

Minutes

Neerlandia Public Christian School Council

Monday, January 20, 2025 @ 7:00PM

Location: NPCSC Staff Room

Present: Victoria Kane, Kirstie Schatz, Alanna Breikreitz, Cassie Wierenga, Charlene Fleming, Julaine Greilach, Prakash Raju, Sandra Olthuis, Laura Braucht, Shawna Sotnikow, Katlyn Wierenga

1. Call to Order
 - 7:00 pm
2. Devotions- Julaine Greilach
3. Adopt Agenda
 - MSC
4. Approve NPCSC Minutes – November 18, 2024
 - MSC
5. Reports
 - a. Principal Report – Prakash
 - See attached
 - Added there are PCCE Principal Meetings coming up in May (2 days)
 - Added Re: 2025-26 Calendar – Will discuss last 2 – 5 day weeks in June with Staff
 - b. School Trustee Report – Victoria Kane
 - See attached
6. New Business
 - a. Council School Council Meeting Report- Kirstie
 - See attached
 - b. Reschedule May 20 meeting
 - Changed to May 12, 2025 @ 7:00 pm
7. Adjournment
 - 8:10 pm

Next Meeting: March 17, 2025- 7pm

Principal's Report for NPCSC (with NCES parts)
Prakash Raju
2025-01-20

Christian Educators' Convention 2024 (NCES)

Just checking to see if PHSD has invoiced NCES for this.

St. Nick's Day (NCES)

We ended up collecting \$348.75 for pizza, so we have invoiced NCES for \$263.59 for pizza.

Christmas Concert

I believe the Christmas Concert went well and was well received. Has anyone had any feedback?

Staffing update

We have thanked Mrs. Carmen van Heyst for her work with one of our Gr 2 classes. Mrs. Renee Rentz has returned from her maternity leave and is teaching the Gr 2 class Mrs. van Heyst was teaching.

Mrs. Dagmar Visser is retiring at the end of January. We are actively working on hiring a replacement. I will update the NPCSC by email when the new person is hired.

TfT 101 sessions (NCES)

TfT 101 occurred the day before the Christian Educators' Convention, and I was unable to attend, but Jeremy Horlings made a special online session for Ft. McMurray Christian School that I was able to attend. I attended a second session before the end of November. I will be attending two more days in Leduc on March 5 & 6. I appreciate our membership with PCCE, because that allows me to attend these sessions without cost.

Early Learning

Early Learning (Prep and Preschool) has opened for registration across the school division. We will have this information placed on our webpage and we will add information to our next newsletter.

Superintendent/Trustee Visit

Select students will meet with Superintendent, Brett Cooper, and Trustee, Victoria Kane, at 11:30am on January 23. They will have pizza and answer questions about the students' current school experience and what they may like to see in the future. Students were selected to get a cross section of opinions from students who would likely share with the Superintendent and Trustee.

Portables Update

Kirstie asked me to get an update on the option for portables for NPCCS. I talked with Tracy Tyreman about this and he said that the request has been sent to Alberta Education/Infrastructure, and now we have to wait and see. There are a number of portables that should be available from the Alberta government over the next few years, but currently we do not have as high utilization or other schools. For example, we have approximately 84% utilization, while Busby is at 108%.

Collaborative Team Meetings (CTMs)

Collaborative Team Meetings are a way for teachers to analyze data, consider areas for improvement, discuss ways to improve and implement those ideas before the next meeting. One tool we can use is a Data Wall. This week, in cross-grade groups (K- Gr 4 and Gr 5-9) we will be discussing what we want to have on our Data Walls and how lay them out. Next week, during our collaborative day, we will work on creating our Data Walls.

Nutrition Grant Funding

We have requested to get Nutrition Grant Funding of \$9000 for this year, and this has been approved. We have proposed to use this for classroom food supplies that can be accessed by all students (granola bars, yogurt tubes, fruit (apples & bananas). Supplimented with cheese strings, cheese and cracker packages, and apple sauce cups. We will be confirming plans with staff and moving forward before the end of the month.

Winter Walk/Board School Visit – Feb 5 (NCES Component)

Prakash needs to confirm with NPCCS Staff that this is still a go for Feb 5/25, weather permitting. Will NCES provide treats for the end of the walk, if it is going ahead? The board will be visiting NPCCS in the morning on that day, and continuing with meetings in the afternoon.

2025-26 Calendar

I sent out the draft calendar last week. Thank you to Charlene for getting me to open up sharing on the link sent. Discussion?

Library Selection Committee

Trustee Victoria Kane
January 2025 Board Report
Neerlandia

Approved 2025-2026 School Year Calendar

Following an extensive consultation process the calendar reflects our commitment to balancing instructional time, staff planning needs, and family considerations. The calendar retains the structure and rhythm of the 2024-2025 school year, providing predictability for families and staff while addressing feedback.

Here are the highlights:

- First Staff Day: August 25, 2025.
- First Student Day: August 27, 2025, which allows for a gradual start before Labour Day. This schedule gives schools the opportunity to host welcome events such as Meet the Teacher nights, school tours, and BBQs to help students and families ease into the new school year. The gradual start to the year supports a smooth transition for students and families.
- Fall Break: November 10–14, 2025, including Remembrance Day. This week-long break provides a “circuit breaker”. It also gives teachers time for marking, planning, and reporting.
- Winter Break: December 22, 2025–January 4, 2026. Students will return to school on January 5.
- Spring Break: March 30–April 2, 2026, with Good Friday (April 3) and Easter Monday (April 6) providing an extended break for students and staff.
- Last Student Day: June 24, 2026.
- Last Staff Day: June 25, 2026. This earlier finish allows families more summer vacation time while still meeting instructional day requirements.

Rotary Music Festival

I’m pleased to share that our board has approved a \$2,000 monetary donation to support the upcoming 45th Annual Barrhead Rotary Music Festival, scheduled for March 5–13, 2025. Our funding will cover the entry fees for Pembina Hills students and ensure access to venues at BES and BCHS. This event provides students with opportunities to participate in piano, speech, vocal, and instrumental categories, fostering the arts and youth engagement in our community.

Grade Configuration and School Closure

The board has passed a motion to revisit the viability of Fort Assiniboine School’s junior high program following the September 2025 enrollment update. This decision ensures that the board continues to monitor enrollment and assess its impact on program delivery and financial sustainability.

Policy Reviews and Updates:

Trustees are reviewing and updating several policies. There is an emphasis on ensuring clarity and alignment with legal and operational standards. One to note – is **Policy 04: Trustee Code of Conduct**. This was revised with recommendations from the legal team and subsequently approved. The appendix regarding sanctions was removed, as the content was integrated into the revised policy.

School Board Elections on October 20th, 2025

Nomination forms are now available online for School Board Elections in Alberta! Pembina Hills put together a candidate information package and its available on the Pembina Hills website. I have provided Nominations forms at the school office, as well as to the Town Council. If anyone has election-related questions, please call Secretary Treasurer Heather Nanninga @ 780-674-8504.

Bylaw 07-2024: Requiring Criminal Record Checks for Trustee Nominations

The Board conducted the second and third readings of Bylaw 07-2024, which requires prospective trustee candidates to submit both a criminal record check and a child intervention record check as part of their nomination package. This aligns with recent amendments to the Local Authorities Election Act. The bylaw mandates that these checks must be issued no earlier than six months before the nomination date. Public disclosure of nomination packages remains optional but must be accessible for physical examination as stipulated by law.

Municipal Partners Delegation:

We have started meeting with our municipal partners, and I've had the opportunity to connect with both the County of Barrhead Council and the Town of Barrhead Council. These meetings have been an excellent opportunity to share some of our successes and begin exploring ways we can collaborate on community-driven initiatives. I'm also looking forward to meeting with Swan Hills on Wednesday, as we're scheduled to connect with them then.

The meetings we've had throughout the division have been both productive and positive. We are truly grateful for the strong working relationships we share with our municipal partners, which help us work together to serve our students and communities.

One topic that came up during the discussions with the County of Barrhead - was the presence of a peace officer stationed at "hotspots" within the county. This year, 34 tickets have been issued. However, it is unclear where these are specifically.

Another concern raised with the County was the rapid growth of some of our community schools, such as Neerlandia. Noting that a relatively new school is already in need of portables. The County expressed interest in how we're factoring growth into our modernization plans. Projects like this are managed through Alberta Infrastructure and involve ongoing collaboration with the Alberta Government. Barrhead Comp modernization, that is starting in the spring, will be rightsized to around 820 students – where we are projecting 650 students in the next few years. The numbers don't anticipate growth beyond 820 students in the near future. We currently have room for over 1,200 students.

Fly-By Update:

The Board has brought fly-bys to ASBA's Zone 2/3 advocacy committee – where we are advocating for a provincial campaign to an Alberta wide crisis regarding rules governing school buses.

We just had a ASBA Zone 2/3 meeting on Friday – I can share a bit about this.

Council of School Council

December 10, 2024

School Council Work Plan – document to help plan meeting agenda with principals.

School Council Annual Report- provide a summary at the May meeting of what has happened in the council this year. Can continue to provide via the slideshow made for our AGM. Brett really appreciated the slideshow set up that Sheri had.

2024-25 School Calendars- 841 responses from survey. 52.8 % November break good for our family. 49.1% good for our family to continue in further years. 52.8 % would choose a longer summer break or a November break. The board will see 3 different draft proposals next Wednesday and will make a decision. One issue with an extended long weekend, we will still need to start before the labour day weekend to get in the instructional hours for the semester.

ACSE Grant- 500 for every school council. Will follow up with possible new criteria. Could use for ASCA conference in April. Add to January agenda

ASCA Conference- \$1000/\$5000 used towards the conference because Heather used the ASCA grant money that wasn't being used, towards it.

Trustee Elections 2025- Encouraging community school council to brainstorm for possible candidates. January 1 nominations open. No nomination fee.

Early Learning Programming- School Councils to reach out to our communities about enrolling in the program. Shared our issues with transportation to preschool with express bus not being allowed. Also the combination of kindergarten and preschool is the other deterrent for our area. Brett encouraged trustees to advocate to the govt for extra funding to spread out classes and teachers in our example.

How do we deal with teachers speaking at meetings as parents and not teachers? Brett- Teachers are a teacher 24/7. It shouldn't be an issue. We want staff/parents to attend meetings.

Fort Assinaboine to chair next meeting in May

Takeaways- NPCCS has it really good with our council. Active members, encouraging community engagement etc. Don't take that for granted.

Highest attendance at a meeting in many years. Many joined via google meet.

May 13- 5pm next meeting