

Meeting Minutes
GP Vanier Joint School Council and Parent Society Meeting
Regular Monthly Meeting

Date: April 28, 2026

Location: Hybrid (both in-person at Georges P. Vanier School and virtual)

Attendees:

In-Person

Farouk G (chair)	Steven R	Marty A	Travis M
Chad E* (principal)	Joy P	Sarah A	Tanis K
Cindy C* (assistant principal)	Monica V		
Laura Hack (trustee)			

On-line/Virtual:

Jessica S	Leita B
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*Vanier Staff

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order by Farouk at 7:04 pm.

2. Welcome and Housekeeping

- Welcome by Farouk

3. Acknowledgment of the Land

- Acknowledgement of the Land by Cindy

4. Approval of Agenda

- Motion: Sarah motioned to approve the agenda. Seconded by Travis. Approved.

5. Approval of Minutes

- Motion: Sarah motioned to approve the minutes from the January and February meetings. Seconded by Steven. Approved.

6. CBE Trustee and Ward 4 Councillor Introduction

- Laura Hack, Trustee for Wards 3 and 4 and Chair of the Board of Trustees, was in attendance.
- DJ Kelly, Ward 4 Councillor, was unable to attend due to a last-minute council issue.

7. Prepared Q&A for Guests & Open Discussion

- Laura thanked volunteers for the school council, noting that school council involvement makes a difference.

- Laura has two children in the CBE herself. She is a former teacher of math and science. She has been in Calgary since 2010/11. She is passionate about education and serving.
- This is Laura's second term as trustee. She is currently the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees sets policy from kindergarten to grade 12 and have one employee, the Chief Superintendent. The main activities of the Board of Trustees are setting policies for operational expectations, setting results policy (performance targets), and advocating for students and education.
- There was a question about how often service providers on the Master Agreement list are reviewed to ensure they meet safety standards.
 - The Chief Superintendent oversees the operations regarding the Master Agreement list.
 - Off-site activities are regulated by CBE Administrative Regulation No. 3027 (AR.3027). There are four categories of off-site trips: Class A, B, C, and D.
 - Class C trips are outside of Alberta (but within Canada) and Class D trips are international. Both Class C and D trips go through an off-site safety committee. The education director has the authority to approve these trips. Insurance providers also approve Class C and D trips. There is a procedures manual for off-site trips that Laura does not have access to as a trustee. Risks for a particular trip are selected from a comprehensive database of risks.
 - If parents have concerns about service providers, Laura indicated raising these concerns with the teacher-in-charge.
- There was a question about lockdown procedures and the safety vs. traumatization (risks/benefits) of lockdown procedures.
 - Laura noted that the building owner is responsible for emergency preparedness. CBE AR.3021 specifies how often drills and lockdowns need to happen. This regulation has been in place since 2001.
 - In follow-up, a parent asked how often lockdown procedures and drills are evaluated and wondered if the CBE would look at different severity levels for lockdowns.
 - Laura noted that the government of Alberta just announced safety procedures and funding for safety procedures, so the CBE will be re-evaluating safety procedures in view of this government funding.
 - Laura suggested having discussions at home with children can help them process lockdown procedures. Teachers are following procedures to help keep students safe.
 - It was noted that police are involved in checks during lockdown drills and provide feedback to schools on what could be improved.
 - There was further parent discussion about drills vs. simulations vs. large area role plays. There was also a parent question about best practices to introduce lockdowns to students of various ages.
 - It was noted that there are protocols, but how they are implemented will look different depending on student body. Vanier has a school resource officer that talks to teachers annually about why we have lockdowns.
- There was a question about what the CBE could do internally to reduce teacher workload (for instance, adjusting assignable hours for teachers or moving specialists back into direct teaching roles).

- Laura indicated there is nothing the CBE can do to internally reduce teacher workload.
- Regarding assignable hours for teachers, Laura stated the CBE has their hands tied and cannot negotiate on assignable hours with teachers at this time. The CBE is unable to conduct local bargaining with teachers because of the agreement imposed on teachers by the government.
- Regarding moving specialists back into direct teaching roles, Laura indicated that although this was suggested by a teacher to the parent who put forth the question, some teachers may make suggestions based on misinformation. Laura stated there is only one specialist per subject, so moving them back into teaching roles would not make much difference. Laura stated most people downtown are operational in nature (e.g. human resources, finance, facilities) and do not hold teaching certifications.
- With the new curriculum being implemented, the CBE is looking at adjustments to report card feedback for character and personal development.
- Laura noted that the CBE has more bus routes than the City of Calgary. Bus route planning is currently under-resourced, so resources can't be shifted away from this area to provide more classroom teachers.
- Laura indicated that if parents complained less to the area directors, the CBE could have less directors and, correspondingly, less administrative staff that support these directors. However, there are many parents who go above school principals with their complaints. Because of the nature of these complaints, the CBE needs directors with a teaching certification to handle them. Because of the volume of complaints, these directors, who have teaching certification, cannot be moved back into the classroom.
- There was a question about the challenges of parents navigating the PowerSchool system and concern that the system may also be inefficient for teachers to use.
 - Laura understands that PowerSchool is challenging for parents to navigate.
 - Laura noted that there is a limited number of software packages that have all the integration of PowerSchool. PowerSchool was noted to be a powerful reporting tool because system-level information can be pulled without disrupting teachers or requiring anything from them. Laura stated that PowerSchool is used by most school boards and that it is one of the more secure systems, despite the recent breach. One security benefit of the PowerSchool system is that payment information is not saved in PowerSchool.
 - Laura noted that a low proportion of parents look at report cards on the PowerSchool system. Chad noted that Vanier has a higher-than-average rate of parents looking at report cards, but it is still lower than desired. There was discussion about the school council providing a session (or sessions) to orient parents new to the PowerSchool system.
- There was a question about the grading scale and difficulties that some parents may have interpreting grades on report cards and the perception that grades may be subjective.
 - Laura emphasized that grades are not subjective. There are summative evaluations (e.g. final exams/projects, unit tests) or formative evaluations (e.g. quizzes, homework, class discussions) that provide evidence for the grade given to a student.

- Laura noted that research backs up the value of goal-based feedback (i.e. did well on this, could improve on that) on report cards. The group noted the value in teacher comments on report cards.
- Laura suggested that parents who are feeling unclear about their child's report card should have a conversation with their child's teacher to clarify.
- Laura mentioned there is a video on the CBE website on how to understand the grading scale on report cards.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18QjiMJFlqE&t=5s>)
- Action: It was suggested that this video be sent out along with the parent notification when report cards are ready.
- There was a question about policies regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI).
 - Laura noted that the CBE has guidelines around AI. One important aspect of the policy is disclosure of the use of AI. There is also consideration of the proper use of AI. Laura indicated that teachers are using AI to reduce their workload (e.g. encouraging students to use grammar-checking sites rather than have a teacher note all the grammatical errors in written work).
- There was a question about school-based accounts receivable.
 - It was noted that school-based fees are different than central CBE fees. CBE collects for outstanding central CBE fees, but the school handles school-based fees and any accounts receivable of these school-based fees.
- There was a question about the new curriculum and if the CBE is looking at how students will transition from grade 9 to 10.
 - Laura noted that staggering curriculum changes is helpful.
 - Laura indicated that the Board of Trustees is constantly advocating for more lead time for any rollout of a new curriculum, but that there has often been a lack of lead time for teachers to prepare for a new curriculum.
 - It was noted that marks will often shift down with the implementation of a new curriculum.
 - It was noted that the Council of School Councils is advocating for students to finish the curriculum that they started with because new curriculums are disruptive to learning.
- Laura indicated that the CBE can only spend 3% of their budget on administration.
- Laura encouraged us to reach out to her at the beginning of the year if we would like her to attend again next year.
- There was discussion of the school council acting as an additional resource for parents.

8. Principal's Report

- The School Development Plan looks at outcomes.
- The school has a budget of almost \$4M. Almost all of the budget goes towards staff. Because the Parent Society helps fund supplies for the school, more school funds can be used for staff and intervention efforts. The Parent Society doubles the amount of funds available for supplies.
- There was some concern about overruns on some of the activities funded by school-based fees. Chad explained that the school runs losses on some of the activities to provide opportunities for students. Options and extra-curricular activities bring students to school and keep them engaged. This is a high priority to keep students

engaged at school, but Chad keeps on eye on overruns to make sure they are not unreasonably high.

- It was noted that there is disparity between schools who have resources to organize casinos and those who don't.
- The school would like to offer grade 9 English students a similar trip to the Eastern trip for grade 9 French students. Although the Eastern trip has been offered to the English grade 9 students in the past, there has not been uptake by grade 9 English students. The school would like to try a trip to Edmonton for the English students instead, which would have a lower cost and be English-based.
- There is about \$37,000 in budget for supplies, but this has limitations on how much can be spent on what. The biggest expenditure for supplies for the school is photocopying and the school gets charged per copy. There was a suggestion by a parent that field trip forms could be moved online to save on photocopying costs. It was noted that this would be very challenging to do. There was discussion that parents could donate through Education Matters and/or the Parent Society could set aside funds to provide printing services.

9. Treasurer's Report

	General Fund	Casino Fund
February month-end balance	\$1,497.66	\$117,478.51
March disbursements	none	(\$13,654.56)
March month-end balance	\$1,497.66	\$103,654.56

10. Key Communicator's Report

- The Key Communicator's Report was deferred to the next meeting by agreement of the group.

11. Casino Update – Parent Society

- The Parent Society is still waiting for new casino date.

12. Band Association Update

- The Band Association is still planning to amalgamate with the Parent Society with a motion at the next meeting.

13. Fundraising – Parent Society

- Joy had some technical difficulties with getting the Coco Brooks fundraiser up and running, but she will have the campaign link out in the next couple of days. Thursday is the preferred day for pick up of Coco Brooks orders.
- Action: Joy to organize Coco Brooks fundraiser.

14. New Business

- There is \$500 available for the grade 9 farewell. Most of the \$500 will be used for engraving awards. The remainder can be used for other expenses for the grade 9 farewell.
- The school still needs to select a date for the Clubs Night at the end of the school year. May 27 is the drama production and June 2 is the band showcase. There was

discussion about having the Clubs Night from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm before the band showcase and/or drama production.

- Action: Schol to finalize date(s) for Clubs Night.

15. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 7 pm

Meetings are held the last Tuesday of every month in the school year except December, March, and June.

Note that there are still opportunities for parents to help out with Council and other volunteer opportunities to learn, share ideas, or can have co-roles. This is a great opportunity to learn from other council members as parents rotate through the school and families move on.