

## **Superintendent's Report for DEC April 13, 2022**

### **ENDS #1: Provide a safe, healthy, and welcoming educational environment for learners, staff, families, and partners**

Food Allergy Canada is working in partnership with the local Sweet Caroline Foundation to pilot four short modules for grades 4-6 students for May which is Allergy Awareness Month. They are seeking interested pilot schools in BC, Alberta and NB and we have at least eight schools that have registered so far. I sit on the Board of the Sweet Caroline Foundation, and they are very appreciative of the work done by the district to promote allergy awareness. This Foundation began after the death of grade 8 Rothesay Park student Caroline Lorette from an anaphylactic reaction. The Foundation has a website which includes a video of Caroline's story which is worth taking a few minutes to watch. DEC member Jonathan Barry is Chair of the Foundation.

Recently we were sent a Brushalot Kit and communication from Ian Wilms who was looking to donate a kit to each Grade 1 student in the District (1600 in total). Each kit contains a hard covered book "Brushalot Tale of the Tooth Fairy, a Brushalot Horse "Incisor" and a Brushalot Nightlight. This donation is in line with dental health month – April. Thank you to Mr. Wilms for this generous donation.

### **ENDS #2: Improve student engagement and achievement by embedding research based best practices in a variety of learning environments.**

The Outdoor Learning Cohort met in late March with 15 participants and conducted a session focused on knot tying, shelter building and use of microscopes as part of the outdoor learning experience. Shelter building and its connection to the curriculum was also discussed by the group.

Fifty elementary Principals and Vice Principals participated in an after-school professional learning session focused on how to support teachers with using the "Plan, Do, Check, Act" methodology to differentiate instruction and identify personalized student goals. This session included more information about leading the roll-out of the "Building Blocks of Reading," which many elementary schools have started.

Program Information evenings (virtual) are taking place by Education Centre – on Wednesday evening approximately 135 people joined the meeting to learn more about Early and Late FI,

Intensive French, and the new Language Learning Opportunities (LLO) initiative as well as FLORA (Language Learning Opportunities in Rural Areas).

**ENDS #3: Engage system's leaders in improving mental health and resiliency for both learners and staff through proactive strategies such as Positive Education and Social Emotional learning.**

Peter Smith and Jennifer Grant were re-certified as VTRA (Violent Threat Risk Assessment) trainers in early March, along with Jen Dwyer from Health and Beth Ernst Marr from Social Development. We are sharing the leadership in VTRA with our partners in ISD as we are encouraged to do this as a community protocol rather than only a school protocol. ASD-S hosted a two-day VTRA training March 15-16 which was attended by members of the SJ Police, Social Development, our Child and Youth Teams and a few education staff. Unfortunately given the need for supply teachers to cover due to illness, we were unable to have a high number of educators attend. The training was facilitated by Jennifer Grant and Jen Dwyer.

A two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Training, (ASIST) was held on March 29-30 for the new Behavior Intervention Mentors (middle school), members of the Child and Youth Teams and some of our Social Development partners. Again, the supply teacher situation prevented us from having school-based staff. This training was facilitated by Jennifer Grant and recently retired ESS Coordinator Pam Miller.

Offering congratulations to Hampton High School on their Mental Health Mondays. This is a student driven initiative which was featured on CBC Information Morning on April 7<sup>th</sup>. [Mental Health Mondays](#).

**ENDS #4: Ensure all members of the school and district community are welcomed, respected, accepted and supported.**

Resources were shared with teachers to help teach about the importance of water as March 22 was World Water Day. This included a power point with indigenous perspectives, lesson plans, websites and articles.

Lesson plans and resources for teachers were also provided on how to teach about sensitive topics. Supports for children and families connected to the Ukraine have been uploaded to the MS Teams site for K-12 teacher use.

The Anti-racism Committee met last week – PRUDE (Damon Levine) and Black Lives Matters (Matthew Martin) joined as community members, four students of color and our staff discussed the need for on-going antiracism work. It is very valuable to have the students share their experiences. The Committee also discussed a high school Systemic Racism Survey which we hope to have high school students complete in late April – this survey has been ready for some time, but given the pandemic the administration of it has been very challenging.

SJ Newcomer Association recently hosted a virtual newcomer panel discussion, and our District Anti-racism teacher coach, Therese Trofimencoff, a current SJHS student and an ASD-S supply teacher participated along with others. The following morning Therese and the SJHS student were interviewed on Information Morning SJ.

Saint John High School also hosted a school assembly on racism and Therese, Matthew Martin from Black Lives Matter and two students of color spoke to the full student body.

#### **OTHER:**

On March 21 we learned of the unexpected death of St. Stephen High School grade 9 student Dionne Ademolu. Dionne had been a student at St. Stephen Middle School where she worked closely with EA's and teachers. Her death impacted both schools and supports were available.

Report Cards will be distributed on Monday, April 11 and parent teacher conferences will be held in person the evening of Thursday, April 13 and half the day on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Schools are also offering a virtual option for the conferences.

We recently had nine Principal positions and one Vice Principal position advertised – the competitions closed this week and in the coming weeks Human Resources, the Directors of Schools, a PSSC representative and I will be interviewing candidates for these very important positions. We have Principal retirements at Milltown, St. George Elementary, St. Stephen Elementary, Blacks Harbour Elementary, Hammond River Valley Elementary, Rothesay Elementary, Saint John High School, Seaside Park Elementary, Bayside Middle School and a Vice Principal position at Simonds High School. These are all 5-year positions. This is a much higher number than we have seen in previous years.