

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – February 9, 2022

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met virtually on Wednesday, February 9, 2022. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Chair; Heather Gillis, Vice-Chair; Jane Logan, Wayne Spires, David Connell, Amanda Hamm, Beth McQuinn Nixon, Richard Malone, Shelly Merrill-MacKillop, Jonathan Barry and Amanda Henderson-Matthews.

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications; Ryan Price, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Melissa Savoie, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Peter Smith, Director of Education - Support Services, John MacDonald, Director, Finance & Administration, Marc Godin, Supervisor of Data and Accountability, Lissa McNaughton-Dickie, Director, Early Childhood Services and Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He advised that Kristen Murphy was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Mr. Nesbitt began the meeting respectfully acknowledging the territory in which we gather as the ancestral homelands of the Wolastoqey, Mi'gmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples. We strive for respectful relationships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation and honour this beautiful land together.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Agenda for the meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Logan. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the January 12, 2022 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. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Gillis. Motion carried.

3. Superintendent's Report & Update

Mrs. Watson advised that her report had been posted earlier in the week for Council to review.

She provided information that the students continued with on-line/at home learning, however, some students were invited to be in school each day or for part of the day. The Education Support Services teams and administrators worked to identify students for this initiative. Transportation was also provided for these students. On average about 2300 students participated (10%).

She mentioned that it was announced on January 24, 2022 that schools would be returning to in-person learning on January 31, 2022 for K-8 and February 2, 2022 for high schools. There were updates to the EECD Winter Plan documents and they were reviewed with Principals and Vice Principals before they welcomed students back.

Mrs. Watson mentioned Schools/offices where positive cases have been identified are recorded at 5:00pm daily on the Covid Dashboard on the ASD-S Website. Weekend cases are included on the Monday report. Contact tracing is no longer happening, and no longer have rapid test kits (POCT) are no longer distributed which is a significant change for families and staff from December.

She provided information about the “When Children Succeed Project” supported by BAPI (Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative, Living SJ, EECD and ASD-S). The goal of this initiative is to close the achievement gap at K-2 in a number of Saint John Centre schools with the highest rates of childhood poverty. This project ended in March 2020 but was updated and restarted in fall of 2021.

She mentioned that data has been collected and monitored for numeracy, literacy and attendance. A baseline was established in September and progress was measured late fall based on the results in relation to that baseline. The baseline indicated that grade 1 and 2 students began this school year behind the grade level standards, however the data indicates students are on a trajectory to gain at least a year’s worth of learning by the end of June.

Mrs. Watson spoke about virtual PD sessions for Curriculum Coaches that continue in the area of positive education and the integration of social-emotional learning into curriculum outcomes. Coaches work directly with teachers, and it is critical they have this knowledge.

She mentioned Staff Appreciation Week which is happening this week. During this week we especially appreciate the work of each employee group – educators and support staff as well as our 69 Principals and their Vice Principals who provide that day to day leadership through the many phases of this pandemic.

She spoke about the on-going collaboration with curriculum coaches to support the embedment of First Nations culture and perspectives into curriculum – including a grades 3-5 exploration unit, and a grades 6-8 middle school social studies unit plan on Indigenous world views, land and treaty education, and a drum program for music.

4. Presentation

4.1 ASD-S Provincial Assessment Results – French Second Language

Marc Godin presented to the DEC members the ASD-S Assessment Results 2020-2021 for the Anglophone Sector. The presentation has been posted on the ASD-S website under “About Us”.

Mr. Godin presented information from the Reading Assessment for French second language from early immersion (grades 4, 6 & 10), late immersion (grades 6 & 10) and post-intensive French (grades 6 & 10). With the exception of grade 6 and 10 for Post Intensive ASD-S is above the provincial average.

Oral proficiency assessments are given at grades 6, 10 and 12 (the grade 6 assessment has not been administered since 2018-2019). The results are reported as the percentage of students reaching the intermediate level. ASD-S is slightly below the province at grade 10 but by grade 12 is above the average with 95.2% at intermediate.

4.2 PALS – Community Schools (Partners Assisting Local Schools)

Erica Lane, Debbie Fisher, Susan Tipper and Michael Welton shared a presentation about PALS and Community Schools. They highlighted the PALS Partnership and how it began at Prince Charles School in 2000 with the vision evolving from Mr. J.K. Irving. Over a period of more than two decades, one school and one partner have grown to more than 30 schools and 150 partners and this growth continues. PALS has also spread to other parts of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The Community Schools program was launched provincially in June of 2007 and designated schools were given a School-based Coordinator. In SJEC the seven schools in the inner city have a dedicated coordinator. They assess the needs of the school by focusing on nutrition, feeding and clothing the students.

The PALS program expanded in 2010 at St. Malachy's Memorial High School when they started a new program PALS En Route to Success – this program provides a 4-year high school learning opportunity that is project based, hands-on, and experiential. This year the program expanded to Saint John High.

“Making a difference in the life of a child can have a powerful impact, not only on that young person, but also on the future of our community. If our work together for young people serves as a model to make a difference in other schools in our community, that would be the best reward of all.” James K. Irving

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Policy Review – 4.6 & 4.7

Mr. Nesbitt reviewed the revision to policies 4.6 and 4.7 and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Gillis moved to accept the revised version of policies 4.6 and 4.7 and be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Logan. Motion carried.

5.2 Provincial Sports during School Hours

A letter was written and sent to 19 various sport associations regarding the concern about student attendance and organizing events during the hours of instruction..

5.3 Policy Committee Update

Mr. Malone presented the Draft ASD-S DEC Executive Limitation policies.

Mr. Nesbit asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved to accept the policies be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Hamm. Motion carried.

5.4 First Nations DEC Representative

Mrs. Watson mentioned that an ad was posted in the Telegraph Journal, Kings County Record, St. Croix Courier and on social media. The deadline for application is February 18, 2022.

6. New Business

Mr. Nesbit indicated there was no new business at this time.

7. Information Items

7.1 Member's Notebook

Ms. Gillis mentioned that she and Ms. Logan will be attending a “ It Takes A Village” Committee meeting. Ms. Gillis announced the virtual open houses for middle school students who will be attending high school in the fall. There will be a video posted by each high school.

Mr. Spires indicated he will be in touch with three of his schools regarding their PSSC meetings (SSES, MES and SSHS).

Ms. Hamm mentioned that in January, she had the privilege to attend the Harbour View High School PSSC meeting with Jane Logan. They provided an update on the Education Governance Reform consultation process that is currently taking place. During this meeting, they received an update that the Reimagine High School Project has had its start delayed due to COVID19. Everyone is hopeful to get this initiative back on track ASAP. The HVHS team is excited to launch their virtual open house.

Ms. Hamm expressed a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to all staff in Anglophone School District South as we celebrate staff appreciation week. Staff continue to step up, time and time again, going above and beyond to support both students and each other during these unprecedented times.

Ms. Merrill-MacKillop attended Back Bay Elementary PSSC meeting February 7, 2022. They discussed ideas on how to spend the remaining \$325 of their PSSC budget. Attendance has been consistent for 40/42 students. Wondering if they were going to be able to hold Welcome to Kindergarten day as well as have new

students attend classes. Online learning is going relatively well with two half hour virtual sessions daily. EAs had scheduled time with online classes.

Mr. Connell announced the good news that Glen Falls School has re-opened after the fire. They are excited to be back and all is good.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Activities Since Last Meeting

Friday, January 21, 2022 – Virtual Governance Engagement Session

Monday, January 24, 2022 – Virtual meeting with Kris Austin, People's Alliance Leader – part of the Council of DEC Chairs meeting with the political parties.

Monday, January 24, 2022 – Virtual PSSC with Quispamsis Middle School – good discussion on the Wellness Centre being created as well as use of PSSC funds, classroom bubbles and masking,

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 – Appeal hearing at District Office.

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 – Virtual PSSC Meeting at Lakefield Elementary – good discussion on School Improvement Plan, PSSC funds, student learning gaps and return to in person learning.

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 – Joined virtual Policy Committee meeting.

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 – Virtual meeting with Roger Melanson, Interim Liberal Leader (with DEC Chairs).

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 – Virtual monthly meeting with Deputy Education Minister and Assistant Deputy Education Minister and the Council of DEC Chairs.

The Council of DEC Chairs met with Connie Keating and Ardith Shirley of NBTA for the purpose of letting them know DEC concerns – not against change but during the pandemic stability is needed in the system. Looking at the current model and how to make it better may be best at this time.

Mr. Nesbitt spoke about the Language Commissioners Report (Judge Yvette Finn and John McLaughlin) and how they are reviewing the Official Languages Act. Encouraged each member to go on-line and read the report.

7.3 Correspondence

None. All was posted.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and reminded Council the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:52p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Chair

Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary