

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – April 12, 2023

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met in-person on Wednesday, April 12, 2023. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Chair; Amanda Hamm, Vice-Chair, Wayne Spires, Jane Logan, Teresa Sewell, Amanda Henderson-Matthews, Ginny Hooper, Matthew Martin, Sarah Craig, and Shane Borthwick.

ASD-S Staff:

Derek O'Brien, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications; John MacDonald, Director of Finance, Allan Davis, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Rosemary Southard, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre, Lissa McNaughton-Dickie, Director, Early Childhood Services, Marc Godin, Supervisor of Data and Accountability and Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He advised that Beth McQuinn-Nixon and Jon Barry were 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. Ms. Logan moved that the Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the March 22, 2023 meeting and asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Ms. Hooper moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Borthwick. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

No public in attendance.

3. Superintendent's Report & Update

Mr. O'Brien advised that his report had been posted last week for Council to review.

Mr. O'Brien began his report by speaking about some events from Ends #2 which were interesting in the fact there is talk about embedding our research based practices and engaging learners in different environments. On March 24th there was an experiential learning dinner which featured a number of schools who have students involved in different experiential learning programs. The students made the dinner themselves and the quilts which were completed by many of the elementary schools with the help of a community quilting guild.

Mr. O'Brien expressed his appreciation to Mr. Matthew Martin, who is a member of our District Education Council but also the Executive Director with Black Lives Matter and also to Therese Trofimencoff, our Antiracism and Equity Lead, who gave workshops on antiracism to Principals by level on March 29th, 30th and 31st.

He mentioned the continuation of working with the resource teachers in our schools and appreciate the work of the ESS coordinators who have helped with various sessions this month.

He spoke of the advertised known vacancies with retirements and those who are in acting positions, and the need to get these filled. Interviewing process will continue to fill each of the vacancies that are open for administrator positions.

4. Presentation

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

Mr. Todd Cormier, the acting coordinator for school counselling and ISD process, began the presentation by explaining the first goal which is to develop a strategic plan to promote diversity and antiracism and to address heterosexism and discrimination by creating affirming cultures. An affirming environment is one that allows students to feel that they're heard, they're understood and there's potential for growth and dignity.

Mr. Cormier continued with the strategies with the first one being an increase in racial, ethnic and cultural equity in school communities and to ensure the students who are black, indigenous and persons of color are heard at the district level. The second strategy has been identified to build and consult with the ASD-S LGBTQ+ Inclusion Advisory Committee to identify strategies to increase voices of students. A third strategy was training for curriculum coaches. Six curriculum coaches completed a three-day training on antiracism and social emotional learning. This training will allow district curriculum staff to incorporate antiracist and social emotional learning coaching into a variety of subject areas.

Ms. Laura Taylor, the subject coordinator for the First Nations Education and English as an Additional Language (EAL), presented on the policy with respect to newcomers, EAL and First Nation education. The first strategy is to support newcomers by creating welcoming environments, providing culturally responsive teaching and ensuring equity of instruction. The second strategy is to support teachers capacity in embedding First Nations content across the curriculum through sharing of educational resources and authentic experiences that celebrate and prioritize local First Nations (Wabanaki) cultures, histories and knowledges.

Ms. Taylor spoke of some highlights with a drum making workshop and organizing a series of blanket exercises based on using indigenous methodologies. Another initiative that was put in place was getting knowledge keepers, artists and elders into schools and the goal is to enhance what is being taught in class by learning from knowledge keepers as they share their wisdom, knowledge and experiences, as well as their language and traditional skills. The final initiative is teaching resources where we are continuously creating new Wabanaki resources and collaboration with elders, knowledge keepers and subject area coordinators to integrate Wabanaki knowledges into all areas of the curriculum.

Ms. Lisa Riggs, an early learning consultant, spoke about the strategy where the early childhood educators bring awareness to antiracism, antibias education through communities of practice, by providing resources that support all forms of diversity.

Ms. Riggs mentioned the Bridging Program and the vision statement is literacy through a lens of allyship and anti-bias. The kindergarten teachers and Early Childhood Educators have partnered to examine how they honour and present anti-bias education. Additional books, art materials and an anti-racist deck (card game) are new resources which allows conversations to be started. Another resource is a set of 12 dolls which have their own persona and some of them are nonbinary. The dolls are from different cultures and come with a manual and a bit of history. The dolls allow difficult conversations to occur between the educators and then children and their family.

Mr. Cormier finished up the presentation by indicating our district is the first one to host an antiracism summit for high school students. This summit allowed the high school students to voice their experiences with racism in the school system along with some strategies to help overcome antiracism. The students would go back to their respective schools to implement some type of antiracism committee in their building and to encourage other schools to be a part of this as well.

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Hooper moved to approve the Ends #4 Monitoring Report as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion Carried.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Sub District #10 Update

Mr. Nesbitt mentioned that one individual submitted their intent to become the Sub District #10 DEC Representative. A letter was sent to the Minister recently outlining the candidate.

5.2 New School Education Specifications

Mr. Nesbitt spoke briefly about the report that was posted regarding the Education Specifications for both the new North and South Schools for Saint John.

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved to approve the Educational Specifications for New Saint John Central Peninsula K-8 School for Anglophone South School District. Seconded by Ms. Craig. Motion Carried.

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved to approve the Educational Specifications for New Saint John North-end K-5 School for Anglophone South School District. Seconded by Ms. Hamm. Motion Carried.

6. New Business

6.1 Monitoring Reports

EL 3.3 – Information to Council

EL 3.4 – Financial Administration

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Logan moved to approve the two monitoring reports as presented. Seconded by Mr. Martin. Motion carried.

7. Information Items

7.1 Member's Notebook

Ms. Amanda Hamm had the privilege to attend the production of Grease at Saint John High School on March 31st. On March 4th she attended the Inglewood School Technology Fundraiser where they had an auction and opened their doors to the community. They were able to raise \$5,000 to purchase new computers for students and help support some of their microbits program and technology. At River Valley Middle School the students have been weaving discarded fishing rope they collected on the beaches to make sleeping mats that will be provided to the homeless. They have 20 completed and the students in grades 6 to 8 are all participating.

Mr. Wayne Spires mentioned that Mr. Simpson, from the IT department of the St. Stephen Education Centre, spoke to parents on internet awareness at Milltown Elementary School. Principal O'Leary, from Vincent Massey Elementary School, had parents come into the school to hear from the RCMP regarding internet safety.

Ms. Sarah Craig spoke about Lakewood Heights School and how they participated in the symbolic monarch migration program where they sent paper monarchs down to Mexico where the actual monarchs go. The students in Mexico kept them safe for the winter and last month they started making their way back to Lakewood Heights students were thrilled to receive some of their own butterflies back. Students are looking forward to releasing their own butterflies that they are growing hopefully at the beginning of the summer.

Ms. Jane Logan brought to attention the "It Takes A Village" the collaborative committee of the PSSC from the four high schools. May 10th will be their next session at Harbour View High School and the topic will be Nurture Resiliency and Navigate Anxiety. Prior to the session there will be booths set up in the lobby from different agencies, services and organizations in the community that may be a resource to the parents.

Ms. Ginny Hooper mentioned that Seaside Park Elementary had an Artisan Market and it was nice to see not only adult entrepreneurs with their wares for sale but many student entrepreneurs had booths set up selling their products as well.

Ms. Amanda Henderson-Matthews was happy to report that Campobello Island Consolidated School has a working PSSC. There are at least 5 community members participating. On March 31st the middle school students had a heritage fair and they chose a winner from each grade who will be moving on to the regional fair on May 4th at UNB Saint John. The food bank on Campobello put in for a grant to purchase microwaves for the school cafeteria for students to use.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Nesbitt indicated there has not been anymore news regarding governance. He will be attending the three Inspire Awards celebrations in May.

7.3 Correspondence

Nothing to report currently.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Chair

Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary