

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – August 20, 2014

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, August 20, 2014 at 490 Woodward Avenue Saint John, NB. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: Gary Crossman, Gerry Mabey.

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer Saint John; Paul Smith, Senior Education Officer Hampton; John MacDonald, Director Finance & Administration; Kate McLellan, Director Education Support Services, and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

Media was in attendance.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Fowler passed on regrets for Mr. Crossman & Mr. Mabey who are unable to attend and advised that Mr. McDevitt was attending via conference call.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda & Minutes

Mr. Fowler reviewed the Agenda with Council and asked 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 June 11, 2014 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. Nesbitt moved that the Minutes be approved and Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Public Comment

None

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

3.1 BCAPI Meeting Follow Up

Mrs. Watson reviewed for Council the meeting held with members of BCAPI on June 2, 2014 whereby Council learned of their work within Saint John and our school communities. Following this meeting, Council requested that the Chair send a letter to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to show our support for this group and the great work that they do. A copy of this letter of support has been posted to the DEC portal with this month's meeting materials.

4. Presentations

Mr. MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration, reviewed the Functional Capacity of Schools document which had been posted for Council. He explained that this document simply reviews all of our schools and the number of classroom spaces used for teaching in each, and then determines the percentage capacity depending upon whether the number of students per classroom is at maximum capacity, or above/below capacity. He went on to explain that 60-85% capacity is good. Anything beyond 85% is too full with little or no space to add a class. Anything below 40% would likely indicate that the school is experiencing a declining enrolment with empty spaces in the building. This would lead to the question about whether or not there may be a need to consolidate or close a particular school.

Mr. Nesbitt commented that there are a significant number of 'under-utilized' buildings identified on this report. Mr. Fowler suggested that there will be a need for serious consideration on rationalization of these buildings.

Mr. Boudreau asked if we could add projected enrolment information to this document in order get a clearer picture of possible future numbers. Mr. MacDonald will look at including this information. The Chair requested that for our September meeting, Mr. MacDonald supply Council with projections on all those schools that are below 60% capacity.

5. New Business

5.1 Superintendent Evaluation

Mr. Nesbitt reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation Summary Report which clearly outlined the process followed to complete the yearly evaluation of the Superintendent's performance in a number of areas.

This review process resulted in the following motions:

Mr. Nesbitt moved that the District Education Council of Anglophone South School District express sincere thanks and appreciation and strongly commend Zoë Watson for her efforts during this second year of amalgamation on behalf of the District, all employees, students and parents. Seconded by Don Cullinan. Motion carried.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that as a result of her successful administration of Anglophone South School District this year, Zoë Watson's performance is rated as Exceeds All Expectations. Seconded by Stephen Campbell. Motion carried.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that as a result of the performance of Zoë Watson being rated as Exceeds All Expectations, she would be eligible for a four step re-earnable increment if salaries were not frozen at present levels. Seconded by Wayne Spires. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Nesbitt and his committee for their work on the Superintendent's annual review.

5.2 Budget 2014-15 Update

Mr. MacDonald reviewed a budget document posted with this month's meeting materials. He explained that we require an additional \$4,442,516.00 in order to achieve a break even budget. The two areas requiring additional funds are Facilities and replacement costs (absenteeism).

Considerable discussion arose between Council members and Mr. MacDonald provided detailed information regarding where the additional funds were required and why.

Motion was then made that we approve an expenditure plan of \$218,276,000.00 to cover areas identified as a deficit and requiring an additional \$4,442,516.00 above the original budget allocation of \$213,833,484. Motion was moved by Mr. McDevitt and seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

5.3 Dates & Locations for Meetings 2014-15

Mrs. Watson reviewed the two meeting schedule options that were posted with this month's meeting materials. Discussion arose on the best course of action, keeping in mind fiscal responsibility and the amount of travel time for a number of DEC members located outside of the Saint John area who travel even greater distances, depending upon where meetings are held.

Mr. Boudreau suggested a third option; to hold all meetings at the Saint John Education Centre as it was the most central location. Members who travel a significant distance to meetings were asked for their feedback and confirmed that meeting at the Education Centre would be the most convenient for them. Mr. Boudreau then moved that all meetings be held at the Saint John Education Centre for 2014-15. The motion was seconded by Wayne Spires. Motion carried. The meeting calendar will be revised.

5.4 Annual Agenda Planning Calendar 2014-15

Mrs. Watson presented the Annual Agenda Planning Calendar and reminded Council that it was a “draft” only, and that any changes or suggestions by Council could be incorporated.

Discussion arose on a number of possible additions to the calendar, and also suggestions were made to change the dates for a number of reports/presentations to ensure Council has enough time to review before they are due. Mrs. Watson will take all feedback and present a revised version for the September meeting.

5.5 Planning for Fall PSSC Orientation

Mr. Fowler asked Mrs. McGill-Pierce if she would be interested in coordinating this year’s PSSC Orientation event and she agreed. Mr. Spires, Mr. Fowler and Mrs. Gunter all agreed to assist in the event planning.

Discussion arose on the best date for the session, and it was agreed that the session would be on Saturday, October 18, 2014. The Senior Education Officers will advise all Principals at their upcoming meetings this week to flag this date.

Mr. Fowler asked if Council wanted to invite Charlie MacDonald back as guest speaker. All agreed that would be a good idea. Mr. Fowler will contact Mr. MacDonald about his availability.

Council requested that the dates for PSSC/Open Houses be posted so that they can make plans to attend as many as possible. Mrs. Watson will ensure that all dates are provided to Council as soon as they are available.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent’s Report and Updates

Mrs. Watson thanked Mr. Nesbitt and his committee for their work on her evaluation. She stated that feedback is always good, and this review process provides valuable information to her as well as Council on the progress of the District.

Mrs. Watson advised Council that this summer there has been a significant amount of professional development sessions happening. These sessions have been very successful and it is more economical to provide these opportunities at a time when replacement costs are not required.

Mrs. Watson updated Council on the many activities happening in the Facilities Department over the summer months. She wanted to acknowledge their hard work and dedication during these months as there is much that has to be done. For example, custodians do a deep clean of all schools and there are numerous summer improvement projects taking place. She noted there are a few projects that are behind schedule, the main one being in Blacks Harbour.

Mrs. Watson updated Council on the hiring of administrators - the complete list was posted with meeting materials for tonight. She thanked both Paul Smith and Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officers for their time and effort in sitting in on all Principal & Vice Principal hires – 25 in all! She noted that there are still a couple of positions to fill. Mrs. Watson hosted this new group of administrators on Monday, August 18th for the first time.

Today was the first meeting of all Principals and Vice Principals for the new school year and was held at the Algonquin in St. Andrews. Approximately 175 administrators, subject coordinators and management attended the session. She advised that tomorrow Principals would meet by Centre and receive AESOP training (new casual booking system) during their session. Next Monday, August 25th all teachers return and they will have 2 Admin days and 2 days for NBTA-Subject Council Days. Mrs. Watson noted that Sandra Herbst would be in Saint John (next Tuesday) and St. Stephen (next Monday) to address our teachers on assessment practices. Also today, Administrative Assistants were meeting by Centre for training on AESOP.

Mrs. Watson spoke about a number of tragedies that happened over the summer. We had a young student pass away due to a severe allergic reaction in the Hampton Education Centre and two of our 2014 graduates die on Grand Manan.

She wanted Council to know that the District was very active in providing support to the school communities with assistance from the provincial ISD team in Grand Manan, Dr. Kate McLellan and her team from Education Support Services and others too numerous to mention. She advised that in Grand Manan we provided yellow buses to help transport folks to and from the school where the funeral services were held. She went on to mention the most recent tragedy for the Grand Manan community whereby a helicopter pilot and first responder were killed when their medical transport plane crashed on the Island. And then, last Sunday, the sudden death of another student from Grand Manan. She advised that we do as much as we possibly can to support our school communities during these times and are happy to do so. She said that the District is looking at long term support for Grand Manan School.

Mrs. Watson briefed Council on the sudden closure of St. Patrick's school in August by the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development. Although the DEC had been kept up to date as events unfolded, she wanted to reiterate staff have really stepped up to the plate in order to make this happen in time for school opening. The Principal at St. Patrick's and all administrators at both Beaconsfield and Havelock have provided their assistance to ensure a smooth transition for all students involved. Facilities staff have gone above and beyond to get both schools ready to accommodate the new layout for students moving into Beaconsfield and Havelock schools.

Mrs. Watson advised that the Community Meeting held at the Carleton Community Centre on Thursday, August 14 went very well. Transportation has advised that three buses will circulate in the community and letters have gone out to families outlining where their bus stop is and what time the child should be there. No student will be walking very far to their stop.

Suggestions arose from Council members regarding ways to help integrate the St. Patrick students into their new environments. Mrs. Watson advised that St. Patrick's students would have their own entrances at both Havelock and Beaconsfield.

Mrs. Watson advised that a back to school ad had been placed in local newspapers and it was also posted with Council's meeting materials for tonight.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler advised Council that DEC Chairs would soon meet with EECD to review the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy 322. In preparation for this, the Chairs will be sending out a survey (through Stacey Brown) to gather feedback on what's working, what is not, and how the policy is being implemented.

With regard to Policy E9, Mr. Fowler had previously advised that he wasn't happy with the revised wording, but does agree that there are good programs to support it.

Chair/Vice Chair Renewals:

Mr. Spires moved that the status quo be upheld to 2016. Motion was seconded by Mrs. McGill-Pierce. Motion carried.

6.3 Correspondence

Mr. Fowler noted that all correspondence had been posted on the Portal for Council's information.

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Spires advised Council of the passing of a long time teacher, artist and all around outstanding New Brunswicker - Fred Ross. Council observed a minute of silence in his honour.

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, September 10, 2014 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary