

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – January 8, 2020

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Lory-Ann MacAskill, Kristen Murphy, Bernie Regenbogen, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Richard Malone, Heather Gillis, Justin Tinker

Regrets: Larry Boudreau, Wayne Spires

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Peter Smith, Director Education Support Services, Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Jessica Hanlon, Director Communications, 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 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. Seconded by Ms. Murphy. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the December 11, 2019 meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Malone moved that the Minutes be approved. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None.

3. Member's Notebook

Ms. Sherbo commented that the two Christmas concerts at Rothesay Elementary were amazing and very well attended with approximately 200-300 people attending.

Ms. Gillis attended the Christmas Market at Bayside Middle. The Grade 6 English students worked hard to design their own business and create one-of-a-kind products to sell. She was impressed to see what the students had accomplished, and many products sold out very quickly. Students were required to donate 10% of their sales to charity. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Regenbogen attended as well, along with Mrs. Watson.

4. Presentations

4.1 ENDS # 2 – Literacy, Numeracy, Science

Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Jillian Ingalls Garey, Subject Coordinator, provided Council with an overview of what's been happening under ENDS #2 - to demonstrate continuous improvement toward meeting provincial targets in literacy, numeracy, science (English and French Immersion) and to improve learning in and application of the arts, trades and technology. The monitoring report was posted with Council's meeting materials for their review and forms part of these Minutes.

Mr. Hall provided a brief overview of the main strategies focused on building capacity within school communities with balanced assessments across all curricula and to have high functioning Professional Learning Communities at the District and in all schools/early learning centres. He noted that these initiatives are on target.

Ms. Ingalls Garey updated Council on balanced assessment practices in our schools and talked about the need to encourage practices that don't penalize students for mistakes. She explained formative and summative assessments and provided highlights of the assessment "journey" at ASD-S over the past several years. Ms. Ingalls Garey also provided Council with detailed information on the Formative Assessment for K-12 and the opportunity for high schools to submit assessment proposals and access District funds to further the work happening in their school with assessment, or to begin the assessment process. These documents were posted with Council's meeting materials and form part of these Minutes.

Following the presentation, Ms. Sherbo moved that the monitoring report for ENDS #2 be accepted as presented. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Hall and Ms. Ingalls Garey for an informative presentation.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Response to Request for Information re Morna Heights School

Mrs. Watson provided information to Council that had been requested at the December meeting. She advised that two air quality tests have been done at the school, in different areas, and some remediation was recommended in an area under the stage, and this has been completed. There will be a follow up test this Friday. The company stated that there were no serious concerns in this regard.

The water at the school is safe for washing hands, but not for drinking. This has been the case for many years, and bottled water continues to be available at the school. Council was advised that any school that is on a well is tested monthly. The water at Morna Heights was tested recently and there is E.coli and chloroform in the water; however, these are not uncommon and do not pose a health risk as long as students do not drink the water. Possible options to improve the water were discussed but they would be expensive undertakings and unlikely to change the outcome.

Council had also asked staff to provide 5 year enrolment projections for eight schools located in the area comparing the current configuration and the proposed configuration, and all students can be accommodated at their schools based on current projections. A projection that considered if all current FI students from the Morna catchment area were enrolled in FI at Morna to see what the population could be and an outline of the projected savings if Morna Heights was to close were reviewed. The documents will be posted on the ASD-S website.

Comment was made that some members of the school community believe that if the FI students from the catchment area all attended Morna, that it would mean an increase in enrolment; however, the projections show that it would likely mean a lot of combined classes due to small numbers. Morna Heights is not large enough to support two programs.

Question was raised if Morna was to close, and a family wanted to apply to remain in the local area rather than attend a school in the city, would that be possible? Mrs. Watson advised that the District has a policy whereby parents can apply to have their children attend a school “out of zone”.

6. New Business

6.1 Council Staff Relationships #4, 5 & 6

Mr. Fowler suggested that CSR #5 be removed from review tonight as it needs to be updated to reflect the new process for the Superintendent’s Evaluation and he will provide a revised version at the February meeting for review. Council was in agreement.

Comment was made that the changes to CSR #5 were made in the fall of 2018 and have not yet been dealt with.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that CSR #4 and #6 be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Malone.

Comment was made that in CSR #4, the language provides an opportunity to change the boundary between Council and Superintendent domains, and by not reviewing this policy, we are keeping in place the same operations of the DEC since we started.

There being no further comments, motion carried. Ms. Sherbo voted against the motion.

7. Information Items

7.1 Superintendent’s Report

Ms. Watson advised Council that the final enrolment numbers for 2019 have been confirmed and the District saw an increase of 260 students. Enrolment is now at 23, 163. This is positive news. She noted that a media release had been posted on the website with regard to UNESCO schools. Mrs. Watson commented on the numerous Christmas initiatives of staff and students across the District which have now been gathered and are available for viewing on a “sway”. The link to this information will be sent along to MPs, MLAs, and PSSC Chairs as evidence of promoting the importance of being “good citizens” and global citizenship. It has since been shared with Mayors.

Mrs. Watson advised Council of two recent student deaths – Michael Kraszewski, a grade 11 student at Sussex Regional High School whose death is being investigated as a homicide; and, Solange LaFlamme, a previous grade 2 student of Rothesay Elementary School who was being homeschooled. Her death was the result of murder/suicide by her mother. She asked for a moment of silence in their memories.

7.2 Chair’s Report and Update

Mr. Fowler had nothing new to report at this time.

7.3 Correspondence

None. All correspondence was posted for Council’s review.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary