

Superintendent's Report for DEC May 11, 2022

ENDS #1: Provide a safe, healthy, and welcoming educational environment for learners, staff, families, and partners

Over the last two weeks we have been seeing fewer staff days coded as sick leave which is good news after our struggles through late March and April. This is the first week we have not had a large group of 80 supply teachers booked for daily work within a cluster or pair of schools. This week most jobs are being picked up through our supply teacher/casual EA/ Administrative Assistant booking system. If a school remains short Coaches will be dispatched and for Administrative Assistant unfilled jobs, support staff from our offices are willing to help.

On April 28, 2022, the District Joint Health and Safety Committee observed a moment of silence for the day of mourning for those who lost their lives in the workplace. Provincially, flags were at half-mast which would include our schools.

The week of May 1-7 is Safety and Health Week, there are many free virtual learning opportunities this week, and information was shared in Southern Exposure on how to access these resources.

Schools of over 20 employees are required to have a Joint Health and Safety Committee with members from each employee group. Members must receive training to be part of these committees – this used to be face to face training, however, since the pandemic training now is five online courses followed by a six hour in class session. There is a committee in each of the three Education Centres and recently they have been reviewing their safe work procedures for tractor use, stripping floors, fall protection, vibration and working alone. The next step is to look at emergency response plans for each of our three offices. This work is led by Clare Tooley, Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator.

We are pleased to have 32 schools register to pilot in May the grades 4-6 teacher/student resources on food allergy awareness made available through Food Allergy Canada in partnership with the local Sweet Caroline Foundation. BC, Alberta, and NB are the three provinces with the opportunity to pilot and give feedback on the resources.

ENDS #2: Improve student engagement and achievement by embedding research based best practices in a variety of learning environments.

The Outdoor Learning Cohort, consisting of 17 educators, have their last PL session Wednesday, May 4. The focus is for each participant to share an exemplar outdoor learning lesson with the group with its curriculum connections.

A session for high school FSL teachers from thirteen schools, "Inclusion within the French Immersion Program," was held with Renne Bourgoin from University of Moncton. The session included administrators, FSL SPRs, subject area FI teachers, and EST-Resource teachers. Three middle schools attended the middle level session as other middle school participated last year. The elementary session had three schools as they also had this training last year.

ASD-S in partnership with Brilliant Labs, will be hosting a Maker Faire on May 24th. There will be approximately 20 stations where visitors can see innovative things that have been happening around the district this year as well as some where they can try some "hands on" interactive exhibits like soldering and coding. Schools and students who received innovation grants will be participating in the fair as well.

The Regional Heritage Fair for ASD-S was again held virtually, and the virtual presentation ceremony will be on Thursday May 19,2022. Thanks to all of the participating schools and to teacher Brittany Gowan for taking a leadership role again this year.

ENDS #4: Ensure all members of the school and district community are welcomed, respected, accepted and supported.

The Antiracism and Equity Coach continues to be very busy with school-based requests – e.g. Bayside Middle and Rothesay Park School. There are now more K-8 requests.

Coach Therese Trofimencoff has developed an antiracism unit to be delivered to English Language Arts classes at high school and seven teachers at four schools have agreed to participate. She has also given workshops at Harry Miller and QES for staff members. Whole-school presentations have been completed on antiracism at Rothesay Park and Hampton Middle Schools.

A short anti-racism student survey via technology was open for high school students last week and this week. The results of this survey will help to support the work of our advisory committee.

OTHER:

To date ASD-S has had nine Principal and two Vice Principal retirements – the first round of postings have closed and the following positions have been announced as of May 4, 2022.

Principal of Hammond River Valley Elementary School – Megan Donovan (currently at Hazen White St. Francis) replacing retiring Principal Nathalie Graham.

Principal of Rothesay Elementary School – Sarah Blanchard (currently Principal at Hampton Elementary School) replacing retiring Principal Charlene Carroll.

Principal of Bayside Middle School – Angela Marr (currently Principal of Beaconsfield) replacing Pat Laskey who is retiring.

Principal of St. Stephen Elementary School – Melissa Brown (currently Vice Principal of St. Stephen Middle School/Acting Principal SSMS) replacing Colleen Winchester who is retiring.

Principal of St. George Elementary School – Matthew Kernigan (currently VP at the school) replacing retiring Principal Paddy Huzinga.

Principal of Milltown Elementary School – Katie Chambers (currently the VP at her school) replacing retiring Principal Heather Bell-Williams.

Principal of Blacks Harbour Elementary School – Tammy Surette (currently an itinerant counselor in St. Stephen Centre), replacing retiring Principal Jo-Ann Schwartz.

Vice Principal of Simonds High School – Stephanie Marr (currently a VP at Centennial Elementary School) and replacing retiring VP Andre Dumas.

Plans are taking shape at each elementary school for the Kindergarten Orientation Day in late May or early June. Director Lissa McNaughton Dickie has been working with the Principals on this initiative. On the day of the visit for children/parents there will be no school for current kindergarten children and this was communicated District-wide in a letter from me. ASD-S will

have sessions for parents and teachers will meet with the children. ASD-S is covering the costs of bags of materials which the children can take home; play-doh, scissors, glue sticks, pencils, crayons, construction paper, doodle pad, magnetic numbers/letters and a book. Some of the materials will be used while the children are at school. It is exciting to have these initiatives return!

As a member of the Board of the NB Children's Foundation, we will be hosting the AGM at our office on Tuesday, May 18, 2022 and as part of that meeting members will be visiting SISTEMA. This visit to SISTEMA was scheduled for May 2020 and will finally happen.

Superintendents and Directors will be in Fredericton for our first face-to-face Education Group meeting since late fall of 2020. Derek O'Brien is now the President of this group representing Directors and Superintendents, after I completed my three year term in August 2021.

The Turnaround Achievement Awards will be held in person on Thursday, May 12 in St. Stephen Centre, and Thursday, May 26, 2022 for Saint John Education Centre. The Hampton Education Centre have opted to do a virtual ceremony this spring, with each student being celebrated at their school. The Chair and I were asked to submit a video to offer congratulations to the recipients.

In winter 2020 our team began discussing having a June event in each Education Centre to recognize our retirees and the recipients of 25-year watches. NBTA offers evening retirement celebrations for members, however there is nothing for the other employee groups. We want to offer all retiring employees the opportunity to be recognized. We are finally ready for this in person initiative. The celebrations will be held in early June and the DEC Chair (or designate) will be invited to attend to offer congratulations on behalf of the District Education Council.

There will be no school for students on Friday, May 6, 2022, as it is NBTA/AEFNB Subject Council Day in NB. Typically, the Council sessions were held in large venues across NB, but this year they will again be virtual with keynote speakers. On Monday, May 9, 2022, the local NBTA/AEFNB AGMs will be held and these meetings will be virtual. We have two local AEFNB Branches and six NBTA branches. I will be joining the Saint John Branch and the Hampton/KV Branch virtually on Monday to bring updates.

Zoë Watson
May 5, 2022