

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – April 10, 2019

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Kristen Murphy, Bernie Regenbogen; Wayne Spires, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Richard Malone, Larry Boudreau, Heather Gillis, Justin Tinker

Regrets: Lory-Ann MacAskill

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications; Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction); and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He advised that Lory-Ann was unable to attend the meeting due to work commitments.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler asked that item 5.2 be moved up to 2.4 on the agenda. He asked if there were no questions or concerns with the amended Agenda that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the amended agenda be approved. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the March 13, 2019 meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

Brittany Merrifield addressed Council to voice her support for a new building to replace Grand Bay, Morna and Inglewood schools. She is a parent in the District and has spent time in all three schools. She noted that they are dated, inaccessible and do not have the amenities required and have a high cost to operate. She suggested it would be better to spend the money on a new building.

Grace Losier, Mayor of Grand Bay/ Westfield, addressed Council and spoke about the underwhelming condition of these three schools. She noted that schools are a very important anchor for any community and they have been planning for a new school for years. She acknowledged that site selection is not a DEC decision. She noted that they have invested in this opportunity and solidified funding for Colonel Nase Boulevard as a location for a new school. She asked Council to support this opportunity for their community.

Jeff Cyr, a former city planner with the city of Saint John and a resident of the central peninsula addressed Council. He explained his involvement with Develop Saint John and the Central Peninsula School Task Force and spoke about the challenging issues involved noting that the schools are located in low income and high poverty areas. The facilities are old and major capital repairs are required. The area is densely populated and building specs for a new school are challenging. He spoke of the creation of a task force to leverage support from many community partners and their success in obtaining funding to cover \$2.5M in extra costs associated with an Early Learning Centre and other needed programs. The task force also looked into site options and worked with design architects to develop a vision for a new school in this urban area. They are excited about this opportunity and hopeful that it will move forward.

Theresa Rogers, PSSC Chair at St. John the Baptist/King Edward addressed Council and explained the process the community has taken since the 409 process began. She noted that initially the community was not in favour of closing their school. Many community meetings were held and surveys completed. She spoke about how her children went from private school to the public school system – she saw positive changes. They saw exceptionalities in their classrooms, became more tolerant, accepting and generous. When the option to close both St. John the Baptist/King Edward and Prince Charles to build one new school was raised, the community agreed that there was a tremendous need for a community school. She spoke of additional monies received from the Social Innovation Fund which has led to the hiring of more K-2 teachers, and smaller class sizes, which allows teachers to reach beyond the classroom and engage families at home. A new program for parents, held the last Friday of each month, saw 70/81 families attend the first meeting.

Donna Reardon, Saint John City Councillor spoke about the opportunity for a new school in the central peninsula as a transformative project for the City of Saint John. She is an advocate for children and was previously a DEC member and knows how schools affect a community. She is a resident of the south end and sees a great need for a mixed school/neighbourhood. Children learn from each other.

2.4 Capital Projects Prioritization (agenda item 5.2)

Mr. Fowler commented that Council feels all 6 of the projects on the prioritization list are critical – and we want them all. Unfortunately, the reality is that it will be difficult to even get one new school approved in this fiscal environment.

Mr. Fowler then reviewed the projects (in no particular order) and highlighted key points. He reminded Council that the Saint John High School mid-life upgrade had been on the list as #1 until it was halted last year. To date, \$4M has been spent on the project, with a budget of \$22M.

Mr. Fowler then suggested an order of priority for the six projects and asked for a motion. Mr. Nesbitt then moved that the projects be listed in priority order as follows:

1. New K-8 school to replace St. John the Baptist/King Edward School and Prince Charles School as per 409 study completed 2017-18.
2. Major Mid-Life Upgrade for Saint John High School to proceed.

3. New K-5 school to replace Morna Heights School, Inglewood School and Grand Bay Primary as per 409 study completed 2015-16.
4. New K-5 school to replace Centennial School and Hazen-White/St. Francis School as per policy 409 study completed 2017-18.
5. Either an expansion onto M. Gerald Teed School or replacement of M. Gerald Teed School to provide full K-5 school as per 409 study completed 2018-19.
6. Full facility analysis of Princess Elizabeth School to determine useful life.

Motion was seconded by Mr. Spires. Mr. Fowler then opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Mr. Regenbogen commented that he felt Grand Bay/Westfield needs something. He would like to see Grand Bay Primary/Morna/Inglewood as priority #2.

Mr. O'Connor thanked all for attending and commented that there are a lot of needs in the District, but he believes that Grand Bay/Morna/Inglewood have the greatest need and have been on the list the longest. From a needs perspective, he feels this project should be priority #1.

There being no further questions, motion carried. Mr. O'Connor opposed the motion.

3. Member's Notebook

Mr. O'Connor advised Council that Dr. Chorney presented on the topic Social Media Meets Mental Health at Harbour View High School on April 4th. He noted that the It Takes A Village event was well attended (130-140) and the feedback was positive. Requests have been received for a repeat of Dr. Chorney's Anxiety presentation. He also reminded Council that Simonds High School will be presenting the musical "Grease Lightning" May 1st – 4th.

Mr. Regenbogen wanted to bring an issue with wheel chair accessibility for one family in the District to the attention of the Superintendent and staff. Mrs. Watson advised that she would follow up.

Ms. Sherbo advised that at a recent District Health Advisory Committee meeting she learned that there has been one outbreak of chicken pox in St. Stephen. ASD-S Healthy Learners Nurses are tracking all out breaks. She also commented that our high schools have a serious challenge with people passing school buses while their lights are flashing. The Saint John police have been contacted and they have agreed to run a campaign to assist in this effort. Healthy Learners Nurses will also help get the word out and we need to have communities and PSSC get this issue in front of our MLAs, etc.

Ms. Sherbo spoke about the closure of a school for the day which was caused by the ventilation system. She was impressed with the quick action of school staff and the Transportation staff to ensure all students got home safely. She raised the question as to what happens when parents cannot be reached, and the possibility of a child being dropped off with no one at home. Mr. MacDonald and Mrs. Watson explained the process for sending students home early and how the decision is made. Mrs. Watson also noted that the District has access to an emergency messaging system whereby all student contacts can be reached via voicemail. Mrs. Watson added that the District policy is that the school staff tries to reach all elementary school parents by telephone prior to sending these students home.

Ms. Sherbo asked that Council be kept up to date as further information on a new provincial Work Place Violence and Harassment policy rolls out in terms of schools. Mrs. Watson commented that she had sent an email answering questions on this topic to all Council members and had nothing more to report at this time.

Ms. Gillis noted that the PSSC at Champlain Heights is putting on a Healthy Eats and Treats event which will include an information session for parents on April 25th. This past weekend Bayside Middle School attended a volleyball tournament at UNBSJ and there were a number of ASD-S schools in attendance. A cup stacking competition was held recently at Bayview School. She also noted that the middle school students are anxiously awaiting their letters for high school.

4. Presentations ENDS # 4 & #5

4.1 Jennifer Grant, Positive Learning Environment Subject Coordinator, was in attendance to present an update on Council's ENDS #4 - to provide opportunities for staff to learn about mental health issues in children and youth and to promote school and District wide initiatives that promote mental fitness. The monitoring report and was posted with Council's meeting materials for their review and is attached to and forms part of these minutes.

Ms. Grant reviewed the highlights of the monitoring document for ENDS #4 which focuses on strategies to provide professional learning for guidance staff, train counselling leads to provide clinical supervision, expand mental health first aid training to school based staff, expand District sponsored initiatives - both nationally recognized and District developed, and to promote positive education strategies/Celebrate.

Following this presentation, Mrs. Watson asked for a motion to approve the monitoring document for ENDS #4. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the monitoring document for ENDS #4 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

Ms. Grant then went on to provide an update on Council's ENDS # 5 - to expect all members of the school community to be welcomed, respected, accepted and supported and to address heterosexism and discrimination. The monitoring report and was posted with Council's meeting materials for their review and is attached to and forms part of these minutes.

Ms. Grant reviewed the highlights of the monitoring document for ENDS #5 which focuses on strategies to provide professional learning for teaching and non-teaching staff on the topics of heterosexism, transgender students and associated administrative concerns, training for guidance staff, building capacity of gay-straight alliances (GSAs), increasing diversity of curriculum resources with regard to lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans, queer and questioning – plus (LGBTQ+).

Following this presentation, Mrs. Watson asked for a motion to approve the monitoring document for ENDS #5. Mr. Spires moved that the monitoring document for ENDS #5 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Grant for her informative presentation.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Amendment to Policy 4.4

Mr. O'Connor noted that he had received feedback from an email sent to Council outlining his proposed amendment to this policy and as a result, moved that we amend Policy 4.4, Council Committee Principles & Structure, to add the following: (6.5) Sub-committees should not be operating in camera. There shall be a reporting process in place that allows for the information to flow to the DEC. Seconded by Ms. Sherbo. The floor was then opened for discussion.

Considerable discussion followed with regard to whether DEC members could/should attend sub-committee meetings, Terms of Reference (which include a reporting process), sub-committee vs committee of the whole, due diligence of the sub-committee on behalf of the DEC, flow of information, a lack of trust in the sub-committee and other recommendations for inclusion in the motion.

Following this discussion, Ms. Murphy moved to amend the motion on the floor to reflect that each sub-committee will address reporting and the flow of information in their Terms of Reference. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion to amend carried.

Mr. Fowler then asked for a vote on the amended motion to Policy 4.4 which will read as follows: (6.5) Sub-committees should not be operating in camera. Each sub-committee will address reporting and the flow of information in their Terms of Reference. Carried. This will now be sent to the Policy Sub-committee.

Mr. Fowler advised that Mr. Nesbitt is working on a draft Terms of Reference document which will be sent to all members of Council for their feedback.

5.2 Capital Projects Prioritization

Addressed in number 2.4 above

5.3 Summer Improvement Projects 2020

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that the Summer Improvement Project list was provided with their meeting materials last month for review and that a vote was required tonight.

There being no questions, Mr. Malone moved that the Summer Improvement Project list for 2020 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

5.4 Sub-district Boundaries Update

Mr. Tinker advised that he sent a letter to the PSSCs explaining the proposed revision to Sub-district 12 boundaries. He received a significant response, and all were positively against a change in representation. He reviewed some of the reasons with Council.

Mr. Spires then moved that the Sub-district Boundaries be left as they currently exist. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried. Ms. Gillis opposed the motion.

5.5 Spring Symposium

A reminder to all that the Spring Symposium is being held in the Miramichi on May 10th and 11th at the Rodd Inn. Members who would like to attend and haven't yet registered, should connect directly with DEC Manager Stacey Brown.

6. New Business

6.1 Executive Limitations Policies – Monitoring Reports

Mrs. Watson reviewed for Council her monitoring documents for Executive Limitations policies EL-8 (Staff Compensation); EL-9 (Treatment of Media, Public, Stakeholders and Staff) and EL-11 (Property Management) which were posted with Council's meeting materials for their review. She noted that in

EL-9, some of the points overlap with other policies and that might be something the Policy Subcommittee could review.

Mr. Fowler asked that if there were no questions or concerns, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that Council accept the three monitoring reports as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mrs. Watson for her reports.

6.2 Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee

Mr. Fowler advised that he planned to kick-start this subcommittee next week and asked subcommittee members Mr. Spires and Ms. Sherbo if they could be available to meet Wednesday or Thursday of next week to meet. Ms. Sherbo advised that she would not be available at the proposed time of evening and suggested that someone else might want to step up to take her place. Mr. Fowler will follow up with members.

7. Information Items

7.1 Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Watson advised that her report was posted with Council's meeting materials for their review.

She advised that three ASD-S staff would be receiving a National Inclusive Education Award tomorrow in Fredericton. Congratulations to David Taylor – a teacher at St. Stephen High School, Anna Buckley – a School Intervention Worker at Fairvale Elementary School and Jenny Shea – a teacher at Rothesay High School. There are eight awards in total being presented.

Mrs. Watson reminded Council that the dates and times for school drama productions are listed in Southern Exposure for anyone interested in attending. The events are put together with a huge team of staff and volunteers and are very well done.

On Friday at NBCC ASD-S has 12 schools participating in a "Try a Trade" event which will be followed on Saturday with the NB Skills Competition where 3 schools will participate. Also on Saturday - a group of 70 Hampton Education Centre staff will be participating in a First Nations Blanket Activity with Mark Perry and Frist Nations partners and ASD-S will host a provincial Chess Tournament at Millidgeville North School.

Mrs. Watson advised that under the direction Peter Smith, Director of Education Support Services, ASD-S Autism Leads have provided 3 professional learning sessions with Saint John city fire department personnel to provide information on how to approach children during an emergency situation. Mrs. Watson has the video clip from the Saint John Council meeting and will forward to DEC.

Question was raised about vaccinations and what the policy was surrounding unvaccinated students. Mrs. Watson advised that the District follows the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Policy 706 Proof of Immunization; however, Districts have not excluded students from school if immunizations are incomplete. Parents can sign a personal exemption for immunizations and students can be in school. If there is an outbreak, the students who do not have their full immunizations could be asked to stay at home. She reviewed the key points of the policy including the involvement of Public Health in this process and exemptions.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Fowler had nothing new to report to Council.

7.3 Correspondence

None. All correspondence was posted for Council's review.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, May 8, 2019 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary