

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – September 14, 2022

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met in-person on Wednesday, September 14, 2022. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Chair; Jane Logan, Wayne Spires, Amanda Hamm, Amanda Henderson-Matthews, Beth McQuinn Nixon Teresa Sewell, Shelly Merrill-MacKillop, Richard Malone and Ginny Hooper. On-line: Jonathan Barry and Sarah Craig.

ASD-S Staff:

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

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

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. Mrs. Watson asked that item 4.1 be moved just below item 2.3. Mr. Spires moved that the amended Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Malone. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the August 17, 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, Ms. Logan moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Henderson-Matthews. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

No public were present at this meeting.

Presentation

4.1 Advanced Placement

Zoë introduced Christina Barrington, Principal of Saint John High School and Jill Eckstone, a Teacher and SPR at Simonds High School.

Ms. Barrington began the presentation with background about Advanced Placement. AP is a way to personalize education for the most passionate learners. AP is not just for gifted, and talented – it is for the curious, the passionate, the disengaged learner – you will be surprised what can happen when you expand the diversity of voices in the classroom. AP allows for a wider array of subjects, ability to provide enrichment in accordance with Policy 322, collaboration between buildings creates strong connections amongst colleagues and youth connecting with equally passionate learners across the district. Virtual AP started with four high schools in the district – Simonds, Fundy High/Middle, Rothesay and Hampton. Through the process they were able to overcome some challenges by collaborating with technology, willing educators and program coordinators. There are still a couple of challenges to be addressed.

Ms. Eckstone spoke about the registration statistics and on February 14, 2022 there were 100 students registered for a variety of AP courses from the four high schools with many joining virtually. Students are encouraged to complete exams but it is no problem if they don't. Of the 100 students 64 did write the exams. Beginning this year there is a registration total of 101 (31 remote enrolments) with five additional high schools participating. AP is expanding access to enriched courses and post-secondary preparedness to students across ASD-S and beyond. The bottom line is more schools are participating, more courses, more classes, students accessing courses otherwise unavailable and teachers are developing enhanced skills in assessment and instruction.and the initiative is only 6 months old!

3. Superintendent's Report & Update

Mrs. Watson advised that her report had been posted last week for Council to review.

Mrs. Watson mentioned there was an unexpected staff death – long-time Custodian Gail Seales. Gail was the head custodian at Prince Charles School and had been with the District since 2003. A moment of silence took place to remember Gail.

She mentioned about the successful re-opening of schools for 2022-2023. New Administrators met on August 23rd to review expectations, meet the directors and hear more about ESS, Transportation, Budget and Accounting, Curriculum/Early Childhood and Human Resources. The following day, August 24th all the Administrators met at the Delta. During this time there were several opportunities for table-top discussions on how to re-connect with families and communities, how to embed social-emotional learning in curriculum and how to re-engage students in their learning.

She spoke about the one-day training sessions for all Administrative Assistants. Topics included Power School, budgets and school messenger.

Mrs. Watson mentioned that many schools were hosting Open Houses during the week leading up to school. Many schools reported very large crowds and a very positive energy about the opening of schools and being able to host families. She spoke about the official opening of the Outdoor Learning Area at Rothesay Park School – a wonderful dedicated space which will be well used by staff, students and the community.

She mentioned there were a handful of teaching positions still to be filled. Thank you to the HR team and Directors of Schools for filling these positions. New additional positions funded by EECD were also re-advertised. The priority was to have teachers in classrooms.

Mrs. Watson spoke about the virtual meeting she had with the 13 new Principals regarding PSSC. She reviewed the PSSC tools shared – budget, PSSC handbook, importance of having a Chair/Notetaker, the role of the DEC liaison member.

Mrs. Watson pointed out that enrolment is monitored daily. Some schools are reporting several new students with 200 AEI and 300 Newcomers there has been growth in each of the centres, especially in Saint John. The Welcome Centre is seeing many students from Ukraine, Columbia, Philippines, Brazil, South Korea and China.

She shared that with the increase in fuel costs there will be an adjustment with the cost of school bus trips.

4. Presentation

4.2 When Children Succeed

Mrs. Watson introduced the When Children Succeed Project which has been a three-year project which began in 2018 after a long partnership with ASD-S and BCAP (Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative). This group of business leaders has been leading poverty reduction initiatives in Saint John for the past 20 years, and have been very interested in education with early literacy and high school completion as priorities. Seven Saint John city schools have been participating. In year one, 21 additional teachers were hired to make class sizes smaller for approximately 750 children from Kindergarten to grade 2. Some key findings were reported from year one with many oral language deficits, reading benchmarks improved for K to grade 1, chronic absenteeism and the importance of teacher collaboration and Principal sharing.

Year two was cut short in March 2020 with the pandemic and the data collection ended, however, the key findings at that time were kindergarten students made the greatest progress, followed by grade 1 in literacy and numeracy, behavior improved and teachers had more time to talk to children and follow up with home to build relationships. In 2020-2021 additional teachers were funded from the Department, however, it was not possible to continue with data collection. Year three was put on hold. There continued to be on-going communication with the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development by ASD-S and to Minister Cardy and local Ministers/MLA's through BCIPI.

Mr. Nick Munn, a new Vice Principal at Saint John High School was part of this project with the District Office prior to his new position. Mr. Munn spoke about the percentage of Chronically Absent Students by Grade – YTD June. He also reviewed the percentages regarding Literacy – Phonological Awareness and Literacy – Quick Phonics. Mr. Munn gave the percentages of students successful on numeracy bench marks.

Mrs. Watson spoke about the announcement which was made on June 20, 2022 at Hazen White/St. Francis by Minister Trevor Holder (PETL) that \$3 million will be invested in this project. It takes a village to work on this project and Mrs. Watson mentioned all those who participated and helped with this project.

Monica Chaperlin, from BCIPI, who was in attendance at this meeting took a moment to thank all those who were involved and expressed hope When Children Succeed will be a regular program so there will be a solid education foundation.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Sub District #7 DEC Representative – Sarah Craig

Mr. Nesbitt welcomed DEC member Sarah Craig. Mrs. Watson shared the following about Sarah.

Sarah is an MBA graduate of UNB (2008). She is a university administrator with the MBA Program on the Saint John Campus, and she is a Canadian Armed Forces Member specializing in training youth through the Canadian Cadets Organization. Sarah is highly motivated, driven and international professional with over 10 years of progressive leadership. Experience in a customer focused, accountable and resource conscious role. Responsible for managing a team of independent contractors to produce high quality marketing and recruitment efforts. Successful in setting and meeting recruitment targets; development of multi-year enrollment targets, implementation and adjustment based on market demands. She has had a number of volunteer experiences such as Vice-Chair, Lochloman Villa, Saint John Board of Trade, FUSION Saint John and the Director of the Saint John SPCA Animal Rescue.

5.2 PSSC Orientation

Mrs. Watson mentioned the Principals have been provided many tools to use at their first PSSC meeting for 2022-2023. The tools provided are to help with orientation of new PSSC members.

6. New Business

6.1 Sub District #5 Vacancy

Mr. Nesbitt mentioned the resignation of Heather Gillis. The following schools will be getting an interim DEC member until the vacancy can be filled.

Bayside School; St. Malachy's Memorial High School; Bayview School; Champlain Heights School – Jane Logan
Saint John High School – Amanda Hamm
Prince Charles School & St. John the Baptist – Ginny Hooper

Principals to be contacted indicating who their interim DEC member will be.

Mr. Nesbitt stated that since Heather Gillis was the Vice-Chairperson for the DEC that a new Vice-Chairperson will need to be elected. Two members were interested in having their name stand: Wayne Spires and Amanda Hamm. A secret ballot vote was completed, and Amanda Hamm was elected as the new Vice-Chairperson for the Committee.

6.2 GP 4.0 – Governance Commitment

GP 4.1 – Governing Style

GP 4.2 – Role of the District Education Council

Mr. Nesbitt reviewed the Governance Process Policies which were posted as part of the meeting materials.

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

7. Information Items

7.1 Member's Notebook

Ms. Hamm mentioned she attended two open houses at Inglewood and River Valley Middle schools – very encouraged by the turnout and meeting the parents.

Ms. Logan indicated that Harbour View High School PSSC had their first meeting which she attended.

Mr. Malone spoke about Honouring the Children and Peace Powwow on Saturday, September 24th from noon until 5 pm in the Town Square in Hampton.

Mr. Spires mentioned he contacted the school Principals in his sub district asking they let him know when the PSSC's meetings will be. He also mentioned he invited Ms. Sewell along to introduce her to the various PSSC members.

Ms. Sewell mentioned that she would be more than willing to go to any of the schools.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Meeting Dates

August 24, 2022 – Spoke to district principals and vice principals at their annual pre-school year meeting.

August 31, 2022 – Open House at Quispamsis Elementary School

September 1, 2022 – 9AM Appeal Hearing at District Office

September 1, 2022 – Open House at Kennebecasis Valley High School

September 2, 2022 – Virtual meeting of the Council of DEC Chairs

September 7, 2022 – Virtual update from Porter O'Brien

Governance Review

Over the summer, there has not been a good deal happening regarding the review. Porter O'Brien held an "informal" meeting with Minister Cardy. A "more formal" meeting was scheduled for August but did not take place. Ashley Counsel who was responsible for the governance review file left EECD. She has been replaced by Dr. Tiffany Bastin, who has worked in the department for a number of years.

Superintendent Search

The search process is ongoing. Virtual candidate presentations are scheduled for September 8th. Following this, candidates will be doing an in-basket exercise. Virtual interviews with the candidates who have made the short list are scheduled for September 15th. KBRS will do a leadership assessment with the candidates on the short list after this. In-person interviews with the finalists are scheduled for September 26th. After consideration of all the available information on the finalists, the Search Committee will recommend a candidate for DEC approval.

Updates to the posted Chair's Report:

Mr. Nesbitt mentioned he was on a call with Mr. Caldwell on September 14, 2022 regarding the 2021-2022 assessment results. Children held their own over this time and it is encouraging. Things are generally stable.

Mr. Nesbitt brought to everyone's attention with the cessation of Porter O'Brien – what are the next steps with the Governance Review.

7.3 Correspondence

Posted for this meeting and dealt with during the meeting.

8. Adjournment

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Chair

Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary