

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – November 12, 2014

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at 490 Woodward Avenue Saint John, NB. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Roger Nesbitt, Wayne Spires, Don Cullinan, Stephen Campbell, Larry Boudreau, Bob McDevitt and Gerry Mabey.

Regrets: Sherman Ross, Joanne Gunter and Charlotte McGill-Pierce

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration, Kate McLellan, Director of Education Support Services and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

PSSC Chair Jason Gaudet (St. George Elementary) and PSSC member Dan O'Connor (Simonds High) were in attendance.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

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

Mr. Fowler passed on regrets for Mr. Ross, Mrs. Gunter and Mrs. McGill-Pierce.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda & Minutes

Mr. Fowler reviewed the Agenda with Council and suggested we reverse items # 3 & 4 to allow the St. Rose students to present early. He asked if there were no concerns or questions regarding the amended Agenda that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Nesbitt moved that the amended Agenda be approved. Mr. Spires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the October 8, 2014 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved and Mr. Mabey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Public Comment

None

3. Presentation – St. Rose Elementary Grade 3 Students

Teacher Margot Duff and Vice Principal Shari Carey were in attendance with 4 grade 3 students. Their presentation was part of their cross-curricular New Brunswick Unit and was based on the NB Tourism video of David Myles.

The class focused on the different skill sets that traveling on a trip throughout New Brunswick would require, incorporating skills such as math, art, music, writing, reading, and research to plan an imaginary trip across the province.

They developed scrap books, keeping/drawing pictures of places they visited; they wrote letters about where they should stop and why; they did a video of the places they visited; celebrated with popsicles from our factory in Saint John, and tried dulse! They even had a car give away (the card board one they built)! The students each spoke about the part of the project that they liked the best.

The class received great recognition for their work, including an article in the Saint John paper.

Mr. Fowler thanked the students and teachers for their efforts in this great project.

Presentation – District Report Card

Mrs. Watson introduced Marc Godin, Supervisor of Data & Accountability along with Subject Coordinators Greg Paterson (Literacy); Glen Spurrell (Numeracy) and Juliette Ramzi-Trofimencoff (French Second Language) who would be presenting the District Report Card for 2013-2014. She advised that the initial embargo had been lifted and these results were now available on line from the Department website for all schools in our District and this presentation would be posted on the ASD-S website for public review. She stressed that these assessments represent “one point in time”.

A summary of the assessment results are included in the table below.

Provincial Assessment Results for Anglophone District South

	Grade	Assessment	Target 2016	Province % at Appropriate or above – 2014	District % at Appropriate or above – 2014	District % at Appropriate or above – 2013	District % at Appropriate or above - 2012
K-5	2	Reading	90%	77.5%	81.4%	80.3%	80.3%
	4	FI Reading	90%	68.4%	77.7%	58.3%	N/A
		FI Writing	90%	63.8%	73.0%	N/A	N/A
	5	Mathematics	90%	N/A	N/A	62.5%	63.8%
6-8	7	Reading	85%	77.1%	78.1%	77.0%	N/A
		Writing	85%	N/A	N/A	63.9%	N/A
	8	Mathematics	85%	57.6%	61.9%	60.8%	57.4%
9-12	9	Reading	100%	80.4%	82.2%	77.5%	N/A
		Writing	100%	88.2%	89.1%	82.4%	N/A
	10	FI Reading	85%	80.1%	80.1%	77.4%	79.7%
		FI Writing	85%	47.2%	46.4%	34.4%	45.4%
		Orals	70%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Grade 5: 59.4 percent, plus or minus 1.4 percent of the grade 5 student population would be in the AA or SA performance levels 19 times out of 20 (20% sample for 2013-2014).

* Grade 7: 59.7 percent, plus or minus 3 percent of the grade 7 student population would be in the AA or SA performance levels 19 times out of 20 (20% sample for 2013-2014).

Subject Coordinators each spoke about what is currently happening within their schools and some issues they are facing. Discussion followed the presentations. Council responded with many questions including, the number of leads in each education centre, what weaknesses are being identified by these assessments and if this information is leading to changes in the classroom. Marc Godin cautioned that we need to be careful when comparing these results with previous ones, as these are different students and different sample sizes.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Godin and the team for attending the meeting to present this important information to Council.

Presentation – Attendance

Mrs. Watson briefly explained how the need for this research evolved after she and others from the District and Council attended a NBTA Forum on Students Attendance two years ago. Discussion at the forum raised questions such as is student attendance an issue in ASD-S, how is it recorded, and what do we do with this information? Subsequently, it was learned that ASD-S schools were recording absences in many different ways. Work was done last year with school administrators and administrative assistants to bring consistency to what is being recorded and how, and these changes have enabled data to be collected.

Marc Godin presented the student attendance research and explained what it meant, and how it affects the whole student population when students are absent. A summary of his findings are below.

ASD-S ATTENDANCE REPORT: K - 8 Schools					
School Absenteeism Report: Year - Report Period: Sept 4th, 2013 - June 20th, 2014					
% of Absenteeism Male	% of Absenteeism Female	% of Absenteeism Total	% of Male Students Involved	% of Female Students Involved	% of Total Students Involved
5.7%	5.4%	5.6%	6.2%	5.9%	6.1%

ASD-S ATTENDANCE REPORT: High Schools					
High School Absenteeism Final Report: Report Period: Year DATA					
% of Absenteeism Male	% of Absenteeism Female	% of Absenteeism Total	% of Male Students Involved	% of Female Students Involved	% of Total Students Involved
9.0%	8.5%	8.8%	17.0%	15.9%	16.5%

Questions from Council members included what was being done about the chronic cases of absenteeism, if this information would be made available to parents and how this information could be used to help address this challenge in our classrooms.

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

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

3.1 PSS Symposium Follow Up

Mr. Fowler advised that the symposium was fairly well attended with approximately 60 people attending. He noted that ASD-E had a PSSC information session on a Tuesday evening recently and they had 173 people attend.

He advised that there is a summary feedback form that was posted with meeting materials for tonight outlining comments from participants. He noted we struggle to find something “new” to keep people interested in attending year after year. He also mentioned that timing of the event and materials will need to be looked at before our next session in 2015.

3.2 School Sustainability Reviews - Update

Mrs. Watson advised that we have had two sessions to date; one at St. Patrick’s (held at Havelock) and one at Seawood School. The sessions were fairly well attended and notes were taken. The first sessions were to explain the Policy 409 process, present our proposed plan of action and answer any questions on the process. The next sessions are at Havelock (Nov 17th), Lorne (Nov 18) and Penfield (Nov 24).

The second round of public session dates are scheduled to be advertised in the paper in the next few weeks. Mr. Fowler reminded Council that it was important for as many members as possible to attend these public meetings. These sessions will allow parents and community members an opportunity to speak to our proposed changes and provide their feedback. Council will request that anyone who presents at these meeting provide a

copy of their presentation for our records. We will work to identify a site on the portal to store these presentations.

3.3 Grade Reconfiguration – St. Stephen Centre

Mrs. Watson advised that she had a lengthy conversation with Shane Borthwick, PSSC Chair from Back Bay where it was suggested that before the PSSC committees all meet with the District, that questions be submitted in advance to provide time to fully prepare. This was done and a meeting will now be scheduled with the PSSCs from Back Bay, Blacks Harbour, Fundy High, St. George Elementary and Pennfield schools with John Tanner, Principal from Fundy High, Mrs. Watson, and Jenny MacDougall, Director of Schools St. Stephen, and Derke O'Brien, Director of Curriculum and Instruction to discuss all concerns raised. This meeting will be open to all PSSC members, not just the Chairs. Principals will also attend. This meeting will take place before Christmas.

3.4 Student Leadership Conference – Follow Up

Mr. Fowler advised that he, Mr. Nesbitt, Mr. Spires, Mr. Mabey and Mrs. Watson attended the Student Leadership Annual Conference in Fredericton last week. Council had an opportunity to explain their role as District Education Council members, and were able to hear directly from ASD-S students the things they Celebrate, and their challenges. It was also an opportunity for schools across the province to discuss common issues and how they address them in their school.

ASD-S was well represented; 30 students attended along with District Education Council members and staff. Mrs. Watson noted that she was able to make a few notes during the session and that these points will be posted on the portal for all to review and shared with high school Principals.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of Governance Policies #5-7

Mr. Fowler asked if there were any questions or concerns with regard to Governance Policies #5-7 which had been posted with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Spires moved to accept the policies as written. Seconded by Mr. Cullinan. Motion carried.

5.2 Revisions to Summer 2015 Capital Improvement Projects

Mr. MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration reviewed recommended changes to the previously approved Summer 2015 Capital Improvement Projects and explained the reasons behind the suggested changes. Changes are outlined in detail in the attached table which forms part of these Minutes. Mr. Nesbitt inquired if we are guaranteed to get these project changes approved. Mr. MacDonald explained that these changes have been discussed with the Department and the feedback has been positive, but there is no absolute guarantee.

Comments were made with regard to whether or not this is the best use of funds when some schools have leaking roofs. Mr. MacDonald explained that roofing is now covered under a separate list, and is handled directly by the Department.

Mr. Fowler then asked for a motion to approve the changes to the Summer 2015 Capital Improvement Projects list. Mr. Cullinan moved that the changes be accepted as outlined. Seconded by Mr. Campbell. Motion carried. Mr. Boudreau voted against the motion.

5.3 Vacancy for Sub-District #10

Mr. Fowler advised that an ad had been placed in local newspapers to announce the vacancy and invite qualified applicants from the Sub-District to apply to fill the seat vacated by Gary Crossman. We will now send on three applications to the Minister for his consideration.

5.4 Naming of the New K-5 Quispamsis School

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair of the New School Naming committee read the final report of the committee. The report detailed the public process undertaken to gather feedback and names for consideration of the new school. He asked Council if there were any questions. Mr. Boudreau asked how the names were decided upon, was a rubric used. Mr. Nesbitt advised that they went with the names with the most commonality, and those appearing most frequently. He then made a motion that the report of the committee be accepted. Mr. Cullinan seconded the motion. Motion carried. The full report of the Naming Committee is attached to and forms part of these Minutes. The top three names will now be forwarded to the Minister for consideration. Mr. Spires asked that a letter be sent from Council to the Committee thanking them for their hard work.

5.6 updates on the New K-5 Quispamsis School

Mrs. Watson advised that advertising for the new Principal has begun and the competition will close on November 28. She will work with Paul Smith, Director of Schools for Hampton Education Centre, to conduct interviews prior to Christmas. The successful candidate will start after the March Break as there are many details to be worked out in bringing together new staff and a new school community.

Mrs. Watson will be sending letters to families who are going to be attending the new school. She advised that the construction is on schedule, and we hope it continues to proceed on time. She also advised that she is working with the NBTF to finalize the staffing process and advises that there will be a call for expressions of interest. Mrs. Watson will conduct a conference call each month, or more regularly, with the three Principals involved in this new elementary school to deal with questions as they arise.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Updates

Mrs. Watson advised Council that on October 15th we had about 750 high school students from around ASD-S bussed into Harbour Station as guests of NBCC – Saint John to hear Marc Kielburger. NBCC were launching the Robertson Institute for Community Leadership – the Institute's major focus is on enabling students to be involved in community leadership opportunities that will help them develop their leadership and citizenship skills. As part of the learning experience, students will work toward completing a Community Leadership Certification. Our participating schools sent selected students involved in leadership initiatives to take part in the event.

On October 20th and 27th, NBTA Branch 08-20 held their Supper Seminar Series at Bayside Middle School – this was an opportunity to take advantage of PD offered by our own staff members. Mrs. Watson also advised that the District met with the NBTA Liaison Committee, including Presidents and Directors from the eight branches on November 6th.

On October 16, a meeting of all ASD-S Principals was held in Saint John. Mrs. Watson advised that there are limited funds to bring Principals together so when we are able to, the focus is on PD. This last meeting focused on student assessment. Sandra MacKinnon, Director of the Evaluation Branch spoke in the morning on the international assessment, PISA, the national assessment, PCAP and changes to the provincial assessment program in NB. Principals began a book study "Making Classroom Assessment Work", by Anne Davies.

Fine Arts Coordinator Kyle Peters has reached out to all high schools about the annual opportunity to have students design our ASD-S Christmas Card! Since the 2012 amalgamation, the elementary students and middle schools have had an opportunity to submit their designs, so this year is high school. In 2012 and 2013 the winning design was from St. Martin's School.

The week of October 29, ASD-S hosted two days of provincial meetings for the nine provincial Inclusion Facilitators – one per Education Centre in NB, under the leadership of Lori Wall who is working this year at the provincial level. The Inclusion Facilitators have been very focused on supporting many of our high schools; Mrs. Watson has had the opportunity to attend recent provincial high school triad meetings that have been hosted within ASD-S with teams from other provincial high schools. Inclusion Facilitators Mike Wilson, Helen Johnston and Beth Horgan have recently provided evening sessions for parents on the new Inclusion Policy 322 with approximately 61 families participating.

The first week of November saw two big ASD-S initiatives including CAREER WEEK with Take Our Kids to Work, Career Fairs and other school based initiatives; and, we once again hosted "Retro Bill", in partnership with the Saint John Police Force and Fundy DARE. "Retro Bill" is from Southern California and he spoke to approximately 5,300 middle school students in each of the three Education Centres. He addressed important challenges facing our students such as drug abuse, bullying, teen suicide and much more. His message is meant to boost students' self-esteem, celebrate diversity, and encourage goal-setting, good grades and making safe choices at school, home and on the internet. "Retro Bill's" message aligns with the District Education Council's goal to promote mental fitness.

On Friday and Saturday, November 7 & 8, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development sponsored a Universal Design for Learning Conference. Over the two days, we had approximately 200 educators from schools and the centres attending sessions – administrators, guidance, resource, coordinators, leads and classroom teachers.

6.2 Chairperson's Report & Updates

Mr. Fowler advised Council that the Minister's Forum was being held this weekend in Fredericton, along with the Minister's Excellence in Teaching Awards ceremonies on Saturday evening.

6.3 Correspondence

None

6.4 Members Notebook

Question was asked about the bus situation in the St. Stephen area. Mrs. Watson responded that when we experience a bus driver shortage in any area, the bus run will be announced as running 90 minutes late. This will allow time for a second driver to complete their initial run, and then begin a second run to cover off the driver who is absent. Mrs. Watson said in St. Stephen some doubling up of runs was happening and it caused overcrowding. This has been addressed.

Mr. Fowler reminded Council that Member's Notebook is time to bring information to Council regarding your schools, events you have attended, etc. It is not designated as a time to ask questions of the Superintendent on operational matters.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, December 10, 2014 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary