

**ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)**  
**DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Meeting – December 9, 2020**

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met virtually on Wednesday, December 9, 2020. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

**Council Members:**

Rob Fowler, Chair; Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Jonathan Barry, Wayne Spires, Justin Tinker, Dan O'Connor, Bernie Regenbogen, Heather Gillis, Kristen Murphy, Richard Malone

**Regrets:** Lory-Ann MacAskill

**ASD-S Staff:**

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communication, Peter Smith, Director of Education Support Services, John MacDonald, Director Finance & Administration, Susan Moffatt, Director of Human Resources, Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre, Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre, Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre, 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 referred to the Agenda for the meeting and advised item 2.3 would be removed as no members of the public were in attendance due to being in the orange phase of the pandemic. Mr. Fowler asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Agenda be approved as amended. Seconded by Mr. Barry. Motion carried.

**2.2 Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting and asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Barry. Motion carried.

**2.3 Public Comment**

Removed from the agenda as no members of the public were in attendance due to being in the orange phase of the pandemic.

**3. Member's Notebook**

Mr. O'Connor advised that he attended the FACE Annual General Meeting (virtually) where he learned of their newly adopted mission statement and other good information. He commented on a video that was presented which provided a 3 minute overview and was very well done. The video has not yet been posted on the FACE website. Mrs. Watson will follow up with Lissa McNaughton-Dickie who is responsible for Early Childhood to locate the video. Mr. O'Connor also wanted to acknowledge Michelle Banks at Simonds High for her work in promoting outdoor learning.

Mr. Barry commented on positive feedback received from parents on their comfort level with the "safety" of their children in school. Operational plans have been critical to ensure safety for all. He also noted that

virtual parent teacher interviews were successful, and it might be a good idea to keep this option in the future.

Ms. Gillis noted that Bayside Middle School provided “contact cards” to all students with contact information for mental health services available to them if they needed someone to talk with. This was done as the mental health awareness night had to be cancelled due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

#### **4. Presentations**

##### **4.1 School Operational Plans**

Clare Tooley, Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator for ASD-S addressed Council to provide information on the school operational plans, including how they were developed and what was observed at the schools during walk-thrus.

Ms. Tooley advised that each of our 69 schools were required to create an operational plan using a template that was created in consultation with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Public Health, WorkSafe NB along with ASD-S representatives. Schools then modified the template to their specific school layout and needs. Plans were reviewed at the District level and revised as required. The plans are reviewed and updated monthly and available to parents on each school website.

The EECD K-12 “Return to School” document is the comprehensive and first reference point for each of the 14 sections included in the school plans.

Ms. Tooley then shared with Council the many ways our schools have been creative in embracing these changes as seen during walk thrus that were done in conjunction with Healthy Learners Nurses Alberta Stanton Rousselle, Ann Hogan and Ms. Tooley, September through November. Schools have highlighted the positive use of masks, mask storage, outdoor classrooms, physical distancing for classroom bubbles, safe travel within hallways and the storage of equipment for bubble classes, to mention a few.

Question was raised with regard to student absenteeism due to parents not feeling safe when the outbreaks occurred, and a perceived lack of transparency in contact tracing. Mrs. Watson explained the communication process for when an outbreak is identified within the ASD-S school district and noted that other districts may follow different protocols for this process. The main communication has been that if families do not receive a call from Public Health, that is a good thing!

#### **5. Business Arising from Minutes**

##### **5.1 City of Saint John Snow Removal**

John MacDonald advised Council of a meeting that was held between the City of Saint John transportation and pedestrian traffic services departments, ASD-S Transportation Manager, Jamie Tait, and himself. The purpose of the meeting was to try and minimize disruption to sidewalk clearing in and around our schools. Cuts to sidewalk clearing had been proposed by the city of Saint John due to a funding shortfall for 2021 resulting in job and salary cuts for city employees and the loss of two sidewalk snow plows from service.

During the meeting the city reviewed 13 different routing documents that covered all city sidewalks and their reasoning for suggested changes. The District’s concern for students walking (under 1.5 km) was discussed as well as sidewalks in close proximity to our schools. The city will work to be flexible in these areas as much as possible and has already changed the priority on some streets. The city will also be looking to reduce service to one side of the street where possible as many have streets have sidewalks on both sides. Mr. MacDonald felt confident that the city will do their best to address our concerns. There will be some streets impacted, but the majority will hopefully be maintained.

Once the city receives final approval for their plan from Council, they will provide the District with the information on a map and the District will be able to overlay it on our transportation mapping system to see what areas may be impacted.

## **6. New Business**

### **6.1 Expenditure Plan Update**

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the Expenditure Plan to November 30, 2020. He noted that we are forecasting to break-even at year end and went on to highlight some of challenges including: a shortage of funding for EAs (funded for 775 out of 846 required); a shortfall in operations due mainly to extra cleaning supplies and equipment due to COVID; the changes in seating on our buses requiring the addition of 12 new buses; additional expenditures in District Office due to the new contract for photocopiers; additional expenditures in IT for new equipment in the additional classroom spaces due to the change in class sizes for K-8 (i.e. smartboards);

Some savings were realized due to the closure of schools from March – June (i.e. salary replacement costs, heating, etc.). Mr. MacDonald explained that the Department provided funds to cover some COVID expenses up front but as the year went on, realized that there were significant savings due to school closures, and stopped funding. He noted that any savings at year end will be used to balance out the additional expenses due to COVID.

Following the presentation Mr. O'Connor moved that the Expenditure Plan update be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Motion carried.

## **7. Information Items**

### **7.1 Superintendent's Report and Update**

Mrs. Watson advised that her report had been posted with Council's meeting materials for their review.

She highlighted the following from her report: a summary of the COVID 19 outbreaks within four schools in the District and a possible exposure in another; the great support received from Principals and Healthy Learners Nurses; the hundreds of questions that followed the outbreaks; Dr. Barker's TEAMS meetings with ASD-S administrators and also Campobello families, which were very well received; 4 days technology training for the five technology coaches and coordinator, Darren White; 64 innovation grants totaling 60K (42 grants were awarded in the Saint John Education Centre, 17 in the Hampton Education Centre and 5 in the St. Stephen Education Centre); the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Ring a Bell campaign hosted provincially by Lawrence Station Elementary School; launching of Policy 713, Sexual Orientation & Gender Identities; how community partners are maintaining engagement with our students and supporting the Christmas activities in our schools; virtual parent teacher conferences and a follow up survey; holiday card design winner (and also winner of the Child & Youth Advocate card design), Amelia Cyr from St. Malachy's High. She welcomed Melissa Savoie who will be assuming the role of Director of Schools in the Saint John Education Centre when Paul Smith retires in a couple of weeks.

### **7.2 Chair's Report and Update**

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the Minister's Forum was held virtually on November 30. Unfortunately, the Minister had technical difficulties and wasn't able to continuously be on line, so the majority of the meeting was hosted ADM Craig Caldwell. The next Minister's Forum is tentatively scheduled as virtual for February 19, 2021.

Mr. Fowler noted that the vacancy for Charlotte County had been advertised and a deadline was set for Friday, December 11 for applications to be received at the District Office.

Mr. Fowler was happy to note that Policy 713, Sexual and Gender Identity, had now been adopted by the Department of Education and Early Childhood after many years in development. He went on to

explain how the policy had originated, the long path to final approval, and the importance of all students feeling “safe” in their school.

He advised the Minister’s Excellence in Education Awards are scheduled to be held mid-February in conjunction with the Minister’s Forum.

**7.3 Correspondence**

None, all had been posted.

**8. Adjournment**

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening’s Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Council may choose to attend in person or virtually.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Rob Fowler, Chair

---

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary