

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – September 11, 2019

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Kristen Murphy, Lory-Ann MacAskill, Bernie Regenbogen; Wayne Spires, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Richard Malone, Larry Boudreau, Justin Tinker

Regrets: Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair, Heather Gillis

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; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Peter Smith, Director Education Support Services, Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler asked if there were no questions or concerns with the Agenda that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the agenda be approved. Seconded by Mr. Tinker. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the August 21, 2019 meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. O'Connor moved that the Minutes be approved. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None.

3. Member's Notebook

Mr. O'Connor attended the Loch Lomond School PSSC Kick Off and they were happy to celebrate two priorities being completed – the sidewalk crossing and afterschool program.

Ms. Sherbo felt that Principals did a good job communicating at their open house events about vaping and were very straight with parents. Question on possible presentation to Council from L. Chalmers. Mrs. Watson advised that Ms. Chalmers now resides in NS and was not available until sometime in October or she could join by phone.

Mr. Spires felt Principals also did a good job and were very prepared and upfront with parents during their open house events. They encouraged students to ask for help when they needed it - not to wait! Mr. Tinker expressed his thanks to Mrs. Watson and Mr. O'Brien for their work in addressing the re-allocation of teachers in the St. Stephen Education Centre.

Mr. Fowler commented that staggered start dates at grade 9 has made a difference over the years with rookeying in the Saint John High Schools. It is no longer an issue. Transition day activities are planned by students for the grade nines and in middle schools for grade 6.

4. Presentations

Lissa McNaughton-Dickie, Regional Director of Early Childhood Services provided Council with an overview of what's been happening in Early Childhood Services.

She spoke about the 86 designated early learning facilities, the 800+ children receiving subsidies through the Parent Subsidy Program; advised that 76% of the spaces in designated facilities are full and outlined the objectives of the designation process going forward. She provided information on Talk With Me and the NB Curriculum Framework/Global Competencies.

Questions arose including who is eligible for subsidies; the Bridging Project; the need for support workers, and how parent committees are selected.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. McNaughton-Dickie for an informative presentation.

Ms. Jessica Hanlon spoke to Council to provide an update on the district's new Vaping initiative and how it came about. She provided samples of the awareness signage that has been developed as well as an overview of the information contained in the toolkit which is available to all schools.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Hanlon for her informative update.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Expenditure Plan Approval

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the proposed Expenditure Plan which is forecasting a break even position for year end; however, he went on to explain key areas where ASD-S is underfunded including; teacher fte, replacement salaries, EAs, and the cost of minor repairs for our aging schools.

It was suggested that the DEC write to the Minister outlining the serious concerns of Council regarding the funding shortfalls within these categories. Mr. Fowler asked staff to prepare a letter for his signature clearly outlining pressure points.

Considerable discussion then followed on the merits of approving/not approving the expenditure plan as presented. Members were in agreement that they felt it was important to send a message to the Department regarding their concerns with systemic, chronic underfunding.

Motion was then made by Mr. Spires that we accept the Expenditure Plan as presented. Seconded by Mr. Malone. Motion was unanimously defeated.

5.2 PSSC Orientation Sessions Update

Ms. Sherbo advised Council that the sessions will follow the same format as last year. She, Heather Gillis and Gary Hall met to finalize details for each session and she will finalize the agenda.

6. New Business

6.1 Policy 409 – Saint John Education Centre

Mr. Fowler provided a brief background on the Policy 409 process for Morna Heights/Grand Bay Primary/Inglewood over the past 8 – 10 years and suggested that the likelihood of getting a new school in this area would be slim as it has been on the list for a number of years now. He reviewed possible options that may be considered, specifically with regard to Morna Heights. Concern was raised that these schools have been through a lot over the past years.

Following discussions, Mr. Spires moved that Council direct the Superintendent to inform Minister Cardy that Council intends to study School Sustainability at Morna Heights School. Seconded by Ms. Sherbo. Motion carried. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Boudreau voted against the motion.

Mr. Fowler noted additional information was still required about Grand Bay Primary and Inglewood from the original proposal.

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 reminded Council that the NB Student Leadership Conference would be held in Fredericton on November 14. Directors and DEC members will have an opportunity to meet with student leaders at that time.

She thanked all Principals for the work at Open House events. She noted that the District would be providing names to the Department of Education for pre-consultations prior to the Education Summit (Oct 16-18). There will be a one hour focus group with 12 students from a rural setting in our District, and three parents and six teachers attending the pre-summit consultations. The Chair, Superintendent, two Principals, two Teachers (winners of Minister's Excellence Awards) and two others will be invited to the Summit.

Mrs. Watson noted that Attendance Matters materials are now available in a tool kit which includes posters, brochures, magnet to track absences, etc. This kit is available to all schools.

Questions followed with regard to those who are invited to attend the Summit, and if there are any PL opportunities provided to health/physical education coaches with regard to training for working with special needs students. Mr. Hall will follow up on the PL question with the Physical Education Coach and Coordinator.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Fowler advised that he is working with Melissa Wright, NB Student Leadership, to set up a conference call with student leaders to explain the role of a representative who would sit as a student representative on Council.

He explained that he followed up with the Department with regard to a First Nations representative and was advised that work is being done to recognize the Passamaquoddy group and once that is accomplished, then a representative will be appointed to the role.

He reminded Council of the Open House event taking place at St. John the Baptist/King School on September 17 for the proposed new school in the central peninsula and encouraged all to attend.

Mr. Fowler advised that he would be attending the Education Summit on October 16 – 18 in Fredericton.

The Superintendent Evaluation package has been sent to subcommittee members and Council will receive a copy along with their recommendations at the next meeting.

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, October 9, 2019 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary