

Merritt Bench Elementary PAC
November 4, 2025
Meeting held at Bench Elementary Library & via Teams

Present:

Daniella Bennie, Principal
Bethany Ryan, President
Bailee Allen, Vice President
Amy Douthwright, Treasurer
Dana Grebinski, Fundraising
Kayla Sofiak-McNaney, Secretary
Ms. Ottens

Meeting called to order: 6:31pm

Approval of minutes

A. Motion to approve the minutes for October 7, 2025 made by Dana. Seconded by Amy.

Treasurers Report - attached in email

Checking

Opening balance:	\$9994.30
Expenses (babysitting):	\$20.00
Outstanding (Neufeld - hasn't been deposited yet):	\$841.00
Bank Balance:	\$9974.30
Reconciled Bank Balance:	\$10815.30

Gaming

Opening Balance:	\$ 554.74
Ending balance:	\$ 554.74
Approved Gaming Grant - \$3060	

- Approved \$900 of spending for teachers requests at last meeting.
- PST exemption rebates for PAC. Scan in and submit older receipts, can go back 4 years in time. Big purchases: playground, jerseys, guitars.

Old Business

A. Guitars

- 30 guitars requested - 20 full size and 10 3/4 size
- Students not to take guitars home
- No definitive plan for storage. Maybe maintenance could build guitar hangers?
- Can aim towards getting cases another year?
- Maintenance: string winder, strings etc. District account for strings? \$2.50 ea.
- The cheaper guitars not up to quality, don't tune well or stay in tune
- Guitars to be used during class time as well as extra curricular club
- Offered to grades 6&7, maybe 5. Grade 4 and under too small still.
- Legion and Old Times Fiddlers enthusiastic about guitar club and purchase - should hear back this month
- We do have access to ukuleles as well. Usually used as stepping stone to guitar, in younger grades.

B. Fundraising

- Christmas Cards: Samples in today, will go home this week with order form. Teachers very happy and excited about them.
- Krispie Kremes: Tumbleweed ordered 50 boxes and sold out, recommend doing more -100 boxes. Can order as far in advance as want, but not in December. Store opens at 6am, we pay \$9 a box and sell for \$20. Need to be given to kids the day we receive them. Try not to do on a Friday or Monday due to school attendance. Places to set up stand and sell: Country Christmas Parade Civic Centre, Centennials game on 26th, Love to Dance concert. Maybe use this fundraiser for Grade 7 Ski Trip and get the Grade 7s to set up stand to sell?
- Spirit Wear: Orders have closed, \$400-500. Hoping to have them done next week.
- Fundraising Ideas:
- Yaki Joes: coupon card with deals, free from Yaki Joes then sell card for anywhere from \$5-20, 100% profit. Maybe get some more info and do another time.
- Parent date night: Another PAC had done this. PAC and older kids worked together and had little stations to keep younger kids entertained so the parents can go out on a date. Parents pay amount to drop off kids. Liability could be an issue re: childcare without a license.

C. RBC signing authority

- Joy following up on why we haven't heard anything back.

D. Student recommendations

- Book suggestions: Ms. Ottens has a list going every year from students, will order books in based off their requests. Email list of book requests to Ms. Ottens. Donations from PAC at Scholastic Book Fair accepted.
- Water cooler for Mr. Schmidts class has been installed. Mr. Cleaveley said not necessary for his class.
- Recycling bin and extra garbage can outside now.
- Volleyball post. Amy knows of a company, Marchants - approximate cost \$1400 for pair of posts with free shipping. Get quotes on posts and net, need to do some measurements. In January/February school will get better sense of full year budget for school replacement. Krispie Kreme fundraiser or Gaming account could maybe go towards this. Could be good project to fundraise for for beginning of next school year.
- Hockey nets and goalie gear needed. Canadian Tire \$60 street hockey goalie gear. Walmart also carries gear. Ask teachers if they think goalie gear is necessary for playing hockey in the gym - will discuss further next meeting. Could pull kids up at an assembly and let school know because of their suggestion PAC has purchased this for the school.

E. PAC Parent Communication

- Website is ready but not live yet
- There is a link to a PAC page that will have the agenda posted every monthly and what were fundraising for.
- Would like a picture of PAC executives for this

New Business

A. Funding Requests:

- Yearly standing requests: Come Read with Me, Kindergarten Grad, Ski Trip, Agendas, Bussing, Christmas concert rentals. Deal with things as they come up, still would like to receive requests.
- Come Read with Me has requested for funds this year. Let them know we need an official letter.
- Amy is a school bus driver for the district and would offer to help and drive for some of the field trips at a smaller rate than the usual \$70/hr. Already confirmed with the board office that this is okay.

B. DPAC Report

- Steph and Amy are reps. Amy to reach out to Steph to be added to their chat.

Trustee Report

N/A

Principals Report: - attached in email

- A. Fire Department came and did fire prevention for grades 3-5.
- B. Christmas Concert will be at the school on Dec 18th at 5:30pm, with doors to open at 5pm. Each child will have 2 seats assigned to their name, any additional family members wanting to come will be added to a "waitlist". Could set up a google docs/shared docs to keep track of how much seating is available so people know ahead of time if there's a seat for them before coming. Dress Rehearsal day before if parents want to attend that instead. Live stream will also be offered again. (Ms. Bennie to check if any PAC funds are needed for Christmas concert rentals).
- C. Primary Reading Groups - still need more volunteers.
- D. Pumpkin Patch went well , as did halloween party.
- E. Website comes out this week.
- F. Remembrance Day assembly on Monday at 10:45am.
- G. Portable update. Spoke with Daryl this afternoon and he said should be able to get an update next week.
- H. Community Engagement re. school closure - have been held at each school including Princeton. Looking for strategies, cost saving/budget ideas. There will likely be more of these nights as we near end of the year. When a school is chosen, teachers will keep their jobs but a principal and secretary will not. Students will be dispersed amongst other schools and each Band can choose their school which will impact Bench. Catchment areas could change and cross-catchment students will be re-evaluated. Bench is small and size will be looked at before decisions are made.

Next Meeting: December 2, 2025 at 6:30pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51pm