

PARENT COUNCIL OF RIVER HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 15, 2026 @ 7:00 pm

Attendance: Wendy Weiss, Nicole Hall, Tara Betts, Brielle Schmolke, Karla Tweten, Heather O'Reilly, Amanda Hobson, Jessica Schutte, Nicole Sehn, Gwendoline Dirk (Trustee)

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Karla Tweten.
2. Treaty Land Acknowledgement - The land acknowledgement created by the Grade 2 students was read aloud.
3. Approval of Minutes - Nicole made a motion to adopt the Parent Council (PC) minutes from the meeting held on February 25, 2026. The motion was seconded by Brielle. Minutes adopted as distributed. Quorum verified.
4. Teacher Presentation - Grade 2 - Mercy Smith and Elizabeth Kruger

The grade two teachers focused their presentation on classroom supports and the importance of wellness.

We look forward to visits and school wide themes from our RH School Success Coach, Jessica Bertelson, and our Family School Liaison Worker Erin Gerrard! The current theme is "I am brave. I am loving. I am kind." Feeling welcome is so important. Students have been learning breathing exercises and how to calm anxiety. Physical fidgets are used to correlate to different emotions and we talk out how to spot emotions. Once emotions are identified, we focus on ways to communicate how students are feeling. There is a project underway, Islands of Personality, that helps connect to this segment. Students are learning about themselves.

We love having Miss Courtney Lagasse in our classrooms! She is one of the division's First Nations, Metis & Inuit (FNMI) Support Workers. We learn so much from her and have rich FMNI content in the classrooms. She connects much of the learning, through activities like friendship bracelets, to the curriculum. Courtney also works with and supports our learning aides.

Kayla, from the Heart Program, talks about feelings and provides anti-bullying content. This is a six week program run in association with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. Today students were putting positive affirmations on clouds.

So much of what we do in the classrooms emphasizes the importance of wellness and helps students with how to navigate their own emotional and social landscape.

Another tool we use is the PWIM or Picture Word Inductive Model. We have been exploring AI to generate an image that incorporates all of the integrated subjects. The image is then used to reinforce and engage with curriculum items, i.e. to build vocabulary, talk about producer to consumer in social studies, discuss the system that

our society is built on, math considerations. The model allows for many entry points for discussion for students at all levels, even with different complexities in the classrooms. Students jump in where they can. It is a powerful model and supports basic to advanced concepts and learners.

5. Reports from school and council:

a. School Administration Team - Wendy Weiss and Nicole Hall

i. MHPSD: Engagement Process & Education Plan Development (Winter/Spring) - Every four years, the MHPSD undergoes an engagement process to help establish goals. The process starts with the Admin team. Tuesday night, the teachers will be added to the discussion. Parent feedback is also sought out. The universal goals for the plan include:

1. Optimal Learning Environment - The optimal learning environment (OLE) is a framework to support common language across MHPSD. An aspirational model that involves collectively engaging to develop each OLE element: engage learning culture, quality evidence of learning, leveraging digital, intentional learning design and impact files instruction.
2. Thinking and Acting Inclusively - The employed strategies are designed and developed and action a mindset around thinking inclusiveness. MHPSD continues to progress toward a shared understanding of this goal and how we collectively work to include everyone.
3. Wellness - MHPSD believes in fostering healthy school communities that nurture a culture of wellness for all members. This work is reflected in the intentional supports provided for mental health, well-being, and social-emotional learning.
4. Truth and Reconciliation - MHPSD is deeply committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation through the integration of First Nation, Melissa and Inuit perspectives into daily learning and community celebrations.
5. The division is looking for parent feedback in pursuit of the above goals:
 - a. What is most important to you about public education in our community?
 - b. When public education is serving students and the community effectively, what does success look like to you?
 - c. From your perspective, what is MHPSD currently doing well that we should continue or build on?
 - d. What areas of our school division might benefit from additional attention or improvement?
 - e. Looking ahead, what one or two priorities do you believe should guide the next 4-year plan?

6. School Administration, the MHPSD Executive and Board will be meeting together out at Cypress Hills to brainstorm.
 7. To provide your feedback, from the parent/guardian perspective, please access the Google Form [Here](#).
- ii. Alberta Education and Childcare Assurance (AECA) Survey
 1. This survey compares our district to Alberta overall on a variety of metrics including student growth and achievement, teaching and leading, learning supports and governance. The results of the survey can be found on the RH website.
 2. These numbers are based on Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT) results and survey results. The more parents/teachers that respond, the better the data. With the new curriculum, only Language Arts and Math PAT results will be included this year.
 - iii. Our School Survey - This survey takes in feedback from students and families in grades 4-6. It drives school goals and helps us improve.
- b. Junior Jays - The program started today. It is fun to see kids learning the basics of baseball and playing a sport they have never tried. The program is geared to students in Grade 3-6, with participants hand-selected by teachers. There are approximately 4-5 students per grade. The Toronto Blue Jays support the program with t-shirts and hats for students and equipment that stays with the school. We have had quite a few staff step up to help with Junior Jays this year including, Mr. Preston, Ms. Willock, Ms. McIntyre, Mrs. Olechowski, Mr. Sam and Mrs. Hall.
 - c. Pursuits - The last pursuit rotation of the school year started yesterday and operates on Tuesday & Thursday afternoons when Hockey/Ringette students are in session for academy. Pursuits include students in grades 4-6 in mixed groups, participating in a rotation of five disciplines: culinary arts, STEM, fine arts, drama and multi-sport. Students are not always pleased with the idea of participation in all disciplines. We focus on growth mind set and resilience to bring them around. Some parents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to try all things, even if it pushes their students out of their comfort zone.
 - d. Education Week - On Friday students will be participating in a school wide collaborative project for education week. Working with a buddy class, students will be creating a flower project on the bulletin board and is focussed on the grown mind set and being unique.
 - e. Elementary Reporting - Going forward, beginning with the 2026/2027 school year, there will only be two reporting periods, January and June. However, our RH team wants to ensure there are enough touch points with families to stay on top of learning for students or highlight areas of concern. The Admin team asked, with regard to Student Led/Showcase of Learning, if we should look at replacing one in favor of the other or returning to a parent/teacher meeting. Feedback, in consideration of this information, included:
 - i. We need a standard and consistent connection with teachers about student progress.

- ii. Kids should have some accountability for their learning too. There could be a goal setting session for students, during school hours, to discuss who they are feeling about their learning, i.e. strengths, challenges, reflections.
- iii. Use in-house metrics to trigger conversations.
- iv. Both Student Led and Showcase of learning are important. It is important for students to have the opportunity to showcase their learning to family, but parents also need information and communication from teachers. Possibly look at hybrid options.

The Admin team will take the feedback to teachers in the hopes of creative solutions.

- f. Co-Chairs - Karla Tweten and Heather O'Reilly
 - i. Division Council of School Council Meeting (DCOSC) - The last meeting was scheduled for March 12, 2026. Topics at the meeting included: Screenagers Presentation (screen time), Google link to surveys, library and literary division policy amendments, elementary reporting, complexity and school amalgamation. The next meeting will be held on May 7th, in-person at Central Office. Please see the link below for further information, past and current agenda and/or meeting minutes: <https://www.mhpsd.ca/division-council-of-school-councils>. All council members are welcome to attend.
 - ii. The Alberta School Council Association (ASCA) is hosting their annual conference at the end of the month, April 26th & 27th. Participants can attend either in person in Edmonton or online. Associated fees will be covered by either the MHPD or the RHSCA.

6. Report from committees and council representatives:

- a. RHSCA
 - i. Hot Lunch - Nicole Sehn and Brielle Schmolke
 - 1. April 17 - Taco in a Bag
 - 2. April 23 (Thu) - Pizza 73
 - 3. Overall, everything is going well. There have been quite a few parents stepping up to volunteer in response to FB posts.
 - ii. Fundraising - Karla Tweten and Heather O'Reilly
 - 1. We are hoping to advertise a Kernels fundraiser soon. Although, there are no other fundraisers planned at this time.

7. Old Business

- a. Staff Appreciation Follow Up - Tara Betts

The overall feedback was amazing! The week of food and celebration brings pure joy! It was a great week to host staff appreciation and the timing for each meal was good. Our Vegan teacher was so grateful for all of the special consideration!

8. New Business

- a. Meeting Dates - All meetings will be held In-Person Meeting (Project Commons)
 - i. Next Meeting:
 - 1. Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 7:00 pm
- 9. Meeting Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.