

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – September 12, 2018

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: Larry Boudreau

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler advised that under Presentations, the order of items 4.1 and 4.2 would be flipped. With that change, he asked if there were any questions or concerns with the revised Agenda and asked that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the revised Agenda be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the August 22, 2018 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. Regenbogen. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

Heather Stephens, PSSC member for Millidgeville North and Princess Elizabeth addressed Council with questions regarding Policy 711 and clarification of “lower nutrient” foods and fundraising activities going forward.

Mrs. Watson explained that the District was receiving questions about fundraising and advised that she has communicated to schools if they currently have fundraisers planned, they could proceed until after the election when the District would get further clarification. She noted that the Department of Education and Early Childhood has developed two documents that outline ideas/alternatives for school celebrations and healthy fundraisers and the District will post them on the ASD-S website. There are also documents under the tab Parent Resources – Nutrition - on the website which contain good information.

Ron McGrath, PSSC Chair for Chris Saunders Memorial addressed Council with a concern that parents will end up paying a premium price for new meals as Chartwells make very little profit already. Mrs. Watson noted that the schools will continue to get rebates. Chartwells are concerned about their staff, wait times and pricing as they must be in compliance with Policy 711. It may mean that certain schools will be offered a satellite operation (i.e. schools over 150 students and within 18 km of a cafeteria). They have agreed to try it for one year to see if they can make any money, and then make a decision (they will remain in all 25 schools for now).

3. Member’s Notebook

Ms. Sherbo noted that she attended an open house event where they were very supportive of the new policy. They served shiskabobs, popcorn and watermelon and the cost was close to what hamburgers and hot dogs would have been.

Mr. O’Connor attended the Glen Falls PSSC meeting and advised that they were appreciative of the District’s work over the summer to improve parking at the school.

Mr. Tinker advised that he had attended the Canadian School Board Association meetings in Halifax over the summer where they discussed common problems through a different lens. He also noted that he is Chair of the Provincial Curriculum and Evaluation Advisory Committee which is working to develop recommendations for the Minister with regard to graduation requirements in light of reducing the gap between high school and post secondary.

Mr. Spires has visited six of his seven schools and advised all of the upcoming PSSC Orientation sessions. He noted that schools are working to get parents interested in the PSSC.

4. Presentations

4.1 Cashless Schools

Mrs. Watson introduced Carolann Spear, Budget and Accounting Manager who was present to provide Council with a high level view of the cashless schools initiative which is designed to reduce the amount of time spent dealing with money – collecting, depositing, and counting by Administrators and school personnel.

Ms. Spear then reviewed the presentation which had been posted with Council's meeting materials. Her presentation is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

Questions following the presentation included: was the program voluntary; how to register when you had multiple children in multiple schools; safeguards for permission slips; and processing fees, all of which were addressed by Ms. Spear.

4.2 Nutrition Policy

Mrs. Watson noted this presentation had been developed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood to share with the Principals and Vice Principals to highlight some key differences in the revised policy.

Mrs. Watson then reviewed the presentation which had been posted with Council's meeting materials. Her presentation is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

Questions following the presentation included: concern over the hot lunch program; fundraising which provides needed money for the schools, flexibility required by schools to adapt, and food that students bring from home, all which were addressed by Mrs. Watson.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Surplus Land Request – St. Stephen Education Centre

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that at the last meeting we had requested further information/clarification from Mr. Disher with regard to the plans for the housing development he wants to develop on land behind St. Stephen Elementary School that is owned by the District and wants declared surplus.

Discussion arose on the information and revised drawing received along with concerns raised. There was agreement with regard to the need for a permanent 20' treed buffer and fence to remain as part of any motion the DEC might consider.

Following the discussion motion was made by Mr. Spires to declare the piece of land as outlined in the attached drawing and located behind St. Stephen Elementary School as

surplus with the condition that a permanent 20' treed buffer and fence be maintained between the project and the school. Seconded by Mr. Tinker. Motion carried.

5.2 PSSC Orientation Subcommittee Update

Ms. Gillis reminded Council that all had received a booklet with information outlining the format for this year's orientation sessions and asked if there were any questions. She noted that the subcommittee would meet again on September 17th to finalize the agenda.

Ms. Sherbo noted that it would be important for all DEC members to remind their PSSCs about the event and encourage their attendance. She confirmed that there were 9 groups attending as part of the Info Fair.

Ms. Gillis reiterated that attendees don't have to be members of the PSSC – anyone who is interested may attend.

Mr. Fowler advised Council that he had to leave, and Vice Chair Roger Nesbitt would continue in his absence.

5.3 DEC Vacancy Update

Mrs. Watson noted that a print ad had been run twice in the Kings County Record looking for someone to fill the vacant seat for Subdistrict 11. The ad is also posted on the ASD-S website. The deadline for submissions is September 21st and she advised that we do not have any expressions of interest at this time.

5.4 Policy Review Committee Update

Mr. Nesbitt provided an update on the committee's work to date with regard to their review of GP 5 (Council Sub-Committee Principles & Structure) – now 4.4 and renamed Council Committee Principles & Structure; and GP 10 (Linkage Opportunities) – now 4.7 and renamed Public Comments and Presentations at DEC Meetings as well as a document entitled Public Comments Handout. All three documents were posted with Council's meeting materials for review. Mr. Nesbitt noted that a revised DEC handbook would be coming out with additional information, terms of reference, changes on committees, etc.

Following a review of the changes to each policy, Mr. Nesbitt moved that Council rescind GP 5 Council Sub-Committee Principles & Structure and replace it with 4.4 Council Committee Principles & Structure. Mr. Regenbogen seconded the motion.

Discussion followed with questions relating the DEC Handbook, when it would be available and whether there was a need to have it completed, or the relevant section on committees released, prior to approving the new policy. Mr. Nesbitt advised that Council could choose to table the motion. Ms. Sherbo moved to table the motion until Council could get clarification on the DEC Handbook and bring this back to the October meeting. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion carried.

Mr. Nesbitt then addressed GP 10 (Linkage Opportunities) – now 4.7 and renamed Public Comments and Presentations at DEC Meetings and the Public Comments Handout. Ms. Gillis then moved that Council rescind GP 10 (Linkage Opportunities) and replace it with 4.7 Public Comments and Presentations at DEC Meetings, including the Public Comments Handout. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor.

Discussion arose with regard to the need/validity of this policy. Mrs. Watson noted that she strongly recommends that Council have a policy which states the parameters for those who want to present at meetings.

Following discussion, the motion was carried. Mr. Regenbogen voted against the motion.

6. New Business

6.1 Self Sustaining Funds

Mrs. Watson reviewed the document that was posted with Council's meeting materials and noted the development of the three accounts of pre-amalgamation funds, the foreign student account and AEI funding.

Mrs. Watson then noted how funds in these accounts have been dispersed since amalgamation.

Discussion arose on the use of these funds, and whether dollars should be used to help students in the District who are in need of services. Mr. MacDonald noted that these funds represent a very small portion of the overall \$235M budget – less than 2% - and the District does not recommend divesting a lot of these funds. In the case of an emergency, these funds need to be available.

Mrs. Watson noted that funds will be used to support a Student Engagement and Innovation Fund (ENDS #3) whereby teachers can apply for grants. She also noted that the District has used self sustaining funds to help offset the cost to upgrade technology; new switches and access points.

7. Information Items

7.1 Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Watson asked for a moment of silence for Jamie Middleton, a teacher from Sussex Middle School who passed away over the weekend from cancer.

Mrs. Watson noted that her report was posted with Council's meeting materials and made the following additions:

District Health Advisory Committee met today and discussed many topics that support Council's District Improvement Plan, including concussion management and the education of teachers and students.

The Sweet Caroline Foundation has a number of activities planned to educate middle and high school students about allergies. She noted that she will be accompanying the Board Chair of the foundation to meet with the Department of Education and Early Childhood in the hopes of moving their efforts provincially.

Mrs. Watson extended her thanks to the schools for their time and effort in hosting Open House events.

Mrs. Watson advised that Paul Smith will take over the role of Director of Schools for the Saint John Education Centre. She advised that she and Gary Hall will help out at the Hampton Education Centre until the new Director of Schools is named. The competition for the position closes tomorrow.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Fowler had to leave the meeting so will report at the October meeting.

7.3 Correspondence

None; all correspondence was posted on the portal for Council's information.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt 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, October 10, 2018 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary