

BRIEFING NOTE

Proposed Community and Student Engagement Process for Naming a New School

To	District Education Council
From	Superintendent, Anglophone School District South
Date	October 2026
Subject	Proposed Community and Student Engagement Process for Naming a New School
Purpose	Decision

Purpose

To seek District Education Council (DEC) approval for a proposed process to engage students, families, staff, and community members in identifying and considering potential names for a new school.

Background

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) Policy 409 addresses multi-year school infrastructure planning and the implementation of major capital projects. Appendix B identifies “Naming of school” as a stage in the implementation of a major capital project and directs District Education Councils to follow the process outlined in section 6.3 of Policy 409.

Given the importance of a school name in establishing identity and belonging, it is recommended that the DEC use a transparent consultation process that provides meaningful opportunities for student and community voice before making its decision.

The proposed approach would not treat the naming process as a public referendum. Community and student input would inform the DEC’s consideration and decision in accordance with Policy 409.

Key Considerations

- Create a sense of ownership and excitement among students and families.
- Recognize the history, geography, cultures, and identity of the communities served by the school.
- Provide students with an authentic opportunity to participate in a decision affecting their future school.
- Encourage learning about local and Indigenous history, geography, and community identity.
- Ensure potential names are appropriately researched before being considered by the DEC.
- Establish a transparent record of how student and community perspectives informed the decision.

Guiding Principles

Student Voice: Students, particularly those who may attend the new school, should have a meaningful role in the process.

Community Voice: Families, staff, community members, local organizations, and other interested individuals should have opportunities to participate.

Belonging and Inclusion: The name should contribute to an identity in which students and communities served by the school can see themselves.

Respect: Proposed names should demonstrate respect for local history, Indigenous history and culture, geography, diversity, and community identity.

Transparency: The criteria, process, timelines, opportunities to participate, summary of consultation themes, and final decision should be clearly communicated. Individual submissions, due-diligence findings, the shortlist, and advisory recommendations may remain confidential where appropriate to protect privacy and support Council deliberations.

Proposed Process

1. Establish a School Naming Advisory Committee

- The DEC would establish an advisory committee to oversee consultation, review submissions, conduct due diligence, and develop a shortlist.
- Proposed membership: Superintendent or designate; DEC representative; DEC student representative or another student representative; school administrator; and Parent School Support Committee representatives from both Hazen White - St. Francis and Centennial Elementary schools.
- The committee would engage local First Nations and Indigenous education representatives from the outset and throughout the review process. This approach would seek informed perspectives without expecting one individual to represent all Indigenous communities or viewpoints.
- The committee would be advisory and would not make the final decision.

2. Establish and Publish Naming Criteria

Proposed names should:

- Be appropriate for a public school and contribute positively to the school's identity.
- Be meaningful and suitable for long-term use.
- Promote a welcoming and inclusive school identity.
- Avoid confusion with existing schools or public institutions.
- Include an appropriate school designation, such as Elementary School, Primary School, or Academy, subject to applicable requirements.
- Withstand appropriate historical, cultural, and reputational review.
- Be supported by a clear rationale explaining why the name would be appropriate for the new school.

Ideas to Consider

Participants would be encouraged to think broadly about what could provide a meaningful identity for the new school. Ideas might be inspired by the communities the school will serve, local history or geography, culture, the natural environment, shared values or aspirations, or other ideas participants believe would be meaningful to current and future students.

3. Conduct a Public Call for Names

- ASD-S would conduct an approximately three to four-week nomination period open to students, families, staff, Parent School Support Committees, residents, community organizations, and other interested individuals.
- Submitters would provide the proposed name, the preferred school designation, the reason for recommending it, its connection to the students or communities served, and what the name should represent for current and future students.
- The number of nominations received for a name would not automatically determine whether it advances.

4. Create a Dedicated Student Engagement Process

- Affected schools would undertake age-appropriate learning and discussion around the question: “What should the name of our new school represent?”
- Students could explore community and Indigenous history, place names, geography, the natural environment, historical schools, and the values they hope the new school will represent.
- Classrooms, student councils, or student groups could submit recommendations.

5. Complete Review and Due Diligence

- District staff and the advisory committee would review all nominations for historical accuracy, cultural appropriateness, Indigenous perspectives, duplication, reputational concerns, unintended meanings, potentially harmful interpretations or social contexts, and long-term suitability. Input from local First Nations and Indigenous education representatives would inform this review.

6. Develop a Shortlist

- The advisory committee would identify up to three potential names.
- For each shortlisted name, ASD-S would develop a brief explanation of its meaning, community connection, significance, due-diligence findings, and rationale for inclusion. The shortlist and supporting information would remain confidential until the DEC determines what may be released.

7. Report to the District Education Council

- The Superintendent would present in Private Session a School Naming Consultation Report summarizing engagement, participation, student involvement, community feedback, shortlist results, key themes, due diligence, and the advisory committee’s recommendation.

8. DEC Consideration and Decision

- The DEC would consider the consultation report, student and community feedback, naming criteria, and completed due diligence, and proceed in accordance with section 6.3 of EECD Policy 409.

The community and students inform the decision.

The District Education Council makes the decision in accordance with EECD Policy 409.

Communications

The consultation would be promoted through district and school communication channels. To encourage thoughtful participation, the process could be organized around the question:

“What should the name of our new school represent?”

This framing uses clear, age-appropriate language and encourages students and residents to consider community, history, identity, belonging, and aspirations rather than treating the process as a naming contest or public vote.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the District Education Council approve the proposed community and student engagement process for naming the new school and authorize the Superintendent to establish a School Naming Advisory Committee and initiate public and student consultation, with the results and recommendations to be returned to the DEC for consideration in accordance with EECD Policy 409.

Proposed Motion

THAT the District Education Council approve the proposed community and student engagement process for the naming of the new school and direct the Superintendent to undertake the consultation process and report the results and recommendations to Council for consideration in accordance with EECD Policy 409.

Policy Reference

New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Policy 409: Multi-year School Infrastructure Planning, including Appendix B, Implementation Process for Major Capital Projects. Appendix B identifies “Naming of school” as a stage and directs District Education Councils to section 6.3 of Policy 409.

Source: [Government of New Brunswick policy directory](#) and [Policy 409 Appendix B](#).