

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – March 16, 2016

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: None

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Suzanne LeBlanc Healey, Director Curriculum & Instruction; John MacDonald, Director Finance & Administration and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

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

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler asked that an item be added under New Business: (5.3) Approved Summer Improvement Projects 2016-17. He asked that if there were no questions or concerns with the amended Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Campbell moved that the amended Agenda be approved. Mr. Mabey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the February 10, 2016 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Minutes be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Business Arising

3.1 Update on the Naming Committee – Fundy High School

Mr. Boudreau advised Council that the committee had approved the wording for a notice that will be placed on the ASD-S website and area schools websites asking the general public to submit their suggestions for names. Mrs. Watson advised Mr. Boudreau that she had sent some suggested changes and he could let her know if the committee was all right with those suggestions. She advised that Jenny MacDougall, Director of Schools had been added as a contact for anyone with questions on the process and noted one other minor change.

Mr. Fowler advised that the top three names should be submitted to Council for their April meeting so that approval of the Minister could happen in time for the September 2016 school year.

4. Presentation

4.1 ENDS #3 – To strengthen engagement of families and foster community partnerships.

Mrs. Watson welcomed District staff Erica Lane, Community Engagement Coordinator; Marc Godin, Supervisor Data & Accountability; and Lynn MacDonald, International Student Coordinator.

Mr. Godin provided Council with information on the approximately 1,300 survey responses received with regard to the District's questions on how parents would like to receive communication from the District, their school, and teachers. Data showed that:

- 43% of respondents used the ASD-S website “occasionally”
- 51% of respondents found the website “easy” to navigate
- 15% of respondents found they accessed the “calendar” most often on the site
- 40% of respondents visited their school website “occasionally”
- 20% of respondents found that the “events” section of the website was important; 16% the “newsletter” and 16% the “teacher sites”
- 25% of respondents want to receive information from the school via “email”
- 19% of respondents want to receive information from their child’s teacher via “email”

Mr. MacDonald advised Council that information is now available on the ASD-S website to assist families and day care providers during the transition away from out of zone

busing reliance in the Kennebecasis Valley. The District was originally delivering students to about 6 day cares in this area, there are now twenty two, and we are still transporting out of zone. The information on the site includes an interactive map, elementary school boundaries, school locations and day care locations. Mrs. Watson advised that the District met with day care operators and explained the new process. The District provided plenty of notice to those affected by the change to ensure enough lead time for them to make alternate arrangements for child care if required.

Suzanne LeBlanc Healey reviewed the work being done and/or completed to enhance communication with parents on school websites; the importance of consistency in the use of communication tools within a school and the work of the Digital Citizenship Committee on guidelines for the use of social media and email protocol. She noted a new policy has been developed which outlines practical tips for schools when using social media and email.

Erica Lane spoke to the positive things happening with our volunteers and in the community. She noted that the Telegraph Journal has profiled PALS/Community schools and these are feel good stories from our schools and have generated positive feedback. Schools continue to share their good news and initiatives on the ASD-S website. She spoke about the plan to expand PALS to additional schools at the high school level, and an increase focus on service learning - giving back to the community and partner recognition - as this is a big part of the PALS program.

Lynn MacDonald updated Council on the status of international students within the District noting there are 600+ students in our schools representing 55 countries. This includes 33 tuition fee paying students (\$13,365 in 2016-17). She advised that these students are supported by 17 EAL international student mentors (tutors) and the schools are supported by EAL Lead, Jeff Matheson.

She updated Council on the Syrian newcomers within our District advising that we have 133 students registered (127 in school) and 6 waiting for Education Support Services. 11 students are enrolled in home school and 17 transitioned to home schools. There are two Learning Centres located at Hazen White St. Francis and Prince Charles where the focus is on learning the daily routines of school; intense English language support and integration into their home/community schools. Mr. Matheson takes the lead day to day with the Learning Centres and is instrumental in the success of this program.

There are 5 full time teachers at the Learning Centres; 1 - .5 fte for the Learning Centre at St. Malachy's Memorial High School; 2 EAL mentors; 2 EAs and 2 full time EAL Mentors to work in the schools once the students are transitioned. Mrs. MacDonald noted that we also have 2 interpreters and that we could not do this without their assistance.

5. New Business

5.1 Executive Limitation Policies #4 - 6

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or concerns with regard to the Executive Limitation policies #4-6 that were posted on the portal for Council to review. The Monitoring Reports submitted by the Superintendent show compliance with these policies. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Nesbitt moved that these policies be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Mabey. Motion carried.

5.2 Budget Update

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the highlights of the budget advising that we are forecasting a break even, or possible surplus position at year end. The surplus would be due to decreased costs in transportation (fuel costs) and route changes as well as decreased costs for heating our facilities. He advised that the deficit in Operations and Maintenance (\$569,242) was due to approximately \$400,000 required for minor repairs and the rest was in replacement salaries. Replacement salaries were down over last year in Facilities; however, still over budget. Transportation also saw a decrease in replacement salaries.

Mr. MacDonald advised the expenses for Syrian refugee students when they transition into a school, would be at the District's expense. However, if we run over budget due to these costs, the Department has agreed to cover the deficit.

Mr. Campbell asked if the project to reduce sick time has been successful for teaching. Mr. MacDonald advised that attendance has improved and brought awareness to the issue.

Mr. Fowler asked if there were no further questions or comments that a motion be made to approve the budget. Mr. Spires moved that the budget be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Campbell. Motion Carried.

5.3 Approved Summer Improvement Projects 2016-17

Mrs. Watson advised that the approved summer improvement projects for 2016-17 had been posted on the portal for Council to review. It was noted that we had requested \$3,135,000 and were approved for \$2,938,300 in improvements to our facilities.

Mrs. Watson reminded Council that staff would bring the list of projects for 2017-18 to Council at their April meeting. Council will have until the May meeting to vote on/finalize the list for submission to EECD by the end of May.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Updates

Mrs. Watson advised Council of the death of a valued staff member, Verna O'Coin, who had just recently retired from ASD-S. Verna gave many years of service to Education Support Services both for the district and for the province. She will be remembered for her extensive work in the field of Autism. Council then observed a minute of silence in her memory.

Mrs. Watson advised that on Monday, March 21st, Principal Michael Wilson, staff and students of Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School will welcome the Minister and other dignitaries for the official opening of their new school. Council members are welcome to attend.

With regard to Council's new Ends #5 policy, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities, Mrs. Watson noted that on Friday, all middle and high schools would meet to examine the new policy, share ideas and look for strategies to move the policy forward. The meeting will include those schools who currently have a GSA and/or those who are interested in developing one.

Workplace Health & Safety sessions are being held for high schools over a three day period at the District office.

Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) spaces will be available on Child & Youth teams in Saint John (4 teams) and Hampton (3 teams) Centres in the near future. Ads will be out to B teachers within the next week for 8 guidance and 8 resource teachers for these teams.

School Reviews are no longer a service of the Department – due to budget constraints. Jason Burns, Allan Davis, and Keith Pierce will conduct a scaled down version of these reviews for ASD-S. Some funding will be available from the province to cover their supply costs while they conduct these reviews.

Principal professional development will see Dr. Bill Morrison presenting on mental health challenges in the schools on March 22. There will also be a session on the use of data and Attendance Matters.

Mrs. Watson noted that she and Debbie Thomas attended the recent Canada's Outstanding Principal awards ceremony in Toronto. We CELEBRATE Pat Laskey, Principal at Bayside Middle School and Christine Roy, Principal at St. John the Baptist, King Edward on receiving this prestigious award.

She also noted that ASD-S has been awarded two national inclusion in education awards; one by Centennial staff and one by teacher Shonna Martin and EA Karen Roscoe of Fairvale Elementary. Fairvale Elementary is the first school in the Hampton Education Centre to welcome a service dog.

Two ASD-S students have received significant scholarships: Jack McCrossin from St. Malachy's High has received the Loran Scholarship of up to \$100,000 and Cameron Dick from Harbour View High School has been awarded the D & R Sobey Atlantic Scholarship in the amount of \$80,000 to Queen's University. A letter of congratulations will be sent to both students on behalf of the DEC.

6.2 Chairperson's Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler advised that information sessions were held in each Education Centre for all those interested in running for a seat on ASD-S District Education Council in the May civic elections. There were 2 attendees at the Hampton Education Centre session, 4 in Saint John and 1 in St. Stephen (two others expressed interest but were not in attendance at the meeting).

Mr. Fowler advised Council that on March 1st, the PSSC Chairs of the four Saint John high schools held a planning session to develop a seminar focused on mental health issues in the schools. District staff and interested community members were also attendance. There are plans for parent sessions in May and then monthly in the fall. Topics for discussion would follow the LINK program.

Mr. Fowler advised that it is time for the annual review of the Superintendent's performance and asked for volunteers for a subcommittee to conduct this review. Mr. Nesbitt volunteered to Chair the committee; Mr. Spires and Mrs. McGill-Pierce will sit on the committee.

6.3 Correspondence

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

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Spires offered his congratulations to the District (principals and teachers) for their efforts in the St. Stephen Education Centre with the Syrian refugees – everyone has gone above and beyond.

Mr. Mabey advised that the St. Rose PSSC would be hosting three sessions for parents in the community on mental health. The dates are March 31st (Anxiety in Children); April 26th (Anger in Children) and May 19th Project ROAR.

Mr. Boudreau offered "koodos" to the Superintendent and District on their Attendance Matters initiative. He believes that it is working. With regard to school rentals, he noted that he has been advised that the not-for-profit registration process takes a long time. Mr. MacDonald noted that it can be a long process when trying to get a not-for-profit status number. He advised that by registering under Sport NB it can be an easier process. He will make this information available on the website.

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, April 13, 2016 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary