

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – December 12, 2012

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue. The following council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Gerry Mabey, Roger Nesbitt, Stephen Campbell, Gary Crossman, Don Cullinan, Rob Fowler, Bob McDevitt, Charlotte McGill-Pierce, Wayne Spires, Larry Boudreau, Joanne Gunter and Sherman Ross.

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Jeff Hanson, Director of Finance and Administration; Derek O'Brien, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Kate McLellan, Director of Educational Support Services; Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer; Jenny MacDougall, Senior Education Officer; Paul Smith, Senior Education Officer; Joanne Neilsen, Recording Secretary.

The media was not present.

1. Call to Order / Welcome /Regrets

Rob Fowler, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

2.1 Approval of the Agenda/ Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler reviewed the agenda with council and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the agenda that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the agenda be approved, as presented. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the minutes of the November 14th meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the minutes that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. McGill-Pierce moved that the minutes be approved. Mr. Crossman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Public Comment

Mr. Fowler welcomed Stacey Brown, District Education Council Manager, Anglophone Sector.

3. Business Arising from Minutes

3.1 New Quispamsis School K- 5

Mr. Nesbitt reported on behalf of the committee that had been established to examine the provincial education specifications for the new K-5 Quispamsis school. Mr. Nesbitt explained that the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development has downgraded the specifications to build a school for 350 students rather than 400 students as originally planned. There are several reasons for this change. There are currently 301 students housed in modulars in the area. Upon checking with the town of Quispamsis it was determined that housing starts have leveled off and are not predicted to grow. The new Francophone school to be built in Quispamsis is expected to take some students from the Anglophone sector. When the renovations are completed for the Kennebecasis Park School there will be two extra classrooms which could house students from the Rothesay area. As well, there will be some extra space at Rothesay Elementary School once the students from the Kennebecasis Park School are relocated.

Members expressed concern that there are currently 301 students in modulars and that building for 350 students is not enough of a buffer. Some members felt that the Department is being shortsighted by building on the needs that currently exist rather than looking ahead to the future. Council asked what would happen if the DEC did not approve the new specifications. Mr. Nesbitt explained that the project would be delayed. He said that the school is needed as soon as possible to empty the modulars and that is why the committee signed off on the new specifications. It is necessary for the DEC to approve the new specifications in order to move forward.

Ms. Watson explained that she and Mr. Hanson had looked at the intake of kindergarten students over the past few years and had projected the future growth. Some schools had surveyed parents to determine the number of pre-school children that would be entering school over the next few years. The Department used average growth in their projections. Ms. Watson also said that Francophone parents who might not send their children to the Francophone school in Saint John given distance may send them to a Francophone school in this area. Ms. Watson explained that it is not fiscally responsible to build the extra classrooms at a cost of \$2,000,000 per classroom. There are also other areas that change based on the size of the school. For example, a 400 student school would have a larger cafeteria and a full size gym plus a mini-gym, which would add to the cost of the project.

Roger Nesbitt put forth a motion that the District Education Council accept the updated specifications for the new elementary school in Quispamsis. Gary Crossman seconded the motion. The motion was carried. Three councillors opposed the motion – Charlotte McGill-Pierce, Larry Boudreau and Wayne Spires.

Councillors asked the Chair and the Superintendent to write a letter to the Minister of Education expressing the concerns of the Councillors and requesting that the specifications be revisited in the future if there is an increase in the projected growth based on new data.

3.3 MLA Meeting December 3, 2012

Mr. Fowler reported that the meeting with the MLAs had been very successful. The MLAs were appreciative of the opportunity to meet with the DEC and expressed interest in meeting more often, perhaps again in February or March. The MLAs learned how things were going with the amalgamation and challenged the DEC to find ways to change the system. Mr. Fowler suggested that the MLAs be provided with the District Improvement Plan and the district mission statement as they are developed, and capital budget to give them information to go forward on the district's behalf.

4. Presentations

4.1 2011-2012 Provincial Assessment Results

Zoë Watson, Superintendent, gave an overview of the Power Point presentation outlining the 2011-2012 Provincial Assessment Results and she introduced the staff who would be discussing the results in each of the categories assessed – Numeracy, Literacy and French Second Language. Marc Godin, Supervisor of Data & Accountability, is responsible for compiling data for the district. He compiled the data results for each of the 74 schools in the district and he did a Power Point presentation for each Principal. He works with the schools to analyze the data. Johanne Austin is the Subject Coordinator for French Second Language in the Hampton Education Centre; Sheila Murray is the Subject Coordinator for Literacy in the Hampton Education Centre; and Brenda Logan is the Subject Coordinator for Numeracy in the St Stephen Education Centre.

The Power Point presentation showed the results by District for Literacy - Reading and Writing – Grades 2, 4, 7 and 9; for Mathematics - Grades 3, 5 and 8; and French Second Language – Reading and Writing at Grade 10 French Immersion. The presentation summarized the trend results for each category tested and listed actions to be taken to address the results.

It was noted that, in literacy, gender gaps (girls outperform boys) begin at an early age and become more pronounced at the secondary level. There are strategies being put in place to address the Literacy results. Subject coordinators are in the schools working with teachers to clarify and reinforce achievement expectations. There is a focus on reading and writing standards across the curriculum. PD sessions will train teachers in effective literacy practices. Literacy mentors work with teachers to model instructional practices.

There has been improvement in Math at the elementary level. There is no gender gap in the early grades. The district coordinators work with classroom teachers to provide support as required to strengthen teachers' instructional practices. Instructional leads work with teams of teachers to model lessons. The Guided Math program has been very effective in the elementary schools.

The Grade 10 French Immersion Writing Assessment results were low and it is urgent that steps be taken to improve the results. A standards document will be developed provincially and professional learning will be provided on the standards. The Grades 9 and 10 curriculum will be reviewed with a focus on writing outcomes and instructional strategies. Opportunities will be provided for improvement of teacher language proficiency as required.

Mr. Fowler, on behalf of council, thanked Mr. Godin, Madame Austin, Ms. Murray and Ms. Logan for their informative presentation.

5. New Business

5.1 Minister's Excellence in Education Award Recipients

Zoë Watson informed the Council that three educators from the district had received the Minister's Excellence in Teaching Awards – Robert Johnson who held many administrative roles in the former District 8; Nora Elliott, teacher at Lakefield Elementary School; and Jane Conley, teacher at Deer Island Consolidated School. Ms. Watson introduced Mr. Johnson and Ms. Elliot who were present at the meeting. A video of each of the recipients was shown, highlighting the accomplishments which earned them the award.

5.2 Revisit of Summer Capital Improvement Projects 2013

Mr. Jeff Hanson, Director of Finance and Administration, explained that there were oil tanks that needed to be removed from four district schools – Seawood, M. Gerald Teed, Champlain Heights and Woodlawn. The tanks were no longer needed because the schools had been converted to natural gas and they could potentially become a health and safety issue. The estimated cost for removing the tanks, three above ground and one below ground, is \$25,000. Mr. Hanson asked that this project be added to the Capital Improvement Projects Budget for 2013-2014.

Mr. Larry Boudreau moved that the removal of oil tanks from four district schools, at an estimated cost of \$25,000, be added to the Capital Improvement Projects Budget for 2013-2014. Mr. Wayne Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5.3 Report from Sustainable High Schools Committee

Mr. Bob McDevitt reported on the meeting of the High School Registration Process Committee which was held November 27, 2012. Mr. McDevitt explained that the committee had been established to look at the registration process in the four high schools in the Saint John Education Centre and to determine if a committee was needed. At the meeting, two issues were identified – establishing a cap and wait lists. Mr. McDevitt questioned whether the high school registration process should be addressed through a DEC committee or if it should be the responsibility of the Superintendent. The committee will meet again in January to discuss the present process and to decide if there is a need for the committee to continue.

Mr. Paul Smith indicated that he had received an inquiry from a parent in the Hampton Education Centre asking if students in that area would be able to attend schools in the Saint John area now that the districts are amalgamated. It was stated that the catchment areas for the Saint John high schools will remain the same as in the past.

Mr. McDevitt moved that the Saint John Education Centre continue to use the present formula to establish the “cap” number for each high school for the school year beginning September 2013 and that the 200 student enrolment minimum for each high school be maintained; that the District allow for a student “wait list” at each of the high schools for the school year beginning in September 2013; and the “wait list” remain in effect until September 30, 2013. Mr. Don Cullinan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent’s Report

Ms. Watson explained the process for selecting the design for the district Christmas card. Entries were submitted by students and those entries were voted on by district staff. The winning entry was designed by Grace Langille, a grade six student at St. Martins School. Included in the DEC information package were lists of Christmas concerts in each of the three education centres .

Ms. Watson thanked schools for their efforts in raising money for charities, such as for food banks and the Harbour Lights campaign.

Ms. Watson highlighted recent school events – the Sistema music concert involving approximately one hundred students from Centennial, Hazen-White/Saint Francis, Prince Charles, Millidgeville North and Saint John the Baptist/King Edward schools; the KVHS 21st Century Arts Smarts grant on social media; and the renovation of the kitchen/breakfast area at St. Patrick’s funded by the \$15,000 grant from Hellman’s.

Middle and high school principals met with NBACL to discuss year one inclusion activities. Administrators in the St. Stephen Centre held a session on leadership with Karen Branscombe.

Ms. Watson attended a provincial meeting about Integrated Services Delivery. Ongoing discussions are being held with EECD regarding the transfer of employees from Health and Social Development - 28 FTEs, 30 people (one psychologist, 5 social workers, rehab assistants, SLP/Talk With Me, administrative assistants).

On November 30th, Parent Teacher meetings were held and there were PD sessions for school bus drivers and administrative assistants. Planning is underway for educator professional learning sessions on January 7th and 8th. School review training is being held Friday in Fredericton.

There will be a school review of Saint John High School this week. Ms. Watson, Derek O’Brien and Debbie Thomas met with UNB officials regarding teacher intern programs.

A video conference will be held for administrators and district staff to explain how the Right to Information Act applies to education.

Mr. Stephen Campbell asked how the first storm day process worked. Ms. Watson explained that there were a few glitches. The snow line in former District 6 had not been de-activated. Also, the district will work with the service provider to increase the number of calls that can be received by the new snow line. There were a few media calls and Ms. Watson did an interview with CBC Information Morning. Mr. Wayne Spires noted that parents in his area listen to a radio station in Calais – WQDY and suggested that station be provided with information when schools are closed.

6.2 Chairperson's Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler explained that the Education Act requires that there be a student member on the District Education Council. The Department has not yet decided on the process and has asked each DEC to have a plan on how to involve students. It was agreed that the DEC would hold a series of meetings with student councils. There will be one evening meeting per Education Centre. The meetings will be held Wednesday evenings in the January to March 2013 timeframe. The Superintendent will organize the meetings.

6.3 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

6.4 Members Notebook

Ms. Charlotte McGill-Pierce asked if the provincial nutrition policy would be revisited. There is no plan to do so.

Ms. Joanne Gunter asked what bullying programs are available in the district. Ms. Watson explained that there is there is a provincial anti-bullying coordinator, Bruce Vanstone, who is charged with managing anti-bullying programs across the province. The point person in this district is Pam Miller, who works with the "Beyond the Hurt Program" with the Red Cross. A presentation was suggested.

Stacey Brown, District Education Council Manager, Anglophone Sector, informed the DEC that things are in the works from the Minister's Forum. She is working with the Department on budget training sessions. Staff will visit the districts to make presentations on how budgets are developed etc. She is also working on templates for code of conduct and working on a checklist and guide for reviews. She and her Francophone counterpart are working with Policy and Planning to develop annotated interpretations of Acts for the DECs. She asked for suggestions for topics for the Spring Symposium.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all staff and members of the public who attended this evening's council meeting. The next meeting will be held at the Saint John Education Centre, 490

Woodward Avenue on January 9, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chairperson

Joanne Neilsen, Recording Secretary