

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – December 13, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair; Wayne Spires, Bernie Regenbogen, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Gerry Mabey, Rob Alexander, Heather Gillis, Larry Boudreau, Richard Malone, Justin Tinker

Regrets: Rob Fowler, Chair

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration, and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Mr. Nesbitt advised that Mr. Fowler was unable to attend this evening and he would act as Chair.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Nesbitt asked that if there were no questions or concerns with the Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Agenda be approved. Mr. Tinker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the November 8, 2017 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve.

Ms. Sherbo referred to a comment in the Chair's Report with regard to Council decorum, and suggested that the word "attack" be changed to "challenged" and moved for an amendment to the Minutes. Ms. Gillis seconded the motion to amend. Motion carried.

Mr. Boudreau enquired about when he could comment on Correspondence that had been sent by the Chair to the Minister with regard to our request for more support with the roll out of Power School in ASD-S. Mr. Nesbitt invited him to make his comments. Mr. Boudreau suggested that he felt the letter was "weak" and felt that we should be more forceful in our request for support. He felt that we put the onus on parents to keep up to date on what their child is doing in school and we should give them all the tools they need to do so. It was suggested that we wait to see what response we get back from the Minister's Office and then take further steps if necessary.

Mr. Nesbitt suggested that this might be a topic for the Minister's Forum in February. Ms. Sherbo suggested that a presentation at the Forum might be in order to ensure everyone knows exactly what Power School is and what it can do.

Mr. Boudreau enquired whether or not Council would be receiving a response to the meeting surveys that members are to fill out after each meeting. Mr. Nesbitt advised that Mr. Fowler would need to respond to this question.

There being no further comments, Mr. Malone moved that Minutes be approved with the amendments noted. Seconded by Ms. Sherbo. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Member's Notebook

Mr. O'Connor advised that the Loch Lomond PSSC are looking into the safety of their crosswalks and will be taking action to ensure the safety of all students.

Ms. Sherbo advised that at a PSSC meeting at Harry Miller Middle School she was impressed to learn of the number of business partnerships they have within the community. Student designed Christmas cards were sent to thank them for their contributions to the school. Rothesay Elementary also picked up on this idea as well. She advised that at a recent District Health Advisory Committee she felt it was a good meeting and they were moving along on a lot of great initiatives and narrowing their focus.

Ms. Gillis noted that Irving Oil had sponsored a Christmas Breakfast at Bayview and she attended the Literacy Night/PSSC Christmas Social event last week at St. John the Baptist/King Edward. The theme was Christmas Around the World.

Mr. Spires advised Council that Lawrence Station School has welcomed 7 new students. He has been invited to their upcoming Christmas Concert. Mrs. Watson noted that due to the additional students, the District added one more teacher at the school.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Minister's Excellence in Education Awards

Mr. Nesbitt advised Council of the three winners from ASD-S: Shannon Hodder, Loch Lomond School, who was in attendance at the meeting; Tracy Ross, Centennial, and Judy Haley, Susan Collins and Tracey Furlotte from Milltown Elementary.

Mr. Nesbitt attended the ceremony in Fredericton in November and offered his congratulations to all winners. He noted that there are many good things going on in the District and this event is a great way to recognize the people who make that happen.

The three winners' vignettes were played for Council.

4.2 Policy Review Committee Update

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair of the Policy Review Committee, advised that the committee has had one meeting to date with the next one set for January 17, 2018. Committee members include: Stacey Brown (EECD); Wayne Spires, Heather Gillis, Linda Sherbo, Zoë Watson and Rob Fowler, ex-officio.

He noted that the committee began by looking at the first three Governance Policies and when that group of policies are completed, they will move onto the Executive Limitations and Council Staff Relations. Their main focus is to look to develop outcome based language – what should you see.

Draft documents for revised Governance Policies #1, 2 & 3 will be posted with the January meeting materials for Council to review. The committee hopes to have Governance Policies #4, 5 & 6 ready for review for the February meeting. He advised that if anyone has comments or suggestions to make regarding any of the policies, to please send him an email anytime during this process.

5. New Business

5.1 Budget Update

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the budget to date noting we have four months left in this budget year. He reviewed the areas where we are forecasting a deficit and the reasons for it. He advised that we have seen some improvement in replacement costs for sick time; however, the District still must fund the cost of all leaves. He advised that we are currently forecasting

a deficit of approximately \$383,090; however, explained that we will monitor spending on minor repairs and noted that when schools are closed over the holidays and March Break, the District tends to save money as there are no replacement costs for staff. The District hopes to end the year in a break even position.

Questions raised were with regard to the home/hospital tutoring costs and the Teachers Working Conditions (TWC) fund. Mr. MacDonald explained that the TWC is part of the collective bargaining process and there is a dollar amount paid per staff to this fund. Schools have a committee to oversee the spending of this money based on set parameters which are meant to improve the working conditions of teachers within a school. Mrs. Watson advised that there is one person in each office who monitors this spending and the school balances can be carried forward year to year. There is information in the Collective Agreement that explains TWC fund and will post it for the January meeting. Mr. MacDonald noted that sometimes the school will use this fund instead of asking the District for assistance, so it can be a savings for ASD-S. Mr. MacDonald will advise Council of the amount paid into this fund by the Department.

Mr. Boudreau asked if there were numbers available comparing this year to last with regard to savings from the attendance program. Mr. MacDonald will provide for the January meeting. Mr. Boudreau asked about the cost of time and travel to meetings in Fredericton and suggested using technology where possible. Mrs. Watson advised that sometimes the Department pays the cost to attend but we must fund the cost for our staff to travel between our 70 schools. We do encourage the use of technology wherever possible. Mrs. Watson also noted that DEC Chairs did bring the issue of the cost of time and travel to attend meetings in Fredericton to the attention of the Minister.

Question was asked what happens if we are still in a deficit position at year end. Mr. MacDonald advised that worst case, we do have self-sustaining funds which could be used; however, there are a number of factors that can affect the final outcome (i.e. weather).

There being no further questions, Mr. Spires moved that the Budget Update be accepted as presented. Seconded by Mr. Mabey. Motion carried.

5.2 Approved Capital Improvement Projects Summer 2018

Mr. MacDonald reviewed the approved list of capital improvement projects for the summer of 2018. He noted that we will receive \$2,718,000 which is a little less than last year (\$3,000,000). Tendering will likely start sometime after April 1st.

Question was raised about the condition of the roadway to Simonds High School and who owns it. It was suggested that if it is owned by the City, we should be asking for their help to fix it.

Mr. MacDonald clarified that roof replacements are now done by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure but are part of our allotment of funds.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Watson advised that her report was posted on the portal for review with tonight's meeting materials. She noted that prior to her report, the names had not been released of the winners of the Holiday Card contest. She advised that Ally Buchanan from Hampton High School was our winner and that she presented Ally with a framed print of her design and cards for her own use. The second winner was Mason Justason from Rothesay High School whose design was chosen by the Office of the Child & Youth Advocate. He will also receive a framed copy of this design and cards for personal use.

Mr. Boudreau thanked Mrs. Watson for her report. He asked about the survey that was to be conducted with staff on the change to half-day PD sessions and wondered if there would be a way to survey parents as well. Mrs. Watson advised that she will pass along this suggestion to the Department.

Ms. Sherbo asked about DEC members attending PD and other training sessions. Mrs. Watson advised that it would be difficult to advise what PD is happening in a timely manner as she does not always know when certain training is happening as the District is so large. She noted that Southern Exposure is a good place to find much of this information. She also noted that some training is put on by the Department and she would not be in a position to invite others.

Mr. Tinker noted that he will be attending the upcoming Curriculum Think Tank as the Chair of the Curriculum Evaluation Committee and will report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Tinker also enquired about possible bus driver training for a driver who would be driving their community bus in Campobello. Mrs. Watson advised that this is an intensive 4 or 5 days course where we train drivers who want to be added to our casual list.

6.2 Chair's Report and Update

The Chair was absent and will report at the next meeting.

6.3 Correspondence

None; all correspondence was posted on the portal for Council's information.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, January 10, 2018 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary