

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – April 8, 2015

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, April 8, 2015 at 490 Woodward Avenue Saint John, NB. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Wayne Spires, Don Cullinan, Bob McDevitt, Charlotte McGill-Pierce, Roger Nesbitt, Stephen Campbell, Larry Boudreau, Kerry Olinskie, and Sherman Ross.

Regrets: Gerry Mabey and Joanne Gunter.

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Suzanne LeBlanc Healey, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Kate McLellan, Director Education Support Services, and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Mr. Fowler passed on regrets for Mr. Mabey and Mrs. Gunter.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda & Minutes

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or revisions required to the Agenda. There being no questions or concerns regarding the Agenda, he asked that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Agenda be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the March 19, 2015 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Campbell moved that the Minutes be approved and Mr. Olinskie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Public Comment

PSSC Chair from Simonds High School, Dan O'Connor invited Council to the April 22-25 spring production of "All Shook Up" at the high school. He advised that tickets were \$10.00 in advance and \$12.00 at the door. He advised that much work has gone into the production and hoped they would be able to attend.

PSSC Chair Russell Hall from Norton Elementary advised that he was here to see what is happening in the 409 process.

3. Presentations

3.1 Ends #4 – Mental Health/Mental Fitness

Mrs. Watson advised Council that this group would focus on the main strategies of this policy and team members in attendance included Dan Vallis, Skilled Trades, Health & Phys. Ed. Coordinator; Healthy Learners Nurses Alberta Stanton, Joyce Walker-Haley and Thelma Messer; and Jodie Fischer, Positive Learning Environment /Behaviour Coordinator.

Ends #4 goal focuses on providing opportunities for staff to learn about mental health issues in children and youth and to promote school and district wide initiatives that promote mental fitness. Jodie Fischer spoke about delivering Changing Minds and/or Mental Health First Aid Training to staff and the ongoing ASIST (Applied Suicide Prevention Intervention Skills) training. During the summer of 2014 there were 18 participants trained in Mental Health First Aid with three training sessions planned in Grand Manan this year. There are upcoming training sessions planned for the summer of 2015 as well. She also talked about the suicide awareness program "safeTALK" and the fact that schools were now asking for more information on mental illness issues.

Dr. McLellan spoke about the half day focus on mental health professional development and the after school centre-based professional development opportunities for teachers planned for April and May 2015.

Dan Vallis explained to Council that the District had applied for a grant through MindCare NB for \$149,284.80 for "Gatekeepers for Healthy Minds" program. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful this year; however, can apply again.

Thelma Messer spoke about District initiatives to promote mental fitness to educational centre staff. Efforts include: active staff wellness committees; a luncheon with Jeff Liberty in Saint John (testimonial living with depression); "snack Fridays" and potlucks in St. Stephen and a lunch and learn session in Hampton with nutritionist Deborah Ferguson.

ASD-S also held their first professional development day on Friday, March 27th with speakers on mental health, CELEBRATE, and mini workshops on Lync, excel, financial planning and dealing effectively with people.

There is also a positive learning environment newsletter developed and delivered by Pam Miller bi-monthly and educational assistants, school intervention workers and student attendants will participate in four wellness mini sessions at the St. Stephen Education Centre on May 4th, Saint John Education Centre on April 30th, and Hampton Education Centre on May 15th.

Presentations are scheduled for bus drivers in St. Stephen and Saint John education centres for May 1 on Allergies and Anaphylaxis, mental fitness and nutrition. (Hampton Education Centre drivers have already been trained on both).

Joyce Walker Haley spoke about the District Health Advisory Committee (DHAC) and their focus on mental health. Tools were created for schools and placed on the portal to make discussing and exploring the topic easier. Additional tools were also created for businesses and community use. Presentations were done for Educational Assistants with regard to how to 'walk the talk' every day with students. She also spoke about the 'Fun Friends' program pilot to 7 schools and 6 preschools across ASD-S.

Alberta Stanton spoke about the re-launch of "Celebrate What's Right With the World" and that this initiative will now be actively led by Lynn MacDonald. All centres are involved and the website has been rejuvenated. Postcards, post-it notes and pens were distributed during Staff Appreciation week. She invited Council to check out the ASD-S website and see the great stories posted under Celebrate.

Dan Vallis spoke about the creation/review of the portal site. This site is for internal use only by teachers and schools and has invaluable information that can be shared on mental fitness best practices and mental health topics.

Alberta Stanton updated Council on their revisit of Policy 711 including a District wide vending machine audit; nutrition review; newsletter submissions "CELEBRATING best practices, and nutrition month resources added to the parent section of the ASD-S website. They also created sample menus for daycares and preschools in partnership with the Public Health Nutritionists. She also highlighted an Award of Distinction from the Medical Society for MacDonald Consolidated School for their lunch program with Kredl's Corner Market.

The team then opened the floor to questions from Council after which Mr. Fowler thanked them for their informative presentation.

3.2 Early Childhood Services – where are we now?

Gary Hall, Director Early Childhood Services spoke to Council and reviewed where we are now, in year three, and what remains to be done. He advised that they need to do more in promoting integration with District and K-12 education; however, are making progress:

- developing closer connections with the Early Childhood Care Section
- improving our licensing and monitoring processes
- improving communication with parents
- improving the quality of learning environments, and

- improving the transition to school program

He talked about the many opportunities to develop seamless learning from 0-8, about the Kindergarten professional development presentation; Early Learning & Childhood Centre collaboration. He advised that process improvements are being made with regard to the monitoring of applications and the licensing process. This includes the development of online 'fillable' forms for operators (on the ASD-S website) and an online Step by Step Process for Approval and Renewal of License. He noted that the ASD-S website design is to become the model for EECD.

Mr. Hall spoke about the different ways they communicate with parents including recent website enhancements. Specifically, the addition of online inspection reports (initial and follow up) which show the quality of care received in licensed facilities and how rigorous our standards are.

He reviewed the Collaborative Assessment Tool (CAT) which is used as a companion document to the curriculum and allows you to see how you are doing in the delivery of the curriculum. The goal of this assessment tool is that directors and educators will be able to identify areas of inquiry and set goals for improvement.

Mr. Hall reviewed on-going changes and improvements that are happening within the transition to school process as they continue to work to improve this experience.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Hall for his informative presentation.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Policy 409 Review Update – Brown's Flat & Norton Elementary

Mr. Fowler advised that the 2nd public meeting for Brown's Flat was held last night and a lot of information was provided to Council over a 3.5 hour session. He reminded members that April 14th would be the 2nd public meeting at Norton Elementary and asked that as many members who were able to attend.

Mrs. Watson advised that any presentations received will be posted on the portal for review. She will also post the meeting notes from each session.

Following these meetings, DEC will review all feedback received. Mr. Campbell commended all who attended on Tuesday night, saying that people worked very hard to get presentations ready and were very professional.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of Executive Limitations Policies/Monitoring Reports #4-6 & #7-9

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or concerns with regard to the monitoring reports that were posted for review for tonight's meeting. There being no questions or concerns, he asked for a motion to approve the monitoring reports #4 through 9. Motion was made by Mr. Nesbitt and seconded by Mrs. McGill-Pierce. Motion carried.

5.2 Summer Improvement Projects 2016

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the capital improvement list (2016-17) that is being recommended for 2016 totaling \$3,135,000. He is not confident that we will get the full amount requested; however, the Province will give us a final dollar amount and provide feedback. They will not change our project list, but will tender top projects that add up to the dollars we are given. He then provided a brief explanation for each project on the list.

Mr. Boudreau asked if it would make more sense to combine the Harbour View High School projects into one phase? Mr. MacDonald will look into the suggestion.

Mrs. Watson reminded Council we are now looking at this list earlier so that projects can be tendered and completed in a timely manner. She also advised that the Province is also bundling projects when they can to be more cost effective.

Mr. Boudreau suggested that any project that could be considered a health and safety issue should be our first priority and moved up within the list if necessary to assure it gets done. Mrs. Watson advised that the order of projects on the list could be amended if required.

Mr. Fowler asked then asked for a motion to approve the capital improvement list (2016-17). Motion was made by Mr. Spires and seconded by Mr. Cullinan. Motion carried. Mr. Boudreau opposed the motion.

5.3 Superintendent's Evaluation

Mr. Fowler asked for volunteers to form a committee to conduct the Superintendent's yearly evaluation. Mr. Nesbitt, Mr. Spires and Mr. Olinskie agreed to sit on the Committee. Mr. Nesbitt will act as Chair and set a date for a meeting of the committee.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Watson advised Council that this had been a tough week at ASD-s with three deaths; Educational Assistant Janine Veerkamp from Inglewood school; students Darcy Teare from Woodlawn and Eric Almon, from Sussex Corner Elementary. Protocols are in place to assist students and staff through these difficult times.

This Friday is the Science Fair at UNBSJ's Ganong Hall – there will be top notch projects from around the District on display from 4-6 pm.

She noted that there were many spring drama productions, concerts and musicals taking place within the District. She was able to attend productions at Saint John High School, St. Stephen High, St. Malachy's and Sussex High to date. She encouraged Council to attend the upcoming performances (Rothesay High School, Kennebecasis Valley High School, Simonds and Belleisle Regional) and complimented the schools on the hard work and dedication that goes into making these productions such a success.

She also advised that Fundy High School would once again host the elementary drama festival April 22nd and 23rd from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm. With over 250 students from across the District participating in 11 plays over the course of 2 days, this festival presents a great opportunity for learning, confidence boosting and skills development.

Mrs. Watson spoke of three very successful chess tournaments in March with 132 participants in the Saint John Education Centre; 86 in the St. Stephen Education Centre and 85 in the Hampton Education Centre. She extended a thank you to our Science Subject Coordinator Darren White and his team of volunteers in each Centre who helped to make this opportunity happen for students of all levels.

NBTA Branch 08-20 is once again hosting their Super Seminar Series at Bayside Middle School beginning on Monday, April 13, 2015. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a quick meal and a professional development session offered by local staff members. It is open to all staff and sessions are very applicable to educators, school leaders and EA/SIW's.

Carey Childs from Quispamsis Elementary School has been named as the new Vice Principal at Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School. Ms. Watson showed Council a plaque that has been produced for the family of the late Chris Saunders commemorating the January naming event of the new school.

Provincial Subject Council Day is May 1st and there will be no school for students on that day.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that the DEC Spring Symposium is May 29-31 in Moncton this year. Please send your name/registration information to him as soon as possible if you are planning to attend. He also suggested that members remind their PSSC committees of this opportunity. Stacey Brown will cover the first six PSSC members, and our DEC will fund members over that number.

He advised that he will be attending the Strategic Program Review Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 15th.

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that we will be having a retreat on Saturday, April 25th and come prepared for discussion on the sustainability studies. It will be an 8:30 am start and lunch will be provided.

6.3 Correspondence

None

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Campbell advised Council that Sussex Regional High School was awarded \$25,000 towards the purchase of technology as winner of the National Staples Ecovator Grant. This grant recognizes public schools in Canada who are implementing innovative programs that support environmental sustainability. They won for their annual community garden in support of the local food bank where they provided 600 pounds of fresh vegetables.

Mr. Campbell also noted that Apohaqui Elementary School PSSC would be hosting a mental wellness night on Wednesday, April 15 from 6-8 pm.

Mr. Boudreau asked when the committee would be formed to begin looking at the transition of grade six students to Fundy High School. Mrs. Watson will check with Jenny MacDougall and advise.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, May 13, 2015 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary