

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTGATE SCHOOL COUNCIL HELD VIRTUALLY USING WEB-BASED TECHNOLOGY MICROSOFT TEAMS AT APPROXIMATELY 6:30 PM ON THE 16TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026.

PRESENT:

Vanessa Huey, Member-at-Large
Stephanie Leech, Assistant Principal,
Westgate School
Kristin Mason, Secretary

Julie Muhlberger, Principal, Westgate School
Stephanie Paquet, Chair
HollyJoy Stanford, Vice Chair

REGRETS:

Marie-Claude Tremblay, Key Communicator

ALSO PRESENT:

Six parents*

Stephanie P. acted as Chair and Kristin M. acted as Secretary of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order by Stephanie P. at 6:41 p.m. and a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Gillian H. and seconded by HollyJoy S., to approve the agenda as presented. No amendments were requested and the motion carried without objection.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Stephanie P., seconded by HollyJoy S., to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 26, 2026. No amendments were requested and the motion carried without objection.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Bylaw review and ASCA Membership

As mentioned during the last meeting, Stephanie P indicated that Board members of the Westgate School Council and Westgate Parents' Society were planning to undertake a review of the bylaws of both the Council and the Society. She asked Kristin M. to provide an update for Members, which she did, stating that the review is underway. For the Council, Operating Procedures/Bylaws will be developed (there currently are none), based on the recommendations of the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) and the Calgary Board of Education (CBE). For the Parents' Society, a thorough review of existing bylaws is in progress (which likely hasn't been done in quite a few years). In both cases, goals are to make sure the bylaws are clear, practical, up to date, and aligned with current legal and operational requirements. Some of the amendments will be of a "housekeeping" nature, and some will be about improving how things work in practice so future volunteers have clearer guidance and processes.

***Privacy and Attendance Note:**

Full names of School Council executive members and school representatives are included in these minutes to meet governance and transparency requirements. The names of other attendees are not published to protect personal privacy in accordance with Alberta's *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*. A complete sign-in record is retained securely for Council files.

Kristin M. also reported that, following discussion at the meeting in February, the Westgate School Council has obtained a membership to the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA), which provides access to resources to support school councils with documentation, encouraging parent engagement and enhancing student learning. The membership fee is paid by the Calgary Board of Education and access to member resources can be shared with parents and guardians in the school community. Interested individuals can contact westgateschoolcouncil@gmail.com to request login information.

\$500 Alberta Education School Council Grant

Stephanie P. reported that several suggestions had been received from parents for how to direct the \$500 grant, including a dental health presentation, a Screenagers viewing (addressing youth screen time and social media use), and a presentation by a psychologist on psychoeducational assessments. The Chair noted strong interest in the psychoeducational assessments topic, given how frequently it comes up among parents. The deadline to spend the grant is June 17, 2026. Stephanie P. indicated she would allow a few days for any additional suggestions to come in, then make a final decision and confirm the event with school administration to ensure the topic aligns with current school messaging and values.

Spirit Wear

Stephanie P. provided an update on the Spirit Wear initiative. Two vendors are being explored: Coyote, from whom a sample grey t-shirt has been ordered to evaluate quality, and Summarized Designs, the vendor currently used by Bishop Pinkham. Pricing and quality will be compared before a final vendor decision is made. Stephanie P. noted that, unlike the previous approach of sending parents directly to a vendor's website via a link or QR code, both options under consideration would require the Council or Society to collect orders and submit them to the vendor. This would provide more control over order windows, delivery timelines, and parent communications, but would require a greater volunteer time commitment. HollyJoy S. noted that Square could be set up relatively easily to manage orders and payment. The possibility of formalizing this as a dedicated volunteer role for a future year was raised. Stephanie P. anticipated the Spirit Wear program could be up and running with a new vendor by September 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

REPORTS

Chair Report

The Chair indicated that she had no matters to add that had not already been discussed.

Key Communicator Report

Marie-Claude T. was unable to attend the meeting and sent a written report to the Chair. Stephanie P. provided the report on her behalf. Items of note from the most recent CBE Connections newsletter (April 1, 2026 edition) included: the Board of Trustees approved the 2027–2030 Capital Plan on March 17th to support new and modernized learning spaces in growing communities; the Board will approve the final year of the 2024–2027 Education Plan and the 2026–2027 CBE budget in May; the Board of Trustees issued a response to proposed Bill 25 amendments to the Education Act on March 31st, affirming its commitment to student success in safe, respectful, and politically neutral learning environments; summer school opportunities are available in Career and Technology Studies for high school students; CBE youth initiatives have been nominated for the Alberta School Boards Association Friends of Education Award; and families are reminded to check their MyCBE account regularly, as school fees are unique to each student and are added throughout the year. Marie-Claude T. will be attending the next Community of School Councils meeting on April 22nd and will report back.

Administration Report

Julie M. reported that Westgate School will be hosting a Canadian Citizenship Ceremony on April 23rd. The event was arranged through a parent connection: a grade six student's father, who serves as the Executive Director of Immigration and Citizenship Canada, approached Julie M. to ask whether the school would be willing to host. Fifty-two new citizens will be welcomed in the ceremony, which will take place in the gym. Students in grades four through six will attend as the audience. The Principal noted that citizenship is a core theme in the social studies curriculum from kindergarten through grade twelve, making the event particularly meaningful for grade six students who study the citizenship process and the points system in depth.

Julie M. and Stephanie L. then presented the school's planning outlook for the 2026–2027 school year. They noted that RAM (Resource Allocation Method) allocations are delayed this year due to a late provincial budget and will not be received until April 23rd; normally they would have been available the prior week. Because of this two-week delay, there will be only one posting round for teaching positions this year, compared to two rounds in prior years. Unusually, teachers on continuous contracts and those on temporary contracts will be competing in the same round. Westgate currently has no continuous contract positions open and three temporary teaching positions available: coverage for Darlene Holloway, Julia Ireland and Tamara Pesko who are on leaves. Regarding enrolment projections, kindergarten registration stands at approximately 102 students, the highest in recent memory, and could result in a fifth kindergarten class for the first time, depending on final registration numbers. Grade one is projected at approximately 93 students (80 advancing from kindergarten plus 13 new registrations). Grade two will have four classes at approximately 92 students. Grade three will aim to maintain five classes, consistent with the current grade two configuration. Grades four, five, and six are each projected at three classes (grade six dropping from four classes this year to three, as this year was an unusually large cohort). Total projected enrolment is 598, with a small number of families still to respond.

Julie M. provided an update on the ongoing challenges with the Learning Commons open classroom environment. Noise from adjacent classes is a significant issue for both teachers and students. The school has applied to have permanent walls constructed but has not been approved due to the length of the CBE project queue. CBE has also indicated that air flow requirements may preclude walls in some configurations. Gym-style sound-dampening curtains on ceiling tracks have been explored; cost is estimated at approximately \$30,000 plus the cost of installation, which the school would need to fund independently. Movable dividers have also been explored but are limited in their sound reduction effectiveness, and a practical complication was raised: existing coat hooks along the half-walls which hold students' belongings would need to be relocated. Discussion ensued regarding how decisions are made as to which grade to place in that area each year. The preferred solution is to reduce the number of classes assigned to the Learning Commons at any one time to two, which is not always possible given the range of grades and programs in the building, including Child's Play. The school continues to work through configurations and the curtains option remains on a CBE wait list.

Stephanie L. reported on the school's transition planning process, which intensifies at this time of year. She explained that grade teams meet to review student data and develop detailed documentation covering academic progress, learning needs, effective groupings, and any relevant IPP summary information. A student visit day is organized so that classes experience a classroom and teacher for their next grade level, building familiarity and positive anticipation. The school holds meetings with Bishop Pinkham staff to share student information and support effective class placement for grade 6 student transitioning to Bishop Pinkham school. Grade teams also reflect on curricular areas where additional support may be needed, so receiving teachers can plan accordingly. The process involves significant time and coordination but is central to ensuring continuity of support for all students across the school year.

Julie M. reported that the school will be participating in Jump Rope for Heart during the month of May. The initiative was brought forward through a family connection: the grandparents of some of our Westgate students have committed to matching student-raised funds up to \$50,000. A kickoff assembly is planned for May 1st, at which a Jump Rope for Heart representative will attend along with the donor family. Students will collect pledges from family and friends throughout the month and practice skipping during school time. The culminating event is planned for either May 24th or May 29th. The school has previously

raised approximately \$12,000 through similar fundraising events, and the matching component is expected to generate strong engagement.

Events Report

Vanessa H. provided an update on Gatorfest, scheduled for Thursday, May 28th from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. A DJ has been booked. The event will follow a similar format to last year, with TicketSpice used again for ticketing; family admission will remain at \$20, consistent with last year, despite projected increases in event costs. Net proceeds are expected to be approximately \$4,000, somewhat below last year's approximately \$5,000, due to higher costs. A 50/50 raffle is planned. The platform used last year charged seven percent of the total jackpot (approximately \$150) and this year is charging a \$250 setup fee. A different platform has been identified with lower fees and needs some work to set up. The Westgate Community Association's external washrooms will again be available to Gatorfest attendees but the hall was not available for rent this year; it will be pursued earlier for future Gatorfests. A new addition this year is a professional, manned photo booth, at a cost of approximately \$500, with an option for 400 printed photos for an additional \$250. Families will be able to redeem one of their tickets for a print, or keep a digital copy. At concession, candy bags will be replaced this year with a cotton candy machine. The machine is capable of producing approximately 50 cotton candy servings per hour, with production starting an hour ahead of the event to build a stockpile. Cotton candy will be operated outdoors if weather permits. Discussion was held about contingency placement of the photo booth and concession within the gym in the event of inclement weather.

Vanessa H. raised the possibility of recruiting students from Bishop Pinkham and Western Canada High School as Gatorfest volunteers, noting that volunteering at the event may count toward leadership or volunteer hours required at the high school level. The Club Francophonie visit from both schools had already taken place on April 9th. Julie M. noted that the teachers responsible for the club at Westgate could reach out to their counterparts at Pinkham and Western, and that a call for volunteers could also be included in the school's weekly update to encourage former Westgate students to participate.

A suggestion was raised to include an optional directed donation line item on the TicketSpice ticketing page, specifically for the Learning Commons curtains project. It was noted that casino funding cannot be used for the curtains, as AGLC denied that use of funds. Discussion followed about the possibility of the Parents' Society offering a matching contribution up to a specified amount for partition-directed donations, with the general observation that targeted fundraising with a visible outcome tends to generate stronger community participation. Stephanie P. noted that any allocation of general Gatorfest proceeds toward the curtains would require a future motion of the Parents' Society, but that directed donations from the ticketing platform could flow specifically to that purpose. The directed donation option will be explored further.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Westgate School Council is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. and will be held in person at Westgate School. This meeting will proceed as a regular meeting. The tentative Annual General Meeting previously identified for May 21, 2026 will be rescheduled to October 2026. The Council is aligning its AGM timing with bylaw and legislative requirements. Going forward, AGMs will be held in the fall following the fiscal year-end, allowing audited financial statements to be presented to members.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting terminated at 7:58 p.m.