

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – December 11, 2013

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, December 11, 2013 at Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Rob Fowler, Bob McDevitt, Charlotte McGill-Pierce, Wayne Spires, Gary Crossman, Don Cullinan, Gerry Mabey, Larry Boudreau, Stephen Campbell and Sherman Ross.

Regrets: Joanne Gunter

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer Saint John; Paul Smith, Senior Education Officer Hampton; Jenny MacDougall, Senior Education Officer St. Stephen; Derek O'Brien, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; John MacDonald, Director Finance and Administration; Gary Hall, Director Early Childhood Services; Stewart Stanger, Director of Human Resources and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

Media were in attendance.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Mr. Fowler advised that Mrs. Joanne Gunter will be unable to attend this meeting.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda & Minutes

Mr. Fowler reviewed the Agenda with Council and asked that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Agenda be approved and Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the November 13 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved and Mr. Crossman seconded

the motion. Mr. McDevitt asked to clarify a comment he made in the Minutes under District Report Card. He explained that the comment was misleading as it was part of a larger conversation and he asked that the motion to approve be revised to exclude this comment from the Minutes. Mr. Fowler asked for any objections to the revised motion, and there were none. Motion carried with the removal of Mr. McDevitt's comment under District Report Card.

2.2 Public Comment

None

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

3.1 MLA Meeting Update

Mrs. McGill Pierce advised that January 20, 2014 has been confirmed as the meeting date with the Southern PC Caucus. Time will be 10 am – 12 pm here at 490 Woodward Avenue. Mr. Fowler suggested that an Agenda will be developed prior to the meeting.

3.2 PSSC Update - Fundy Shores

Mrs. Watson confirmed that she attended a meeting on December 2nd with the members of the PSSC from Fundy Shores, Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer Saint John, Larry Boudreau, District Education Council member and Sean Gorman, Principal of Fundy Shores. Discussion centered around declining enrolment in the middle school years and the challenges of running the middle school grades with such low numbers. This year there are no grade 6 students at Fundy Shores as students are opting to leave and take late French Immersion at Barnhill School. This also means that next year, the school will be faced with no grade 7 students. Policy 409 talks about the need to communicate and consult with parents/PSSC regarding any possible change to grade configurations within a school so this meeting was set up to begin those discussions.

Parents were disappointed at the possibility of their children having to take such a long bus ride into the city if the grade configurations were changed; however, understood the situation needed to be addressed in some manner. Mrs. Watson suggested that she would have discussions with the ASD-S Transportation Department to determine what options might be available to shorten the time on the bus. She will report back after Christmas to PSSC.

There were some positives expressed with regard to students moving to a larger school at this level, including access to sports teams and clubs and the opportunity to experience a larger school before moving on to high school.

3.3 PSSC Update – New Quispamsis K-5 School

Mrs. Watson advised that a meeting was held on December 4, 2013 with PSSC members and Principals from Quispamsis Elementary, Fairvale Elementary and Lakefield Elementary schools. The meeting also included Roger Nesbitt, District Education Council, Paul Smith, Senior Education Officer Hampton, and ASD-S Transportation Manager John Peters and Assistant Managers, Steve Evans and Linda Carlson.

Preliminary discussions centered around the need to identify the boundaries/catchment area for the new school. We hope the Minister will be announcing the construction phase of this project in the late Jan/Feb timeframe with a proposed opening date of September 2015. Boundaries will need to be finalized well in advance and communicated to families.

ASD-S Transportation Department has agreed to outline a recommendation for proposed catchment areas, street by street, for review by the PSSCs of Lakefield, Fairvale and Quispamsis Elementary schools.

3.4 January Retreat

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the date has been set for January 17/18 for the winter retreat and it will be held at Lily Lake. Friday evening will be a short session followed by a meal; Saturday will run from 9 am until 3 pm. Agenda will follow prior to the retreat.

4. Presentations

4.1 Introduction of Minister of Excellence Award Recipients

Mr. Fowler began by introducing Mr. John Tanner, Principal of Fundy High school who was in attendance at the meeting. He briefed Council on Mr. Tanner's background and accomplishments and then played the vignette that had been created for the Awards Banquet in Fredericton earlier in the fall. The video featured many of Mr. Tanner's students and staff who clearly have high praise for their principal.

Mr. Tanner addressed Council and stated how much he had enjoyed the evening, and how much he appreciated the award and the recognition; however, he truly felt that it was a Fundy High School award, not just a John Tanner award.

Mr. Fowler then briefed Council on the second award recipient Mr. Paul Holder, who unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting. He advised that Mr. Holder had recently retired from St. Malachy's High school and went on to review Mr. Holder's significant background in the educational system. Mr. Holder's vignette saw students and staff who spoke fondly of his love of math and his high expectations for all of his students, which in turn encouraged them to want to excel.

Mr. Fowler next introduced the final award recipient Kathy Young, Principal of Glen Falls School and advised that she would be joining the meeting late as she was attending the school's Christmas Concert. He reviewed for Council Mrs. Young's accomplishment at the school and in the community, and then played her vignette where students and staff were sure that she had to be the best principal ever.

Mr. Fowler congratulated all three ASD-S winners, and advised that the vignettes for the District's 9 award recipients were located on the EECD website.

5. New Business

5.1 DEC Policies for Review

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or concerns with regard to the current Governance policies numbered 9 & 10 which were to be reviewed at this meeting.

There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Fowler asked for a motion to approve these policies for ASD-S. Mr. Mabey made a motion to adopt Governance policies 9 & 10 and the motion was seconded by Mr. McDevitt. Motion carried.

5.2 Hampton Trail Project

Mrs. Watson briefly reviewed the background of a request from the Town of Hampton to declare surplus approximately 20.5 acres of land currently owned by ASD-S in the Hampton area.

At this point, Mr. Crossman declared a conflict of interest in being the Deputy Mayor of the Town of Hampton, and removed himself from the discussions.

Mrs. Watson went on to explain that the Town has been selected as a community site for the Trans Canada Trail which will go through the Town connecting Dutch Point Park Trail System with Dr. Leatherbarrow Primary School, Hampton Elementary, Hampton High and Spooner Island Trail.

Jeff Hanson, then Director of Finance & Administration, Paul Smith and Mrs. Watson met with the Town in the summer of 2013 to learn about the project. Two schools have sent in letters of support for the trail which they believe will provide educational benefits including using the trail for cross country skiing, the delivery of science curriculum through nature walks, learning about local plants and birds and the marsh area. The trail could also be used to enrich physical education – walks, hiking, and snow shoeing.

District staff have discussed this with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure and have determined that it is unlikely this parcel of land will be required by ASD-S. Mrs. Watson reminded Council that any financial gain from this sale of property would go to the Province, not ASD-S.

Mrs. Watson put forth the following recommendation to Council: Staff recommends that the following be declared surplus to the needs of the school district:

- 8.32 hectares (20.5 acres) of land, within PID 192534.

Mr. Fowler then asked Council if there were no questions or concerns, that a motion be made to declare the following surplus to the needs of the school district:

- 8.32 hectares (20.5 acres) of land, within PID 192534.

Motion made by Mr. Spires and seconded by Mr. Campbell. Motion carried.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report & Update

Mrs. Watson advised Council that this time of year many schools are busy with Christmas Concerts and the schedule will be posted on the DEC portal to refer to. These concerts are always filled with high energy and excitement. As well, Mrs. Watson wanted to acknowledge the many staff and students who worked long hours building floats for Christmas parades, participating in the Empty Stocking Fund, and all the fundraisers that take place for community food banks and local charities.

Mrs. Watson shared with Council that grade 7 student Joshua Ellis from St. Martin's had the winning design for the District Christmas Card this year – there were nine schools across ASD-S that participated in this initiative. The winning design was selected by office staff in Saint John; each staff member was given "5 dots" and asked to vote. Debbie Thomas and Mrs. Watson presented Joshua with his designed card framed along with some Christmas cards to share with his family and friends on December 10th.

Mrs. Watson advised that each Education Centre in ASD-S was planning a staff activity to raise funds on behalf of the United Way, who support many initiatives in our District schools. On Monday, December 16th, Management will host a Dessert Trolley in the Saint John Education Centre whereby staff will be offered tasty treats prepared and served by Management in exchange for donations to the United Way. Similar events will happen in Hampton and St. Stephen offices.

There is lots of professional development happening in the ASD-S; French Second Language, Leadership Development, including the final session of Legal Aspects, as well as two days of Violent Threat Risk Assessment training.

November 27th saw all Vice Principals meet in Saint John. They enjoyed a presentation by Tracy Friars on "Celebrate What's Right with the World", and the Inclusion Facilitators presented the new Inclusion policy 322. This was the same day that Premier Alward and MLA Glen Tait visited Bayside Middle School to hear more about the Theatre Restoration Project.

Principals are scheduled to meet in clusters during the month of December. Ten of our largest high schools had an opportunity to meet and share best practices in provincial triad meetings. This is a Department funded initiative.

On Friday, December 6th, each high school in New Brunswick was represented at a meeting in Fredericton to discuss high school renewal and courses. There was a mix of Principals, VPs and Guidance teachers in attendance. The Department was very clear that no changes will be happening for fall – but in January-February the representatives who attended on Friday will be consulting with their staff members and sharing the draft plan which was presented.

Friday, December 13th is the deadline for the student and teacher perception surveys. As of Monday, we had over 11,000 student surveys completed. Teachers have been encouraged to take time to complete the survey as the feedback is important.

Mrs. Watson noted that Council may have noticed the new ASD-S signage that is up on the corner of Woodward Avenue coming up to the District office and at the edge of the driveway coming in. There are also new signs up in Hampton and soon to be in St. Stephen. She also mentioned that we have purchased some ASD-S clothing, and there is a new t-shirt for each Council member.

Performance Excellence training continues with management staff over the next few months. This training looks at our current processes and searches for more efficient and effective ways of doing things. Recently Jamie Tait was named Process Improvement Facilitator for ASD-S. Mrs. Watson advised that she has completed 7 days of process improvement training to date.

All members of Council will find a Mental Fitness Calendar with their meeting documents tonight. These calendars have been made available to each classroom in ASD-S schools. This initiative speaks to our ends policy on maintaining mental fitness.

Mr. Spires asked about the policy for releasing student names to the public as he recently ran into a situation with the Royal Canadian Legion wanting to pass on student works to their national office. Mrs. Watson explained that this is an EECD policy, and that ASD-S is unable to release student names or information without parental permission. She advised that schools would typically send home releases to cover the use of students' names for many initiatives during the year.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler advised that he would be attending the upcoming monthly conference call with the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister on Monday, December 16.

He advised Council that work on the Nutrition Policy under the direction of Joni Donahue was not getting a lot of traction at this point in time and it is now on hold for the foreseeable future.

6.3 Correspondence

Received Holiday Card from the NBTA and a letter from the Minister Blais thanking ASD-S for the warm welcome she received on her visit in October. The letter has been

posted on the portal with tonight's meeting documents.

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Boudreau asked Council if ASD-S could look at having something posted in our arenas that outline a "code of conduct" for all athletes and spectators. This is done in all gymnasiums and it gives coaches and management some back up in dealing with unruly parents or spectators. Mrs. Watson advised that she will look into this and report back.

Mr. Boudreau also read for Council a letter that he received from Pennfield School with regard to the possibility of students staying for grade 5. Mrs. Watson will review the letter, look at enrolment numbers and report back at the January meeting.

Mr. Cullinan asked for a presentation at a future meeting to review PISA results.

Mr. Nesbitt reported on The PCAC (Provincial Curriculum Advisory Committee). This is the committee within the Department that is tasked with reviewing and approving all new curriculum for K-12. The initial meeting was December 10 and 11 in Fredericton. The committee did receive presentations and had discussions around several courses that are at various stages of development. The committee did approve, at the meeting, three new elective courses: Journalism 120, Media Studies 120 and Digital Production 120. They also approved the updated curriculum guides for three of the Mathematics courses for Grade 11 (Financial and Workplace Mathematics, Foundations of Mathematics and Pre-Calculus). The Committee also gave permission for a pilot in four schools for a new course Personal Development and Career Planning 100.

The PCAC is a large committee with 16 members that come from district, university, community college, Home and School, First Nations and DEC. Mr. Nesbitt was elected to Chair the committee and another DEC member from ASD-W, David Bowen, was elected Vice-Chair.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's council meeting and invited Management and Council to stay for the Christmas Reception which would immediately follow the meeting. Mr. Fowler extended best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all.

Members were advised the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary