

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – March 15, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, March 15, 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; Kate McLellan, Director of Education Support Services, John MacDonald, Director Finance and Administration and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:10 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. Spires moved that the Agenda be approved. Mr. Nesbitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the February 8, 2017 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

Heather Stephen, PSSC Chair from M. Gerald Teed addressed Council to provide information on a meeting between 5/7 schools impacted under the current Policy 409 proceedings. They met on February 15, 2017 in an effort to brainstorm alternatives. The goal of the meeting was not to review what had already been discussed in public meetings; however, to focus on moving forward with what was coined “everyone’s best, worst case scenario.”

Ms. Stephen also noted that the PSSC Chairs met with the DEC to review these recommendations on February 23, 2017 during a closed session. Following is an overview of the recommendations:

Assumption that a new middle school would exist and that the K-5 population would require four K-5 schools within the city centre/north end.

Middle School: Millidgeville North, offering grades 6-8 English, 6-8 Early French Immersion, 6-8 Late French Immersion.

Uptown K-5: Either a new construction built in a location central to both St. John the Baptist/King Edward and Prince Charles communities, or exploring options with the Diocese to make St. John the Baptist/Edward the K-5 school for the southern peninsula, thus allowing the Early Learning Centre and community kitchen to remain.

North EndK-5: Princess Elizabeth, M. Gerald Teed (with either an addition or possible rezoning to balance capacity issues). Either a new construction K-5 in a location central to the Centennial and Hazen White/St. Francis communities, potentially on the land owned by the Department of Education on Ropewalk Road, or exploring options within the building previously known as Lorne Middle School.

Ms. Stephen also spoke to the need for the DEC and PSSCs to ensure there is two way communication in the Policy 409 process going forward.

Council was asked to:

- Investigate the parameters of the Mid-Life upgrade program. If it is possible to leverage existing infrastructure (in good condition) through a renovation/expansion, it is more cost effective than new construction for the province.
- Clarify capital budget requirements – what is district funded vs capital budget through the Province of New Brunswick.

Council was asked when a decision would likely be made with regard to this 409 process. Mr. Fowler advised that he could not provide a specific date but there would be notice given in advance through the PSSC and parents.

Mr. Fowler thanked the PSSC members in attendance for their work and Ms. Stephen for her presentation.

3. Presentation

Mrs. Watson introduced staff in attendance to present on DEC policy ENDS #2 – Positive, safe and inclusive learning and working environments, including: Kate McLellan, Director of Education Support Services; Pam Miller, Positive Learning Environment/Guidance; Monique Hughes, Positive Learning Environment/Behaviour; Lynn MacDonald, International Student Coordinator; Nick Munn, Supervisor Data and Accountability; Mary Ann Mackay, Education Support Services Coordinator. She noted that there are a lot of areas that fall under this policy.

Ms. McLellan began the presentation by advising that significant work has gone into the implementation of a District Positive Learning Environment Plan which is designed to promote, create and maintain a positive, safe and inclusive environment. The goal was consistency and accountability in developing the process. Schools are using the current template and are encouraged to add goals that relate to resiliency and mental fitness in the environments.

Monique Hughes spoke about the continued implementation of a Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model to develop a positive student-centred culture in the schools as well as the on-going implementation of a school based behavior pyramid of interventions, including systems to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness.

Pam Miller talked about the introduction of restorative practices in 3 pilot schools. These practices are based on First Nations “circle” and are geared to “fix the relationship” not fix the child. It includes incident management options that are more positive – ie. instead of a suspension. Feedback has been very positive and this program will be broadened next year.

Pam Miller spoke about implementing a plan to ensure that internet safety and digital citizenship are part of the delivered curriculum. She and Moira Sherwood, Subject Coordinator of Technology & Skilled Trades, co-chair a District committee, including local and regional police forces, to examine resources for families, administrators and staff and students with regard to internet safety and digital citizenship.

Mrs. Watson addressed the requirement for a District Emergency Measures team and the development of an ASD-S plan. She noted the need for an ASD-S template for all schools. School EMO plans are posted on the portal. School Connects is available now in all schools and allows for communication (voicemail and email) with parents in the event of an emergency. Lockdown, Hold and Secure guidelines were developed by EECD and were distributed and reviewed with all Principals and all police serving ASD-S.

Mrs. Watson reviewed the need to raise awareness of severe allergies and the impact on students and staff; to examine Policy 704, our training model and to bring consistency to the procedures in place across ASD-S. She advised that since amalgamation, we have lost three students to severe allergic reactions. She talked about our association with the Sweet Caroline Foundation and the training they provide to our schools in the use of epi-pens. There are also community partnerships across the District where Epinephrine Auto-injector Community Boxes have been placed in a number of our

schools. The plan will be to expand this into all of our schools. Schools have advised the District that it is important for face-to-face training on the use of an epi-pen each year, not just a video on this important topic.

Mary Ann Mackay addressed the need to ensure all schools have an inviting environment that respects diversity and inclusive practices. She explained the roll out of a process referred to as an Intervention Process Map which will guide Education Support Services teams through the process for academic and behavioural interventions. This will help to strengthen Education Support Services operations and problem solving skills. She also spoke of the provincial Independent Needs Assessment which was developed to guide Education Support Services teams when making decisions on a student's needed supports (ie a rubric).

Lynn MacDonald, International Student Coordinator spoke about the implementation of newcomer strategies including cultural diversity training sessions offered to schools, teachers, administrators and students; the creation and implementation of Welcoming Schools document/practice; continued consultation with Education Support Services teams; the use of a FAQ document to inform assessment practices on English Language Learners, and support for a best practice document for instruction of English Learners - Observation/Self-Assessment. Documents were posted to the DEC portal for additional information for Council. She noted that as of March 15, we have 1080 international students.

Mrs. Watson spoke about the District's efforts on improving student attendance with a program called "Attendance Matters" which was introduced in the fall of 2015. New to this program is the recent work on developing consistent high school exam exemption guidelines for the 2017-18 school year. Schools may choose to use this as an incentive to encourage good attendance.

Nick Munn addressed Council with an update on Power School and student attendance management. He advised that attendance is now recorded in Power School by all teachers using consistent codes and accurate recording practices in order to establish a baseline of data for 2016-17. By default, all students are marked "present" unless marked absent by a teacher. Middle and high schools take "period attendance" and elementary submit daily attendance which is taken in the morning and updated at noon. He also noted that six high schools are now using the public parent portal with 6,000 parent and student users. On the site, parents can view attendance, marks, assignments, etc.

Questions arose from Council with regard to when more schools will be ready to use the parent portal, other data available from Power School and the definitions of physical violence vs bullying. All were addressed by staff.

Mr. Fowler thanked staff for their informative presentation.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Governance Policy # 8 – Effective Communications Subcommittee Update

Mr. O'Connor reviewed the work that had been done to date and noted that suggested revisions and feedback had been incorporated into a final draft which was posted (March 5, 2017) to the portal for Council to review. He then moved that the revised policy be accepted as presented. Seconded by Larry Boudreau.

Mr. Fowler noted that he had concerns over points within the revised policy and asked that it be brought forward again at the April meeting to allow more time to review as he and others had been away over the past two weeks.

Mrs. Watson addressed her concern over points which would require additional work/resources for district staff.

Questions were raised by members of Council seeking clarification on points within the policy which the Chair addressed.

In light of the discussions around the table, Council members felt that more work would need to be done to finalize the policy. Mr. Nesbitt then moved that the motion be tabled until the April meeting. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

Mr. Fowler acknowledged that much work had gone into revising the policy and commended the subcommittee on their work. It was suggested that all feedback be provided to the subcommittee by March 29th in order to provide time to make adjustments for presentation at the April meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Executive Limitations Policies #4 – 6

The Chair asked if there were any issues or concerns with regard to the three policies and Monitoring Reports (including: EL#4 Information and Reporting to Council; EL#5 Staff Evaluation, and EL#6 Budget and Financial Planning) which were posted on the portal with tonight's meeting materials for Council to review. He asked if Council would like to pass one motion covering all three.

Following several questions/concerns raised by Council with regard to specific points in policy EL#4, a motion was made by Mr. O'Connor to remove this policy from any motion involving EL#5 or EL #6. Seconded by Mr. Boudreau. Motion carried.

In light of this, a follow up motion was then made by Mr. O'Connor to undertake a policy review of EL#4. Motion seconded by Mr. Boudreau. Motion carried.

With regard to the remaining policies and Monitoring Reports for EL#5 & EL#6, questions followed asking for clarifications which the Chair provided. Following these discussions,

motion was then made by Mr. O'Connor to approve EL#5 and EL#6 as presented. Seconded by Richard Malone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Watson addressed Council and advised that based on her interpretation of policy EL #4, and her evidence to support her compliance with the policy as written, she would like to see a motion to approve the Monitoring Report as presented if members were satisfied with her interpretation and evidence of compliance. Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor to approve as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

At this time, Mr. O'Connor then moved that we table EL #4 for one month. Seconded by Ms. Sherbo. Motion carried.

5.2 Budget Update

In light of the late hour, the Chair suggested Council might consider a motion to table this report until the next meeting. Mr. Boudreau moved that the Budget Update be tabled until the April meeting. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion carried.

5.3 Capital Projects & 2018 Summer Improvement Projects

John MacDonald reviewed for Council the Capital Projects and Summer Improvement projects list for 2018. He advised that last year we did not get all the dollars that we had requested, and likely would not this year. He explained the process which determines how projects get on the list – the Facilities Manager and Assistant Managers in each Centre draft a list and the Manager reviews with Director of Finance and Administration and then the Superintendent. He advised that staff are very knowledgeable about their schools and the needs.

Questions from Council included whether or not the Department could change the priority order of some of our requests and about the use of a rubric. Mr. MacDonald explained that if the Department saw something that they felt should be moved up the list, then it would come back before Council to approve. This would be very rare or due to something unforeseen happening in a school that required immediate attention. Question was also raised with regard to ensuring “due diligence” was taken in the compilation of the list. Mrs. Watson responded that our facilities staff know the schools inside and out and are very competent at what they do. They are in and out of schools and communicate with Principals. Mr. Fowler noted that Council should always feel free to ask questions about the documents before them, but should also have faith in staff whose responsibility it is to prepare these documents.

5.4 Evaluation and Compliance Reports – Policy 711

Again, due to the late hour, the Chair suggested Council table these reports until the next meeting. All were in agreement to bring these forward at the April meeting.

6. Information Items

6.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

Mrs. Watson spoke of the St. Stephen High School Welder's Camp that was held over the March Break – "Mind over Metals". It received very positive reviews with at least five students stating they would be taking welding in Grade 11. The students had a great week and learned a great deal about welding. The Executive Director for the Canadian Welders Association attended and spoke to students about the career opportunities for them within the trade. MLA Ames also spoke and explained how the government is supporting the trades and the importance for students to be exposed at this age.

Michelle Deschenes has been appointed Principal of the new K-5 school in west Saint John – Michelle has been in the role of FI Subject Coordinator and before that was Principal of Westfield Elementary School for nine years. She will transition to her new role through the month of March as there is much to be done to prepare for the opening of our new school with facility decisions, ordering, staffing, PSSC etc.

The staffing process has now begun and there will be print ads in the Telegraph Journal beginning this weekend for leadership positions – including one for the Director of Education Support Services as Kate McLellan has advised that she plans to retire at the end of the school year.

Many PD sessions are happening including: science, literacy and numeracy K-2, Guidance, Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS) and French Immersion to name a few. The Department provided special monies to cover these costs. The difficulty is the money must be spent over a short period of time and this can lead to challenges in finding supply teachers on short notice.

On February 28th in Toronto, Matt Bedard (Seawood Elementary School) was the recipient of one of 40 Canada's Outstanding Principal Awards. Matt was joined at the ceremony by Director Debbie Thomas, Monica Watson-Bedard and ASD-S alumni of the program Alan Dunfield, Louise Johnson, Mike Wilson, Pat Laskey and Christine Roy! These school leaders also participated in PD on mental health as part of the national program.

February 21st was a great day with representatives from our high schools; an Innovative Day of Sharing - it was very exciting. Teachers shared their projects – technology, cyber-security, water testing, green house, data analysis, robotics, sumobots and much more. Very engaging for our high school students.

On February 23rd, our school based "CELEBRATE" Champions met for a day of networking.

Mrs. Watson followed up on a question from the February meeting from Mr. Boudreau about the possibility of more evidence in the hiring process. Mrs. Watson advised that she is involved in most hires except for "D" and casual staff. She noted that she can spot check a few competition files and include it in next year's monitoring report. Mr. Boudreau noted that his comment was more for the DEC, not Mrs. Watson. Mr. Fowler suggested that it may

be possible for DEC to audit hiring files – but only for the process – all other information would be confidential. This would be a question for the Human Resources Director given private information in the files.

Mrs. Watson followed up on a question from the last meeting where a member wanted to know at what point renovations to an older school would be too high and a new one built. Mrs. Watson advised that when renovations would cost 85% of the cost to build new – renovations would not be carried out.

6.2 Chair Report and Updates

Mr. Fowler advised Council of the passing of Brian Bawn, a former NBTA President and teacher in Saint John, following a brief illness. He asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

6.3 Correspondence

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

6.4 Members' Notebook

Mr. O'Connor advised Council that the parent session put on by the PSSC of the four local high schools in Saint John on February 27th at St. Malachy's High School was attended by approximately 150 people. There were four guest speakers and the evening was well received. In May, they will host Dr. Chorney.

He advised of NB Engineering Association's STEM Teacher awards. 5 are available for NB teachers - \$2,000 each. Deadline for submission is March 30th.

Mr. O'Connor reminded Council of Lakewood Heights Elementary wellness event on Tuesday, April 4th at 6:00 pm in the gymnasium.

Mr. Boudreau asked if some items that are discussed in closed session of Council might be moved to the open session of the meeting. Mr. Fowler advised he would look into it.

Mr. Mabey encouraged Council members to take a moment to go out and look at the new school being built in west Saint John. It is coming along very well. He also mentioned that the PSSCs from the three schools are working together on nutrition, school colors and other areas in anticipation of the opening in September 2017.

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, April 12, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary