

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – November 10, 2021

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, November 10, 2021. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Chair; Heather Gillis, Vice-Chair; both attended in person. The following members attended virtually: Jane Logan, Wayne Spires, Jonathan Barry, David Connell, Amanda Hamm, Beth McQuinn Nixon, Richard Malone and Shelly Merrill-MacKillop

Regrets:

Kristen Murphy and Amanda Henderson-Matthews

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications and Tanya Bannister, Recording Secretary attended in person. The following staff attended virtually: Ryan Price, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Lissa McNaughton-Dickie, Director of Early Childhood Services; Peter Smith, Director of Education and Support Services, and Susan Moffatt, Director of Human Resources.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Mr. Nesbitt began the meeting by acknowledging that we are on the ancestral homelands of the Wolastoqey, Mi'gmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples. He also asked for a moment of silence from Council to acknowledge Remembrance Day.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Nesbitt 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. Ms. Gillis moved that the Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Logan. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the October 13, 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. Barry moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Connell. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Superintendent's Report & Update

Mrs. Watson began by advising that the PALS program was the recipient of the Red Triangle Award from the YMCA, and that she and Mr. Nesbitt got to participate in the virtual event. She advised that Mr. Irving wanted District staff to participate in the virtual ceremony and bought several tickets. Mrs. Watson shared the framed certificate with Council, and it will be placed in the office. She also stated that she wanted to publicly acknowledge the work of our schools throughout the CUPE job action and recognized how difficult the learning from home situation can be for both teaching staff and families. She spoke of the importance of student and family engagement and how that can certainly differ depending on family situations. She spoke of how the District has been monitoring the Saint John K-2 project and that

Christine Roy at St. John the Baptist King Edward reported that they passed out home learning packets, and how the PULSE organization has given brown bagged lunches, and has done “Sunshine Visits” to homes to check in. She also noted how there have been many laptops loaned out to families, and that the services of guidance counselors are readily available during the job action.

She then highlighted the following from her report: the fact that the district has been hit quite hard by several Covid outbreaks since the last meeting and gave a summary of the schools that had been affected; that the practice of Point of Care kits had ceased given the job action; the new provincial protocol of having vaccinations checked at outside extracurricular activities; the use of wood wind and brass instruments; the District’s Physical Activity Challenge; the success of the “Take Me Outside Day” that happened on October 20 and the District’s intention to keep the momentum going on the learning outside movement; the concerns over attendance within the 7 schools in the SJEC K-2 project; the help that Curriculum Coaches have been giving to support online learning; the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Training that’s been taking place; the work that Therese Trofimencoff, Antiracism & Equity Coach has been doing and her contribution to the Southern Exposure newsletter; she gave a shout out to District employee and PRUDE member Joe Theriault, who was the recipient of the Ed Blackman Award, a National CUPE award. Last year, Joe nominated ASD-S for a PRUDE Cultural Diversity Award; mentioned the “Welcoming Schools Initiative”; and spoke of the virtual format of the fall Parent Teacher meetings.

There were questions from Council which were all answered by Mrs. Watson, and Mr. Nesbitt also encouraged Council to send their questions in advance.

4. New Business

4.1 Policy Reviews – 4.0, 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3

Mr. Nesbitt advised that policies for review will be placed on the Agenda throughout the year, to determine if there are changes or clarification required. He noted the above-noted Governance policies were sent out to Council for review. Ms. Gillis suggested that the Policy Committee review the policies as they come up on the Agenda next year. Mr. Nesbitt recommended that a motion be put forward that Council approve these four policies as reviewed as of the meeting date. Ms. Gillis moved that the policies be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Barry. Motion carried.

4.2 Motion regarding Policy Committee

Mr. Nesbitt advised that a document was posted for Council’s review which proposes the Policy Committee, stating the Committee’s mandate and asked for a motion for approval. The signed document will be posted with Council’s November documents. Mr. Spires moved that the Policy Committee be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Merrill-MacKillop. Motion carried.

5. Information Items

5.1 Member’s Notebook

Ms. Gillis advised that she attended a PSSC meeting at Bayside Middle School in October, and that they are having difficulties keeping the cafeteria open since Chartwells doesn’t have enough staff. She spoke of the Brown Bag Lunch Program for which she sits on the Board. She advised given the recent job action, lunches had recently been donated to Romero House.

Ms. Merrill-MacKillops advised that she attended the November PSSC meeting at Fundy Middle High School, and that their member list has been solidified. She spoke of parents’ beliefs regarding online learning and the CUPE job action, concerns regarding homework load, length of online classes, lack of internet connection and devices, and ideas for the school’s upcoming Christmas activities. She was asked to bring points forward to

Council regarding online learning difficulties as well as concerns over the French Immersion program in rural areas.

She also attended a PSSC meeting at Back Bay Elementary School in October. She spoke of the importance of parent engagement. Mrs. Watson advised that she and Ms. Hanlon would reach out to send additional communications to encourage parents to take care part at their school's PSSC's. Council advised that the schools that are lacking PSSC support are: Fundy Shores School, Blacks Harbour Elementary, St. George Elementary, Centennial School, Bayview School and Prince Charles School. Ms. McQuinn Nixon also spoke of PSSC parent involvement at Norton Elementary and Sussex High School as well.

Ms. Merrill-MacKillop also advised that she's received a letter from the Department of Education confirming her appointment as the Provincial Curriculum and Evaluation Advisory Committee representative.

Ms. Hamm advised she attended PSSC meetings at Inglewood School, Grand Bay Primary and Westfield. She highlighted that Inglewood School was selected for the Indigo Love of Reading Program, and that the school has a partnership with Brilliant Labs, which is a coding-enrichment program. She spoke of the importance of acknowledging Remembrance Day. Grand Bay Primary put a lot of time and effort into their Remembrance Day activities. Each class decorated large banners which were sent to local businesses. Each student has written thank you letters to veterans and current members of the Canadian Armed Forces. The staff have made a donation to the Purple Heart Project using their casual day funds. Westfield School has continued to expand on their new outdoor learning space and just broke ground on their new outdoor classroom. She spoke of the success of Innovation & Engagement Grants through a District-related initiative. Lindsay Savoie made a presentation on the Building Blocks of Literacy program, which is geared for K-2 and gave parents and community members valuable lessons regarding their approach to literacy. She acknowledged concerns regarding the work stoppage and that they are looking forward to getting students back in the classroom as soon as possible.

Mr. Connell advised he attended two PSSC meetings, and that Lakewood Heights is doing a great job by getting students outside and that they seem to have a great team on board. He acknowledged how much Forest Hills and principal Erika Brown have welcomed Glen Falls school with open arms following the fire that took place there last month. He states that the only issue they've had with both schools combining is that the bathrooms are busy. He informed that Simonds High released a Remembrance Day video on YouTube.

Ms. Gillis encouraged the government of New Brunswick and CUPE to get back to the negotiation table in order to get students back in school.

5.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Nesbitt advised that Council have attended online training for three nights with Rick Maloney, and that Council's attendance for the sessions was one of the largest in the province. He spoke of how they learned a lot, especially regarding self-evaluations. He advised that the November 3rd meeting with the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister has been postponed. He mentioned the Red Triangle Awards and the importance of the PALS program. He congratulated Mr. Irving and Mrs. Watson and suggested that Council have Debbie Fisher from the PALS program in to speak with Council at an upcoming meeting. He advised that the Chair and Vice Chair are scheduled to attend the Minister's Forum on November 20th.

5.3 Correspondence

None. All was posted.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Following adjournment, Mr. Nesbitt requested that Council complete a self-assessment.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Chair

Tanya Bannister, Recording Secretary