

BIRCHMOUNT PSSC MEETING MINUTES

Monday January 19, 2026

Attendees:

Dominic Vautour
Kelly Olaveson
Vivian Lam
Crystal Johnson

Owen Brinson
Christa Kirk
Grant Bourque

Tim Carson
Daphne Hachey
Melanie Doucet

Meeting started at 6:10 pm by Grant Bourque

1. Opening

- Introduction of Members - all attendees introduced by name.
- Meeting Minutes from November 24, 2025 - PSSC Meeting reviewed. No changes required.
Meeting Minutes approved by Owen B.

2. Birchmount School Property Update: Tim Carson (Vice-Principal)

- Kitchen Renovations:
 - Meetings have been held since Christmas, another meeting tomorrow.
 - Plan has changed for the Kitchen renovation – District has decided to fund a full Kitchen renovation, including floors, electrical, appliances (dishwashers, oven, microwaves, toasters, etc.), etc. Have received \$115,000 to complete renovations.
 - Work to begin Friday with ‘Keep Items’ being moved out of space to storage. Demolition to begin Monday. Project expected to take 8-9 weeks to complete but must be completed by the end of March 2026 (will be before next PSSC Meeting).
 - Driven by the introduction of the School Lunch Program.
- Update on School Breakfast and Lunch Programs:
 - Birchmount School to continue running Breakfast Program, Chartwell to provide new Lunch Program. Food program is to be subsidized. Concern raised about dietary restrictions – Chartwell has vegetarian option(s). No extra work for Birchmount School Staff as Chartwell Staff will also serve lunches. Fresh meals prepared locally, same day as served.
 - 3 designations for schools involved in the School Lunch Program:
 - Self-contained – food made at the school it will be served at.
 - Distribution – food made at 1 school and distributed to other schools.
 - Hub – food is received by school, prepared at a Distribution school.
 - Birchmount School does not have a Cafeteria, so likely a Hub school.
 - Breakfast Program to be temporarily relocated to another location in the school during Kitchen renovation, with access to a refrigerator and tables (e.g., Room 104).
 - Modified meals will be prepared/provided – no cooking, grab and go options.
 - Might have to stagger classes coming to program.

- Change procedure to have students take food back to classroom to eat or eat in Room 104?
- Lunch Program preparation (e.g., sandwiches) will temporarily move to Staff Room.
- Grant B. asked about number of students using Meal Programs. Nathaniel (VP) would have numbers but Tim C. estimated 50-60 students use Breakfast Program and 25 students use Lunch Program.
- Vivian L. asked about Home and School's Pizza Lunch Days. Fundraiser is held 1/month and is a big fundraiser. Tim C. is unsure but thinks they will likely be continued, e.g., Home and School provides Pizza Lunch dates to the School Lunch Program provider in advance so they know preparation/service is not required that day. Waiting on confirmation from District.
- Asbestos Removal:
 - 8 classroom floors redone over Winter Break. The remaining floors of concern will be replaced in the next fiscal year.

ACTION ITEM: Tim C. to follow up with District regarding the continuation of Home and School's Pizza Lunch Days and any new procedure(s) to implement (e.g., notifying provider).

3. School - Principal's Report from Tim Carson (Vice-Principal)

- 602 Students, 29 Homerooms.
- 74 Staff: 34 Teachers, 4 EST-Resource, 1 EST-Guidance, 1 Academic Support Teacher, 1 EST-EAL, 1 ELL Tutor, 1 BIM, 21 EAs, 2 Admin Assistants, 5 Custodians, 3 Administrators.
- Student Life – Current Student Activities: Badminton, Basketball, Cheer, Rock Band, Choir, Band, TLC, GSA, D&D, Drama, Gaming Club, Makers Club, PAL and Lunch Monitors.
- Holiday Gift Mart – all students were able to participate and get gifts for their guardians.
- Family Sponsorship – This year supported 45 families (68 students) for the holidays.

4. School Improvement Plan Update:

- Literacy:
 - All students shall read, write and communicate at grade level in both languages of instruction.
 - EGLA to guide instruction in early years literacy. Reading comprehension is the focus for Middle Level FILA teachers.
 - English – narrowed monitoring criteria to 10 indicators. Results in less time being spent on assessments and more time to monitor and intervene. K-Gr. 2 literacy EGLA showing steady climb/improvement. All 3 grades showed improvement; comparing grades to each other is not comparing apples to apples since they use different and some overlapping criteria. Gr. 1 results lower as 11 students being assessed and interventions not happened yet.

- French – Constant progress observed with reading. Gr. 6 and 7 – interventions, getting support faster. Working on reading comprehension across subjects.
- Assessments completed, district supported interventions start this week.
- Numeracy:
 - All students will be at grade level in numeracy.
 - Teachers working on improving Tier 1 instructional practices. All K-Gr. 5 teachers participated in 3 PL sessions with the district Math Subject Coordinator – focus on current best practices and how to implement in class.
 - Saw a big jump 2 years ago to past year, showing good progress. Using math centres. Identify criteria important for next level success indicators; still teach all information but do not track all criteria. Term 1 saw rise in success, starting Term 2, expecting a rise in success.
- Absenteeism:
 - Between 2 years ago and last year, low/below district results, good.
 - Students missing school due to sports, e.g., hockey.
 - Grant B. asked if data could be removed to assess absenteeism without absences due to sports. Tim C. said no because students are still absent/missing school but having PL Days on Fridays reduces the effect of sports on absenteeism.
- Student Engagement:
 - Surveys used by Art Teachers – assess if students are engaged in and out of school. For sports/clubs/programs at Birchmount School, most start Gr. 6. A few allow Gr. 5 students, especially with clubs. Cross Country includes Gr. 3-8. If students find an interest, they need to find an adult to supervise.
 - NBCC and McKenna Institute Gr. 3-8.
- SIP Focus as a school has been progress monitoring for last few months.
 - Determine efficacy of implemented measures.
 - Determine which data points have the largest impact and continue tracking progress.

5. Safety Issues/Miscellaneous:

- Safe Drop-Off/Ayer Ave.
 - Grant B. commented about a safety issue he saw regarding Safe Drop-off. The Safe Drop-off is working well; problems lie with families dropping off students on the roads around Birchmount School. Issues include:
 - Crossing Guard has traffic backed up to allow people to cross the road to school.
 - Ayer Ave. is a wide road, but not with vehicles parked on both sides of road and doors opening, causing the roadway to become narrow/1-way.
 - Vehicles turning around in neighbours' driveways.
 - Students dropped off by lower grade doors (e.g., gap in the fence) so they do not have to walk around the school to reach their classroom.

- Students often let out in the middle of the road. Call RCMP/Bylaw Officers – Child Endangerment. Dominic V. suggested an RCMP Blitz.
 - Vehicles parked too close to the stop signs.
 - Congestion on Crestwood Dr. and Ayer Ave.
- Birchmount School is deemed a walking school, except for French students from Queen Elizabeth and Beaverbrook Schools who take the school bus. Sidewalk plowing in Pinehurst Neighbourhood is on priority basis: 1^o (plowed 1st, e.g., Ayer Ave.), 2^o (e.g., Gatineau St.) and 3^o (less urgent, e.g., Woodleigh Ave.).
- Birchmount School can post messages/reminders online to Pinehurst Neighbourhood. Send email to School Community to use Safe Drop-off. Winter is cold and more students getting driven to school.
- Expect traffic to be worse once Mountain Rd. roundabout opens. City reached out about Preliminary Traffic measures – what does Birchmount School want when the roundabout opens? Flashing lights? Parking violations to reduce congestion? Stop signs already moved because of congestion and vehicles blocking school driveway.
- Harrison Trimble High School not as bad with drop-offs because school is on a side street with less traffic than Ayer Ave.
- Today Birchmount School open as normal with bad weather, with buses delayed by 1hr for Queen Elizabeth and Beaverbrook students.
- Communication
 - Vivian L. asked about how many families in school community do not speak English. Tim C. has no number but the ESL Tutor might know. School Staff have used translator program to translate/communicate; District also uses a translator service, e.g., for Parent-Teacher Interviews.

ACTION ITEM: Tim C. to get Sandra S. to send reminders to the Pinehurst Neighbourhood and School Community about traffic and use of Safe Drop-off.

6. Outstanding Items

- Discuss how to deal with Composite Graduation Photos (Sandra) – still on hold. Upcoming school anniversary (60th).
- Christa and Sandra to follow up and coordinate information sessions. Limited time due to Parent Teacher Interviews, PL Days, etc.
- Follow up with AESD about volunteer requirements.
- Identify possible sports/arts/activities for Students.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: March 23rd, 2026 at 6:30pm.

Meeting ended at 7:05 pm by Grant Bourque.

I trust that the above reflects an accurate account of our meeting. In the event that further clarifications are required or that any items are missing, please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Olaveson