

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – November 18, 2015

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 at Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: Sherman Ross

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton 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 p.m. Mr. Fowler passed on regrets for Mr. Ross. Mr. Fowler thanked Principal Mike Wilson for the tour of the new Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School and remarked on how impressed Council was with the facility.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler reviewed the Agenda with Council and asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Agenda be approved. Mr. Cullinan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the October 14, 2015 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. Mrs. Charlotte McGill-Pierce seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

Dan O'Connor, PSSC Chair for Simonds High School addressed Council to pass along a great CELEBRATE moment for the school. He advised that a Simonds High School Vice Principal had received communication from a teacher who had recently attended a swim meet at Simonds High and she remarked how impressed she was with how two special needs students were welcomed and supported by Simonds High students. She wanted to express her thanks to all involved.

Mr. O'Connor also mentioned an upcoming provincial swim meet being held on December 12th at the Aquatic Centre and invited all to attend.

Mrs. Watson mentioned that at a recent meeting in Fredericton student council leaders from Simonds High spoke about the importance of inclusion and supporting all special needs students within their school.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. O'Connor for bringing this good news to Council and offered koodos to all Simonds High students.

3. Presentations

3.1 Diversity and Respect

Mrs. Watson introduced the members of the team presenting including Positive Learning/Behaviour Subject Coordinators Pam Miller and Monique Hughes and Behaviour Leads Bronwyn Tanner, Matt Garey and Erin Duncan. She brought regrets from Kate McLellan, Director of Education Support Services who has been out sick.

She commented that this presentation was requested by Mr. Boudreau and that this was a perfect time as this week is Diversity and Respect Week in New Brunswick.

It was noted that all schools in ASD-S were contacted to provide feedback for this presentation. Their responses provided information on the types of school-wide data that are examined, examples of preventative, proactive strategies they employ as well as supportive, responsive strategies.

The distinctions between conflict and bullying were identified. Surveys that ASD-S students complete and what they tell us were highlighted including Tell Them From Me (TTFM) and Student Wellness.

It was noted that this is the fourth year for the TTFM surveys and this data measures: positive sense of belonging, positive relationships, positive behavior, students who are victims of bullying, bullying, exclusion and harassment, feel safe attending this school, positive student-teacher relationships and positive learning environment. The data received from each of these categories was provided in graph form along with supplemental information which outlined what questions were asked under each category.

The Provincial Student Wellness Survey focuses on grades 4 & 5 and grades 6-12 and all ASD-s students can be surveyed every three years. This report compares District results with provincial results. It was noted that we are very comparable to all schools in New Brunswick. Schools are telling us that 'conflict' is more prevalent than 'bullying'.

All schools were asked to "share the main types of bullying at your school including gender and grade level". Elementary schools told us that students often don't discriminate between bullying and conflict. They reported incidences of teasing and some schools identified rough play, often involving boys. Exclusion, rumours and cyber bullying were both noted for upper elementary grades, more commonly displayed in girls.

Middle and high schools shared that exclusion, rumours and cyber bullying (involving social media) are the most common types of bullying. Relationship issues were a common theme. Throughout the grades, the issues are the same; however, become more complex as the age of students increase.

Proactive and preventative strategies used in ASD-s were outlined including WITS (Walk Away, Ignore, Talk it Out, Seek Help) for K-5; Beyond the Hurt (middle and high school) as well as the LINK program. There is also a provincial mental health fitness program, On the Right Track. The Fun Friends program talks about feelings, empathy, body awareness, making friends and being happy. This program is for 4-7 year olds and builds on social and emotional intelligence.

It was noted that there is a new curriculum being piloted entitled Personal Development and Career Planning for K-5 and grades 6-12. The K-5 program will take place in 2015-16 at Chris Saunders Memorial and at the high school level at St. Stephen High, St. Malachy's and Hampton High.

In October there was a provincial LGBTQ conference held in Fredericton and there was good representation from ASD-S schools. EECD has published an LGBTQ inclusive education resource which is now available on line. Each school in ASD-S will get a hard copy. It was noted that there are funds from the Department to continue this training for elementary principals. Middle and high school administrators were trained last year.

CELEBRATE is also another way for schools to reinforce the 'positive' in their schools.

Moving forward plans include: positive learning environment plans for all schools; healthy school planner; professional development (Dr. Bill Morrison) in October and a book study for all principals entitled "School Culture Rewired".

Questions from Council were addressed by the team and included how schools address "conflict" and the differences between this and bullying; when parents get involved with these types of behavior and whether or not there is a standard policy to address this. One Council member asked if peer mediation was being used within the schools and how it was working.

Mr. Fowler thanked the team for their informative presentation and for the amazing work they do in our schools across ASD-S.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 PSSC Forums and Feedback

Mr. Fowler advised the three sessions were now complete; one in each Education Centre. He noted that there were 56 attendees in Saint John; 62 in Hampton and 34 in St. Stephen. Feedback forms were tallied and overall comments were very favourable. These forms have been posted on the portal with tonight's meeting materials. There was positive feedback for the change from a Saturday to an evening session. A few suggestions for next year will be carried forward.

4.2 Provincial Leadership Conference

Mr. Fowler advised that he, Mr. Nesbitt, Mr. Spires, Mr. Mabey and Mrs. Watson attended the Provincial Student Leadership Conference in Fredericton on November 5th. ASD-S had the largest number of student attendees. They were very engaged and quizzed DEC members on their role. There were many positive suggestions that came from this meeting. The students also met with Minister Rousselle and "grilled him"! Discussion included everything from inclusion to fund raising. Two questions were asked of each school – what is going well, and what are the challenges. Many common themes emerged, one being course availability. Notes from these sessions are being compiled and will be posted to the portal.

Mr. Nesbitt noted that our schools should be very proud of their students. Mr. Spires commented that this was a group of very talented young people who were very "articulate" when they spoke. Mr. Mabey agreed; the students representing ASD-S were not afraid to get up and talk.

4.3 Policy 409 Sustainability Review Updates: Lawrence Station, Morna Heights/Grand Bay Primary/Inglewood

Mr. Fowler advised that the first round of meetings for all schools under review had now been completed. He commented that all had gone very well. The second meeting will be held at Lawrence Station on November 24; Morna Heights on December 7th and Grand Bay Primary/Inglewood on December 8th. He noted that these are very important meetings all Council members should try to attend.

4.4 Grade Reconfiguration Updates: Whitehead, Deer Island and St. Martins

Mrs. Watson advised that reconfiguration meetings with parents and community members had been held in both Deer Island and St. Martins. Jenny MacDougall,

Director of Schools for St. Stephen is contacting all parents of Whitehead Elementary students personally to discuss a possible reconfiguration at their school which would see grades 5 and 6 students move to Grand Manan Community School. To date, feedback from this group has been positive and they feel it is a good idea.

5. New Business

5.1 Governance Policies #1-4, and 5-7 and Code of Conduct

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the Governance Policies which had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Mabey moved to accept the policies as written. Mr. Nesbitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler asked for a motion to approve the Code of Conduct policy. Motion to accept was made by Mr. Nesbitt and seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

5.2 District Education Plan Update

Mrs. Watson commented that each year we update the District Education Plan and bring it forward to Council asking for a motion to approve the updated version for posting on the ASD-S website. Staff will report on each of the four ends policies/strategies after Christmas.

Ends Policy #1 - Suzanne LeBlanc Healey noted that a few strategies were extended, but no changes to the goals. Formative assessment – changes were added and coordinators are now using the framework outlined.

Ends Policy #2 - Mrs. Watson noted that much of tonight's presentation falls under this policy; positive, safe and inclusive learning and working environments. She advised that digital citizenship work is on-going with a very active ASD-S team.

As well, John MacDonald is putting the ASD-S District EMO (Emergency Measures Organization) team together. Mrs. Watson referred to the Point Lepreau exercise with Fundy Shores School being involved.

Ends Policy # 3 - a communication survey to parents on how they would like to receive information has been completed. Approximately 1,200 surveys were completed and are being reviewed. Information on what was learned will come at a later date.

Ends Policy #4 – positive mental fitness – tonight's presentation talked about this as well.

Overall, minor tweaks were made to the plan. Mr. Fowler then asked for a motion to accept the updated plan for posting on the ASD-S website. Mr. Cullinan moved that the updated plan be accepted and posted on the ASD-S website. Mr. Olinskie seconded the motion. Motion carried. Mr. Boudreau opposed the motion.

Mrs. Watson advised that with regard to the Attendance Matters initiative, PSSC Chairs have been asked for volunteers to attend parent focus groups within their Centre. Meetings will be held at a later date.

Mr. Fowler remarked that he attended the Saint John High School PSSC meeting and he agreed DEC could lead to provide an evening for the Saint John Education Centre high schools to host a parent session in the new year on mental health issues.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Watson advised that PSSC focus groups are being organized as we expand this Attendance Matters program within the community. A letter will also be sent to mayors and community organizations with a request to meet with them and discuss ways to build community awareness.

She noted that during Principal and Vice Principal meetings there is an opportunity for schools to share what they are doing to promote Attendance Matters in their school. Lori Doyle, Principal at Prince Charles School provides a certificate and a white bracelet for perfect attendance. We are looking for a spot on the portal to park these good ideas.

SPRs (Department Heads) from ASD-S will meet for the first time and focus their discussions on curriculum.

On Monday, November 23rd Anne Davies, a well-known author on assessment for learning will be speaking in Fredericton. There will be fourteen coordinators and directors attending from ASD-S.

It is the time once again in all three centres when we host fund raisers for the United Way. This organization assists our schools all across the District. In Saint John, the Dessert Trolley will roll down the halls of the Saint John Education Centre bringing coffee and sweets to all for a donation to United Way. Other centres all have something planned in the near future.

Mrs. Watson noted that a Vice Principals' meeting will be held at District Office on November 25th and the Principals on December 3rd. Principals will focus on dealing with difficult situations and conversations and begin a book study – "School Culture Rewired". Mrs. Watson commented that Principals of middle schools met together during the last week of October and had an opportunity to discuss the tenants of a middle school and what this experience should be. They plan to have a follow up meeting.

Mrs. Watson advised that we will be receiving refugee students in our District but she does not have a lot of information at this time. She noted that Lynn MacDonald, our International Student Coordinator will be part of a provincial committee to address this initiative.

Diversity & Respect week in New Brunswick replaces Anti-bullying Week. Mrs. Watson feels this is a great title – we have a lot of diversity within our District.

A very successful Canada Career Week within the District. Many career fairs took place including one at St. Stephen High School, Simonds High School, Sussex Regional High and at the HMCS Brunswicker. There were also four grade 9 students at the District Office for Take Your Kids to Work day.

Earlier this month an open house was held at Havelock School for the west side community to see the plans for their new school. This included families from Havelock, Seawood and St. Patrick's School. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development had representatives at the meeting and the architect of the new school was also in attendance.

Many schools across the District will be attending the upcoming "We Day" celebrations in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Schools include River Valley Middle, Harbour View High, Fairvale Elementary, Quispamsis Middle, Harry Miller Middle, Hampton Middle, Sussex Middle and St. Stephen Middle School.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler advised that the Minister's Forum was held November 13/14 and on the Saturday evening, the Minister's Excellence in Teaching Awards were held.

The DEC Chairs met at a working supper with the NBTA where they looked for common ground to partner on. The emphasis was on inclusion and how it's working – both groups will share their data. There will be a working group meeting in January to discuss.

There was a meeting with Minister Rousselle on Saturday morning. Darlene Whitehouse-Sheehan provided a gap analysis on the Math pilot project which was very informative. There was an update from Tony Webber on 409 reviews and suggestions around how we formulate our recommendations to the Minister to ensure all bases are covered.

The Minister's Excellence in Teaching Awards was a wonderful event with the three ASD-S winners in attendance with family and friends. Mark Perry (KVHS), Rose Theriault (RVMS) and JoAnn Watters (Princess Elizabeth). The videos were very well done and the three winners will be invited to attend our Christmas Reception where they will be introduced to Council and their vignettes played.

Work is being done on raising awareness with the public for the upcoming May DEC elections.

Mr. Fowler recently attended a PSSC meeting at Saint John High School and commented on how well the meeting was conducted. It included topics such as budget, SIP, Principal's report and Student Council Report.

6.3 Correspondence

None

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Spires spoke about the meetings that have been taking place with regard to the grade 6 students moving to Fundy High this fall. Jenny MacDougall has been chairing the meetings and Mr. Tanner (Principal at Fundy High) has provided updates on what has been done at the school to get ready for these students. The group is now working on a new name. Mr. Spires congratulated the group for their work and says that all is on target for this fall.

Mr. Campbell suggested that we might like to invite students to Council to speak on student led initiatives in the future.

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, December 9th, 2015 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary