

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – April 12, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Wayne Spires, Bernie Regenbogen, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Justin Tinker, Gerry Mabey, Rob Alexander, Richard Malone, Larry Boudreau, Heather Gillis

Regrets: None

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Jenny MacDougall, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Suzanne LeBlanc Healey, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

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

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the March 15, 2017 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Malone moved that the Minutes be approved. Mr. Nesbitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Question was asked about recording “no” votes on any motion. The Chair advised that if someone votes no, and wants it recorded, they must ask to have it noted in the Minutes.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Presentation – ENDS Policy #3 – Family/Community Partnerships

Mrs. Watson introduced Erica Lane, Community Engagement Coordinator and Lynn MacDonald, International Student Coordinator for ASD-S who would be presenting on new initiatives that are geared to strengthen engagement of families and foster community partnerships.

Ms. Lane advised that school websites in the Hampton and Saint St. Stephen education centres are now on the new Sharepoint site and that Saint John schools will move to this new format over time. She talked about the new PowerSchool Parent Portal and confirmed that the six former EdLine schools are now using this portal as well as the grades 9-12 from Campobello. There are approximately 7000 users including 2100 parents and students with an estimated 100,000 logins to date. Parents now have access to data, marks, course selections and homework. Teachers in the other 9-12 high schools are in the process of learning Power Teacher Pro (Gradebook).

A question arose about some parents being bumped and not being able to log in to the portal. Suzanne LeBlanc Healey advised that she would follow up. Question was also raised about when the remaining schools would be on line with the public portal. Mrs. Watson advised that there is no definitive date; focus is on getting accurate information into the system, tracking attendance, behavior, scheduling and next year the new report cards will be implemented and everyone must be trained and ready.

Ms. Lane reviewed work being done on social media and email protocols. She noted that the Digital Citizenship group is working on strategies to share with different stakeholders. She spoke about the expansion of the PALS program at the high school level and the increase in global partnerships whereby partners want to provide services and resources for an education centre or the entire district. She reviewed the many community committees that District staff participate on and the hope to expand the “Bee Me Kidz” program within the District.

Mrs. Watson spoke about a new initiative with the creation of Makerspaces within our schools. This is a collaborative learning space that encourages students to create, invent, build and learn as they engage in science, technology, engineering, art, math and tinkering. Resources to help create these spaces have been provided through grants, partnering with their Home and School, Brilliant Labs and the community at large. She noted that Loch Lomond School and St. Malachy’s each received \$10,000 grants from Best Buy to support technology in their schools.

Ms. Lane spoke about the expansion of trades within the District with partners. Sussex Regional High recently received upgrades in the Welding lab through partnerships with the Canadian Welder’s Association, Irving, EECD and the District. St. Stephen High School held a March Break “Mind over Metals” camp for 13 students.

Suzanne LeBlanc Healey spoke about engaging students to participate in real world citizenship initiatives and helping to create a global community. She spoke about the continued growth of the “Me to We” program and noted that 307 students from the District attended We Day Atlantic – Halifax in November of last year. She noted school projects including Quispamsis Middle School building four classrooms in Haiti; the Hampton Middle School Community Garden and the great learning and exploring opportunities provided by The Learning Partnership including the Holocaust Project; NB Legislative Seminar (Grades 11-12) and Entrepreneurial Adventure.

Ms. MacDonald, International Student Coordinator, advised Council of the opportunity for our high school students to visit China this summer or to participate in other exchange programs to travel abroad. She spoke of the many multicultural events/clubs happening at our schools and the partnerships with NBCC/PETL and UNBSJ.

Mr. Fowler thanked staff for their informative presentation.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Governance Policy # 8 – Effective Communications Subcommittee Update – tabled from the March meeting

Mr. O’Connor reviewed the feedback that had been received on the policy since the last meeting. He stated that the committee worked to ensure more involvement/contact with the PSSC and did not intend to create more work for district staff. He noted that the comments were posted on the portal by sections and that they were reviewed in the hopes of finding a middle ground. Mr. O’Connor then moved to accept the revised policy GP #8 as submitted. Seconded by Ms. Gillis.

Mr. Nesbitt noted that under the Section “Communication with Parents, Students and the General Public”, second bullet, that “senior education officers” are now “Director of Schools”. This line will be edited to read “directors” in order to encompass all directors within the District.

Mrs. Watson asked for clarification on “when” the committee was expecting meeting materials to be posted for the public and expressed concern over the significant amount of additional work this would require going forward. She reminded Council that we do not have a webmaster to assist with postings to our public website and all documents would now need to be duplicated in a pdf format, prior to being posted. It would also require assistance from our IT Technician in St. Stephen to get the information onto the public website every month.

Discussion continued around whether there was a significant need to post all documents publicly as the District has rarely received a request; what documents would be posted and when. It was suggested that anything presented at the public DEC meeting should be posted after approvals. Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Fowler advised Council that the policy is a “goal” and suggested that they might want to consider passing the revised

version with the understanding that work would need to continue to come up with a “practical application” that can be managed by District staff. He suggested a target date of September 2017.

There being no further comments, the motion was carried.

4.2 Executive Limitations Policies #4 – tabled from the March meeting

The Chair asked if there were any issues or concerns with regard to policy EL #4 going forward or if a subcommittee would be required to review it.

Ms. Sherbo stated that she was looking for clarification of point #8 contained within the policy, which the Chair provided.

There being no further questions, the policy will remain as is.

4.3 Budget Update – tabled from the March meeting

Carolann Spear, Budget and Accounting Manager reviewed for Council their current budget and what was included in it. She noted that any monies that were to be charged back to Fredericton for various reasons were added back into the appropriate accounts. She advised that the budget will likely balance out for year end.

Ms. Spear then presented the Budget Update which was tabled from the March meeting. She noted the District is projecting a balanced budget for year end. She then reviewed the line items highlighting reasons for significant shortfalls under Instruction and Instructional Support (EA funding and replacement costs) as well as under Operations and Maintenance (minor repairs).

Mr. Boudreau asked if it would be possible to add a column to the budget updates that would compare to last year. Mrs. Watson noted that Mr. MacDonald has previously advised that categories change over time and it is extremely difficult to compare year over year. Mr. Fowler asked that when a line item is significantly different from last year, could an explanation be provided as to “why”.

Mr. Boudreau asked about the staff attendance program (Every Day Counts) and how it is working. Mrs. Watson advised that Mr. Stanger, Director of Human Resources would be presenting at the June meeting and it would be covered in his presentation.

There being no further questions, Mr. Regenbogen moved that the Budget Update be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

4.4 Capital Projects & 2018 Summer Improvement Projects

Mrs. Watson addressed Council to ask for a motion to approve the Capital Improvement Projects 2018-2019 document that was presented at the March meeting so that it can be forwarded to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Mr.

Nesbitt moved that the Capital Improvement Projects 2018-19 list be approved as presented. Mr. Malone seconded the motion.

Discussion on the motion included questions on deferred maintenance and how items get placed on the list. The process was explained by Mrs. Watson and it was emphasized that health and safety come first. The top projects on the list are the ones that really need to happen and we would not likely receive all the money we have asked for.

Mr. Boudreau asked if there were any items from last year that were low on the priority list that did not get on – (i.e. do projects get rolled over). Mrs. Watson advised that yes, some projects do get rolled over and they could be identified by comparing this year's list with the previous list.

Mr. O'Connor noted that he was not clear on how projects are prioritized for this list and suggested a piece of the process was missing. Mr. Fowler reviewed the process that staff undertake to develop the list. Mr. Spires added that our District staff (Facilities Manager and Assistant Managers) are experts at what they do and identify what the real priorities need to be. The projects are then reviewed by John MacDonald, Director of Finance and Administration and Mrs. Watson before being presented to Council.

There being no further comments, the motion was carried. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Boudreau voted against the motion.

4.5 Evaluation and Compliance Reports – Policy 711 – tabled from the March meeting

Mrs. Watson introduced Ann Hogan, Healthy Learners Nurse for the Hampton Education Centre who recently joined the District after the retirement of Thelma Messer.

Ms. Hogan reviewed the provincial recommendations from the Policy 711 review. She talked about the review process, the definitions of food categories used, and highlighted some limitations within the review. She noted that 13 schools from the District participated in the review process and explained the rating system that was used. The final report for each school is posted on the portal for Council to review.

Recommendations from the review included the creation of a District committee that would develop a plan for the communication, promotion and monitoring of Policy 711 (under the direction of a provincial-level committee). This committee would include representatives from District Office, school administration, public health, food service providers, PSSC, Home and School committees, students and other interested partners. They would oversee the implementation of the provincial system (once developed) for monitoring cafeteria menus and vending machines; follow up with schools to ensure minimal nutrition value items and ingredients are eliminated and/or replaced with healthier choices and provide regular communication and resources to all partners.

Ms. Hogan advised Council of the grants available to schools to assist with healthy eating including NB School Wellness grants and Nutrition Funding Grants from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Hogan for her presentation.

5. New Business

5.1 Executive Limitations Policies #7 – 9

Due to the late hour, the Chair suggested that Council table this item until the May Meeting. All were in agreement.

5.2 Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee

Mr. Fowler asked for a subcommittee to conduct the Superintendent's annual review. Mr. Nesbitt agreed to Chair the subcommittee and Ms. Sherbo, Mr. Alexander, Mr. O'Connor and Ms. Gillis will sit on the committee.

5.3 PSSC – New K-5 School West Saint John

Mrs. Watson informed Council that she had confirmed with DEC Manager, Stacey Brown, that anyone who is a current member of the PSSC from either of the three schools; Havelock, Seawood or Beaconsfield, will be invited to join the PSSC for the new school and finish out their term if they wish. This may lead to the new committee being over the maximum number of members; however, a motion by Council will allow for this exception. Mr. Spires moved to combine the three PSSC to form one committee for the new west Saint John school. Seconded by Mr. Mabey. Motion carried.

5.4 DEC Remuneration

Due to the late hour, the Chair suggested that Council table this item until the May meeting. All were in agreement.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

Mrs. Watson advised Council of the death of River Valley Middle School student Jordan Laird who passed away at home today. Jordan faced many challenges and health issues. He will be missed by his many school friends and family. She asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

Principals met today in Saint John and began the first of three sessions on Mental Health First Aid. ASD-S now has have 4 trained facilitators (Jennifer Grant, Pam Drury, Kate McLellan and Todd Cormier) who will lead this initiative across the District. There is also a high school Admin Committee which will look at how to engage students on this topic.

Today the District's 1st annual SumoBoT competition for high schools is being hosted at Simonds High School. Students must build and program small robots to specific dimensions and weight in order to participate. There were 10 schools attending the event.

It is a busy time in ASD-S – FI oratorical was last evening in Hampton Education Centre and this evening in St. Stephen Education Centre. There are Science Fairs, Heritage Fairs, musicals and also two recent book launches. Island View School hosted the launch of "Chip & Crystal Experience Energy" an initiative of Stonehammer UNESCO and the launch of "It's a Mystery Pig Face" in the St. Stephen Education Centre. This book was written by former Deputy Minister Wendy McLeod MacKnight and Mrs. Watson and Mrs. MacDougall attended the event.

Mrs. Watson held a second "Fireside Chat" for a group of 10-12 Principals to ask what is going well in the District, what could be improved and feedback on how to do a better job as a school district.

St. Malachy's High school received a \$10,000 grant from Best Buy to support technology in their school.

Administrator positions are being advertised in the TJ and on our website. Announcements of the successful candidates for these roles are being made in Southern Exposure. Mrs. Watson noted that we are struggling to find casual staff (drivers, EAs, teachers).

Mrs. Watson clarified a point from last meeting regarding mid-life upgrades and the cost to renovate vs building a new school. The Department has advised that every project is different and whenever a project is estimated to be more than 50% of the cost to build new, the Department will look at it very closely. The tipping point could be 60% or more, depending upon the individual project.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Due to the late hour, the Chair suggested that Council table this item until the May meeting. All were in agreement.

6.3 Correspondence

None; all correspondence posted on the portal for Council's information.

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. O'Connor reminded Council of the parent session being put on by the PSSC of the four local high schools in Saint John on May 4th at Harbour View High School. Guest speaker will be Dr. Chorney, speaking about Youth Anxiety and Parenting Strategies. He also noted that he has received questions from PSSC with regard to the use of Synervoice which he will forward to Mrs. Watson.

Mr. Regenbogen mentioned the meeting of the Premier and his Cabinet at Harbour View High School.

Mr. Boudreau reminded the Chair of the need for a subcommittee meeting to review ENDS # 2 & 5. Mr. Fowler advised that he will get something set up and send materials to Mr. Boudreau and staff.

Ms. Sherbo enquired about the epi-pens and asked who would coordinate information. Mrs. Watson advised it would be the Healthy Learners Nurses.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue on Wednesday, May 10, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary