

Ecole Regent Park – Virtual Parent Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2026

Attendance:

Larissa Thorsteinson – Principal

Deanna Pockett – Vice Principal

Katherine Ybanez – Vice Principal

Lisa Kocis- Chair

Barb Donaldson- Vice Chair

Paula Vosper- Secretary

Paul Vosper – Treasurer

Carlynn Bryga- Fundraising Coordinator

Stephanie Nduwimana

Brett Panteluk

Dawn Williamson

C D

Samantha Kuzyk

Oluwabukola

Jena Kjernistead

Jack Brinkman

Anuolowapo

Isaac

Nick Edwards

Oscar S

Duke & Davis Ekpunobi

1. **Call to order** by Lisa at 6:01 pm
2. **Review and adoption of minutes**

Motion to adopt minutes –Barb

Seconded by –Carlynn

3. **Chair Report** –Lisa Kocis

Good evening everyone and welcome. Thank you all for joining us tonight and for your continued support of our PAC.

I would like to begin by extending a sincere thank you to Barb and Carlynn for purchasing the items for our staff treat day in December. The staff were very appreciative and truly enjoyed all the goodies!

I would also like to thank Paula, Paul, and Carlynn for volunteering their time at the PAC table during the winter band concerts to collect donations toward our new swing set initiative and hand out treats. Thanks to their efforts and the generosity of our school community, we raised \$167.00 toward the new swing set.

At this time we are looking for volunteers to help with a few upcoming events:

□ Wednesday, January 21st, from 3:30–5:00 pm, we are seeking volunteers to help hand out cheese and perogies for the Grade 7 and 8 fundraiser.

□ We are also looking for volunteers to stand at the PAC table during the upcoming winter concerts:

o Grade 2 and 3 concert on January 28

o Grade 4 and 5 concert on January 29

If you are available to help with any of these events, your support would be greatly appreciated. I would also like to begin discussions around School Staff Appreciation Week, which will take place February 8–14. Traditionally, PAC organizes a week-long event with different treats, snacks, or surprises each day, followed by a larger staff lunch at the end of the week. This is always a big undertaking, and we will need all hands on deck to help with planning, organizing, and execution.

In the past, we have also asked for family donations to help offset the cost of Staff Appreciation Week through our “Toonies for Teachers” initiative. This has been very successful before, and we should discuss whether we would like to do this again this year.

Lastly, I would like to share an exciting grant opportunity. Access Credit Union is offering a grant of up to \$25,000, which we are eligible to apply for. This funding could significantly help offset the cost of the new swing set, and we will be exploring the application process moving forward.

Access Credit Union - Focused Funding Grant

They provide 25,000.00 to 10 schools.

Applications open: February 16, 2026

Applications close: March 31, 2026

Projects must be pre-approved by the respective school division.

Must be a Public School located in Manitoba. An application may only include one eligible school (i.e. one application per school).

Must be completed in full and include a letter of support provided by the school principal or vice principal.

1. Eligible projects may include enhancements to:

- recreation equipment or upgrades
- playgrounds
- accessibility components
- mental health and wellness programming
- student lounges, or engagement activities

Note: priority will be given to kitchen enhancement projects to help support the snack and meal programming. However, all projects will be reviewed and considered beyond that.

2. Must help support the school in the long term.

3. Must provide full project details and budget for the project (depending on scope, consideration will be given to funding 100% of the project).

That being said, there are money other grants we can apply for. We had discussed this a couple of months ago, but I think we should set a date to meet in person to discuss some of these other opportunities. Between grants and fundraising maybe we could secure enough funds for 2 swing sets. While the one we have planned is amazing, and will be a great addition to the playground, its only 4 swings, so having double that would be even better.

4. **Vice Chair Report-** Barb Donaldson

Mentioned applying for grants. Thank you to Lisa for researching the grant process.

5. **Principal Report** – Larissa Thorsteinson

ÉRP PAC – Principal's Report - January 20th, 2026

1. Thank you to our students and families for your generosity in collecting nonperishable food items to support those in need this holiday season. In December, all donations were contributed to the Transcona Food Bank, helping local individuals and families within our community.
2. Thank you to PAC for the special treats and snacks that you provided to staff before the winter break! It was such a thoughtful and kind gesture and was very much appreciated

by all!

3. **Celebrating Our Band Concerts** - Congratulations to our Grade 6, 7, and 8 students on their outstanding band concerts last week! The performances were a wonderful showcase of talent, hard work, and dedication. Bravo to our students and a big thank you to Mme. Nowostawski and M. Adams for making these events such a success!
4. **Winter Spirit Week** occurred before the break and students engaged in various seasonal activities including a hockey game – students vs. teachers, mini-games in the gym and a door decorating contest!
5. **A variety of clubs** are offered to our students at lunch including craft club, crochet & knitting, board and card games, reading, Minecraft, MYRCA, homework help, karaoke, and more - there's something for everyone! These clubs provide wonderful opportunities for students to explore interests, build friendships, and develop new skills in a fun and supportive environment.
6. ÉRP is proud to offer our **Rainbow Club** to interested students. Everyone is welcome, and the main goal is to foster an inclusive, positive school culture that champions kindness, celebrates diversity and encourages empathy.
 - For Grades 2-8 the focus is on how to be a kind and inclusive person and friend to others, how to respectfully acknowledge others (it's a mini grammar lesson as we learn pronouns). There are no sensitive curricular outcomes/topics discussed from any grade level.
 - For Grades 6-8 the focus is on supporting conversations around 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion and finding ways to support gender diversity in our community. This includes making a bulletin board, promoting inclusivity for all students, and looking for ways to connect with other schools.
7. **Volleyball** season has wrapped up and now Basketball season is well underway. Families are welcome to come out and cheer on our teams!
8. **Early Years' Winter Concerts!** Families are invited to come to the dress rehearsal at 1:00 p.m. Evening shows begin at 6:00 p.m.
 - o Grades 2 &3 - January 28 th
 - o Grades 4 &5 – January 29 th

9. Students and staff are preparing for a number of upcoming school trips including:
 - o Grade 7 Ski Day Trip – Feb 5, 2026
 - o Grade 8 Ski Trip – Feb 11 & 12, 2026
 - o Grade 7 Camp Arnes – Feb 25-27, 2026
 - o Grade 7 Brandon Jazz – March 12-13, 2026
 - o Grade 8 MB Band Tour – April 28-29, 2026
10. As we move into the new calendar year, we are beginning preparations for next school year. Our **Grade 8 families** received a letter with important information and updates regarding their upcoming transition to Senior Years!
11. January is **I Love to Read month** at ÉRP! There will be many special activities and experiences throughout the month such as contests, special visitors, Book Tasting, Mystery Readers, Lecture sous les étoiles (Reading Under the Stars), prizes, and so much more!
12. **Microwaves** – we are aware that some parents have questions about the removal of microwaves from classrooms. Please know that this was a decision made to support student and staff safety and to comply with fire safety guidelines. I am working closely with our divisional maintenance team to identify if there is a possible solution or a safe location where some students with additional needs or dietary restrictions may be able to at times heat their lunches. We understand that this may require some adjustment, and we appreciate your understanding as we continue to support students in their lunchtime routines.

<https://www.mbschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Fire-Safety-in-Educational-Facilities-Guide-for-Educators.pdf>

<https://media.retsd.mb.ca/media/Default/medialib/ebcb-r.9e0e11682.pdf>

Question:

Security question on doors of the school. Front doors remain open all other doors locked after 9 AM.

Would cameras be set up in the school? School Division in discussion on safety measures. Waiting on further information from Province.

6. **Vice Principal Report-** Deanna Pockett & Katherine Ybanez

