

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – May 12, 2021

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met virtually on Wednesday, May 12, 2021. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Shelly Merrill-MacKillop, Jonathan Barry, Dan O'Connor, Wayne Spires, Justin Tinker, Heather Gillis, Richard Malone, Bernie Regenbogen, Kristen Murphy

Regrets: Lory-Ann MacAskill

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communication, Peter Smith, Director of Education Support Services, John MacDonald, Director Finance & Administration, Susan Moffatt, Director of Human Resources, Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre, Melissa Savoie, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre, Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre, Lissa McNaughton-Dickie, Director of Early Childhood, Marc Godin, Alignment Champion; Erica Lane, Community Engagement Coordinator and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He advised that Lory-Ann MacAskill was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler referred to the Agenda for the meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Murphy. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the April 14, 2021 meeting and asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Member's Notebook

Ms. Gillis provided information on a "Brown Bag" lunch program at Silver Falls Church which currently supports three of our schools; Simonds, Bayside and St. Malachy's. A team of volunteers work off site to prepare the lunches and the school has someone pick them up. They will be adding a fourth school soon, Saint John High. Lunches include a sandwich, fruit and cookie.

She noted that Bayside Middle school held their "Math Olympics" this week and that the winners will be announced on Friday. It was a big deal at the school with prizes, etc. At Champlain Heights, the Principal provided some of the results from the Tell Them From Me Survey to the PSSC, and will provide a more formal report for the fall.

Ms. Merrill-MacKillop commented that the PSSC at Back Bay Elementary are very active and involved at the school. She provided information on the goals contained in their School Improvement Plan. She also wanted to send a 'thank you' to the driver of Bus 123 in the St. Stephen Education for being so courteous to the travelling public.

4. Presentations

4.1 ENDS #4 – Maximize the engagement of families and the community through effective communication and outreach. Ms. Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communication, and Erica Lane, Community Engagement Coordinator, were in attendance to update Council on the goal of maximizing the engagement of families and the community through effective communication and outreach. The monitoring report and additional supporting documents were posted with Council's meeting materials for review and form part of these Minutes.

Ms. Hanlon then provided Council with an overview of strategy 4.1 – to ensure all stakeholders have access to relevant information and resources pertinent to student success and wellbeing. She spoke about the website being antiquated and in need of revamping. There have been some updates with the addition of Parent Resources and an Education Support Services section. She noted that the Province is moving to a new platform, WordPress, and that the District will be hiring a full time web designer to change out all 69 school websites and the ASD-S site.

Ms. Hanlon talked about District communications - the COVID-19 communication plan which includes multiple channels, is timely and very focused. She advised that 140 specific, planned, family communications were sent between August and April and there were 150+ media requests during the same time period.

Suggestion was made that Council write a letter of support to the Minister in favour of making Ms. Hanlon's position permanent as it is currently on a year to year basis and the need for her role is evident.

Ms. Lane began with invitations to the Saint John Education Centre Turnaround Achievement Awards ceremony which is being held virtually this year. The invitation contained a link that would be available for viewing from June 4 -30. Invitations will also be coming to all DEC members for the Hampton and St. Stephen events.

Ms. Lane then provided Council with an overview of strategy 4.2 – to maintain existing partnerships and engagement with outside organizations. She spoke about PALS, who are celebrating their 20th anniversary this year and all our community partners, and how COVID-19 affected what they were able to do for our schools, students and families. Ms. Lane talked about the nutrition programs including: the Community Hub Kitchen at Threshold Ministries and how it came about, the partnership between ASD-S, Inner City Youth, PALS and JD Irving, funding from the Brewer Foundation, the three JDI companies who deliver the food to our schools and the lunches it provides to 400 students – soon to be 650 - three times per week. She highlighted the Grab & Go Breakfast and Snack programs funded by school nutrition budgets along with donations from partners and cereal drives, and a \$7,500 donation from United Way for schools not involved in the Hub Kitchen and not currently receiving funding for nutrition.

Ms. Lane outlined some of the many activities where our partners stepped up to the needs within our schools including; PALS Holiday Hampers, Coats for Kids campaign, Nutritious Snacks and Cereal campaign, plus a \$15K donation for food where 23 schools benefitted. She advised that documents had been posted with detailed information on our partners and what has been happening over the year. Ms. Lane was happy to say that we have not lost any partners and they continue to ask "how can we get involved".

Mr. Fowler thanked the District staff for their informative presentations and called for a motion to approve the monitoring report for ENDS #4. Mr. Regenbogen moved that the monitoring report for ENDS #4 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion carried.

5. New Business

5.1 Executive Limitations #12, and 3.0

Mr. Fowler advised that Executive Limitations policies #12 (Annual Reporting to the Public) and #3.0 (Global Executive Constraints) were posted with Council's meeting materials for review. He asked that if there were no questions or concerns, that a motion be put forth to approve both monitoring reports in one motion.

Mrs. Watson briefly reviewed each policy highlighting challenges and/or any changes from the previous year.

There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Nesbitt moved that Executive Limitation policies #12, and #3.0 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Regenbogen. Motion carried.

5.2 Functional Capacity Report

Mr. MacDonald explained that functional capacity calculations are based on the following information: Capacity per school = maximum class size X number of classrooms in school.

Mrs. Watson commented that 81 additional K-5 classroom spaces were found for use during the COVID pandemic.

Mr. MacDonald then reviewed the updated functional capacity reports for each education centre highlighting enrolment, average age of schools and functional capacity.

Discussion arose with regard to spaces available in schools that are close to capacity, what happens if more space is needed, and what the "sweet spot" is (i.e. 75% capacity).

5.3 Provincial Curriculum & Evaluation Advisory Committee – End of Mandate

Mr. Fowler advised that a new representative would be required for the Provincial Curriculum & Evaluation Advisory Committee as Mr. Tinker had completed a two year term and was not re-offering for Council. He suggested that Council wait until the new DEC is in place at the August meeting to fill the position. All were in agreement.

Mr. Tinker commented that he found the role very rewarding and it was a great opportunity to be part of moving curriculum forward.

5.4 Provincial Assessments 2019

Nick Munn, Supervisor Data & Accountability shared with Council an overview of the provincial assessment program results for 2019-20. This included English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA); French Second Language Oral Proficiency Interview. Due to the global pandemic, some provincial testing was not completed in the 2019-20 school year and therefore could not be part of the report. Mr. Munn informed the Council of the change in ELPA testing methodology and indicated that the change in methodology was the reason for the gap in the ELPA graphs shown in the presentation. Mr. Munn also informed the Council that this year's ELPA assessment was administered via an online platform and that all indications were that the online testing was a success. The French Second Language Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) results were also presented to Council. Mr. Munn informed the council that the OPI results from the second semester were not used for comparison to previous years, due to the fact that the OPI in the spring of 2020 was done on a voluntary basis, which skewed the results for that semester. Results provide an opportunity to compare ASD-S results with other districts and provincially. They are also provided by school online. This assessment report is attached to and forms part of these Minutes. This document will also be posted on the ASD-S website.

Questions followed the presentation and all were addressed by Mr. Munn. Discussion arose around French Immersion. Request was made to break out data with regard to those who don't have access to FI going forward.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report & Update

Mrs. Watson advised that her report had been posted with Council's meeting materials for their review. She thanked the Directors who were attending on line tonight.

On May 2nd we learned of the death of grade 8 student Sebastian Daley from Bayside Middle School (and formerly Champlain Heights Elementary) after a long-term illness. A few weeks previously, some of his Bayside Bronco supporters were able to do a drive by at his home. Sebastian's mother Patti is an EA at the school. She asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

She highlighted the following from her report: June activities for Kindergarten students; planning taking place to ensure safe ways for schools to celebrate; Mental Health Awareness Week; CAPSLE conference; Inclusive Education Award recipients Carol Ann Haggarty (Simonds High School) and Heather MacDonald (Somerset Pre-School), Sarah Dobbelsteyn and Kimberlee Dixon (Seawood Early Childcare Centre), and this year's virtual Turnaround Achievement Awards.

Mr. O'Connor commented that Glen Falls PSSC would be celebrating student appreciation day June 9 – 10 chance to thank students who faced a very challenging year – a day in their honour.

6.2 Chair's Report & Update

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that at the last meeting he read into the record a rebuttal to the Telegraph Journal article critical of DECs. He noted that a second article has since been published. Mr. Fowler has had several conversations with his francophone counterparts and they too are concerned about the misinformation that is out there regarding DECs. A joint press release was sent to the media to set the record straight. This release is attached to and forms part of these Minutes.

He commented that if the plan is to give more power (local control) to the schools, who will be addressing the big picture items such as policies, mental health, school reviews/closures, etc.

Mr. Fowler advised that the Minister's Forum will be held virtually on May 27 due to the pandemic.

6.3 Correspondence

None. All was posted.

Mr. Fowler thanked all staff who attended tonight's meeting in person and on line for their time.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Council may choose to attend in person or virtually.

He noted that the new DEC will begin their term beginning August 1. Training will be provided and all have been notified.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary