

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – June 14, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

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

Regrets: None

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration, Stewart Stanger, Director of Human Resources and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

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

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler asked that if there were no questions or concerns with the Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the Agenda be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Mr. O'Connor asked that we add Student Fees to the agenda (5.4). The amended motion was moved and seconded as above. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the May 10, 2017 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. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Presentation – Early Childhood Awareness Campaign

Mrs. Watson introduced Gary Hall, Director of Early Childhood Services. Mr. Hall distributed promotional materials on the “It’s All About the First 5 Years” awareness campaign. He explained that ASD-S and a network of providers (Public Health, Family Resource Centres, YMCA and many more) meet every 6-8 weeks to discuss early childhood services. They collaborate very well.

He spoke about the challenges faced with decreasing parent engagement with children. Parents are busy, always looking at their screens and tablets when they are interacting with their children. The messages of the campaign are simple: Look at me; Talk with me; Read with me; Sing with me and Play with me. He then played a short video developed by Early Childhood Services partners and Rod Stears. Distribution of these materials is now underway – they will be sent to all doctors’ offices, Public Health, childcare centres – everywhere! There will be tweets and information sessions with service groups in the fall. The plan is to keep it moving. This campaign led to a revamp of the Early Childhood Services website (part of the ASD-S site). The imagery is now more child-like and the promotional materials encourage parents to come to the site for more information.

Mr. Hall wanted to express his appreciation to Mrs. Watson for her continued support for the integration of early childhood into the district.

Mr. Boudreau asked Mr. Hall about the plan to get daycare operators/parents engaged. Mr. Hall explained that the materials have already been sent to all daycare operators via the coordinators who will also do professional learning in the fall.

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

3.2 Human Resources Report

Stewart Stanger, Director of Human Resources addressed Council to present the annual review of the Department of Human Resources.

Mr. Stanger gave a brief overview of the departments of Human Resources and Payroll. Human Resource Officers (HROs) oversee labour relations and Payroll staff. He explained the role of Natalie Worth, Occupational Health and Wellness Coordinator who oversees Every Day Counts, Wellness, Family Assistance Program, WorkSafe and Right to Information requests and Josh McIntyre, HRO who oversees Pensions and Benefits.

He reviewed the challenges faced by the Department, including: the lack of an effective HR/payroll system (the current one is 30 years old & DOS based); the fact that there is still some resistance with AESOP which is used for casual/supply booking – (he did note we are also having some success); identifying adequate replacement levels (some

positions go unfilled in AESOP); the volume and complexity of staff and union issues and the demand from external sources for information and committee work. He noted that 99% of staff are unionized within 5 collective agreements.

He reviewed the breakdown of permanent (3,321) and casual (1061) positions within the District. He noted that the number of supply teachers stood at 392 and that staff worked to clean up the supply list and deactivate those who were not accepting /available for positions. He advised that there were a total of 335 WorkSafe NB claims submitted (up from 331 last year) and 317 of those were accepted (up from 264 last year).

Mr. Stanger noted that the number of grievances totaled 72 across the District (vs 86 last year). He pointed out that grievances were challenging mainly for the amount of time that is required. He also noted that Human Rights complaints are huge files to work with.

Mr. Stanger advised that staff attendance data coming from AESOP provides more accurate data than we had available in the past. He reminded Council of the provincial attendance initiative (Every Day Counts) that has a goal of reducing the amount of sick leave days (paid and unpaid). He reported that ASD-S was best in the province last year; however, this year it is not a good picture - we had an increase in sick leave of 2,628 days. He noted that focus groups are scheduled for next week to look at this. He explained that after staff are out sick for a period of 5 days, supervisors are to meet with them to examine any ways in which the District can assist in getting this person back to work. This is not something that the Unions like as they feel it is onerous on the staff and records are not being kept. After a staff member misses 10 days, they are assigned to a case manager through Manulife to address issues that are keeping them from attending work.

He noted that the Employee and Family Assistance Program "InConfidence" is an excellent program which is increasingly being utilized by staff both face to face and via online chats.

He briefly reviewed the teaching and non-teaching vacancies and provided a list of the leadership postings in the three Education Centres.

Questions arose from Council including a suggestion to send a letter to the Minister with regard to the need to replace our antiquated payroll system; the role Union representatives play; litigation; a request to add previous year comparisons for Grievances for next year's reporting; questions on reasons for increase in WorkSafe claims; backfilling of positions and salary covered; repercussions for abuse of sick time. All were addressed by Mr. Stanger.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Stanger for his informative presentation.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 ENDS Policy #2 & #5 Update

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the subcommittee met with District staff (Zoë Watson, Pam Miller, Monique Hughes and Kate McLellan) to review the two policies. It was decided that ENDS Policy #5 (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities) would remain as is; however, changes were required to add some strength to ENDS Policy #2 (Positive, Safe, and Inclusive Learning and Working Environment).

The revised policy was posted for Council to review and Mr. Fowler asked if there were any comments or questions on the revisions. There being none, motion was then made by Mr. Boudreau that Council accept the revised ENDS Policy #2 as written. Mr. Malone seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4.2 Trigger School Update

Mrs. Watson advised that a letter received from the Department (and reviewed at May's Council meeting) outlining the trigger schools for 2017-18 did not include Campobello Island Consolidated School and that it should - their functional capacity is at 28%. She advised that a motion would be required to add this to the trigger list. Once Council approves the addition, the Department will be notified. Motion to include Campobello Island Consolidated School to the 2017-18 trigger list was made by Mr. Boudreau. Motion was seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

5. New Business

5.1 Final Budget 2016-17

John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration advised that ASD-S finished the year with a small surplus of \$62,718. He then reviewed the report which had been posted on the portal with Council's meeting materials. He explained the shortfalls associated with replacement costs for different staff groups and advised that the District receives 10.8 days to cover all paid absences, not just sick time. The District then must cover vacation (if employee is replaced), bereavement, emergency leave, family leave and any other paid leave as their collective agreement covers. This can lead to a shortfall that the District must fund. He also highlighted the shortfall under Plant Operations and Maintenance explaining that this is to cover the costs of minor repairs to our aging infrastructure as well as replacement costs for employees in that group. Employee Benefits also was over budget due to the retroactive pay equity payments – this was not fully funded by the Department.

Mr. MacDonald advised that we started the year with a 1.2M dollar shortfall due to funding for Educational Assistants. The Department was approached and the District was provided with an additional \$860,000 in funding to address this issue. He noted that in the business world, on a budget of this size, + or – 1% is considered doing well. The District is happy with the final budget outcome.

Mr. Fowler spoke of the challenge of how the District budget is calculated. The Department knows it is not close – but expect the District to manage attendance in order to balance any shortfall. Mr. Boudreau moved that Council send a letter to the Minister regarding the issue

of only receiving funding for 10.8 replacements days and the high cost to the District to cover shortfalls. Motion was seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

Mr. Malone expressed his thanks to the District for their handling of the budget. He noted that a \$62,000 surplus was amazing and felt the District was in good hands. He then asked what happens to the surplus. Mr. MacDonald advised that it will be set aside and used to help cover any future shortfalls.

Mr. Regenbogen asked why the Province would not pay for leased schools. Mr. MacDonald explained that the Department does cover leases on schools – for example St. Malachy's, St. John the Baptist/King Edward and others in the Saint John Education Centre.

Mr. Spires then moved that the final budget for 2016-17 be approved as presented with thanks for a job well done. Seconded by Mr. Regenbogen. Motion carried.

5.2 Superintendent Evaluation – Subcommittee Report

Mr. Nesbitt reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation Summary Report which clearly outlined the process followed to complete the yearly evaluation of the Superintendent's performance in a number of areas. The review process included the following motions:

Mr. Nesbitt moved that the District Education Council of Anglophone South School District express sincere thanks and appreciation and strongly commend Zoë Watson for her efforts during this fifth year of amalgamation on behalf of the District, all employees, students and parents. Seconded by Mr. Regenbogen. Motion carried.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that as a result of her successful administration of Anglophone South School District this year, Zoë Watson's performance is rated as Exceeds All Expectations. Seconded by Mr. Mabey. Motion carried.

Mr. Nesbitt moved that as a result of the performance of Zoë Watson being rated as Exceeds All Expectations, she would be eligible for a four step re-earnable increment if salaries were not frozen at present levels. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Nesbitt and his committee for their work on the Superintendent's annual review. Mr. Fowler extended his personal appreciation to Mrs. Watson for the work that she does.

5.3 Minister's Excellence in Education Awards

Mrs. Watson advised that the call for nominations for the Minister's Excellence in Education Awards deadline was June 9, 2017. By June 30th ASD-S will be required to submit three names to the Minister for his consideration. She asked that a subcommittee be formed to review applications received. Mr. Fowler, Mr. Boudreau, Mr. Mabey, Mr. Spires and Mr. Tinker all agreed to sit on the subcommittee.

Mr. Fowler advised that he will send out options for a date to review applications in person.

5.4 Student Fees

Mr. O'Connor explained that when Council met with the high school students in the fall, there was concern expressed over the high cost of fees and that there were different costs at each school. He asked if Council should consider a review of the student fees within the District.

Motion was then made by Mr. O'Connor to ask the Superintendent to provide a summary of all high school student fees paid last year, including any for sports teams, graduation, etc. by December, 2017. Seconded by Mr. Boudreau. Motion carried.

Mrs. Watson advised that ASD-S has a School Supplies and Student Fees policy and it is on our website. It was developed by a committee which included PSSC and parent representation. She noted that start up is an expensive time for families, and the District recognizes that other groups are also asking for fees at the same time. She reviewed for Council the procedures outlined in the policy.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

We were saddened to learn of the death of Kiera Hartford, a grade 2 student at Milltown Elementary School. Kiera died on June 7th at the Saint John Regional Hospital. She had been attending half days at school up until March and in recent weeks had failing health. Thank you to guidance leads, ISD and others who were there to support the family, staff and students. Mrs. Watson asked for a moment of silence in Kiera's memory.

The School Calendar for 2017-18 has been completed and Council has been emailed a copy. She explained the change in the structuring of PD days for this coming year – there will be 5 half days instead of all full days and all Anglophone Districts will be making this change. There are also a number of other changes in the calendar for next year and they are outlined in Southern Exposure.

Peter Smith, the current Principal of Kennebecasis Valley High School will be joining the District Office as Director of Education Support Services in July. Stewart Stanger will be transitioning to ASD-N during the summer where he will be the Acting Director of Human Resources. He will be on leave from ASD-S for one year. Other Administrator positions that have been awarded are listed in Southern Exposure.

Summer Learning PD sessions are set to run throughout the summer months this year, instead of all being focused within one week. There are a variety of sessions available and these opportunities are open to all employees.

One June 1st ASD-S had five schools participate in The Learning Partnership Entrepreneurial Showcase at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, including: St. John the Baptist/King Edward, Bayside Middle, St. Stephen Middle, Lakefield Elementary and Chris Saunders Memorial. Students had many great products from granola, to plants, to "Kits for

Kids With Cancer”, to a dog shampoo and an app to donate food, time or money to a local food bank. At the end of the celebration, St. Stephen Middle and Lakefield Elementary won the “Viewer Choice Awards”. Bayside Middle was the recipient of a BMO National Award with a \$500.00 cheque.

Turnaround Achievement Awards have just finished up across the District and over 50 students were honoured for turning their life around. Mrs. Watson expressed her thanks to Council members who attend the events in their Centres.

Mrs. Watson attended the Turning Points ceremony on May 25th where 6 students from ASD-S were awarded prizes for their essays. Turning Points is a program that offers a unique opportunity for students in grades 6 – 12 to reflect upon personal values and their own experiences in order to write about what is truly important to them.

Seaside Park Elementary School held a Family Night for all three school communities to attend (Havelock, Seawood and St. Patrick’s). It was a great evening of fun for the families who will be attending the new school in September. The school has unveiled their new mascot – a Sea Otter.

The annual Marigold Day will take place on Thursday, June 15th when students will plant a sea of color from one end of Main Street to the other.

Mrs. Watson advised that she had attended annual retirement celebrations which were held in all three centres over the past few weeks to honour those retiring from the District after many years of service.

ASD-S will be hosting the annual NBASBO conference this year – it will be held at the Delta Hotel. This includes managers, assistant managers and IT staff groups.

Mrs. Watson expressed her thanks to our K-2 teachers and leads in both Literacy and Numeracy who moved this past year to a coaching model. They did an awesome job during a period of significant change.

The staffing process continues in ASD-S and we had 20 displaced B teachers who were declared surplus and the Directors of Schools have worked to find them a suitable placement and location. The D contract list has been updated and recalls have begun for those teachers.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Watson and the staff at the three education centres who worked to put together the Turnaround Achievement Award ceremonies for their centre. He attended all three events and was impressed with the students who “owned their issues”. They were very emotional nights and a great opportunity to CELEBRATE these students.

Mr. Fowler also attended the retirement event at Lily Lake for Branch 0820 employees.

He advised that the DEC Chairs would be meeting for a three day planning session in Moncton in the near future. The DEC Minutes from the forum are currently being approved by the Department and will be available shortly.

He reminded Council that this is the last meeting of the school year, and that our August meeting will be held on August 23, 2017. He expressed his thanks to staff who have given up a lot of their time to attend Policy 409 and other meetings throughout the year.

6.3 Correspondence

None; all correspondence posted on the portal for Council's information.

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. Regenbogen expressed his appreciation to Council and the District for their support and kindness for his grandson, Rowan.

Mr. O'Connor noted that Loch Lomond School had a very successful Fine Arts night and wanted to congratulate staff. He noted that the Saint John high schools will likely conduct another mental health session or two next year and that Forest Hills PSSC have advised that they want to see elementary schools join together to put on a similar type of event next year. Mrs. Watson noted that they will have their new PSSC budgets to cover costs. Mr. Fowler noted that Council may be able to help out as well.

Mr. Tinker thanked Mrs. Watson for being part of the Soap Box Derby day at Princess Elizabeth School on May 27th. He noted that the Engineer's Association is involved in putting the event together. It was a great success and the kids had a fun day.

Mr. Tinker presented Mr. Mabey with a Certificate of Appreciation for his effort and hard work in making Seaside Park Elementary School a reality. This award was presented on behalf of Wayne Long, MP.

Mr. Mabey advised Council members to take a drive over to see the new school – it is a beautiful site - has a big bus turning lane. The PSSC from St. Patrick's met last night and it is hard for them to say good bye. They are working on a yearbook. He noted that the students all call him "Grampa Gerry" – so they know who he is.

Mr. Boudreau noted that the students at Fundy Middle and High School have a new program "SWAT" (Students Work Against Tobacco) and that they are working hard to change the culture.

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 on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary