

Superintendent Report August 2020

Since the last DEC meeting on June 10, 2020 our schools were busy with report cards which focused on work completed from the end of the first reporting period in late November until schools closed on March 13, 2020. Schools had opportunities for parents to drive by to pick up report cards or they were mailed – some schools had other items to be sent home with students especially at the transition years of grades 5 and 8. Our fourteen schools with high school grades each had graduation ceremonies the week of June 15 and they were very well done and lots of positive feedback was received. For some schools it was a two-day process with graduates arriving in small numbers with their family to have picture opportunities and the presentation of their diplomas. I applaud our high schools, as we spent many virtual meetings discussing graduation and what could happen to make it special for graduates. Each school had their own creative ideas including the red carpet, wonderful decorations and flowers, musicians, video of the class, grad pictures projected on the side of the school etc. We were fortunate to have a week of lovely sunshine as well. The week of June 15 there was also 5-days of Professional Development for teachers focused on technology and on-line learning; these sessions were all recorded for teachers to be accessed over the summer or at the start-up of the school year. A recognition of Darren White, our Technology Subject Coordinator and his three Teacher Coaches – Sarah Rankin, Stephen MacEachern, and Moe Savoie as well as Director Gary Hall. These five individuals worked so hard from March- June supporting individual teachers, leading PD, and participating on provincial calls.

When schools finished on June 23, the focus changed to preparing for fall 2020. Many staff have been involved over the summer with provincial virtual meetings and District planning. We are very fortunate to have Clare Tooley, since April our Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator and as always, our Healthy Learners Nurses Ann Hogan, Joyce Walker-Haley and Alberta Stanton Rousselle. Their expertise has been invaluable to our management team, the Facilities and Transportation Departments. Regular meetings were held with Anglophone Superintendents and the Deputy and Assistant Deputy as the provincial “Return to School” documents were completed and now have been shared with families and the public. Each school will have a detailed “Operational Plan,” covering all topics from communication to families and staff to transition times during the school day, access to the school, masks etc. We had a few virtual meetings with our Principals and Vice Principals over the last two weeks, one with the Deputy and ADM and our dialogue will continue over the next two weeks until teachers and other support staff return the week of August 31. The plan for each school will be posted on their website the week of August 31 for all families to see. We do expect changes may have to be made as situations change so it is a fluid plan which will be regularly reviewed. There will be a full orientation for all employee groups – school staff, drivers, and custodians.

A memo went to all staff from the Director of Human Resources, Susan Moffatt so we can be informed of staff with health issues who may require sick leave or have additional accommodations to work. A similar memo went to all employees in the Anglophone sector this week.

There will be many questions over the coming weeks and the District and schools will use School Messenger to get information to families, as well as our website which Jessica Hanlon has updated for fall 2020, twitter and Facebook. We know communication is key at this time. One summer letter went to all parents, and we asked them to inform us if their contact information had changed over the summer and a few hundred emails were received.

A busy summer for transportation as our 900+ bus routes had to be reviewed to reduce the number of riders on K-5 buses to 24 (one student per seat) unless members of the same family, and to reduce

middle/high school runs to no more than 2 students per seat. Students will be required to wear a community mask if there are 2/seat from different households. We are able to maintain busing for all students who live beyond 1.5 kms from the school, however, there will be changes to the pick up and delivery times. Every effort is being made to ensure these times are no more than 30 minutes from what they were last year – for most it will be about 15 minutes. We have had to eliminate pick-up/drop-offs in some subdivisions and will be meeting students at the end of a street/subdivision. The goal is to have the Transportation Parent Portal available to families by the end of next week so they can see their stop and estimated times. We had about 3000 parents who registered to “opt out” of either morning, afternoon or all transportation for 2020-2021, however some circumstances are changing and calls received to say parents can drive some days but not every day and that is fine. The plan is also to continue providing transportation to after school programs which are over 1.5 km from the school. Thanks to Manager Jamie Tait and his Assistant Managers David Breault, Karen McCully and Steve Evans for their on-going work.

ASD-S has added 75 additional classrooms at K-5 in an effort to reduce class sizes; thirty-three of these positions were filled by Coach/Lead teachers returning to the classrooms and others by D-contract teachers so very few actual new hires. In a few schools where space was a challenge, facilities have been able to sub—divide larger areas or make other adjustments inside the school. The new classrooms will be outfitted with a smartboard and teacher furniture, in a few cases additional student furniture was required. Facilities have also added plexi-glass around some of the school reception areas to maintain the 2m of distancing. Manager Jim Connors, Clare Tooley and Director John MacDonald have worked with EECD on the ordering of hand sanitizer, disinfectant, additional masks, face shields, arrows and dots for the floors etc. This work will be on-going for the next couple of weeks.

On August 18 all school leaders will have their second opportunity for a virtual session with Kevin Cameron from the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response in Alberta. Kevin is well known in ASD-S as he facilitates the Violent Threat Risk Assessment training, and is a nationally recognized expert in trauma response (e.g. led the response the Taber and LaLoche school shootings and the Humbolt bus accident). He spoke to us virtually in June about COVID 19 and the impacts the current situation can have on students, families and our staffs. Administrators will also have a virtual session on August 27 with Dr. Daniel Chorney, a child psychologist from Halifax who is very well known to educators and to those who have attended the “It Takes A Village” series in SJEC.

Over the summer staffing continued with Directors Allan Davis, Derek O’Brien and Paul Smith taking the lead – at this moment we have all FSL positions filled and St. Stephen Education Centre welcomed 3 new international teachers who are currently self-isolating and will be teaching FI. We have appointed two new Principals – Christina Barrington (VP at St. Mac’s) will move to Rothesay High School, and Renee Caldwell will move from her teaching position in St. Stephen to Lawrence Station Elementary. Anna Marie McLaughlin will be the new VP at Grand Manan Community School for a 5-year term. We are pleased to have 6 psychologists for 2020-21 – some are Residents in Psychology or Psychometrists who will qualify for their residency in the fall.

Director Gary Hall met for four Wednesdays on TEAMS to discuss on-line learning and had 30-40 educators each week. They reviewed and discussed some of the learning materials on our ASD-S virtual learning site. A few teachers participated in a provincial Think Tank this week on “experiential learning.” Darren White has been meeting with the Provincial Technology Team through the summer. Peter Smith and his ESS team have been planning PD for resource teachers and guidance staff in a virtual format for at least

the fall term. We want to have our middle level GSA Day and high school Mental Health Forums, and in all likelihood for fall 2020 they will be virtual.

Over the summer we had the deaths of three students – Elijah Dollar from St. Malachy’s Memorial High School, Brandon Lewis from St. Stephen High School and most recently Rebekah Epton-Galbraith from Harbourview High School. With guidance from Dr. Barker, Regional Medical Officer of Health we were able to support close friends of Brandon and Rebekah with a small open house at the schools, and friends of the family arranged a similar time for Elijah’s friends and hockey teammates. Our thoughts are with these three families at this very difficult time.

Summer is always an extremely busy time for our facilities staff – Manager Jim Connors, and his Assistants Blair Dickson (HEC), Ron Munn (SSEC) and Wayne Breen (SJEC). We have the larger summer improvement projects pre-approved by DEC, smaller jobs which are contracted by ASD-S, the work done by our staff and the deep-cleaning of the schools done by our custodians. Below is a summary of the work done across our 69 schools:

Saint John Education Centre

Bayside: Middle top floor painted and four stairwells, Temporary walls

Simonds: Roofs will be completed this week

M. Gerald Teed: New office space completed, Penthouse pressure washed and resealed, Walls built

St. Rose: Four classrooms painted, Masonry completed, New main floor completed – new tiles

St. Malachy’s: New front lobby painted plus 4 classrooms

Harbour View High School: Roofs will be completed this week

Saint John High School: Gym painted, floor resurfaced, bleachers

St. Martins: New main floor completed – new tiles, Washrooms redone, waiting on partitions

Centennial: Main hallway being painted this week, plus main office and classroom, Masonry completed, wall dividers installed

Champlain Heights: Washrooms are on track to be completed by Aug 28, New tile flooring installed in washrooms completed

Bayview: Chimney sealed

Lakewood Heights: New door installed

Forest Hills: New tile flooring installed in office area completed

Seaside: New door install completed, Temporary walls at Seaside park

Beaconsfield: Paving to be done

Millidgeville North: Roofs and Interior

Masonry completed @ Princess Elizabeth, Barnhill, St. John the Baptist/King Edward

Hampton Education Centre

Kennebecasis Valley High School: Paving completed, Windows ongoing, Roofs near completion

Rothesay High: Roof near completion

Apohaqui: Interior flooring nearing completion

Lakefield: Roof ongoing

Quispamsis Elementary School: Leveling and blocking at mobiles, New washroom

Norton: Wall removed for new classroom

Belleisle Elementary: Drainage and culverts completed

Hampton High School & Hampton Middle School: Fume hoods in Labs repaired

Sussex Regional High School: Locker room/washroom upgrades ongoing

Asbestos remediation work ongoing at several buildings, mostly plaster repair and flooring
Painting at various schools still ongoing

St. Stephen Education Centre

Milltown: Painting, Remove rug and tile two rooms

Campobello Island Community School: Re-coat Gym Floor, Yard Clean up (90%), Remove old Bleachers
Install New, Outdoor Basketball repairs (90%)

St. Stephen Elementary School: Remove two portable walls and construct new walls (1 done)

St. Stephen High School: Paint lines outside basketball court

St. Stephen Middle School: Special Needs changing room (90%)

Fundy Middle & High School: Replace Stair Treads, Replace 4 doors, Lockers 125 new – old are out, new
ones early September delivery, Floor drains and grout floor washroom off cafeteria, Painting

Blacks Harbour School: Insert floor pockets for Volleyball net post, Shelving in Equipment room

Fundy Shores Elementary: Painting, Parking lot markings

Back Bay Elementary School: Wainscoting replaced in one room, Replaced lifting floor tiles, Painting

Vincent Massey Elementary School: Repair damaged wall from water leak

Grand Manan Community School: Painting

St. George Elementary: stairwell patch and paint, Install new door in room F-1-A, Replace ceiling in
custodian room, Change out Circular pump valves on small boiler, New staff washroom, Roof

St. Stephen High School, Middle & Elementary: Parking lot markings (85%)

Milltown: Roof, Parking lot markings

All schools: Playground repairs and inspection (75%)

Island View: Prepare locker rooms to be used as class rooms (85%)

Inglewood: Zipline and other playground equipment, spread top soil, have Fundy Fence install extra
fencing to lock off playground

Grand Bay Primary: Paint lines Gym floor

Several schools: Asbestos removal started

Zoë Watson