

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – August 19, 2020

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met virtually on Wednesday, August 19, 2020. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Wayne Spires, Richard Malone, Heather Gillis, Justin Tinker, Lory-Ann MacAskill, Kristen Murphy, Larry Boudreau

Regrets: Dan O'Connor, Bernie Regenbogen

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre, Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre, John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Peter Smith, Director Education Support Services, Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communication, and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

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

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. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the June 10, 2020 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. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried. Ms. Murphy abstained.

3. Member's Notebook

Ms. Gillis noted that she is getting a lot of questions from concerned parents in the community about return to school. Mrs. Watson explained the communication that has been sent to families to date, and what will be sent in the next few weeks. To date, EECD has asked to lead on communication. She noted that EECD has published a parent document with 15 pages of information on returning to school.

4. Presentations

4.1 Human Resources Report

Ms. Susan Moffatt, Director of Human Resources, was in attendance to present the annual review of the Department of Human Resources. Her presentation is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

Following the presentation, comments and questions arose from Council including: an ask to see comparisons of WorkSafe claims and grievances compared to last year; the use of an outdated DOS system and accuracy of information; an ask under WorkSafe to breakdown incidents of violence vs day to

day incidents (i.e. lifting something too heavy) for EAs; the challenges being added to the HR Department each year who work with a small staff and serve approximately 3,500 permanent and 1,000 casual staff, the causal/supply list for the coming year, all of which were addressed by Ms. Moffatt.

Mrs. Watson offered her appreciation to the Human Resources Department staff for their continued hard work with the additional challenges this past year.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Moffatt for her informative presentation.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Superintendent Evaluation Report (2018-19) and Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee (2019-2020)

Mr. Tinker explained the process that was followed by the subcommittee to complete this review. He advised Council that the tabulation of data revealed a strong consensus that the Superintendent has met or exceeded expectations of all Ends Policies and Executive Limitations. He also noted that the subcommittee has reached the conclusion that Superintendent Zoë Watson has exceeded expectations of reasonable performance.

On behalf of the subcommittee, Mr. Tinker then moved that the District Education Council of Anglophone South School District express sincere thanks and appreciation and strongly commend Zoë Watson for her very dedicated work this past year on behalf of all employees, students and parents. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

On behalf of the subcommittee, Mr. Tinker then moved that as a result of her administration of the District this year, Zoë Watson's performance is rated as Exceeds Most Expectations with respect to policy compliance. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

On behalf of the subcommittee, Mr. Tinker then moved that as a result of her successful administration of Anglophone South District this year, Zoë Watson would be eligible for a four step re-earnable increment. Seconded by Mr. Malone. Motion carried. (**NOTE:** Currently provincial re-earnable increments for the Superintendent remain frozen and have been since amalgamation).

Mr. Fowler added his personal thanks to the Superintendent for her tremendous work over the past year.

Mr. Tinker then asked for volunteers to sit on a subcommittee to look at the Superintendent's evaluation for the 2019-2020 year. DEC members were invited to email him if they are interested.

5.2 DEC Vacancy

Mr. Fowler noted that applications have been received to fill the vacant position in Subdistrict #8. He noted that since an election has been called and the government now dissolved, we don't have a Minister of Education to send them to. He advised that the names will be forwarded as soon as we have a Minister of Education named following the September 14th election.

6. New Business

6.1 PSSC Budgets

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the document and advised that the amounts are based on September 2019 enrolment, and are either a \$500 minimum, or \$2.40 per student, whichever is greater. Question was asked whether this amount could be increased this year due to the COVID pandemic and additional communication costs that will likely be incurred by the PSSC. Mr. Fowler explained that DEC has in the past provided additional funds to PSSCs when requests for special projects have been received (i.e. It Takes A Village). Council will again review any such requests that may be received this year. ASD-S pays the full cost of the School Messenger system for voice mails.

Mr. Spires then moved that Council accept the PSSC School Budgets as presented. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

6.2 PSSC Orientation

Discussion arose on possibilities for PSSC Orientation sessions this year in light of COVID-19. It included suggestions made following last year's event (recommending a virtual set up) as the attendees to these events continue to be low. Mr. Fowler suggested that Stacey Brown, DEC Manager, is in the process of creating virtual training and we could incorporate that into our events. The Superintendent and Council could provide virtual personalized messages. The "mock play" could be virtual as well. Ms. Gillis and Ms. Murphy agreed to work on a plan for this year and present it to Council for their feedback.

6.3 Draft Council Meeting Dates/Locations 2020-2021

Mrs. Watson reviewed the schedule for the coming year and noted it is a virtual schedule at this time. The only exception to the schedule is the second Wednesday in November is Remembrance Day, so the meeting will move to the following week (November 18).

Mr. Fowler commented that hopefully the pandemic will ease, and we can safely get more people involved in monthly meetings "in person"; however, for now the public will continue to attend virtually.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that Council accept the schedule as presented. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

6.4 Draft Annual Planning Calendar

Mrs. Watson reviewed the draft calendar and noted that this is a fluid document and can change as required by Council. Information on some events (i.e. Student Council Mtg, DEC Orientation) have not been confirmed at this time and will be updated going forward.

Ms. Murphy moved that the calendar be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

Mrs. Watson advised Council that the Expenditure Plan is not available at this time as changes are happening daily, and staff expect to be able to present it at the September meeting.

6.5 District Improvement Plan Update

Mrs. Watson noted that updates to the District Improvement Plan are normally sent to EECD in early July; however, with COVID-19, everything else stopped and the whole focus has been on how to safely reopen schools. Our strategies, therefore, have not been updated. She commented that many of the ENDS goals are still applicable but will look different when schools reopen. She requested that Council give permission to make some adjustments, word changes, and/or combining of policies to more accurately reflect the 2020-21 school year and to bring back to Council a one year revised plan.

Mr. Spires then moved that Council approve the request for staff to make adjustments to the ENDS policies to more accurately reflect today's realities. Seconded by Ms. Murphy. Motion carried.

7. Information Items

7.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

Mrs. Watson reviewed her report which had been posted with Council's meeting materials for their review.

She highlighted several key areas from her report including: the importance of communication to families/staff as we get closer to schools reopening; the busy summer for staff dealing with all the issues in our schools and offices due to the pandemic; transportation challenges with social distancing accommodations during COVID-19; additional teachers/classroom spaces due to smaller class size requirements this fall; PD sessions for staff; the work of our facilities department over the summer

months who were very busy with additional project work required to allow students to return to their classrooms.

Mrs. Watson wanted to also acknowledge the hard work of our custodians and facilities staff during the summer months and especially this year with additional cleaning requirements.

She noted the deaths of three students over the summer; Elijah Dollar from St. Malachy's High School, Brandon Lewis from St. Stephen High School and most recently, Rebekah Epton-Galbraith from Harbour View 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. She asked for a moment in silence in their memory.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Fowler noted that with the government now dissolved until after an election, we no longer have a Minister of Education; however, he wanted to thank Minister Cardy for all that he has done and tried to do and said his heart is in the right place. He appreciated the opportunity to work with him.

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the election of DEC members will likely be in May 2021.

He commented that in past election cycles, DEC Chairs have reached out to the leaders for a meeting and they have recently sent a similar request. This is not to endorse any party, but to gather information and to provide them with our areas of concern within education. This feedback is then provided to all members of Council.

7.3 Correspondence

None. All correspondence was posted for Council's review.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's virtual Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 9, 2020 beginning at 7:00 p.m. and will likely be a virtual meeting as well.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary