maybe for a big temporary art installation ahead of year-end party. Just NOT allowed on the brick.
- Janice will recruit kids to decorate.
- We can do a call out for chalk donations for this.

Update from facilities re: OLAF

- Tender will go out at the end of May and OLAF will be worked on over the summer. This timeline has been provided by facilities.
- The project should be completed before the first day of school in September.

Further Discussions

Event planning

- Moving ahead for event planning, we should aim to start each process with a short meeting with Marcus and parent lead to get the ball rolling, trying to expedite the planning and decision making process.
- We will create an MJ Event Planning Document with guidelines and rules, including regarding ordering and purchasing of supplies.

- Document can be updated as rules change.

Active Transportation Committee

- Paul is still trying to get the hydro path connected to the bike rack area on the Junior side. WRDSB has replied to Paul and have promised to follow up on request.
- On the Primary side, there is a curb where the path opens onto the road. Can we cut the curb so that people don't have to stop on their bikes?
- Dianne: Drive to Five information is something that could go out in the first week of school. Instead of dropping off at the school, park 5 minutes away and then walk from there in order to reduce traffic right at MJ.

New Family Handout

- Handout is complete.
- There is a kindergarten intro day this year (May 27), rather than evening, so incoming kindies can see what the classroom looks like during the day.
- Marcus will ask Mrs Lago if she wants a Council member in attendance.
- The school will distribute the new family handout at that event. Full of FAQ for brand new families.

Staff appreciation event

- Paul: Some councils have a staff appreciation event. Can we consider that for next year?

Council's Role

- Nada asked for clarification on the expectations and role of School Council at MJ. What is our role beyond event planning? Such as decisions around track and field, or class photos. What other influence do we have? Is there a role for parents to be advocates for decision making in the school community?
- Marcus: Absolutely, yes. School Council should be involved in the advocacy of school issues.
- Nada: So how do we do that? How do we have those conversations? Example: track and field.
- Janice: There is a misunderstanding of how things operate, sometimes. Staff can't be told they have to do anything. So Council can't come in and say they want track and field and have the teachers run it as such. The teachers have to be willing to take it on.
- Partnerships are a great way to do it. Example: Dianne taking the lead on the running club. A staff member supported her, but she took the lead. And a staff member volunteered once Dianne had initiated and committed to the club.
- Is there an opportunity for parents to be part of more discussions?
- Marcus: Camp is a good example of the balance required and partnership to work out different logistics with different contractual obligations, requirements, needs, etc.
- Equity is another piece of the puzzle.
- Any parent can volunteer for any event.

- Track and Field: it's not mandatory to do it at all. Every school does it differently.
- Janice: it's helpful when it's in partnership, not when it's brought as a criticism.
- All voices are welcome at Council.

Kickstart Fundraising for Next Year

- Can we approve any fundraisers for early next year? IE: Herrle's Food Box Fundraiser that we missed out on last year.
- Herrle's: if we commit now, we can organize ahead of Thanksgiving food box distribution.
- Also - we need to confirm with Alanna whether she wants to continue running pizza, or whether we need a new parent lead. Gillian is willing if Alanna is not available.

Next Meeting: 2026-2027 school year!

Thank you, everyone!