

**ANGLOPHONE WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Kingsclear Community School
Public Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2024**

Council Members Present:

- Connor Brennan – Sub-district 2
- Serena Bradford – Sub-district 5
- Ruth Eden – Sub-district 6
- Janet Dean – Sub-district 8
- Chris Harquail – Sub-district 10
- Jim Mills – Sub-district 11
- Thomas Geburt – Sub-district 13, Chairperson
- Luke Carson – Student Councillor

Council Member Regrets:

- Candice Browse – Sub-district 3
- Tanya Cloutier – Sub-district 4
- Michael Mazerolle – Sub-district 9
- Wallace Carr – Sub-district 12, Vice Chairperson
- David Perley – First Nations Councillor

Council Vacancies:

- Sub-district 1
- Sub-district 7

ASD-W District & School Staff Present:

- David McTimoney, Superintendent
- Kendra Hatheway, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & DEC
- Darla Day, Director of Schools, Fredericton Education Centre
- Marcie Connors, Principal Kingsclear Community School
- Kimberly Ouellette, Teacher Kingsclear Community School
- Lana Thompson, Teacher Kingsclear Community School
- Collin Tibbits, IT Support

District Staff Regrets:

Members of the Public

- 0 Media
- 2 Guests -
 - Amer Hassounah – Kingsclear Community School PSSC Chair
 - Amgad Salem – Former DEC Councillor

Call to Order:

- DEC Chairperson, Thomas Geburt, called the public meeting to order at **6:36 PM**

Welcome & Comments by the Chairperson:

- Chairperson Geburt, on behalf of the Council, acknowledged that, with the exception of one, the land on which Anglophone West School District schools are located is the traditional unceded and unsundered territory of Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet). This territory is covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship which the Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet), Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with the surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized the Wolastoqey (Maliseet), Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.
- Chairperson Geburt welcomed everyone to the public District Education Council (DEC) meeting. The Superintendent introduced district staff in attendance.
- Chairperson Geburt thanked the public for signing in and reminded everyone public comments would be at the end of the meeting.

Review and Approval of the Agenda:

- The agenda was reviewed by the Council and approved by consensus.

- **Review and Approval of Previous Public Meeting Minutes (September 19, 2024)**
- The minutes were previously reviewed by the Council and approved by consensus.
- **ACTION:** Kendra H. to scan September 19 minutes to the Superintendent and send them to Paul/Damon to post on the website.

- **Business Arising from the Minutes:**
- PSSC Handbook – DEC Chair Thomas Geburt advised meeting attendees of the newest version of the PSSC Handbook available on our website.

- **Superintendent Monitoring Reports:**
- The Superintendent provided an update on his monitoring report ASD-W EL4 (1 of 4): Budgeting / Forecasting.
 - Due to the inability to access budget information from the Fusion software, the Superintendent requested a postponement to formally present his report to council in November. The postponement was approved by DEC Chair, Thomas Geburt.
 - The Superintendent offered a budgetary update. The pressures related to budget don't change a lot year over year. This year the pressure is on staffing, specifically Education Assistants (EA's).
 - The Superintendent further stated he has already reached out to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) for additional funding for the EA's. The Superintendent also noted his report EL4 will likely forecast a deficit, but he is hopeful funding will be forthcoming from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).
- DEC Chair, Thomas Geburt indicated that to justify the Superintendents request for additional funding, it may be necessary for the DEC Council to also write to the department.
- **ACTION:** The Superintendent to provide EA and bus driver salary information to the Council.

- Superintendent Report - ASD-W EL8 Communications to Council.
- The Superintendent presented his monitoring report EL8 to Council and welcomed any questions.
- The ASD-W-EL8 report is posted publicly on the ASD-W website.
- The Superintendent reported compliance of the policy, and the Council accepted.

- **Presentation: Busing within ASD-West – Transportation Manager Daniel Wishart**
- Daniel Wishart, the Transportation Manager, gave a presentation to Council regarding bus transportation within ASD-W.
- The Superintendent offered a brief update as it pertains to the newly implemented Inclement Weather Policy and requested that Mr. Wishart enlighten attendees of the goals surrounding the recruitment and retention of bus drivers.
- Daniel Wishart discussed a proposed trial period for 15 floating bus driver positions. Those drivers will be guaranteed 30 hours per work week until the end of June. We hope this will ease unfilled vacancies
- Daniel Wishart outlined the Transportation Departments current bus driver challenges such as, illness, injury, family emergencies, funerals, problems with the bus or personal vehicle, and fully trained drivers leaving for alternate employment.
- Daniel Wishart further explained the district is waiting to take delivery of 12 busses that will be added to the fleet.
- The Superintendent mentioned school enrollment has increased, which has led to the hiring of more teachers and an increase in the number of classes.

- A few questions followed the presentation:

- DEC Chair Thomas Geburt asked is if there is a pool of replacement bus drivers?
 - Daniel Wishart's Response: Collectively working towards a larger pool of replacement drivers and the transportation department would welcome retired coach or city bus drivers on the Casual Driver's Roster. Yes, there is a list of casual drivers.
 - Mr. Wishart feels increasing the driver's hourly rate, having a more flexible schedule and offering bus drivers more hours would attract candidates and aid in the recruitment and retention of bus drivers.
- DEC Chair Thomas Geburt asked what is the average age of the driver?
 - Daniel Wishart's Response: The average age of our bus drivers is 58.
- DEC Councillor Connor Brennan inquired on the duration of the bus driver training and how long before the trained driver is assigned a route?
 - Daniel Wishart's Response: Approximately 5 weeks in total, with some delays a direct result of scheduling driving tests at the Provincial Licensing Offices.
- DEC Councillor Serena Bradford asked which recruitment methods have already been tried to attract candidates?
 - Daniel Wishart's Response: Job Fair, Employee Referrals, ASD-W Website, and some Social Media Recruiting have all been used.
- DEC Chair Thomas Geburt mentioned how challenging it is to have shortages in Educational Assistants and bus drivers.

• **New Business:**

- Update on Change in School Hours K-2 Level/ Consultations with Oromocto-Fredericton communities
 - The Superintendent had hoped to provide a more formal update; however, he is pleased to share the services of Porter O'Brien have been retained. They are a neutral body and will be taking the lead on this initiative.
 - Porter O'Brien will share their findings in report form with the Superintendent, which will help guide decision making as it pertains to school hours. The Superintendent is hopeful staff and parents will participate in the survey and public sessions. Robust participation ensures quality feedback
 - The timing for this initiative will be a November/December activity.
- Update on Absenteeism (Staff & Students)
 - The Superintendent provided attendees an update on student & staff absenteeism.
 - The Superintendent provided an update on staff absenteeism.
 - Unfilled vacancies for bus drivers – there was a steady increase of unfilled vacancies and then receded a little bit.
 - The Minto/Chipman/Coles Island/Cambridge region appears to see the fewest unfilled vacancies.
 - Oromocto, Gagetown, Fredericton Junction, Fredericton appear to have the most consistent unfilled vacancies.
 - The Superintendent reiterated, once again, the dire need for new buses and new bus drivers
 - The Superintendent receives a weekly Teacher and EA Unfilled Vacancies report. So far, this school year shows improvement over last school year for teachers but not for EA's.
- DEC Councillor Ruth Eden asked how teacher vacancies are managed?
 - The Superintendent's Response: Options that have worked in the past are to combine two classes together with a single instructor, assign coverage from within, or deploying leads. There is a response plan that school administrators can follow. This year's plan will go out soon.
- DEC Councillor Ruth Eden expressed concern about the cancellation frequency of rural buses and how those cancellations affect the attendance records of students. She wondered how these cancellations/attendances might affect the outcome of our districts Provincial Assessment results?

- Update on New District Office
 - o ASD-W staff currently working at 1135 Prospect Street will be moved to 21 Knowledge Park Drive, Fredericton, NB. The move is forecasted to be in March 2025 but is subject to change.
 - o Relocating will enable all of us to be under the same roof and return the space we occupy and back to Fredericton High School and Enterprise.

- **Public Comments: DEC Chair Thomas Geburt asked the public if they had any questions.**

- Amgad Salem – Inquired about the Districts Long-term plan and the duration of time the plan will encompass?
 - o Response: DEC Chair Thomas Geburt, as it relates to an infrastructure perspective, spoke briefly of the increasing need for a long-term plan and the ability to forecast district essentials and was hopeful by the end of the school year, the Council would have further insight.
- Amgad Salem – Also inquired about a plan to use School Messenger to notify parents/guardians of bus delays or cancellations.
 - o Response: The Superintendent confirmed this method of communication was being explored and other districts have/are testing but, there is no specific plan within ASD-W just yet.

- Lana Thompson - Suggested partnering with students from NBCC & UNB to help remedy the bus driver shortage. Some students who don't attend morning classes or have few afternoon classes could be motivated to be trained and added to the bus driver roster, especially if payment was in the way of scholarship or course credit.

- **Closing Comments:**

- **Date of Next Public Meetings:** Thursday, November 21, 2024, Public Meeting at the Montgomery Street Elementary School, 692 Montgomery Street, Fredericton, NB E3B 2X8

Chairperson Geburt called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED BY: Chris Harquail

SECONDED BY: Jim Mills

MOTION CARRIED


- **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM.



 Thomas Geburt, Chairperson

21 November 2024

 Date



 Kendra Hatheway, Executive Assistant
 to the Superintendent & DEC

Nov. 21, 2024

 Date