

DEC Self-Evaluation Report 2022-2023 School Year

During the 2022-23 school year, the ASD-S District Education Council attempted to build upon the work begun in the area of self-evaluation that was begun during the 2021-22 year. Work was continued during the Private Meetings which was not possible during all private sessions due to pressure from other items. The ultimate goal being that we become better at what we are doing as a Council.

The approach used during this past year was to evaluate our performance in relation to the Council-Staff Relationship (C-SR) policies and start back through the Governance Process (GP) policies.

We began with the October 2022 meeting by looking at C-SR 1.0 Council-Superintendent Delegation. This policy establishes the connection of the Council to the operational organization of the school district. There was general agreement that our focus is monitoring as per our policies and that the Superintendent is the CEO of the district and responsible for the operations side.

Also in October, we examined Council performance as it relates to C-SR 1.1 Unity of Control. This policy reminds us that Council is to act as a body and that only motions duly made and passed are binding on the Superintendent.

At the November 2022 meeting we evaluated our performance in relation to policies C-SR 1.2 and 1.3. Policy 1.2 is Accountability of the Superintendent. It is believed that Council acts in compliance with this policy in recognizing that the Superintendent is responsible for operations and that staff are responsible to the Superintendent. It is understood that Superintendent performance is identical to organizational performance.

Policy C-SR 1.3 is Delegation to the Superintendent. Council monitoring is achieved here by compliance of the Superintendent with the stated Ends and Executive Limitations policies. Compliance is determined by evidence that a reasonable interpretation of the policies is being made and that reasonable efforts are being made to achieve the policies. The following relates to the Ends policies in particular:

- School Improvement planning has shifted from a “top down” focus to one that is more “bottom up”.
- Input from the schools is going to be critical as we go forward with a new District Improvement Plan.

In January 2023, self-evaluation focused on C-SR 1.4 Monitoring Superintendent Performance. This policy outlines the process for the annual evaluation of the Superintendent as per the Education Act and has been developed for use by all DEC's in the province. The theme of the policy is determining the degree of compliance with the Ends and Executive Limitations policies. Council is believed to be in compliance with this policy. .../2

Policy C-SR1.5 Reappointment of the Superintendent was also on the agenda for January 2023. In this regard, our current Superintendent Derek O'Brien was hired on a five- year contract effective November 1, 2022 and so will not come up for reappointment until 2027.

In March 2023, the focus of our self- evaluation was GP 4.0 and 4.1. GP4.0 Governance Commitment. The general consensus is that the Council is committed to supporting students, staff and is considerate of the interests and values of the public. This is evident by the fact that the Council engages in regular self-evaluation and self-reflection to be more effective. The Council is striving to achieve governance excellence.

Additional evidence of compliance with GP 4.0 include:

- Internal DEC training developed.
- Internal DEC onboarding for new members completed.
- Policies are current and regularly reviewed for compliance.

Also, in March 2023 we considered GP4.1 Governing Style. The policy reminds Council members that we operate as a “body corporate”. Individual views and ideas are considered but decisions are made by the Council as a whole. Council is committed to governing with excellence as the goal and must be on the lookout for opportunities to develop further in this area.

Individual comments and further evidence of compliance with GP 4.1 are as follows:

- I think we need more work. Specifically, I think we need to consider the first paragraph (of the policy) more closely with regards to focusing on strategic leadership, future orientation and vision. I also think we need more work on section 3 of the policy, whereby we focus more on the future and on how we can really help students and the community. We are strong at governance, but we contribute and push harder on how to evolve our education system towards the future.
- Defining a path for the future of education excellence in ASD-S. What does success look like?
- DEC review and approval of DIP with defined Ends policies.
- DEC acts as one voice through our DEC chair.
- Internally we leverage individual SME skills to help the DEC arrive at better group decisions.
- DEC participation in student leader’s forum and new school planning, PSSC meetings, school open houses, and school family nights.
- Need better measurement and reporting on compliance to the public.
- Completion of self-evaluations.
- Internal DEC training developed.
- Internal DEC onboarding completed for new members. .../3

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- Regular self-evaluation retrospective completed.
- DEC (members) have been committed to working for every student in the district not just for their sub-district.

At the April 2023 meeting the focus of our self-evaluation was GP 4.2 Role of the District Education Council. The Council is committed to representing the community at large and to leading the district to excellent organizational performance. The work is driven by policies: Ends, Executive Limitations, Governance Process and Council-Staff Relationship. Consensus was that we are essentially compliant. Members come to meetings prepared by reading monitoring reports, other documents and familiarizing themselves with policies. Members discussed the concept of a Progress Dashboard to let individual members and the public know what members are doing. The idea of PSSC's being asked to evaluate their DEC member was mentioned.

Individual DEC member comments:

- DEC members **must** maintain linkage with students, parents and community.
- DEC members **must** be knowledgeable about "Governing Policy" – Ends, Executive Limitations, Governance Process, Council-Staff Relationship.
- DEC evaluation of the Superintendent is based on his/her interpretation and compliance to the best of his/her ability.
- DEC members must ensure that they do their job to the best of their ability. It is always a "team effort".
- Better measurement and reporting on compliance available to the public. DEC participation in student leader's forum.
- DEC member PSSC meetings attendance.
- DEC member school family nights participation.
- Active review and continuous improvement of DEC policies.
- Authority is delegated via policy. Adherence is measured via EL monitoring reports.
- Retrospective reviews, such as this, are scheduled and completed.
- Ends policies are approved, measured and monitored for success/improvements.
- I think we collectively do a reasonable job of staying connected with students, parents and community. But it feels like many people don't understand the DEC nor what it does. We could likely do better here, or at least, have a discussion for ideas on how we think we are doing, and what we could possibly consider to get better awareness of the DEC and how it can help.
- I think we can do more in the area of Ends and Organizational Performance. In order to do that, we would need some concentrated, or perhaps facilitated, time together. We would likely also need to bring up the level of overall awareness and understanding of DEC in order to make this useful. For instance, my own level of understanding of the system would be considerably less than Roger.

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- In any event, we need (and want) to stay relatively high level, but it would feel better if we could engage in more discussion around how to have a positive impact on organizational performance. Maybe looking at some of the best ideas around the world so we could open our minds? And supporting Derek to undertake some of these more strategic contemplations?
- I feel we are in compliance with policy 4.2 at the current time.
- I find it very effective to have monthly presentations from district staff that exhibit how the Ends policies are being met. Similarly the Superintendent's report always highlights clear linkage between policies and day-to-day activities in the district.
- You ensure that we review and revise policies on a regular basis, and I think the group is very attentive to meaningful interpretation and appropriate wording.