

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)

DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting – February 12, 2025

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met in-person on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Roger Nesbitt, Chair, Amanda Hamm, Vice-Chair, Beth McQuinn Nixon, Ginny Hooper, Matthew Martin, Wayne Spires, Sarah Craig(on-line), and Ché Greene.

Absent Members:

Jon Barry, Jennifer Sheils, Teresa Sewell, Shane Borthwick, Kelsey-Ann Peterson and Amanda Henderson-Matthews

ASD-S Staff:

Derek O'Brien, Superintendent; Jessica Hanlon, Director of Communications; John MacDonald, Director of Finance and Administration; Mark Blucher, Director of School and Data & Accountability; Rosemary Southard(on-line), Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre, Susan Moffatt(on-line), Director of Human Resources, Ryan Price, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Matt Bedard, Acting Director of Schools, Jennifer Grant, Acting Director of Education Support Services, and Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Nesbitt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He advised that he received regrets from Shane Borthwick, Amanda Henderson-Matthews and Kelsey-Ann Peterson.

Mr. Nesbitt began the meeting respectfully acknowledging the territory in which we gather as the ancestral homelands of the Wolastoqey, Mi'gmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples. We strive for respectful relationships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation and honour this beautiful land together.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Agenda for the meeting and asked that if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that the Agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Hooper. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nesbitt referred to the Minutes of the January 8, 2025 meeting and asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. There being no questions or concerns, Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Martin. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

3. Superintendent's Report & Update

Mr. O'Brien advised that his report had been posted for Council to review.

He began his report recognizing Staff Appreciation Week and acknowledging all the dedicated and hardworking staff of Anglophone South School District.

He highlighted that resource teachers and representatives from our partner agencies in Health and Social Development received two days of Violent Threat Risk Assessment Training, over 30 people received ASIST – Suicide Intervention Training, and the three training sessions for Resource Teachers with Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act and ESS Connect Privacy, Assistive Technology and Trauma in Schools. Our New Teacher Learning Community completed a professional learning session focused on introductory overview of the curriculum, accessing teams' sites, coaching and necessary resources and supports to teach K-5 math, literacy, and French Second Language.

Mr. O'Brien shared that Thérèse Trofimencoff, our Antiracism Lead, presented ASD-S Antiracism and Equity Policy at the recent high school principals meeting and will also present to the middle and elementary school principals later in the month.

He mentioned that Todd Cormier, Coordinator for School Counselling and Integrated Service Delivery Processes, continues work with school teams, Leads and Behaviour Intervention Mentors around secondary trauma. This work provides insight about the signs and symptoms of potential secondary trauma, and how staff can take direct measures to support one another without the potential of 'sliming' one another with disturbing material.

Mr. O'Brien spoke about the Education Support Services Coordinators who are working with VIVA and are starting to schedule Kindergarten transition meetings. This collaboration will allow the coordinators and the schools teams to better understand our new students' needs as they enter the school system. He mentioned the development of a pilot document with select school levels in the Hampton Education Centre for information shared as the students transition through the school system.

He commented on the first Assessment Leadership Academy cohort of 35 high school teachers which began on February 4, 2025. He mentioned in March a second data sprint for kindergarten to grade 5 Academic Support Teacher project will be completed.

He concluded his report indicating he had meetings with Fusion Saint John and Portage where they shared about their programs. He also had a Grade 3 Class tour the Office of the Superintendent as well as the schools he visited, Norton and Sussex Elementary Schools, Princess Elizabeth School and Seaside Park Elementary School along with other schools which he visited with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Education.

4. Presentation

4.1 Newcomers Presentation

Ms. Melissa Gavin, Coordinator for the Newcomer and International Student Welcome Center, began her presentation by highlighting the number of new student registrations that have come in over the past number of years and she mentioned how the number of staff members have increased in the past 10 years to help accommodate newcomers.

She commented that in 2024, IRCC have capped the number of study permit applications that can be accepted for processing and how this measure has reduced the number of international students coming to Canada by 40%.

Ms. Gavin indicated that in the school year 2022-2023 there were 1041 newcomer registrations; in 2023-2024 there were 1236 registrations and so far in 2024-2025 there are 820 newcomer registrations. Some of these newcomers represent 97 countries with 56 different languages. A concern for these students is allowing them to receive language and school readiness support. A new program was formed, Strong Start, Empowering Multilingual Language Learners, to help build their confidence and give them tools to guide them into a functional language, school readiness, social vocabulary and SEL support.

She concluded her report by stressing that building the students confidence is the number one priority and how the percentage of the students confidence grew following the Strong Start Program.

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Sub-Committee Report

Mr. Martin advised the members a meeting time will be determined, and they will report back at the March meeting.

5.2 Town of Sussex – Land

Mr. John MacDonald reviewed the request from the Town of Sussex regarding their interest for the school district to consider the potential purchase and sale of the land alongside the Sussex Elementary School Lands.

Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Mr. Spires moved that we declare the piece of land surplus. Seconded by Amanda Hamm. Motion carried.

6. New Business

6.1 Executive Limitations Monitoring Reports:

EL 3.1 – Emergency Superintendent Succession

EL 3.2 – Human Resources

Mr. O'Brien reviewed the monitoring reports. Mr. Nesbitt asked if there were no questions or concerns that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Hooper moved to approve the monitoring reports as presented. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

6.2 Schools not visited by DEC (Policy 4.6)

Mr. Nesbitt mentioned to the DEC members that a minimum of one visit per year to a PSSC meeting is required and if the members are unable to get to all the schools to reach out to Mr. Nesbitt.

6.3 3rd Quarter forecast to end of December

Mr. John MacDonald presented the Expenditure Plan Update (2024-2025) forecasting a balanced budget. Mr. Spires moved that we accept the 3rd Quarter Expenditure Plan Update as presented. Seconded by Mr. Greene. Motion carried.

7. Information Items

7.1 Member's Notebook

Ms. Hamm reported that on January 14th she had the privilege to attend River Valley Middle School, PSSC. One thing that they were really excited about is the long-term recommendations in education that were put forward. They had the opportunity to jump on a middle school renewal program that's being led by EECD and there's a few schools, middle schools throughout the province that are part of this pilot project.

On January 15th, she was able to attend the school steering committee meeting, with PSSC chairs from Westfield, River Valley Middle, Grand Bay Primary and Inglewood who have formed together to organize a team, and they have 3 fundamental goals: Improve the synergies of the schools in the community; having different parent nights and really champion education in the community. Their next meeting is to take place at River Valley Middle School on February 25th.

January 21st, she was able to visit Harborview High School as part of their PSSC meeting, and things are going great with that school. One thing that they did want her to bring to the table was some challenges around busing, and perhaps an opportunity to encourage the district to investigate the utilization of city transit.

January 27th, she visited the Westfield PSSC and they have a big initiative of embedding numeracy, so they're really putting a focus on math.

January 29th she was able to attend the minister's forum. One topic was recruitment and retention of staff, particularly teachers.

February 4th, she had the privilege to attend the East West basketball game that happened between Harbour View High School and Simonds. It took part place at Simond's this year and I just want to comment on the unified teams.

February 8th, she had the opportunity to see the production of Something Rotten at Saint John High School. It was an incredible performance.

Mr. Spires reported that he attended the Milltown Elementary PSSC meeting and the school is really turning their reading program around through the holistic program. He also spoke about the lack of parent participation

attending the PSSC meetings in a number of schools in his sub-district. Vincent Massey is trying to encourage their students to speak French during the day which the children are doing.

Ms. Hooper reported that she was able to get to most of the schools in her sub-district and many of these schools are concerned about food insecurity.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

January 13, 2025 – Virtual meeting with the superintendent

January 14, 2025 – Virtual meeting with the Council of DEC Chairs and Vice Chairs

January 20, 2025 – Appeal hearing

February 4, 2025 – PSSC at Chris Saunders Memorial Elementary School

February 10, 2025 – PSSC at Quispamsis Middle School

Script for Public Presentations to DEC

This script has now been prepared and has been included on the website following the motion that was passed in December 2024.

Memorial Guidelines

At the January 2025 meeting a motion was passed to write a letter encouraging the Minister to develop a set of provincial guidelines for memorials. The letter that was sent is included in the correspondence. In addition, the matter was raised with the CDC and subsequently at the Minister's Forum held on January 29th. As a result, the Minister has agreed that the Department will pursue the matter further.

Minister's Excellence in Education Awards

These awards were created a number of years ago as a way to recognize those folks in education who are making outstanding contributions. Nominations are now open until Thursday, February 20, 2025. It will be my pleasure to present three (3) from this district at a dinner in Fredericton on June 3rd. I will be asking for 3-4 DEC members to select the 3 recipients from the nominations received. If you are interested in helping with this, please let me know.

DEC Teach-in

Just a reminder that the professional learning session scheduled for January 11 has been re-scheduled for Saturday, March 29. Please put this item on your calendars. We will need to know numbers of who are attending in order to have the food available.

7.3 Correspondence

Posted for this meeting and dealt with during the meeting.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Nesbitt thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nesbitt, Chair

Susan Cunningham, Recording Secretary