

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – March 27, 2013

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue. The following council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: Stephen Campbell, Sherman Ross.

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer, Saint John; Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

The media was present.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Fowler advised that Mr. Campbell and Mr. Ross would be unable to attend this meeting and send their regrets.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda & 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 and Mr. Crossman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the February 13th meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved and Mr. Mabey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Public Comment

None

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

3.1 Student Council Presentations to DEC

Mrs. Watson advised Council that invitations have been sent to the St. Stephen Education Centre high schools inviting them to address the DEC on Wednesday, April 3rd at the St. Stephen Education Centre. The three areas of focus were outlined as follows:

- What is going well at your school that you would like members of Council to know about?
- What things might be improved in education K-12?
- What suggestions do you have for improving public education?

DEC members are asked to let Clare Murphy know if they are planning on attending. \$200 Honorariums will be presented to those presenting tonight, as was done in each of the other Centres.

Several Council members provided positive feedback from the previous two student sessions and Mr. Mabey suggested to media present (Carolyn Thompson from the Telegraph Journal) that she do an article on all the great things these kids do for their community.

3.2 School Websites

Mrs. Watson offered a follow up on school websites and the addition of consistent PSSC information on sites. She has spoken to all principals and requested the following information be added to all sites: current PSSC members; the Chair; a list of meeting dates; information on the role of the PSSC as well as Minutes of meetings if at all possible. Mrs. Watson advised that this will happen over time.

3.3 Vision/Mission/Ends

Mrs. Watson referred Council to the updated version of the Vision/Mission/Ends document which had been posted prior to the meeting. She noted that there had been further word revisions to Goal #4.

She advised that she has shared this with all principals and that today, conversations between staff were beginning on strategies under mental health goals. She confirmed that the goal will be for staff to develop strategies for the next school year.

3.4 Tell Them From Me Surveys

Mrs. Watson advised Council that the results from the on-line teacher surveys from early December are now published on an internal portal. If any DEC member would like copies for their schools, hard copies could be made available.

Tell Them From Me Surveys were available on-line for parents and a hard copy went home.

All students grades 4-12 will be doing a survey mid-March through mid-April. When results are available, Mrs. Watson will update Council.

The NB Public Service Employee Survey is underway and is open to all staff, casual and permanent. Currently ASD-S has a 50% completion rate. Other Districts are challenging their staff to catch us! This survey was completed on line, or in hard copy format.

4. Presentations

4.1 The Integration of Early Childhood Presentation

Mr. Fowler welcomed Mr. Gary Hall, Director Early Childhood Services to the meeting.

Mr. Hall introduced himself and outlined to Council how his position evolved, the addition of his Early Childhood team to Millidgeville North School and other sites, and how the roll out of these new services will occur. He referred to "Putting Children First" as the ECD roadmap which he explained they will be working to integrate over a period of time. This roadmap includes a commitment to quality child care, affordability, accessibility, vulnerable children and inclusion.

One of the core challenges faced by Early Childhood Services is the need to integrate and coordinate all of the services available from the many partners and the need to develop clear outcomes. Early childhood services will now include children up to age 8 (up from previous age 5).

With the transfer of Early Childhood Services from the school district to EECD a new delivery model and a new management structure has been created which Mr. Hall briefly outlined to Council. Goals of creating a continuum of learning from birth that is more robust, with greater policy coherence with increased supports to families and young children; efficient and effective utilization of resources to maximize the impact and outcomes will go a long way to positioning early childhood for the future.

Mr. Hall spoke about the creation of 'networks' of early childhood services to develop common work plans and ensuring optimal ECD and a successful transition to school. This will include expanding early childhood services to include children up to the age of 8; removing barriers to service delivery by simplifying the process; 'no wrong door' for parents to access services; providing earlier diagnosis of children's health and development problems and increasing the range of services and supports offered to vulnerable children and their families.

Mr. Hall ended his presentation with the thought that the time to make changes is in the early years so that all of our children come to school ready to learn.

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or comments from Council. Members felt that the move from age 5 up to age 8 is a very important step in the right direction. There were questions about other partnerships in the future and Mr. Hall advised that there will be additional agencies involved as time progresses.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Hall for his time and his informative presentation.

5. New Business

5.1 Policy 409

Mr. Fowler updated members of the upcoming deadline of June 30th to send the Department our multi-year school infrastructure plan. Changes to the plan may come as a result of school tours by DEC members and/or from recommendations made by staff after their review of all schools in the District. Staff recommendations should be made available to DEC at the May meeting for review and discussion.

Mrs. Watson confirmed that staff will get more school information packages prepared and posted. She also offered to arrange more school tours for DEC members to assist in their decision making if required.

Mr. McDevitt asked if we need to send a letter to the Minister about any possible plans to close a school in our District and if so, by what date. Mr. Fowler requested that previous Minutes from District 8 be reviewed to see if that information was available.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report & Updates

Mrs. Watson presented each DEC member with a new ASD-S lapel pin and advised that we are also in the process of finalizing business cards and letterhead using our new logo. She also advised that the Department was looking for some consistency in the 'look' of all collateral materials across all districts.

Mrs. Watson outlined a number of events that were happening or had happened recently in ASD-S, noting it is a very busy time of year. Some of these events include an Elementary Drama Festival April 16/17; Heritage Fair April/May; Parent Teacher this week; Professional Development days funded by EECD including Conflict Resolution for Principals; EECD "PREPARE" training for emergencies and numerous drama productions throughout the District, to name a few. She also mentioned that coming up next week would be the "Big Rothesay Read". She encouraged members to attend as many events as they can and reminded us that much time, effort and energy go into these events and productions and they are very impressive. She suggested that our Southern Exposure Newsletter is a great way to keep up to date on all that is going on!

Mrs. Watson also informed Council that the KVHS Improv Team is attending the Nationals in Ottawa.

Mrs. Watson was able to provide Council with Grade 7 Assessment results as follows:

- provincially, 76.2% were successful in reading; with 77% successful in ASD-S (1,758 students) and,
- provincially, 62.6% successful in writing with 63.9% successful in ASD-S.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler updated Council on the success of two past Student DEC members; Chris Harper, recently elected Health Sciences Rep at McMaster University and Elizabeth Murphy, elected Student Council President at St. Thomas University.

Mr. Fowler also advised that he will be sitting on a newly convened provincial Anti-Bullying committee headed by Bruce Van Stone, a consultant at the Department. Mr. Fowler has been involved with this initiative in the past as Chair – Minister's Advisory Committee Anti-Bullying and hopes his presence will provide some continuity going forward.

Mr. Fowler reminded members that the Spring Symposium is coming up May 24-26 in Fredericton, and that the Minister will be attending the Friday evening and Sunday morning sessions.

Mr. Fowler advised Council that Mrs. Watson's annual evaluation is coming up, and asked for a sub-committee to address this task. He advised that he will co-ordinate the first meeting and then it will be up to the sub-committee to meet and come back with their report for Council. He advised that Stewart Stanger, Director Human Resources will be available as a guide on what needs to be done, and how to do it. Four members volunteered for this sub-committee, including Mr. Spires, Mr. Nesbitt, Mr. Mabey and also Mr. Crossman (if his schedule permits).

6.3 Correspondence

None

6.4 Members Notebook

Mr. Mabey asked that all members take a few minutes to vote online for Island View School who are in the running for a \$20,000 grant in the Trees of Knowledge competition. They are the only school in the running from the Atlantic Provinces. There are approximately 30 days left to vote and you can vote as many times as you want at www.majestatressofknowledge.ca Adults who vote are also eligible to win \$10,000!

Mr. Mabey also advised that Morna Heights PSSC will be holding a meeting on Internet Safety for Parents at River Valley – April 9 at 6:30p.m.

Mr. Nesbitt offered congratulations to the Lakefield Elementary Home & School for the significant amount of funds that are raised and put back into schools in the form of scholarship funds. Also, hats off to KVHS who won a Future Shop grant of \$18,000 for computer upgrades.

Mrs. Gunter asked if there were any changes to the curriculum coming for next year. Mrs. Watson advised that there are no major changes that we are currently aware of, but that focus groups are being held in the near future re graduation requirements.

Mrs. McGill-Pierce asked about funding for drama festivals, bussing of students, etc. Mrs. Watson advised that the school is responsible for these costs, however, the District would help in any way possible to ensure participation if costs were an issue.

Mrs. McGill-Pierce advised that a committee has been formed to address a playground project for Rothesay Elementary and that they were running into major roadblocks getting grants, etc. She was asked if the DEC could provide any assistance. It was suggested that she get in contact with Jeff Hanson, Director Finance & Administration for ASD-S to determine what assistance might be available, possibly in-kind, or direction and suggestions, volunteers, etc. Mr. Fowler advised that he would provide the name of a possible contact for grading, etc. Mrs. McGill Pierce will follow up with Mr. Hanson.

Mrs. McGill-Pierce raised the question of transition days for 2013-14. Mrs. Watson advised that there will likely be some changes this year as we try and create one model for all ASD-S. Discussions are currently on-going and a decision should be available soon. Mrs. Watson advised that the school calendar is not yet out for 2013-14.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's council meeting. The next meeting will be held at Sussex High School, 55 Leonard Drive, Sussex on April 10, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chairperson

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary