

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – January 11, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School, 187 Pettingill Road, Quispamsis. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: Rob Fowler, Chair; Larry Boudreau

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Kate McLellan, Director Education Support Services and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

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 December 14, 2016 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Mabey moved that the Minutes be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

Andrea Anderson Mason addressed Council and raised concerns with the changes that took place at Fundy Middle and High School when the grade six students from the Charlotte County area transferred in. She expressed disappointment with the scheduling of the physical education classes and suggested that students are missing 18 days of curriculum time per year. She questioned time being used for the “After School Activity Program”. She advised that the community is still pushing to get the minimum time set out for middle school students.

3. Presentation

Mrs. Watson welcomed Tiffany Bastin and Nancy Boucher from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Both are overseeing the implementation of the 10 Year Education Plan.

Ms. Bastin began by updating Council on the current status of the plan. She noted that the initial focus (years 1 and 2) is on K-2 Literacy and Numeracy; balanced literacy and formative assessment. This includes condition for success of positive learning environments and mental health. She advised that an implementation team has been established (including DEC member Heather Gillis; Director of Schools for Hampton Education Centre Paul Smith; Principal Michael Butler from Harbor View High; Literacy Coordinator Ryan Price and a teacher representative from St. Stephen Middle). They will meet as a group 4 times per year and make recommendations on next steps. She invited DEC to provide feedback by completing the survey and sending the link to the PSSC Chairs and suggest any other avenues for ongoing engagement and input.

It was noted that although the focus is on K-2 to ensure students are ready for grade 3, there is also work going on elsewhere within the plan.

Ms. Boucher spoke about the efforts to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of all learners, with a K-2 focus; including instructional coaching with teachers and formative assessment. Teachers have the greatest impact on their students and with the diverse needs and challenges in today’s classrooms, it is most important to support our teachers. In light of this, a decision was made to focus on instructional practices. Significant resources have been made available for the plan and we now have additional Leads to assist our teachers.

Ms. Bastin spoke about what comes next, advising that there is a team working on mental resilience and mental fitness; there will be pilot schools involved in systemic implementation of personalization; an internal portal geared to educators only; additional work with Principals and teachers (spring meetings and focus groups) and summer learning sessions to support the Education Plan objectives.

Many questions followed the presentation including whether or not inclusion would be revisited; the amount of time teachers have to teach and the time it takes to deliver formative assessments; a discussion on the need for life-long learning for teachers and

the work that is taking place with universities to ensure teachers have what they require when they begin their teaching careers.

Mr. Nesbitt thanked Ms. Bastin and Ms. Boucher for their informative presentation.

Kate McLellan introduced Pam Miller, Positive Learning/Guidance Coordinator for ASD-S. She commented that we are 'ahead of the pack' on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities and that Pam and her team continue to work to move it forward.

Ms. Miller compared this to a "journey" and that we are learning as we go and building relationships. She advised that we do have Canadian data and must decide how to use it to help inform our practices moving forward.

Ms. Miller explained that the goal of ENDS Policy #5 is for all members of the school community to be welcomed, respected, accepted and supported in every school, specifically committing to addressing heterosexism within the school community. Administrative procedures and strategies to ensure respect for human rights, support diversity, and address discrimination will be implemented.

Strategies to achieve this goal include revisiting and supporting high school Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) groups – including EGALE training and participation in the annual GSA provincial conference. It will also include provision and promotion of professional learning opportunities for staff to increase their awareness of the scope and impact of discrimination toward these individuals; to increase staff knowledge and skills in promoting respect for human rights, supporting diversity and addressing homophobia and heterosexism in our schools.

At the elementary level a committee of Principals is working on prioritizing the needs for K-5 to support the diverse family structures. This includes creating a library of suggested books that support families and creating a common presentation that is generic and safe and can be used with staff and families.

In March of 2016, the middle and high schools held a GSA workshop where there were 31 representatives (one staff from each middle and high school). At this meeting advisors were challenged to create safe environments. This group highlighted the need to "hear the kids voices" and so a meeting in November 2016 followed where there was an adult advisor from each middle school, and one adult advisor and 1 or 2 students from each high school in attendance. (31 adults; 24 students). Diversity and Respect/Guidance Leads and ESS Coordinators were also in attendance.

Our staff and students attended True Colors 2016 in Fredericton whereby 8/21 schools attending were from ASD-S and 65/170 participants were from ASD-S.

Next steps include the continued support of schools and GSAs; providing information on current practices; on-going professional learning for staff; creation of a presentation that establishes the values of human rights, common language and inclusion principles; circulation of an e-packet to K-12 schools which includes resources, toolkits, activities,

etc. and investigate the purchase of the LGBTQ inclusion Pocket Guide for all schools (from EGALE).

Mr. Nesbitt thanked Ms. Miller for her informative presentation.

4. Business Arising

4.1 Naming Committee Update – New West Saint John School

Mr. Mabey advised Council that we received close to 500 suggestions for names for the new K-5 school in West Saint John. He reviewed the report of the committee for Council. The report detailed the public process undertaken to gather feedback and names for consideration by the Minister.

Mr. Mabey moved that the report of the committee be accepted. Motion was seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

The three names will now be sent to the Minister's office for a final decision on the name of the new school.

4.2 Governance Policy # 8 – Effective Communications Subcommittee Update

Mr. O'Connor advised that the committee hopes to have a draft for Council to review at the February meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Council-Staff Relationships # 4 - 6

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were any issues or concerns with regard to the Council-Staff Relationships policies # 4 – 6 which had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. There being none, he called for a motion. Mr. Regenbogen moved that the policies be accepted as written. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried. Ms. Sherbo abstained.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

The week began with a very successful Professional Learning Day across the province focused on School Improvement Plans, the roadmap for our schools. School visits showed great discussions on topics such as student perception survey results, anti-bullying initiatives, assessment, K to 2 work with the Ten Year Plan etc. There was on-line Autism training for our EAs and training for our bus drivers. A Professional Code of Conduct handout was made available to all staff. This brochure will become part of our new hire

packet. Both the Union and NBTA reviewed the brochure before it was finalized. Copies will be provided at our February meeting.

On Thursday, January 12th the Management Team will be meeting with local police from our district (RCMP and municipal). Topics where the district and police intersect such as lockdowns, hold and secure, bomb threats and the new search and seizure policy will be reviewed.

A public call by the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture was recently issued to all New Brunswick artists. This is for the commission of artwork(s) for the new K-5 school in West Saint John (\$20,000). The art work(s) would need to reflect the concepts of learning, community and diversity and would engage the school community in ways that reflect the new school's relation to the city, including its history and traditions. The deadline for submissions is February 17, 2017 and the successful works will be installed by December of 2017.

The competition has closed for the Principal for the new west side school. The selection process will begin shortly. The Principal will be in place sometime in March as there will be much to do prior to the opening of the new school.

The registration process is now complete for the three FI programs offered for fall 2017. Across the District we have 427 registered for grade 1 entry and 589 for the grade 3 entry point. In the Hampton Education Centre, we have 206 (35%) of the kindergarten population registered for FI; in Saint John Education Centre 172 (21%) and in St. Stephen Education Centre 49 (20%).

For the grade 3 entry point, the Hampton Education Centre has 35%; Saint John 37% and St. Stephen 25%. Currently we have 35% in grade three FI so it is about the same.

Media are now comparing the grade one numbers to grade three and at this point the grade three is higher. It is interesting to note; however, we have 623 in grade 3 FI now, 535 in grade four FI and 479 in grade 5 so the grade 3 program has grown over the last three years and we have seen an overall decline in enrolment.

In preparation for staffing, we are looking at sending out our annual teacher preference form to all B contract teachers this month. We will be adding a question to determine if there are any teachers (superior speakers) who are not currently teaching FI but would like to as we are going to need additional FI teachers this fall.

Mrs. Watson asked Council for a moment of silence in memory of Gail Dickison, a former teacher and DEC member for this district who recently passed away.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Mr. Nesbitt reminded Council of the second round of Policy 409 meetings that will begin next week and asked that everyone try to attend as many as they can.

6.3 Correspondence

None

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. O'Connor spoke about the upcoming mental health sessions being put on by the four local high schools in Saint John. Information was posted on the portal for Council's review for tonight's meeting. Discussion arose around the need for funding – a one-time only request as the PSSC will use their budgets next year. Mr. O'Connor moved that the DEC provide a total of \$600 in funding assistance in support of these two sessions. Mr. Regenbogen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Question was asked about a retreat date for the debriefing on the 409 information received during the consultation process. Mrs. Watson advised that a date had not yet been set.

Ms. Sherbo advised Council that she had attended the recent DHAC meeting and found it very interesting. They are working on a strategic plan which is a great learning experience.

7. Information Items

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Vice Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary