

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – February 8, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, February 8, 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 (private session), Rob Alexander, Richard Malone (via telephone), Larry Boudreau

Regrets: Heather Gillis

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 7:00 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. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the January 11, 2017 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Sherbo moved that the Minutes be approved. Mr. Tinker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Question arose with regard to a survey for the DEC which was mentioned by presenters from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development during the previous

meeting. Mr. Fowler advised that an opportunity will be provided for DEC to complete an on-line survey. He will follow up and get more details from Nancy Boucher at the Department.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Presentation

Mrs. Watson introduced Subject Coordinators who were attending to present an update on ENDS # 1 – Literacy, Numeracy and Science including: Brenda Logan (Numeracy); Ryan Price (Literacy); Greg Patterson (Literacy); Jillian Ingalls Garey (FSL); Michelle Deschenes (FSL) and Darren White (Science). Also in attendance was Michelle Standing, a Rothesay High School science teacher. These coordinators take the lead with the implementation of provincial curriculum in their area and also provide professional development for teachers.

Ryan Price and Greg Patterson addressed Literacy in our schools. It was noted that all teachers are becoming familiar with/using the 9 components of Balanced Literacy. A video clip of a reading conference with a middle school student during a class was played. It was explained that conferencing is a high yield reading strategy to support struggling readers using prompts. There was a picture of a literacy rich classroom in a middle school – it included 1,500 books, a rocking chair, and a variety of magazines – all with a goal to foster a love of reading. It was explained that our high school teachers are using core documents and Look Fors in instructional planning. Teachers plan with the end goal in mind – they work with SPRs (Department Heads) to look at exam practices as not all teachers use traditional exams – some use portfolios (evidence of learning/communication skills); a learning narrative (gallery walk assessment where students present what they learned/how their ideas changed and what they would take forward as an adult) and there are also peer assessments. These practices were showcased in a slide from “Women in Media Studies”.

Questions were asked about teaching grammar, cursive writing, verbs – the role of the SPRs and performance appraisals.

Jillian Ingalls Garey and Michelle Deschenes spoke about French in our schools and the goal of improving French proficiency of students and the introduction of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (will replace Oral Proficiency Assessment). This model is a positive one – it includes “I Can” statements with a responsibility to self-assess. It has an electronic language portfolio which students update and use as proof of proficiency.

Questions were raised about whether we have enough qualified teachers. It was explained that 90% of our teachers are “superior” and there are some face to face courses available to help maintain and improve language proficiency level. There has been training for teachers of intensive and middle school post intensive French and at the

end of the month there will be literacy PD for teachers of grades 7 & 8 french immersion. Teachers will be provided with an opportunity to observe other teachers. Pictures of students highlighted K-3 language learning and a video clip of a student leading the class in days of the week and sharing a song was played.

Brenda Logan spoke about numeracy across the District and the focus on professional learning and formative assessment (data we observe with students). The professional learning target is to build capacity with balanced assessment. In Sept of 2016 SPRs and lead teachers had an opportunity to meet with Sandra MacKinnon (EECD) and Subject Coordinators on balanced assessments to ensure questions for both assessment and instruction include upper levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Following that, during the October PD day, all teachers were asked to look at their test questions to ensure they covered basic, mid-range and higher order questions. Coaches will work with teachers/teams if there are too many basic level questions and develop a plan to move to mid and higher range questions. A video clip was played of a student and teacher working through percent questions.

Formative assessments – focus on K-2. There are nine leads in 18 schools. They use a Teaching Process Map (plan lesson, do lesson, check for understanding). A video was played on use of exit slips.

Question was raised on the amount of time required by teachers for planning.

Darren White spoke to Council on the goal of strengthening best instructional practices in Science by focusing on science skills. He talked about the difference between facts and skills – facts are readily available on the internet – skills are transferable (students must analyze data and then be able to use them in another application).

He introduced Michelle Standring, a grade 11-12 Biology teacher who spoke about a project she did with her grade 11 class. It focused on bacteria/viruses. She created "patient" files which contained pertinent information to the complaint of the patient. She challenged the students to figure out what the problem was so the patient didn't get sicker and how they would treat it. Following this, students could then create their own "patients" with a backstory, symptoms, etc.

Darren also spoke about world class facilities like Huntsman; the Atlantic Salmon Federation working with NBCC and elementary schools to build probes for salmon habitats. He displayed a picture of students constructing circuits – using it to light a bulb – real life science. There is a focus on teaching students to be resilient, to be able to problem solve and to work together as a team. He reminded Council that Science Fairs would soon be ramping up and that ASD-S students always do very well in these competitions.

Mr. Fowler thanked staff for their informative presentation.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Governance Policy # 8 – Effective Communications Subcommittee Update

Mr. O'Connor advised that the subcommittee will review the policy for ASD-S along with other DEC's similar policies. They will provide a draft version by February 11th for Council to review and provide their feedback on prior to the March meeting.

Mr. O'Connor advised that the subcommittee will be recommending changes in three general areas including enhancing the DEC to PSSC relationship; identifying the Chair and Superintendent as the DEC's spokespersons with the media, and a minor refresh to other sections.

The policy will be presented at the March meeting for discussion/revisions/approval.

5. New Business

5.1 Executive Limitations Policies #1 - 3

Mrs. Watson reviewed the policies and monitoring evidence for the three policies which had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. The policies included Global Executive Constraints; Emergency Succession Planning and Staff Hiring. Following this, Mr. Fowler asked if there were any issues or concerns with regard to the policies. There being none, he called for a motion. Mr. Spires moved that the policies be accepted as written. Mr. Nesbitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Question was raised as to how the DEC would "audit" the District's compliance with the hiring process. Mr. Fowler suggested that Mrs. Watson's monitoring report is evidence of compliance, but suggested that the DEC could ask for a "spot audit". It was suggested that Stewart Stanger, Director of Human Resources be asked if there is a process for this.

5.2 Capital Improvements 2017-18

Mrs. Watson reviewed the list of approved capital improvement projects for 2017-2018 which has been received from the Department and had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. It totals \$3,029,000. She noted that we would have applied for much more than was approved. She advised that the Department now prioritizes all roof replacements/repairs.

She advised Council that she and Debbie Thomas had been on a tour of the new school on the west side of Saint John and that it was coming along quite well and has some beautiful views of the Bay of Fundy.

Question was asked about what triggers a facility review. She explained that the Province does what is called a mid-life upgrade for our high schools – this is done due to the age and work required in a particular school. A review is carried out to determine if it

is worth the investment prior to the upgrade taking place or if a new school would be the best course of action.

Another question arose as to when a facility would be replaced versus fixed. Mrs. Watson advised that she would get the percentage figure. Question was asked about our ability to do preventive maintenance. Mr. Fowler responded that unfortunately there is no money in the budget for it and this is the situation we are in. Mrs. Watson commented that some maintenance work would be done under minor repairs and noted that we are always over budget in the category.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

Mrs. Watson advised that on the weekend of January 14th, we learned of the death of one of our St. Stephen Education Centre bus drivers, Kathy Stewart. Kathy was driving up until the holidays, and passed away after a short illness. She had been with the District for 14 years and most recently transported students from Sir James Dunn Academy, Vincent Massey as well as St. Stephen High School. She asked for a moment of silence in her memory.

Mrs. Watson compared the percentage of grade 1 students in French Immersion from the last years grade one entry was offered to the percentage we have for fall 2017 and found that it has remained fairly consistent. In 2005, 21%; 2006 – 22.5%; 2007 – 21.3% and for 2017, 26%. She noted that grade 3 FI is at 35% and is projected to be at the same level for next year.

She reviewed the sites where grade 1 FI would be for the fall of 2017 in each of the three education centres and noted that Millidgeville North School would require a grade reconfiguration in order to have grade 1 FI students attend this fall. She also advised that there will be one class at Grand Bay Primary after a poll of parents.

The District has received funding from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to hire 2 FI Subject Coordinators – one has been hired and we are still looking for a second. In the meantime, we have someone filling in from February until June. The District has been out at university job fairs (at UNB and the University of Moncton) and has issued some conditional contracts. The District has also asked for any B teachers wanting to teach FI to express their interest. It is estimated that we will need 26 grade 1 FI teachers and our concern is that we need to find those with superior speaker language proficiency.

This week is Internet Safety Week with a theme of '**Be the Change: Unite for a Better Internet**'. There are links for lesson plans for grades 3-8 as well as a parent letter and family resources. At the high school level there is information on your digital footprint and sexting. ASD-S recently met with each of our police detachments across Southern NB and the topic of internet safety and sexting came up. Moira Sherwood and Pam Miller have a working committee of police, teachers and administrators focused on initiatives to support good digital citizenship with our students – we have great posters with students from St.

Stephen High School featured as well as magnets with our message “Beware of What You Share”.

Mrs. Watson shared that Matt Bedard, Principal at Seawood School has been named Canada’s Outstanding Principal by The Learning Partnership. He will attend an award ceremony later this month in Toronto. ASD-S previous winners have included Christine Roy and Pat Laskey (2016); Louise Johnson (2015); Michael Wilson (2014) as well as Allan Dunfield, Elizabeth Horgan and Eric Estabrooks.

Professional development funds have been received from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to support K-2 literacy and numeracy. There are also funds for EAL, Science, Education Support Services and nutrition initiatives.

Next week is Staff Appreciation Week - the week when we take time to say a special thank you to our custodians, facilities staff, teachers, administrators, administrative assistants, management, EAs and SIWs, bus drivers, library assistants, EAL mentors, speech language therapists, ISD members, education support services staff, early childhood staff, and office staff for everything they do to support education in ASD-S! We have so much to celebrate and be proud of in our District. We are a large team of 3000 working together to support students, schools, families and communities.

Mrs. Watson will be hosting another round of “fireside chats” with a group of administrators and asking them for feedback on three questions; what is going well in the District, what could be improved and what suggestions they might have for improvement.

An updated Code of Professional Conduct brochure was provided to all DEC members.

Mrs. Watson advised that Sistema has requested an opportunity to perform/speak at an upcoming meeting.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the Spring Symposium would be held in Saint John at the Delta on May 5, 6 & 7. Friday night would be a casual welcome reception; Saturday would begin at 8:00 am and include information on assessments with Sandra MacKinnon; information on the Priority Unit from Nancy Boucher and information from DTI on capital projects, including how projects are scored. On Sunday, there will be an opportunity to meet with the Minister at breakfast.

Mr. Fowler also noted that each DEC is asked to be prepared to speak on one of their policies that has made a difference – ASD-S will focus on ENDS #5 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.

He advised that Stacey Brown will cover the cost for the first six PSSC members who would like to attend, and that the DEC would cover any others over that. He asked that members bring this information to their various PSSC.

All registrations will go through Stacey Brown and registration information will be coming shortly.

6.3 Correspondence

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

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. O'Connor reminded Council about the upcoming parent session being put on by the PSSC of the four local high schools in Saint John on February 27th at St. Malachy's High School. The poster is on the portal and the topic is Drug Awareness – What Parents Need to Know.

Mr. O'Connor extended thanks to Mrs. Watson for the District's response to Simonds High School PSSC regarding their facilities. The support was appreciated.

Loch Lomond Elementary School is partnering with Science East to present a session on Science and Technology - hands on learning for the entire community on Tuesday, February 21st at 6:30 pm at the school.

Lakewood Heights Elementary is planning a wellness event on Tuesday, April 4th at 6:00 pm in the gymnasium. More information to follow.

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, March 15, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary