

**ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)**  
**DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Meeting – January 8, 2014**

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following council members and staff were in attendance:

**Council Members:**

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

**Regrets:** Larry Boudreau

**ASD-S Staff:**

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer Saint John; Derek O'Brien, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

Media were in attendance along with PSSC Chair Annette Harland of Sir James Dunn Academy (video conference) and Vicky Wilcox, PSSC Chair Pennfield Elementary.

**1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets**

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Fowler advised that Mr. Boudreau will be unable to attend this meeting.

**2. Approvals**

**2.1 Approval of the Agenda & Minutes**

Mr. Fowler reviewed the Agenda with Council and asked that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Crossman moved that the Agenda be approved and Mrs. McGill Pierce seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the December 11th 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**

Mr. Fowler welcomed PSSC Chairs Annette Harland (Sir James Dunn Academy) and Vicky Wilcox, Pennfield Elementary to the meeting.

### **3. Business Arising from the Minutes**

#### **3.1 MLA Meeting Agenda for January 20th**

Mrs. McGill Pierce advised that Southern PC Caucus members would be in attendance on January 20<sup>th</sup> for a meeting with Council. Mr. Fowler suggested that an Agenda will be developed as part of the DEC Retreat on January 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>. It was suggested that MLAs be requested to consider their potential new ridings and bring any concerns (regarding school facilities) to this meeting.

Mrs. McGill Pierce suggested that we might explain the structure of the District Education Council (governance focused) and stress that we are also elected. Council represents students in this area and we all need to work as team to achieve common goals.

Mr. Mabey suggested that meeting topics should be sent out in advance to the MLAs. Mr. Fowler suggested that we could e-mail the Agenda to them on Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup> after it is finalized at our Retreat.

#### **3.2 PSSC Fundy Shores – Bus Travel Options**

Mrs. Watson confirmed that she attended a meeting in December with members of the PSSC from Fundy Shores, Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer Saint John, Larry Boudreau, District Education Council member and Sean Gorman, Principal of Fundy Shores. Discussion centered around declining enrolment in the middle school years and the challenges of running the middle school grades with such low numbers. Parents were concerned about the possibility of their children having to take such a long bus ride into the city if the grade configurations were changed; however, understood the situation needed to be addressed in some manner. Mrs. Watson committed that she would have discussions with the ASD-S Transportation Department to determine what options might be available to shorten the time on the bus and report back to them. She advised that Transportation is in fact working on travel options and explained it is a very complex issue. She hopes to have more information available at the February meeting. She also confirmed that broader consultation with parents would be required in the coming months.

#### **3.3 PSSC – New Quispamsis K-5 – Catchment Areas for Schools**

Mrs. Watson advised that a meeting was held on December 4, 2013 with PSSC members and Principals from Quispamsis Elementary, Fairvale Elementary and Lakefield Elementary schools. The meeting also included Roger Nesbitt, District Education Council, Paul Smith, Senior Education Officer Hampton, and ASD-S

Transportation Manager John Peters and Assistant Managers, Steve Evans and Linda Carlson.

Preliminary discussions centered around the need to identify the boundaries/catchment area for the new school and current boundaries. Mrs. Watson committed at that meeting that ASD-S Transportation would provide maps and a listing by street of the recommended catchment areas before January PSSC meetings. Packages went out on January 6<sup>th</sup> to schools who will in turn share this information with their PSSCs. Preliminary feedback will be provided to Mrs. Watson by early February.

Mr. Spires questioned when ASD-S must provide bus transportation. Mrs. Watson explained that according to the Education Act, it is those living beyond 2.4km; however, stressed that in reality it is more like 1.5km in ASD-S.

### **3.4 January Retreat**

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the date has been confirmed for January 17/18 for the winter retreat and it will be held at Lily Lake here in Saint John. Friday evening will be a meal, followed by a short session; Saturday will run from 9 am until 3 pm. Agenda topics will include a Facilities Review, a presentation on the Inclusion Policy and development of the MLA meeting agenda.

### **3.5 Pennfield Elementary School – K-5 Request**

Mrs. Watson reviewed for Council a letter that had been received from Vicky Wilcox, Chair of PSSC for Pennfield Elementary, and presented at Council last month by Mr. Boudreau. It was a request to change the grade configuration to a K-5 school. Mrs. Watson referred Council to materials in their meeting package which outlined historical enrolment, enrolments by grade and enrolments at St. George and Blacks Harbour. She advised that the Pennfield PSSC had surveyed the affected grade 4 families and 13/16 responded in favour of students staying at Pennfield for grade 5. Mrs. Watson advised that she and Debbie Thomas, Senior Education Officer, would need to further consult with the parent community as a grade configuration change would also affect future years at the school.

Council questioned what the reasons were for some parents not agreeing with the change, and Vicky Wilcox advised that they were for personal reasons.

Mr. Campbell pointed out that time would be needed for parents to plan for this change, and for students to transition, likely in May or June. Finalizing this decision would need to happen by spring.

Mr. Cullinan questioned what affect this change might have on Blacks Harbour and St. George schools. Mrs. Watson advised that this would not be an issue as the numbers are small.

### **3.6 Arena “Code of Conduct” Signage**

Mrs. Watson updated Council on a question that had been raised by Mr. Boudreau at the December meeting with regard to the possibility of having code of conduct signage in our gyms and local community arenas. She checked within our high schools and found that it is not consistent; some have signs and some do not. She advised that the NBIAA are currently discussing the topic of signage and she has expressed an interest in obtaining signage for our gyms and extending it to our arenas. There may be an opportunity to partner with the NBIAA.

It was noted that when playing basketball, if someone gets out of hand, referees have the authority to go to the school official present for permission to ask them to stop/leave. If there is no school official present, the referee can clear the gym of spectators if necessary. It was noted that hockey officials follow similar protocols.

## **4. Presentations**

### **4.1 Report Card Update**

Mrs. Watson introduced Mr. Derek O’Brien and explained his role as Director of Curriculum and Instruction for ASD-S.

Mr. O’Brien briefly reviewed the history behind the changes to the K-8 report card and how the changes came about. The NBTA funneled issues to EECD from their membership advising that the K-8 report card was time consuming, not aligned with current practice and pedagogy and did not appear to support the purpose.

As a follow up, a joint committee of NBTA, EECD and Directors of Curriculum & Instruction researched, reviewed changes in other jurisdictions and examined feedback from New Brunswick educators between January and June. Then, between July and December, the committee moved ahead and defined the purpose, conducted focus groups with more than 80 educators (3 groups from ASD-S) and surveyed all teachers. There were 688 responses received.

The next steps in this process include parent focus groups across the province (3-4 PSSCs in ASD-S), District Education Councils and Home and School Associations. Once the report card is finalized, on-line parent information sessions will be created as well as information sessions for Principals/schools and finally, sessions for teachers. This will all be tied into the new school information system “PowerSchool” that is being piloted in ASD-W this year.

Mr. O’Brien then went on to highlight a number of the proposed changes including four reporting periods, two kinds of reports (progress and achievement), curriculum based reporting, performances indicators (4,3,2,1) will be used (versus A,B,C,D). These changes will provide consistency across grade levels as the same language will be used from K -8. The new report card in the first half of the year will also recognize the special nature of students transitioning into kindergarten.

Mr. Spires commented that outcomes are important and stressed his concern about whether or not parents will know what outcomes are expected. Mr. O'Brien clarified that there will be electronic copies outlining requirements sent to all parents. He also noted that there are comment boxes available on the report where teachers can write anecdotal information – what a student does well, and what they need to work on.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. O'Brien for his informative presentation.

## **5. New Business**

### **5.1 DEC Policies for Annual Review (Ends Policy #1)**

Mrs. Watson reminded Council that ASD-S Ends Policies were identified during our District Education Council Retreat in January 2013 and have been developed over time by ASD-S staff. Ends Policy #1 is the first of four monitoring reports for Council's review this year. Ms. Watson again welcomed Mr. O'Brien along with Subject Coordinators Suzanne LeBlanc-Healy (Literacy, Saint John Education Centre), Beverlee MacDonald (Numeracy, Hampton Education Centre) and Carol Noel (FSL, St. Stephen Education Centre) who were in attendance to review current strategies that support this policy. Mrs. Watson advised that some strategies would be implemented in future years.

Ends Policy #1: "to demonstrate continuous progress toward provincial targets in literacy, numeracy and science (English & French Immersion).

The two main strategies under this policy include:

- Support classroom teachers and teams in developing and implementing routine formative assessment practices to inform both short and long-term planning based on data from on-going assessment (classroom formative, common, school/district/provincial), and
- Support classroom teachers and school teams in the planning and implementation of effective instructional practices to meet the diverse needs of students.

Mr. O'Brien and the Coordinators provided an in-depth review of the professional development and support that has been provided to school administrators, SPRs and Coordinators to help facilitate and support their learning and work with formative assessments. This included Subject Coordinators working collaboratively with individual schools and administrators to design and implement a common district assessment plan that fit with the formative assessments. This includes the introduction of an electronic dashboard to analyze results. The team spoke of the two day high school workshop with Sandra Herbst, sponsoring ten ASD-S administrators at a week long summer 2013 session facilitated by Ms. Herbst, and the ongoing work with administrators. The "Look For" documents were shared and the literacy "blotter".

The FSL coordinator spoke of workshops for Grade 3-10 FI teachers and grade 5 Intensive French teachers and grade 10 Post Intensive.

The complete power point presentation is attached and forms part of these Minutes. The current District Improvement Plan is posted on the ASD-S website for more detailed information.

## **6. Information Items**

### **6.1 Superintendent's Report & Update**

Mrs. Watson reported on a very successful professional development day on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. She had the opportunity to spend time at St. George Elementary, Fundy High School and Morna Heights and heard lots of good discussion about numeracy, an examination of school review indicators, TTFM data, the WITS anti-bullying program and much more. Community Schools Coordinators also met on Monday, another group of educators were trained in Mental Health First Aid, physical education teachers had training in First Aid, and middle school health teachers had a session on curriculum. She advised Council that the next PD Day is February 17, 2014.

Mrs. Watson wanted to acknowledge our facilities staff who had to be out in schools throughout the holidays checking on buildings without hydro, dealing with frozen pipes, and a few broken water pipes. Their dedication is appreciated.

Mrs. Watson advised Council that our three Wellness Facilitators (Kari Parsons in Saint John, Michelle Brenton in Hampton, and Ellie Lord in St. Stephen) were getting set to launch the ASD-S Physical Activity Challenge from January 12 to February 22, 2014! This is a challenge open to all staff, to complete 30 minutes of moderate activity daily. Details are in the newsletter and prizes are part of the initiative!

Mrs. Watson informed Council that next week two of our schools would be participating in the School Review Process – Dr. Leatherbarrow Primary School in Hampton and Back Bay Elementary School. She also advised members that Mark Bates, one of our Technology Mentors, has begun work on a new ASD-S website.

### **6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates**

Mr. Fowler wanted to congratulate Hazen White St. Francis on a wonderful turkey dinner that they hosted just before Christmas. He commented that this event is a PALS sponsored event and it was amazing to see how well the children are taken care of by a number of community organizations.

Mr. Fowler advised Council that there would be a conference call for DEC Chairs on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Fowler informed Council that packages have been provided to all from CNIB with information on White Cane Week.

### **6.3 Correspondence**

Holiday cards received were circulated to members.

### **6.4 Members Notebook**

Mr. Spires asked if he could have some time on the February Meeting Agenda to address Child Protection. He also asked if the document on child protection that he circulated to Mr. Fowler and Mrs. Watson earlier in the day could be sent out to all Council. Mrs. Watson advised that we would add him to the February Agenda and forward the document to Council.

Mrs. McGill Pierce advised that she would be attending an upcoming KVBA 'Commit to Kids' Seminar later this month and will report back to Council afterward. She also asked if we could schedule a presentation from Physical Education mentors/teachers at a later date.

Mr. Mabey inquired if there had been any advances in the trades courses. Mrs. Watson advised that courses are the same with few exceptions, and more schools are participating in the NB Teen Apprenticeship Program.

## **7. Adjournment**

Mr. Fowler 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, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Rob Fowler, Chair

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Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary