



**Queen Margaret's School  
Parents' Association (PA) Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2026**

**Attendees:**

**PA Executive**

Neemet McDowell (Chair) via Zoom  
Taren Phillips (Secretary)  
Asti Williams (Community Welfare)

**Regrets:**

Darrel Siegel (Vice Chair)  
Michele Gergely (Treasurer)  
Natalie Macgregor (Past Chair)

**QMS Staff**

Heather Bartfai, Director of Community & Donor Engagement  
Angie Dobbie, Director of Equestrian

**PA Members**

Malti D., Lucy Z., Scarlett F., Heather M.

- Call to Order 8:30am (Neemet)
- Territorial Acknowledgement (Neemet)
- Welcome and Introductions
- Attendance (recorded)
- Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2026
  - Taren - approved; Asti - seconded – all in favor.

## **Reports**

### **Chair:** Neemet McDowell

- We will be making some small updates to the Constitution during today's meeting.
- HMF planning will begin soon.
- PA positions open for 2026/2027
  - The PA is seeking interested parents/guardians to join the PA Exec as the following positions are open for next year - Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. Any parents interested are asked to email the PA at [gmspac@gms.bc.ca](mailto:gmspac@gms.bc.ca). Position details are attached at the end of the minutes, for reference.

### **Vice-Chair:** Darrel Siegle

- Will prepare a shopping list of equipment required for video streaming the PA meetings (previous equipment belonged to Darrel)

### **Secretary:** Taren Phillips

- Contacted the local bakery in Tumbler Ridge and purchased a selection of baked goods to be provided for the PA meeting at Tumbler Ridge Secondary School on May 7th. The PA Chair was very grateful for our support.

### **Treasurer:** Michelle Gergely

- General account balance \$6545.66
- Gaming account balance \$529.82

### **Community Welfare:** Asti Williams

- Wrote a condolence card to commemorate Ted Brown, QMS bus driver who passed away and a card to celebrate the birth of a new baby in the QMS family.

### **Guest Speakers: Angie Dobbie**

- The equestrian program started approximately 70-80 years ago.
- The focus is on the discipline Hunter/Jumper.
- Offer Equine Science for grades 10-12.
- The riding program is designed for students ages 5 and up and includes:
  - Pony Pals Camps
  - Rookie Riders—offered in a group setting, students begin on a barrel and move up to a horse
  - Learn to Ride—operates seasonally in the fall & spring, for beginner riders up to grade 12
  - Royal Riders—offered 2 x weekly during PE class for grades 2-12
  - Half-lease—riding 3 days/week
  - Team QMS—riding 5 days/week, includes horse ownership or lease and is geared for students wishing to compete in events off campus



- Workshops/Seminars offered throughout the year such as sports psychology, course design, learn to judge program, dressage, vaulting clinic, working equitation
- Equine facilitated wellness introduces students to horses and teaches calm, respectful behavior. It is very calming being in the presence of horses and is proven to lower your heart rate and ease anxiety.
- Equine facilitated leadership gives instruction in how to lead and care for a horse.
- The program draws many international students to the school.
- There are job positions available in the barn to help students cover the costs of program placement, horse shows, etc. Scholarships are also available.
- The program has been scaled back to allow for a quiet day on Sundays to give the horses a “boredom break”. They also get two weeks off in August.
- Turn out pasture fields have been sowed and will be fenced soon, which will give the horses more room to exercise and graze.
- Hog fuel has been added to the paddocks to allow horses to roll, dig and lie down, greatly improving their well-being.
- Horses are very well cared for and receive high quality vet care
- Involvement in the program teaches independence, team and individual sport, self-confidence and community. A three to five year commitment provides a lifetime of skills and gives students a strong foundation that they carry forward with them.
- There are approximately 30-40 horses in the program and there are horses in the community that can be leased if needed. Approximately half are owned by families and half are QMS owned.
- Encourage alumni to stay and ride at the school in the post-grad program. Offers training in coaching and horse training.
- The program essentially pays for itself while the school funds some of the coaches.
- If you are interested in having your child join the equestrian program, please email Angie at [adobbie@qms.bc.ca](mailto:adobbie@qms.bc.ca). Students are welcome to join at any time!

### **For Discussion and Updates**

- PA Fun Fest, Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Inflatables have been booked
  - Food order has been sent to April
  - Lucy to purchase 400 freezies
  - Games, face painting, pool, BBQ
  - Budget is ~\$2000
- Annual Wish List, approved items include new outdoor recess equipment and loose parts play items for the playgrounds, Gaga ball and 4-square, live streaming equipment and AV standardization for Founders’ Hall, Glide Hall, Chapel and the TLC Multipurpose room.



## **New Business**

- Updates to PA Constitution: Motion to Approve: Neemet, Seconded: Malti, all in favour.
  - Part 1, 1.1 (g) change "Duncan" to "North Cowichan"
  - Part 3, 3.3 - remove "There will be no provisions for participation via Phone, Skype or other digital means" and replace with "Phone and/or other digital platforms provisions will be provided when required or upon request from the Executive and/or members."
  - Part 3, Quorum for General Meetings, 3.11 - remove "5" reduce to "3"
  - Part 7, 7.5 remove "Unicycler, Bazaar" and replace with "the Holiday Market & Fair"
  - Part 9, Finances 9.3 (b) - remove (as no longer part of the PA directives)
- HMF Planning Meeting, May 13<sup>th</sup> via Zoom
  - Aim to streamline communication with parents and grade reps
  - Utilize website for raffle, silent auction donations, pre-sale orders, etc.
- Consider switching from Created by Kids to Art Cards for the Fall creative fundraiser

All meeting minutes are posted on the parent portal for reference, and any questions can be emailed to [gmspac@gms.bc.ca](mailto:gmspac@gms.bc.ca).

## **Close Meeting**

Next Meeting: Monday, June 1, 2026 at 8:30am in Karin Quinn Hall and on Zoom  
Meeting Adjourned, 9:55am (Neemet)

See notes regarding PA Roles below.



## **Duties of the PA Executive**

*As per the Parents' Association Constitution and Bylaws*

### **Chair**

The Chair will:

- Speak on behalf of the Association
- Preside at membership and Executive meetings
- Ensure that an agenda is prepared
- Appoint committees where authorized by the membership or Executive
- Ensure that the Association is represented at school functions
- Ensure that the Association activities are aimed at achieving the purpose set out in the Constitution
- Be a signing officer

### **Vice Chair**

The Vice Chair will:

- Assist and support the Chair in the performance of his or her duties
- Assume the duties of the Chair's absence upon request
- Accept extra duties as required
- Be a signing officer

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer will:

- Ensure all funds of the Association are properly accounted for
- Disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive
- Ensure proper financial records and books of account are maintained
- Report on all receipts and disbursements at general and executive meetings
- Make financial records and book of account ready for inspection of audit annually
- Ensure that another signing officer has access to the financial records and books of account in the Treasurers' absence
- Submit a financial statement at the Annual General Meeting
- Be one of the signing officers

To review the PA Constitution, please visit <https://qms.bc.ca/parents/>

