

The Waterfront School
School Council Meeting Minutes #1

Date: Thursday, October 30, 2025

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Location: The Waterfront School / Virtual Hybrid

Attendees:

Charles (Principal)

School Council Members:

Shahina (Co-Chair), Anett (Co-Chair), Hugo (Treasurer), Del (Secretary), Shaza (Ward Rep.)

Community Members:

Sarah, Nero, Samantha, Laura, Anupam, JP, Jessica, Kirthi, Nadine, Yohko, Cheryl, Kathleen, Ayesha, Cole, Linda, Making, Megha, Sabeela, Spence, May, Sanah, Mary, Soni, Simon, Safa, M,

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement – *presented by Shahina*

Shahina opened the meeting with a Land Acknowledgement and welcomed attendees to the first School Council meeting of the 2025–2026 school year. School council members and the School Principal introduced themselves to the school community. Shahina expressed our appreciation to Charles for introducing new initiatives and acknowledged his efforts in making the school a more welcoming and communicative environment.

2. Agenda Review – *presented by Shahina*

Shahina reviewed the meeting agenda and confirmed approval by attendees.

3. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes – *presented by Del*

Del presented the June 2025 minutes for approval. The minutes were accepted as presented.

4. Principal's Report – *presented by Charles*

Principal Charles highlighted several key priorities for the school year:

Student achievement and school priorities: The Waterfront School is currently ranked 306 on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI), with the ranking reflecting relative barriers to student success compared to other schools. The school is operating at 85% capacity.

Consistency in Evaluation: Teachers are working collaboratively to ensure grading is consistent across classrooms so that students' marks reflect the same expectations regardless of the teacher. He highlighted literacy and math results, noting a discrepancy between teacher assessments and EQAO data, particularly in mathematics.

Key areas for continued focus include:

- Strengthening academic rigour and achievement
- Supporting literacy through additional resources
- Advancing Indigenous education and critical thinking skills
- Teacher professional development on supporting students with diverse learning needs
- Engaging parents in school improvement initiatives

Building School Community: Emphasis on connection and belonging. Student leadership is growing, with the Student Council organizing events such as a fun Halloween event, supported by staff (Ms. Mirali and Mr. Djuricic).

Upcoming Events & Student Council Initiatives:

- **Holiday Event Planning:** community members suggested that the pre-holiday event, such as a book sale, toy sale, is great in time for the holiday season.
- Charles noted the **Student Council will lead pre-holiday planning**, ensuring events match student interests.
- Community members suggested a **more cohesive holiday theme**, supported by the group.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Charles emphasized parent engagement in:
 - Intramural sports – provide teacher support, encourage students to participate and be competitive while celebrating good sportsmanship.
 - Safe and Caring Committee - parents who want to see a school culture where we stop judging each other.
 - Field trips
- Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) process explained: \$26 for first-time applications; annual renewal through **offence declaration statement** (online PDF or in-office assistance).
- Encouraged **inclusive volunteering**, with emphasis on participation, enhancing student experiences.

5. Treasurer's Report – presented by Hugo

Hugo presented the financial statement for July–September 2025:

- **Previous Balance (July 1, 2025):** \$8,805.55
- **Total Expenses:** \$7,362.15
- A Closing Balance End of Year Ended 2024-2025 (August 31, 2025): \$1,443.42
- Finally presented the balance for the New School Year 2025-2026 (September 1st, 2025): \$1,443.42

Shahina added context: School Council funds must be used within two years. Larger spending last year was due to using older funds (>5 years old) to support school priorities.

6. Changes to School Council Structure and By-laws – presented by Del

Del presented a proposed amendment to Section 5.3 of the by-laws, expanding parent/caregiver voting members from five to eleven.

- **13 parent nominees** will be contacted to confirm interest.
 - Vacancies may be filled by appointment, per Section 9.2.
 - Updated structure and appointments will be shared with the school community.
 - No objections raised.
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7. Filling Open School Council Positions – presented by Shahina & Anett

- **Current Composition:**
 - Five parent/caregiver members
 - Principal
 - One teaching staff representative
 - One non-teaching staff representative
 - **Open Positions:**
 - **Community Representative:** Proposal to invite the Executive Director of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre or other members of WNC, supported by attendees.
 - **Student Representative:** Discussions ongoing with Student Council to identify appropriate student leaders.
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8. Proposed School Council Meeting Schedule (2025–2026)- *presented by Shahina*

The School Council proposed holding five meetings throughout the school year on the following Thursdays:

- o November 27th,2025
- o February 5th, 2026
- o April 16th, 2026
- o June 4th, 2026

Schedule accepted with no objections.

9. Launch of School Council Survey – November 2025- *presented by Shahina*

- Survey sections:
 - o Free Events (Movie Night, Games Night, STEM Night)
 - o Fundraising Events (Book & Bake Sale, Danceathon, Carnival Night)
 - o Spending Priorities aligned with school goals
 - **Interest in hot lunch programs** will also be included in the survey.
 - Families will have 1.5 weeks to complete the survey.
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10. Ideas for School Council Events and Fundraisers – *discussed by the school community*

Holiday Event Planning

- Charles emphasized that the **Student Council would lead the planning**, as they have insight into student preferences.

Free / Community Events:

- Movie Night, Art Night (Rock Painting), Game Night, Carnival Night, Year-End Celebration

Fundraising Events:

- Book & Bake Sale, Dance-a-thon (including “foam glow sticks”), partnerships with Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre

Additional Suggestions & Notes:

- Talent shows and games nights to be explored with the Student Council.

- A question about bringing back Raffle/50-50 fundraising was discussed; TDSB licensing requirements could take up to 6 months, as explained by Shahina.

School Spirit & Athletics:

- Branded jerseys, tents, and mascot ideas (“Waterfront Fox”) proposed; jerseys will also be included in the School Survey.
- Support for cross-country, track & field, and other outdoor sports through **weather-appropriate spirit items**.
- Student safety and organizational benefits emphasized by parents.

Music & Arts Programs:

- Focus on **recorders** for accessibility and affordability.
- Drama/school play opportunities suggested; itinerant arts teacher to explore options with Student Council.

Fundraising Ideas:

- Interest in **Waterfront Waves jerseys** fundraising included in the survey.
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11. Volunteer Opportunities and Processes – *presented by Charles*

- Charles recommended a **parent volunteer database** for easier coordination of sports, events, and committees.
 - Caregivers are required to have their Vulnerable Sector Check in place prior to volunteering at any school events.
 - Community members inquired about the possibility of accessing funds to cover the cost of a Vulnerable Sector Check. Shahina will follow up on this matter.
 - School Council members expressed their appreciation for volunteers and acknowledged the positive impact their contributions have on the school community.
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12. Process for Parent Engagement: - *presented by Charles*

- Charles outlined opportunities for parents to support school initiatives, including:
 - **Indigenous Education** – developing critical thinking and awareness.
 - **Literacy Achievement** – introducing new decodable reading resources such as Flyleaf.
 - **Mathematics Achievement** – professional learning, such as *Rethinking Our Approach to Disability* for inclusive excellence.

- **Thrive & Belonging** – promoting academic success and well-being for all students.

13. Next Steps & Closing

- Council to contact the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre regarding Community Representative.
- Launch November survey for parent feedback.
- Continue exploring volunteer engagement, school spirit initiatives, hot lunch programs, music, and arts opportunities.
- Shahina encouraged ongoing communication via email and Facebook page.
- The meeting concluded with appreciation for parent and staff participation.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.