

**Superintendent's Report for DEC  
May 5, 2021**

**ENDS #1: Provide positive, safe, healthy, and inclusive learning and working environments for children, youth, and staff.** Plans are taking shape for the annual “Kindergarten Orientation”, the first couple of weeks of June, providing our area remains in the yellow phase of recovery. A letter will go to families of the current Kindergarten children asking that their children remain at home that day. Students will visit in small groups of maximum 10 and will wear their masks. The District will have bags of supplies for each child (play dough, crayons, scissors, a book) and these materials will be used by the children on their visit and then they will take the bag home, along with some educational ideas that families can do together with the materials. Transportation will also have buses available so the new kindergarten children can hear about bus safety and have a short ride on the school bus. Each elementary school will have an operational plan and these are being reviewed by our Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator, Clare Tooley. We currently have 1,430 children registered for Kindergarten next year.

We are also working with schools on plans for year end activities, especially to recognize the grades 5 and 8 students, as they move on to another level. Many schools will hold their special activities during the school day, a few want to have evening “bubble class” celebrations with family. These must be carefully planned and outside as our preference to minimize risk to staff, and families. Some schools want to have field trips for students at K-8 and again the preference is for an outside experience, if possible. We are asking that trips be within ASD-S and they avoid locations where members of the public are touring at the same time. We are seeing many trips being planned to parks in the area. A few schools are planning special year-end days at the school where “bubbles” will remain together, and others are having guest presenters join their bubble for a year-end activity.

May is Food Allergy Awareness Month in Canada. This year's theme is “Know it, Treat it.” The campaign is about demystifying anaphylaxis and empowering all to “know” what the signs and symptoms are and how to “treat” it. Many resources are available on the Food Allergy Canada website.

**ENDS #2: Demonstrate continuous improvement by increasing engagement through innovative teaching and assessment practices, promoting mental fitness through social-emotional learning.** Information has been received from Canadian Mental Health on Mental Health Week (May 3-9) and this has been shared with all schools and featured in Southern Exposure. The theme is focusing on your emotions. CMHA has hosted Mental Health Week the first week of May since 1951.

ASD-S was contacted by Michael Murphy from Quispamsis with the offer of laminated posters to distribute to all middle and high schools, with the message, “It's ok NOT to be ok”. The Murphy's daughter Maddie lost her life to suicide a few years ago and the family want to get the word out in the community about how to get help – the posters have the phone number for mobile mental

health. We were given 80 large laminated posters and over 300 smaller posters and these were packaged and sent to our schools.

All Principals participated in a one-hour workshop on the book “Happiness Advantage: How a Positive Brain Fuels Success in Work and Life”, by Shawn Achor. Sixteen schools requested copies of the book for a book study with their admin or core leadership teams.

The Grade 9 English Language Arts Assessment (ELPA) was done online in April and overall it was seen as a positive experience by our high schools. Nick Munn coordinated this with EECD for our District and he made a point of following up with our high schools to hear their feedback which will be shared with the Department. As with anything new, there were a few glitches but certainly a practice we want to continue.

This month the five Technology Coaches have been working with K-8 teachers in the areas of coding and Office 365 support. High school support continues with Teams and Office 365 assessment and communication tools. Several high schools participated in the Skills Canada competitions which here held virtually this year and results will be expected in the next few weeks.

PD continues in the areas of Global Competencies with the Global Active Citizenship Portfolio with teacher Jonathan Standring. PD was also offered on First Nation art using the Office of First Nation Manual for Art Teachers. ASD-S will have a virtual Heritage Fair on May 28 and we have 17 schools participating.

District staff have been working on a K-2 literacy and numeracy improvement project with Hammond River Valley Elementary School and we are now adding St. Martins and Fundy Shores to this initiative. Over 20 teachers participated in a book study, “Joyful Math”, which is helping to build capacity around embedding inquiry and student-centered learning into mathematics. These sessions are two after school blocks each week.

The Building Blocks of Reading is a developmental continuum that is meant to cause us to reflect about teaching reading. It is based on new neuroscience and supports the five pillars of reading – phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Our Elementary Literacy Coordinator, Nicole MacNeill and her teacher coach, Jessica Verner, have looked at best practice research around reading instruction. In May we will be offering an awareness session for our elementary principals on the “Building Blocks of Reading”. Earlier in the year we did have a focus group of Principals to begin this discussion and these Principals will help to lead the presentation to their colleagues in May.

Professional learning on the facilitation of inclusion in French Immersion with Dr. Renee Bourgoin (St. Thomas University) was offered to a team from twelve elementary schools over two afternoons and again with ten middle schools. Her book “Access for Success” was provided to each teacher, highlighting universal strategies that help all language learners in FSL classrooms. The plan is to include high school teams next year.

St. Stephen High School students who form “Spartan TV” had an interview with Dr. Theresa Tam. These students work in partnership with CHCO-TV in St. Andrews and earlier this year did an excellent video interviewing Minister Cardy, their Principal/VP, and me about the pandemic.

**ENDS #3: Ensure all members of the school community are welcomed, respected, accepted and supported and to address heterosexism and discrimination.** 4<sup>th</sup> R (Relationship) training will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup> and representatives from eight high schools will attend. This is a program from Western University and the training is sponsored from a grant which Nurse Ann Hogan applied for through the KV Domestic Violence Organization.

The Anti-Racism and LGBTQ+ Steering Committees will meet again before the end of the school year. Peter Smith is leading a jurisdictional scan of anti-racism policies.

**ENDS #4: Maximize the engagement of families and the community through effective communication and outreach.**

District General Communications

April 8, 2021	Changes to Buses, Masks	Message to HEC families	Email to HEC Families	School messenger
April 8, 2021	Changes to Buses, Masks	Message to SJEC families	Email to SJEC Families	School messenger
April 8, 2021	Changes to Buses, Masks	Message to SSEC families	Email to SSEC Families	School messenger
April 9, 2021	Return to Full-Time In-Person Learning	Message to High School Families	Email to Families	School messenger, website, social media
April 9, 2021	Additional Changes to Busing	Message to HEC families	Email to HEC Families	School Messenger
April 10, 2021	Full-Time Return to School Delayed	Message to High School Families	Email to Families	School Messenger, website, social media
April 11, 2021	Update to Changes to Buses/ Masks	Message to Families	Email to Families	School Messenger, website, social media
April 22, 2021	Info – IDEA Centre	Message to Gr 9, 10, 11 families	Email to Families	School Messenger, social media
April 23, 2021	Fundy Shores Closing	Message to Fundy Shores	Email/Voice mail	School Messenger
April 23, 2021	Update to High School Return	Schools not returning to full-time in person	Email to High School Families	School Messenger, social media

Planned Media

April 12	<i>High schools return full-time learning on hold</i>	CBC Info Morning	Interview ZW	<a href="https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-28-information-morning-saint-john/clip/15836469-high-schools-return-full-time-learning-hold">https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-28-information-morning-saint-john/clip/15836469-high-schools-return-full-time-learning-hold</a>
April 12	<i>New Brunswick teachers union says province should stick with hybrid high school</i>	Global	Interview ZW	<a href="https://globalnews.ca/news/7753499/n-b-teachers-union-hybrid-high-school/">https://globalnews.ca/news/7753499/n-b-teachers-union-hybrid-high-school/</a>
May 4	<i>ASD-S superintendent speaks to policy of retaining or promoting students</i>	CBC Info Morning	Interview ZW	<a href="https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-28/clip/15840989">https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-28/clip/15840989</a>
May 5	<i>Feature- Essential Skills Pathway</i>	Brunswick News	Heather Kyle – Sussex Regional	TBD

**OTHER:** On Sunday 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 ago, 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. Our thoughts are with the Bayside Middle community.

Directors Melissa Savoie, Allan Davis, Derek O’Brien, Peter Smith, Jessica Hanlon, Susan Moffatt and I participated in the annual CAPSLE Conference (Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education) offered virtually on three afternoons, Sunday to Tuesday. Many very useful sessions on topics such as anti-racism, social media and staff communication.

Congratulations to Carol Ann Haggarty a teacher at Simonds High School and to Heather MacDonald from the Somerset Pre-School on being recipients of this years 2021 Inclusive Education Awards from the NB Association for Community Living. The ceremony will be held virtually!

Congratulations to Jason Thorne and the Kennebecasis Valley High School Reach for the TOP Team on yet another provincial championship – their 16<sup>th</sup> in 17 years. Mr. Thorne has given so much of his time leading this program at Kennebecasis Valley High School!

The three annual Turnaround Achievement Award Ceremonies will be held virtually this spring, and the tentative date for the launch of the videos will be June 4, 2021. A big thank you to Darren White and his team of Technology Coaches for leading the way on preparing the videos – this has involved considerable coordination with middle and high schools.

There are no classes for students on Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> or Monday, May 10 – Friday is provincial Subject Council Day organized by the NBTA – teachers will participate in virtual PD sessions from their schools. May 7 is the virtual AGM for each of the NBTA Branches in our District. I have been invited to join the Kennebecasis Valley and Saint John Branches to bring some remarks.

Zoë Watson