

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – November 9, 2016

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets:

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Suzanne LeBlanc Healey, Director Curriculum & Instruction; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; 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 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 October 12, 2016 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Mabey moved that the Minutes be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Presentation

Mr. Gary Hall, Director Early Childhood Services introduced team members Laura Garland, Talk With Me and Speech Language Pathologist; Sara Richards, Early Learning Literacy Lead and Lissa McNaughton Dickie, Coordinator, Early Childhood Services.

Mr. Hall began by reminding Council that Early Childhood moved to Education from Social Development in 2010 and he noted that there is a very high level of integration with K-2 within ASD-S. ASD-S wants the complete integration to happen as soon as possible with all staff falling under the District (some are currently EECD staff).

Mr. Hall asked that Council and the District encourage the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to continue to integrate early childhood at every opportunity. It is important that we recognize the importance of early childhood meshing with K-12 and support the movement of working together.

Lissa McNaughton Dickie spoke about the Early Childhood Coordinators and some of their key responsibilities: to ensure the safety and security of children within licensed child care; to monitor, license and support curriculum implementation within the early learning facilities, and to complete annual inspections and several unannounced spot checks throughout the year. She advised that there are 140 facilities including community daycare homes, early learning facilities and after school programs within ASD-S.

She spoke about the new Oral Language Standards and the importance of oral language skills and its connection to future literacy success.

Sarah Richards spoke of the new role of Early Literacy Lead where she will work in conjunction with Early Childhood Services and ASD-S. She will coordinate the 2016-17 Bridging Project and provide literacy support to “new to career” and/or “new to grade” kindergarten teachers. She will also provide literacy support to early childhood centres as identified by the Early Childhood Coordinators and professional learning to teachers and early childhood educators.

The Bridging Project is a partnership between early childhood centres and kindergarten teachers from feeder schools. They look at similarities with the other’s curriculum, find best practices which could be incorporated in both environments and bridge any gaps that may exist. The project came about as a result of discussions concerning the integration of early childhood and K-2 learning. The project looks at the challenges staff were having with young children who were transitioning to kindergarten and how early learning strategies and curriculum could be incorporated into our kindergarten programs. It is believed that if early childhood educators had a better understanding of the goals of K-2 education, they could better support them within a framework that is child centered, guided by the interests of the child and play based. The project was rolled out in 2014-15 at two schools and in 2015-16 expanded to four more. The plan is to roll it out to 12 kindergarten classrooms and 12 early childhood centres in

2016-17 (5 in the Hampton Education Centre, 6 in the Saint John Education Centre and 1 in the St. Stephen Education Centre).

Laura Garland spoke about the connection between language, pre-literacy skills and school success. She talked about the Books, Books, Books workshops that were given to early childhood educators and K-2 teachers to share best practices in supporting children's language and pre-literacy skill development. She noted that a Living SJ/Achieve Literacy grant provided funding to purchase 45 books for childcare centres, schools and service providers. 19 of the 21 childcare centres and all literacy leads in the priority communities of Saint John have been trained in this program and 33 of the 66 childcare centres in Saint John the Kennebecasis Valley have been trained. Next steps will be to conduct a follow up visit to all childcare centres who have been trained; train all childcare providers in ASD-S along with other service providers and provide sessions for parents.

Questions from Council followed the presentation and were addressed by staff.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that Council send a letter to the Minister with a request to speed up the integration process of early childhood. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Hall and staff for their presentation.

4. Business Arising

4.1 PSSC Orientation Session Update

Mr. Fowler noted that there was a good turnout for all three sessions and that detailed feedback from each session was posted on the portal for Council to review.

4.2 Saint John Central City Schools Consultations Update

Mr. Fowler advised that Council has now completed 6 of the 7 scheduled first meetings at the central city schools which are part of the Policy 409 review. Monday, November 14 will be at Hazen-White/St. Francis School.

He felt that the participation and feedback have been good with valid points being raised. The schedule for the second round of meetings has been posted.

4.3 Update on New West Side School in Saint John – Naming Subcommittee

Mr. Mabey advised Council that he committee had held two meetings to date where they reviewed Policy 409 requirements for the naming of the new west side K-5 school. Mr. Mabey read for Council the information piece that will go out to the schools, the community and parents/students, and will be posted on the ASD-S website. He felt that it is very important for the students to have an opportunity to participate in this

process. All entries must be submitted prior to the Christmas Break and from there three names will be selected and presented to DEC in the new year. Following that, they will be submitted to the Minister for a final decision on the new name.

4.4 NBSLA Conference Update

Mrs. Watson noted how pleased she was that so many students and DEC members attended the session. It was very informative and notes are now being compiled on feedback received from the students – what is going well and what are the challenges in your school.

Council members commented that students were articulate, and very honest in their feedback. Council members attending the session were impressed with their candor. Students showed great ownership/pride in their school.

5. New Business

5.1 Governance Policies #5 - 7

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions, concerns or changes with regard to the Governance Policies #5 - 7 which had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Nesbitt moved that the policies be accepted as written. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5.2 Entry Point for Early French Immersion

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the District Education Council for ASD-W sent a letter to the Minister with regard to their concerns over the return to the grade one entry point. The motion made by their Council was posted with Council's meeting materials. He advised that ASD-W asked if ASD-S would send a letter in support of their stand on the early entry change. He stated that he felt the grade 3 entry point has not been around long enough to assess its success/failure. He asked for a discussion on the request from ASD-W.

Discussion included concerns over staff/costs; the difficulty finding qualified teachers; the length of time the grade 3 entry point has been around; the fact there would be too many entry points to manage (grandfathering). After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Spires moved that Council support Anglophone West District Education Council in their expression of disappointment with the recent announcement regarding the entry point for French Immersion in September 2017 and that introducing Grade One entry for French Immersion at this time is not a sound decision. Mr. Nesbitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5.3 Town of Sussex Corner – Surplus Land Request

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the Briefing Note that was prepared and posted for Council in response to a request from the Town of Sussex Corner to declare a parcel of land

located on the Sussex Corner Elementary School site as surplus to the needs of the school district.

It was noted during the discussion that this was a large piece of land and that Sussex Corner Elementary students play and do activities on the area in question. It is also used for school and community events.

Mr. O'Connor moved that Council not declare the land surplus. The motion was seconded by Mr. Regenbogen. Motion carried. It was noted that the District is happy to continue with the current agreement that is in place and looks forward to working with the Village of Sussex Corner in the future.

5.4 Saint John Education Centre – Surplus Land Request

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the Briefing Note that was prepared and posted for Council in response to a request from Brian and Faye Nickerson of 27 Sherwood Drive to declare a parcel of land located adjacent to Champlain Heights School (Lot 27A) as surplus to the needs of the school district.

It was noted that the land is part of the Champlain Heights School property and is located at the bottom of a steep grade in the back of the property. It is approximately 33 feet wide x 100 feet long and that the District would have no use for it.

Mr. Spires moved that Council declare Lot 27A as per the attached document, surplus to the needs of the school district. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Updates

Mr. Watson advised that on Monday, October 31st we learned of the unexpected death of Judy O'Ree, a long time Education Assistant at St. Malachy's High School. Judy spent the last fifteen years of her career at St. Malachy's High School supporting students and teachers. She will be missed. Mrs. Watson asked for a moment of silence in her memory.

Principals of middle/high schools had a two day meeting in Moncton in October to learn more about the Ten Year Plan, "Everyone at Their Best". There were PD sessions, information on the plan and opportunities for Principal sharing. On October 25 & 26 Principals with K-2 in their schools had their provincial session.

Tonight Dr. Daniel Chorney from Nova Scotia will present to parents and families at Fundy Middle and High School at 7:00 pm. He will speak on Child and Adolescent Anxiety – What Parents Can Do.

On Thursday, Dr. Chorney will speak during the morning session at a Principals' meeting in Saint John on Child & Adolescent Anxiety and School Refusal – How Educators Can Help. Carmen Meehan and the Centre Wellness Facilitators will participate in the afternoon session.

Last week was Canada Career Week – St. Stephen High hosted the first day of the career week activities and had the local radio station set up in the lobby for their morning broadcast. On Wednesday and Thursday grade 11 and 12 year students had the opportunity to attend the event at the HMCS Brunswicker, and then Sussex High on Friday. Wednesday was also Take Our Kids To Work for grade 9's.

Three Sussex Middle School teachers have been recognized for their exceptional contributions to the understanding of Canadian history. They are the recipients of the 2016 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching – Brian Clancy, Lisa Sheppard and Catherine Morneault. They jointly developed a project that saw their grade six FI students publish a book-length collection of short essays to commemorate the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge during the First World War. The teachers will be presented with their award by the Governor General on November 28, 2016 and they will receive a \$2,500 cash prize and the school will be awarded \$1,000.

Unofficial enrolment numbers were posted for Council. The decline is very small this year, which is good news for the District. At this time, ASD-S has 22,971 students, down 81 students over last year. The Hampton Education Centre saw a loss of 184 students whereas the Saint John and St. Stephen Education Centres have seen gains, mainly due to the arrival of the Syrian students.

Program Information Nights for grades K, 2 and 5 parents which are normally held in January/February time frame each year, are being held early this year. Sessions are scheduled in all centres between November 16th and November 30th. Numbers need to be in to EECD by mid-January 2017. There will be positions advertised soon for two new FSL Subject Coordinators for the Grade 1 program.

In January, staff will report on the ENDS #5 policy on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities. Last spring Pam Miller led a group meeting of middle/high school Principals whose schools have a GSA group and in November, she will host students from this group.

There has been considerable attention in the media recently with the release of the provincial assessment results – these were discussed at the provincial Principals meetings in Moncton a few weeks ago. The grade 6 assessment was a change in format and question type to align more with PISA and PCAP – and we learn from these results. The questions asked of our students in reading, numeracy and science were examining higher order thinking skills, and a student's ability to connect their knowledge and skills to be able to solve the problem. The results indicate that we have more work to do and we will take on that challenge. This fits very well with our focus on formative assessment in ASD-S. At the grade 2 level our District was just above the provincial average, and we struggle to get to a higher level. We have 22 K-2 leads as part of the work of the Ten

Year Education Plan and have confidence we will see gains. The December meeting will see a report from staff on the District Report Card.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that the Minister's Excellence in Education Awards would be taking place on November 19th in Fredericton. There are three ASD-S recipients. The Minister's Forum is also scheduled for the 18th and 19th in Fredericton.

Mr. Fowler suggested that in late January/early February Council will schedule a weekend retreat to map out an agenda for the next four years. Dates to follow.

Mr. Fowler advised that the Spring Symposium this year is scheduled to be held at the Delta here in Saint John in May.

6.3 Correspondence

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

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. O'Connor noted that Loch Lomond School was a recipient of the Best Buy School Technology Grant and will receive up to \$10K to build a technology centre at their school. He also advised that St. Martins School recently raised \$175 for the Terry Fox Walk.

Mr. Mabey mentioned the St. Patrick's elementary school Remembrance Day program and that it was a very touching ceremony. Mr. Spires noted a Remembrance Day program put on by twenty preschoolers. He suggested that Council members should attend these ceremonies if they can.

Mr. Alexander advised of the Grand Opening of the Discovery Park at Sussex Elementary School. It is a wonderful playground – designed for all kids, is 85% accessible and marries classic equipment with green space. It came together with community support and a lot of hard work.

Mr. Fowler noted that the December meeting will be a short one and following the meeting, Council and spouses are invited to gather for a Christmas celebration.

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 14, 2016 beginning at 6:30 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