

Superintendent Report to DEC
January 3, 2018

Since our last meeting on December 13, 2017 ASD-S saw many Christmas concerts, turkey dinners, pancake breakfasts, donations to food banks and those less fortunate during the holiday season. For the second year the office staff in Saint John used Casual Friday monies to provide clothing and treats for students at PORTAGE Atlantic in Cassidy Lake who were not able to go home for the holidays. These were delivered by Pam Miller, who joined the students and staff for their turkey dinner.

Christmas break was calm across ASD-S, with the exception of a few schools in the Saint John Education Centre with frozen and broken water pipes; the most significant being at Millidgeville North School early on Tuesday morning. Hats off to the facilities staff who had a considerable mess to deal with as the water went through three levels.

Professional Development:

In support of the DEC Ends Policy on Mental Health, in December the two-day Mental Health First Aid program was offered to approximately 55 participants – our Vice Principals, and some District Office leaders who missed the training at the end of last school year. We have now used the remaining \$26K from the Saint John Hospital Foundation to purchase the participant resources for the training. During the winter the plan is to offer the training to guidance staff who have not yet participated.

In support of Ends #5 (Sexual Orientation LGBTQ), Tammy Strong from the Department will hold a day and a half workshop January 30-31 for representatives from facilities, human resources, transportation and community schools. Part of this will be an education session and then discussions on how we build understanding and acceptance among our non-teaching and support staff.

There are three schools (Barnhill, Harry Miller Middle and St. Stephen Middle) participating in their second year of the Restorative Practices program. Year one schools include Belleisle Regional, Fundy Middle and High and Hazen White St. Francis. Restorative Practices is an approach for building common relationships, and supports positive culture and welcoming school environments. Funds to support this initiative are from the Department.

In January, a group of 25 resource teachers will begin their second level of autism training called, “Comprehensive Curriculum Learning Independence,” (CCLI). This is facilitated by the Department and this cohort will participate in many components of the training over an 18-month period.

Also in January, all Principals and VPs will have an opportunity to meet – January 11 for high schools and January 24-25 for administrative teams from elementary and middle schools. The idea of bringing the administrators together in their teams came from a small planning committee that met in September to identify the plan for meetings for this year. Topics for the day include; School/District Improvement Plans, tracking behavioral incidents in Power School, Policy 703 (Positive Learning and Working Environment Policy) and engagement of students. With supply release time, food and travel it is very expensive to bring our school leaders together so we use their input to build agendas that address topics from their list of needs.

The Department has provided funding (\$19,528.00) to support a day of professional learning for all elementary physical education teachers in support of the new K-5 Physical Education curriculum which

was implemented, with supporting materials, in the fall of 2017. We are hosting three such professional learning days by education centre and they will be facilitated by two teachers who piloted the new curriculum last year.

Early Childhood:

In mid-December, an announcement was made on the rollout of early learning centres. Saint John has been selected as one of two provincial locations for designated early learning centres – the upwards of 40 licensed early learning centres in Saint John can now voluntarily apply for this designation, and as such, must meet certain criteria around professional learning for staff, a low fee policy, have improvement plans, share data and work with government to look at ways to provide more spaces for infants and toddlers. Very exciting for ASD-S to be part of this. In the new year, Director Lissa McNaughton-Dickie will be meeting with local operators to explain the new initiative.

Other:

Just prior to the holidays schools had the opportunity to apply for up to \$1,500 in funding through a special grant of \$53K from the Department called “Nutrition Literacy.” Activities must support accessing local foods and improving nutrition literacy. Initiatives can include local speakers (e.g. dietician, farmer) on nutrition literacy, a nutrition expo with food sampling, purchasing resources for a school/community garden, or creating signs, murals, videos about healthy food choices. A total of 31 schools applied and received funding. Just over \$7K remains and the Healthy Learners Nurses, along with Coordinator Dan Vallis will be looking at a District-wide initiative for later this winter.

ASD-S learned just prior to Christmas that Minister Kenny is supporting the ASD-S WE BELIEVE Day planned for May 17, 2018 at Harbour Station with \$50K. In October teacher Dan Foote from Hampton Middle School, Constable Corey Jamieson from the Saint John Police and Director Derek O’Brien met with officials from the Department. The planning will continue after the holidays for this special initiative; the focus on middle schools and grade 5 students from those schools with WE programs.

Congratulations to Hampton High School teacher Jim Boyd, who is the recipient of one of twelve Senate 150th Anniversary Medals. Mr. Boyd is well known for his large outdoor sculptures throughout communities in Southern NB. One can be found on the main road leading to St. George Elementary, and most recently one near the field as you drive into Hampton High School. He will receive his medal in early January from Senator David Adams Richards.

Follow-up from December 2017:

Teacher Working Conditions Fund – this fund is part of the Teachers’ Collective Agreement, and is \$1 million across NB. It is divided 40% of the total to each school (both sectors) with the remaining 60% based on the number of full time equivalent teachers in each school. For 2017-2018 fiscal, the ASD-S portion was \$227, 200. Very small schools would receive close to \$2K with larger schools receiving up to \$6K. There is a page in the Teachers’ Collective Agreement that outlines information on TWC, and items can be purchased to support wellness (e.g. air purifier, tower fan, microwave for a staff room, exercise ball chair etc.), to support teacher PD (e.g. supply teacher replacement to allow a teacher to attend a workshop, release time to visit another school and/or observe a colleague, release time to do individual student assessments/report cards), education materials (printer cartridges, special art supplies, subscriptions, stationary etc.), or any materials/resources to support the School Improvement Plan.

