

# BIRCHMOUNT PSSC MEETING MINUTES

Monday March 23, 2026

## Attendees:

Sandra Savard	Tim	Carson	Lisa Bourgeois	
Grant Bourque	Daphne Hachey		Melanie	Doucet
Kelly Olaveson	Owen Brinson		Jessica Ferris	
Vivian Lam	Vivian Archibong			

## Meeting started at 6:31 pm by Grant Bourque

### 1. Opening

- Introduction of Members - all attendees introduced by name.
- Kitchen Tour:
  - New floors have been installed, painting completed and kitchen has been mocked up. Adding furniture/workstations and appliances still to be completed.
  - External contractors to finish work by fiscal year-end (end of March 2026).
  - Sandra S. hoping to have the kitchen completed and open by May 2026.
- Meeting Minutes from January 19, 2026 - PSSC Meeting reviewed. No changes required.  
Meeting Minutes approved by Owen B.

### 2. School - Principal's Report from Sandra Savard (Principal)

- 601 Students, 29 Homerooms.
- 638 Students expected next year. Really low numbers registered for Kindergarten next year, about ½ of numbers this year. Could affect Staff numbers next year. Middle School English is full this year with overflow Students sent to other schools.
- 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. 1 new EA due to new students with complex issues.
- Student Life – Current Student Activities:
- Basketball, Cheer, Rock Band, Choir, Band, TLC, GSA, D&D, Drama (Elementary and Middle School), Gaming Club, Makers Club, PAL and Lunch Monitors. Cheer Team has new uniforms and upcoming competition.
- Upcoming: Wildcats visit (pizza lunch), Math Competition, Softball, Track and Field.

### 3. Birchmount School Property Update: Sandra Savard (Principal)

- Construction Updates:
  - Kitchen Renovations – Construction is on track.
  - Gym Beautification – A new gym floor has been approved. The initial meeting has already taken place. Construction is set to be done in Summer 2026. Expected to cover flooring, paint, ceiling tiles (leak); not covering blinds, curtains, basketball

backboards. Gym project budgets to be covered by Birchmount School and H&S. Budget meeting on Tuesday (tomorrow).

- Front Entry – Working with facilities to price out and get quotes to refresh main entry way, including new paint, new sign and new doors. Hoping to share cost of the project 3 ways – Birchmount School, District Office and H&S. Budget expected to run approximately \$35,000. Sandra S. has been talking to the Facilities Manager.
- Teacher Nomination for the Minister’s Excellence in Education Award – Molly McGinn.

#### **4. Calendar Pilot ASD-East**

- Sandra S. presented Birchmount School results at the Minister of Education’s Annual Forum. The Minister, Deputy and Assistant Deputy of Education, Superintendents and DEC Chairs from all 4 Anglophone School Districts were present; present to Birchmount School PSSC.
- Pilot Schools - chose High Schools and their feeder Elementary/Middle Schools. Easier on families with more than 1 child attending different schools – same school schedule and older student(s) can watch younger student(s).
- 3 Pillars:
  - Professional Learning
  - Collaboration
  - Independent Time

\*Not expected to be equal distribution of time to each pillar.

- ASD-East: Most of time allotted to Professional Learning and Collaboration as these pillars have high impact on Students; less time allotted to Independent Time.
- Push back from the New Brunswick Teachers’ Federation and Province due to less time put towards Independent Time. Going forward, 2:30-3:30 pm on PL Days will be Independent Time. Increase Student achievement, increase Teacher retention/recruitment, increase Student/Staff wellbeing and increase Collaboration.
- ASD-East Student Enrollment has increased by approximately 4000 Students since 2020. Composition of Students is diverse – cultures, languages and behaviours.
- Approximately 50% of Teachers are new and within the first 3 years of their teaching careers. New curriculum has been introduced.
- Pilot Project adds 1 additional PL Day/month, so 10 additional PL Days/year. PL Days are predictable and pre-planned. Plans are approved by Senior Leadership, and allow for ongoing, continuous professional learning.
- PL Day Plan:
  - Morning – Professional Learning (3 hours): district and external training, workgroups.
  - After Lunch – Collaboration (2 hours).
  - End of Day – Individual Time (1 hour, 2:30-3:30 pm).

- Traditional PL = sit in session, get information and take back to classroom to implement. Possibility of not implementing, no feedback coaching, no link to evidence of impact.
- Current PL – ongoing and sustained over time. Workshop models, discussions, problem solving. Topics change back and forth each PL Day, between literacy and numeracy. Sessions involve learning, talking and implementation. Continuous support and coaching. Topics revisited every 8 weeks. Measuring impact/effectiveness of learning and implementation is included directly in day plan, connected to collective goals.
- Less than 14 PL Days/year found to have minimum impact on Student learning.
- Benefits observed with Pilot:
  - improvement in Student attendance;
  - good family support;
  - less pull-out PL so Teachers are in front of Students more during school day;
  - stronger and more effective PLC Teams;
  - increase in engaged learning at home;
  - early evidence of improvement in Student achievement; and,
  - Students at Birchmount School have improved in reading (mono- and multisyllables) from June to December 2025; in some cases, higher than the ASD-East average.
- Staff survey conducted at Pilot schools – higher positive results vs ASD-East. Still early in project, survey conducted after 2 PL Days at Pilot schools. Next survey to be conducted in November 2026. Province-wide results showed PL Days different versus other regions (North, South, East, West) since less Independent Time. With upcoming changes to plans on PL Days (adding Independent Time), expect better results with next survey.
- Growing pains between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> PL Days – some Staff felt there was little time to process what was learned before having to implement in the classroom, felt overwhelmed.
- ASD-East Superintendent originally said no time to be allotted to Independent Time because of optics (perception it was ‘time off’ for Staff) but other districts did allow for Independent Time so this will change in ASD-East. No directives given by ASD-East, up to the Principal at each school to plan.
- Staff can reach out to District Staff to indicate what help they need. Linked to the SIP. District Staff will create specific learning plans, e.g., Reading Comprehension. Allows Staff to be connected. Need to be creative and think outside the box.
- District Staff commented that Birchmount School had lovely students when conducting assessments.
- New Brunswick promises transportation to school, so when weather is bad and transportation is cancelled, schools are closed. Part of commitment to rural communities. Other Provinces have different policies, such as transportation is cancelled in bad weather but schools are still open.

## 5. PSSC Plans for 2026-2027 School Year/Membership Review

- Sandra S. has included PSSC in recent school weekly email and posted about PSSC on Facebook. Suggestion made to send a PSSC email to the Birchmount School Community to invite families to join for next year. Start recruiting members now, not in September 2026 (start of school year).
- Grant B. is current PSSC Chair, has 1 year left. Owen B. is current PSSC Co-Chair.
- Sandra S. asked PSSC Members to promote PSSC.

**Action item:** Sandra S. to send PSSC email to Birchmount School Community to recruit new members for the 2026-2027 School Year. PSSC Members to promote PSSC and recruit new Members.

## 6. Safety Issues/Miscellaneous:

### Safe Drop-Off/Ayer Ave.

- Owen B. saw RCMP/Bylaw Officer talking to an adult dropping off Student(s) at school. Official asked the adult questions, was polite; adult was angry. Visibility of RCMP/Bylaw Officers good to enforce safety rules.
- Birchmount School is a “Walking School”. High number of Student drop-offs, especially in Winter/bad weather. Less safe for walking students because of the increase in traffic and congestion. December-February is the worst time.
- Kiss and Drop works well, 99% perfect.
- Summerhill Dr. drop-off (behind Birchmount School) - mornings seem better because of staggered drop-off times (between 8:10 and 8:25am); in afternoon, pickup can be chaotic because all Students attending Birchmount School are dismissed at the same time (2:40 pm). Also, K-Gr. 2 Students dismissed Teacher-to-Guardian, so people are parking on the street and then entering school grounds. Students have been observed crossing the road at the bend, sometimes Students/Drivers unaware/not watching. Accidents could happen.
- Guardians/Families/Neighbours - encouraged to contact RCMP/Bylaw Officer if they have concerns.

## 7. Outstanding Items

- Discuss how to deal with Composite Graduation Photos (Sandra S.) – still on hold.
- Christa K. and Sandra S. to follow up and coordinate information sessions.
- Follow up with ASD-East about volunteer requirements.
- Identify possible sports/arts/activities for Students.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 6:30 pm** (Last meeting for 2025-2026 School Year).

**Meeting ended at 7:27 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