



**DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Superintendent's Monitoring Report**

POLICY NAME	Closure of Schools		
POLICY NUMBER	ASD-W-EL7	Number of Reports per year	2
Date of Report	March 19, 2015		
Date of Previous Report (s) This School Year	October 23, 2014 (moved from September 25, 2014, by approved motion)		
Date of Future Report (s) This School Year	N/A		
Report Filed by:	David McTimoney, Superintendent		
Report Supported by:	Shawn Tracey, Director of Finance and Administration Many District Office Staff		

REPORT:

- **The policy calls for the District Education Council (DEC) to have steps in place if considering the closure of a school. The steps need to align with Provincial Policy 409 – Multi-year School Infrastructure Planning. There is a requirement to ensure that persons affected by a school closure are given sufficient notice and fully informed about the process, are provided with relevant documentation, have adequate time to consider the information as well as seek advice and consult with others (should they wish) and have adequate time to prepare a presentation for DEC, being heard impartially**
- **The policy outlines a series of steps, with timelines, regarding the process of studying the sustainability of a school**
- **The DEC has been engaged in three sustainability studies, as launched at the October 23, 2014 Public DEC Meeting**
- **A detailed timeline and plan has been followed, with the culmination of two studies (Coles Island and Stanley) scheduled for tonight**
- **The Superintendent has facilitated the sustainability studies with tremendous support from district staff. The DEC has been actively engaged in the studies for a period of five months**

POLICY NAME**Closure of Schools**

- **The communities of Coles Island and Stanley were active participants in the sustainability studies**
- **The Superintendent and staff have prepared two reports for tonight, each containing the necessary documentation to allow the DEC to make an informed decision on the sustainability of the two schools in question...namely Coles Island School and Stanley Elementary/High School. The Council has had access to this information along the way as well as an opportunity to discuss, ask questions and reflect**
- **The Superintendent recommends the DEC make a motion on each of the two studies, bringing them to a conclusion tonight**
- **An executive summary is included in this report, one for each school setting**
- **The sustainability study for Bath Elementary and Middle Schools will continue, reaching a conclusion at the April 23, 2015 public meeting**

Appendices:

- **A - Executive Summary - Coles Island School Sustainability Study**
- **B - Executive Summary - Stanley School Sustainability Study**

Superintendent's Signature: _____**DEC Chair Signature:** _____**Date:** _____

Anglophone West School District Education Council

Sustainability Study - Coles Island School

Executive Summary
March 19, 2015

Formal Communication with EECD

- October 28, 2014 - Informed Minister Serge Rousselle of the Council's intent to conduct a sustainability study of Coles Island School under Provincial Policy 409
- Study was launched following a vote at the October 23, 2014 Public DEC Meeting
- Policy 409 outlines 3 options for the DEC to consider
 - Option 1 - Maintain the Status Quo
 - Option 2 - Recommend a Significant Investment in Programming and Infrastructure for the school to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
 - Option 3 - Recommend closure of the school to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Formal Communication With Parents

- Five formal letters written to parents/guardians of children at Coles Island School
 - October 29, 2014: informed of the study and shared process and timeline
 - November 17, 2014: invitation to Public Meeting #1
 - December 12, 2014: Description of Public Meeting #2 as well as a description of alternate means for engaging in the sustainability study
 - January 12, 2015: Reminder/Invitation to Public Meeting #2
 - March 16, 2015: Invitation to Public Meeting #3 with a description of the streaming opportunity

Public Notice

- Advertisements were placed in the local newspapers
- Posters were placed in strategic locations in the community of Coles Island School
- Posting of relevant documents were placed on a district website specific to the Coles Island School Sustainability Study
- Monitoring of specific “Sustainability” email address, written mail and electronic message board on our website; the Superintendent corresponded regularly with stakeholders on this public discussion board
- An established timeline that was shared with parents and the public through the website was followed

Public Meetings

- November 20, 2014 at Coles Island School - Presentation of Information by School District 17 (Public Meeting #1)
- January 15, 2015 at Coles Island School- Presentation by Parents and Stakeholders (Public Meeting #2)
- March 19, 2015 at Nashwaaksis Middle School and streamed to Coles Island School- Review of Study and Vote on Motion (Public Meeting #3)
- Audio for Public Meetings #1 and #2 are available on our website; presentation slides and notes are also found on the website

Categories of Policy 409

- Public Meeting #1 allowed for a presentation of facts, with categories outlined by Policy 409
- These categories included
 - Enrolment and Functional Capacity
 - Health and Safety and Building Assessment
 - Educational Programs and Services
 - Provincial Assessment and Perception Data
 - School Benefits and Challenges
 - Transportation
 - Finances
 - Community and School Impact
 - Potential Options
 - Advantages and Disadvantages
 - Economic Development

Categories of Policy 409

- Various documents were created to help support the study with data and information; some of these documents were created during the study and posted publicly on our website; other documents were created at the end of the study to help answer specific questions of the DEC; these are available in the final report
- These documents were used as a basis for study by DEC members and as a catalyst for conversation

Community Engagement

- The stakeholder and parent community were very engaged in the study
- There were a number of presentations to the DEC at Public Meeting #2
- A recurring theme of the stakeholders was a concern for long bus rides on potentially dangerous roads
- Stakeholders noted the quality education received by their children at this small, rural school
- Presentations and notes from the stakeholders and parents are included in the report
- A number of individuals participated in public, on line discussions (a part of the report)
- A petition is also included in the report

DEC Reflections and Considerations

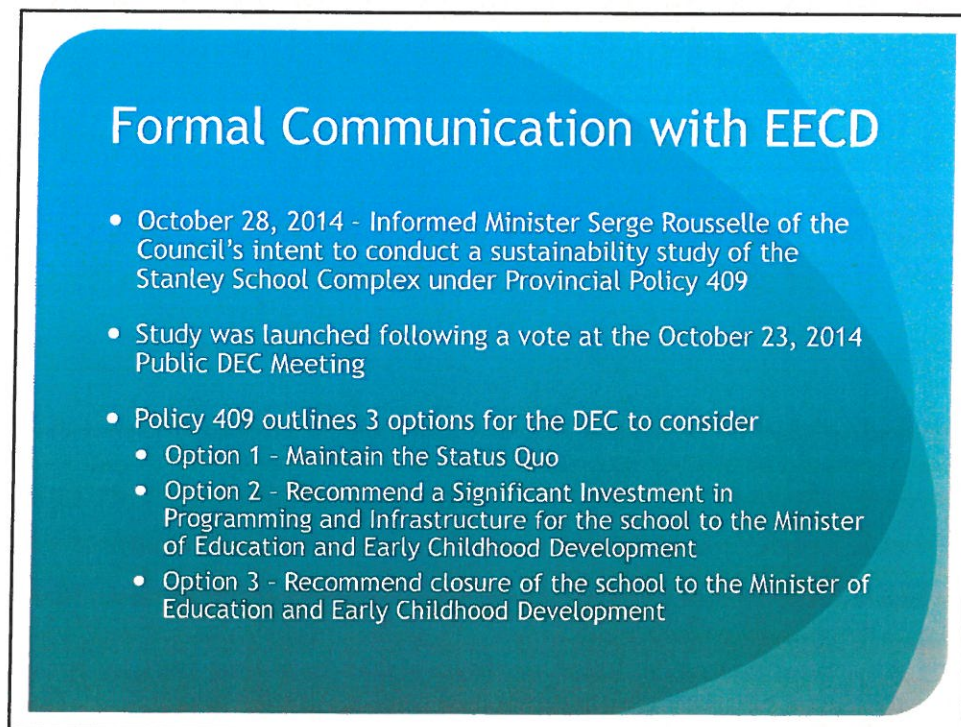
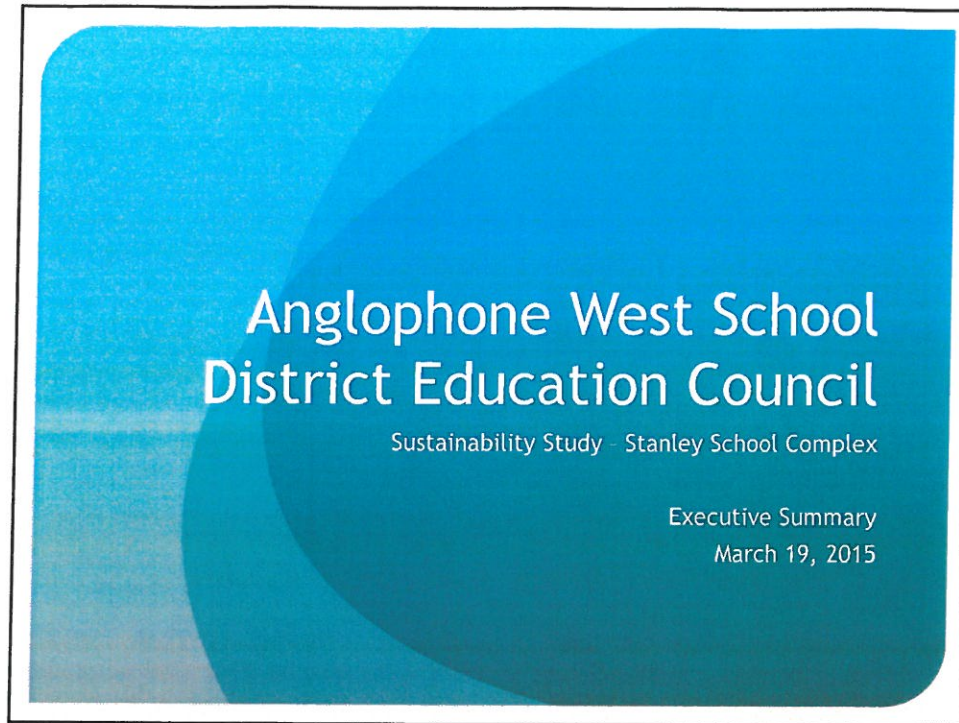
- DEC Members took time to review documents and ask many questions of the Superintendent
- DEC met in a number of working sessions to continue the conversations and reflect on the information
- DEC Members would, on occasion, contact the Superintendent with questions related to the sustainability study(ies)
- Several members of the DEC traveled various bus routes (on a yellow school bus) in the Coles Island catchment area as well as adjacent routes towards Cambridge-Narrows and Chipman

Tonight and Tomorrow

- Final discussions as a Council
- Present a motion to act on the study information
- Conduct a vote on the motion
- Write to Minister Rousselle indicating status quo if voting for option 1, or
- Write to Minister Rousselle with the recommendation and the accompanying information package if voting for Option 2 (Requesting Significant Investment) or Option 3 (Requesting Approval for Closure)
- Write to the Parents/Guardians of the students at Coles Island School with the conclusion

Minister's Responsibilities

- If a closure is recommended by the DEC, Minister Rousselle will review the report and assess it for procedural fairness
- The Minister will need to reach a conclusion on the recommendation in a time frame of no less than 30 days and no longer than 60 days, as per Policy 409
- Upon confirmation of the conclusion from the Minister, the Superintendent will write to the parents/guardians and staff at Coles Island School



Formal Communication With Parents

- Seven formal letters written to parents/guardians of children at the Stanley Schools
 - October 29, 2014: informed of the study and shared process and timeline
 - December 1, 2014: invitation to Public Meeting #1
 - December 12, 2014: Description of Public Meeting #2 as well as a description of alternate means for engaging in the sustainability study
 - February 2, 2015: Reminder/Invitation to Public Meeting #2
 - February 10, 2015: Reminder/Invitation to Public Meeting #2 following first cancellation due to weather
 - February 19, 2015: Reminder/Invitation to Public Meeting #2 following second cancellation due to weather
 - March 16, 2015: Invitation to Public Meeting #3 with a description of the streaming opportunity

Public Notice

- Advertisements were placed in the local newspapers
- Posters were placed in strategic locations in the community of Stanley
- Posting of relevant documents were placed on a district website specific to the Stanley School Sustainability Study
- Monitoring of specific "Sustainability" email address, written mail and electronic message board on our website; the Superintendent corresponded regularly with stakeholders on this public discussion board and replied to formal letters and emails
- An established timeline that was shared with parents and the public through the website was followed

Public Meetings

- December 4, 2014 at Stanley High School - Presentation of Information by School District 17 (Public Meeting #1)
- February 26, 2015 at Stanley High School- Presentation by Parents and Stakeholders (Public Meeting #2)
- March 19, 2015 at Nashwaaksis Middle School and streamed to Stanley High School- Review of Study and Vote on Motion (Public Meeting #3)
- Audio for Public Meetings #1 and #2 are available on our website; presentation slides and notes are also found on the website

Categories of Policy 409

- Public Meeting #1 allowed for a presentation of facts, with categories outlined by Policy 409
- These categories included
 - Enrolment and Functional Capacity
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 - Transportation
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 - Community and School Impact
 - Advantages and Disadvantages
 - Economic Development

Categories of Policy 409

- Various documents were created to help support the study with data and information; some of these documents were created during the study and posted publically on our website; other documents were created at the end of the study to help answer specific questions of the DEC; these are available in the final report
- Some documents were provided by community members for inclusion in the study and final report
- These documents were used as a basis for study by DEC members and as a catalyst for conversation

Community Engagement

- The stakeholder and parent community were very engaged in the study
- There were a number of presentations to the DEC at Public Meeting #2
- A recurring theme of the stakeholders was a concern for young students in Kindergarten and elementary grades being included in the same school as older students at the high school level; concerns of staffing and administration expertise were also noted
- Stakeholders noted the quality education received by their children at the small, rural school of Stanley Elementary
- Presentations and notes from the stakeholders and parents are included in the report
- A number of individuals participated in public, on line discussions (a part of the report)
- A petition is also included in the report

DEC Reflections and Considerations

- DEC Members took time to review documents and ask many questions of the Superintendent
- DEC met in a number of working sessions to continue the conversations and reflect on the information
- DEC Members would, on occasion, contact the Superintendent with questions related to the sustainability study(ies)
- It is noted that, for this study, the option to close a school means that the two current schools (found in one building) would operate as one school (K-12) and not two (K-5, 6-12); students would not be relocated

Tonight and Tomorrow

- Final discussions as a Council
- Present a motion to act on the study information
- Conduct a vote on the motion
- Write to Minister Rousselle indicating status quo if voting for option 1, or
- Write to Minister Rousselle with the recommendation and the accompanying information package if voting for Option 2 (Requesting Significant Investment) or Option 3 (Requesting Approval for Closure)
- Write to the Parents/Guardians of the students at the Stanley Schools with the conclusion

Minister's Responsibilities

- If a closure is recommended by the DEC, Minister Rousselle will review the report and assess it for procedural fairness
- The Minister will need to reach a conclusion on the recommendation in a time frame of no less than 30 days and no longer than 60 days, as per Policy 409
- Upon confirmation of the conclusion from the Minister, the Superintendent will write to the parents/guardians and staff at the Stanley Schools