

# Bluefield Family of Schools District Advisory Council

Members for 2018-19: Amanda Doherty-Kirby (Bluefield High), Cavelle Murphy (Central Queens), Melissa Rommens (Eliot River), Stephanie Arnold (Gulf Shore), Stephen Letner (Westwood), Luke McCarvill (Bluefield High student), Matt Nicholson (Bluefield High student), Karen Clare (PEI HSF rep)

**April 1st, 2019, Eliot River School**

**Guest, Lori Ronahan, Flexible Learning and Innovation Leader, EELC**

## Discussions and Outcomes

### Flexible Learning Opportunities

Lori Ronahan, Flexible Learning and Innovation Leader, EELC, presented about her work at the Department.

Four (4) areas of focus are:

- Essential Graduation Competencies (EGC)
- K-9 Curriculum Update
- Flexible Learning Grades 10-12
- Forward Thinking

### Essential Graduation Competencies include:

- Citizenship,
- Communication,
- Personal-Career Development,
- Creativity and Innovation,
- Critical Thinking and
- Technological Fluency
- These competencies are not limited to grade level. They can be learned and included in all curriculum K-12.

### K-9 Update

- Grades 1-6 are moving to a cross-curricular, integrated curriculum, with a focus on Social-Emotional Learning.
- It is an Inquiry based approach to learning, with 6 Inquiry units per Grade, as well as student led questions.
- A pilot for Grades 1-3 is planned for 2019-2020, and a pilot for Grades 4-6 in 2020-2021.
- Grades 7-9 are looking at a new Intermediate Curriculum Delivery Model.
- It focuses on the developmental needs of students.
- It features 1 hour learning blocks, less periods in a day and fewer transitions.
- It also integrates Health and Phys.Ed., with a focus on relationships and wellness.

- Vernon River and Birchwood are currently running pilots of this model, and it is expected to expand to other Intermediate schools.

### Flexible Learning

Students in Grades 10-12 have several ways to earn credits in non-traditional ways. These include:

- External Credentials (via participation in community organizations or government programs)
- Independent Study
- Destination Imagination
- Distance Education – online courses for students at small schools or those out of school for medical reasons.
- Students in Grade 11-12 can participate in the Academy Diploma Program, which combines academics and community related programs.
- They can also participate in Co-op Work Studies (CWS) during the summer and earn 2 credits in a field of their interest. (CWS take place in the mornings from 9 am-12 pm).
- Members expressed that they would like to have better communication from the Department about all the options that are available for students and parents regarding Flexible Learning.

### Forward Thinking

- CMEC – the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada is examining larger questions concerning the purpose of school, as well as the challenges being faced.
- They are looking into curriculum redesign and achievement reporting and how new models could mesh with post-secondary needs and practices.

### Common Assessment Report

- RMJ tabled their report in December 2018.
- Members would like an opportunity for parents to offer feedback on how assessments are carried out in the early grades.
  - **UPDATE: Elizabeth Costa, Assessment and Accountability Leader, will attend a future meeting.**

### Engage PEI

- Members were reminded to encourage any persons they believe would be a good fit to serve on the PSB Board of Directors to have them apply via Engage PEI by April 30th, 2019.

### Membership

- Membership was reviewed and term ends confirmed.
- Stephen is stepping down after this meeting and his school (Westwood) is working on a replacement member for him.
- There are current vacancies in East Wiltshire and Englewood.
  - **UPDATE: The Engagement Officer is working membership and Principals to fill these vacancies.**

December 13, 2018, Gulf Shore Consolidated

Guests: Dale Sabeau, PSB Board member; Parker Grimmer, PSB Director; Karma McCallum, Charlottetown DAC member.

## Discussion and Outcomes

### Homework Guidelines

- A Charlottetown DAC member reviewed the work compiled around establishing a policy or set of guidelines around homework, with a focus on K-6.
- The goal is to have a set of guidelines that all teachers at K-6 grade levels follow with respect to the amount of homework given, so that the expectations of parents and students is consistent.
- The Department brochure on Learning at Home was discussed. Its focus is on Practice, Production and Preparation.
- Several members indicated an interest in participating in a working group with other partners to explore how to move forward.
  - **UPDATE: The Learning and Leadership team at the Department is examining homework, and will engage with the DACs as they move forward**

### Distance Education

- The Distance Learning handbook was discussed.
- It was suggested that either Lori Ronahan or Derek McEwen from the Department come to the next meeting to provide some clarity on the differing and intersectional roles of flexible and distance learning.
  - **UPDATE: Lori will be attending the April 1 meeting.**

### School Food Project

- Morgan Palmer continues to develop a school food model.
- In September 2019, nine (9) schools will participate in a school food pilot project, including 2 schools in this District (East Wiltshire and Eliot River).
- Direct input from students outlined what they would like to see happen with school food.
- Videos capturing that experience are now posted on the PSB website.

### Staff Allocations - Custodians

- At the last meeting a concern was brought forward from the Westwood school community about the custodian staffing allocation for that school.
- Custodians are allocated based on school square footage, not population, 1:19,000 sq. ft.
- Westwood has a large school population for its square footage.
- They would like to see the allocation model reviewed and additional staff be assigned to address custodial needs at schools with large populations.

### Infrastructure Review

- There was discussion about the upcoming review of all school infrastructure that the Government is undertaking.
- This review will look at schools older than 30 years, and then create a list of priorities and a schedule for repairs.
  - **UPDATE: the RFP has been issued and closes the end of March 2019.**

## Guidance Counsellors

- Members would like to see Full Time Equivalent Guidance Counsellors for each school.
- The role of the Student Well-being team in supporting counsellors was discussed.
- Members were encouraged to go back to their school counsellors and see if there has been any change since the Student Well-being teams started taking referrals.
- There was also some discussion about the PATHS program at Central Queens and Parkdale Elementary schools, and the success that parents, teachers and students have seen in their social-emotional health and self-regulation.
- It was suggested that the PATHS program should be rolled out to all elementary schools on PEI.
- It was noted that the Three Oaks DAC is also interested in this idea, and that Montague and Morell also would like to see some earlier interventions, via A+ or a PATHS program.
- There could be opportunity to work together with other DACs to support this idea.
  - **UPDATE: The PATHS program will roll out to all Island elementary schools in 2020-2024, supported by The PEI Poverty Reduction Action Plan.**

Oct 4, 2018, Eliot River School

## Discussion and Outcomes

### Distance Education

- Some background was given to new members on the reason for having this as a priority.
- DAC members are concerned that there may be a lack of opportunity for students to participate in Distance Education, especially those at home due to an illness.
- A Dept staff person will be contacted to see what pathways/programs are available for students learning from home.
  - **UPDATE: The Dept Distance Learning Brochure, including ways to access the program, was circulated.**

### School Food

- There was an update on the work that Morgan Palmer is undertaking re: school food.
- One member noted that their healthy school lunch provider is no longer going to be serving them, because of overwhelming demand from multiple schools that they cannot fulfil.
- This is leading to a scramble from parents to fill the gap.
- The DAC supports increasing the quality of school food, and will offer letters of support to Morgan should she need them.
  - **UPDATE: The DAC was sent an update on the progress of the School Food Initiative.**

## Role of Librarians

- Students remarked that the support and leadership that librarians showed them in the early years fell away in Intermediate, just when they were starting to use the library more.
- Members see the value of having a librarian available at the Intermediate level to direct or oversee project based and research based learning with students.
- This DAC would like more information about how librarians are allocated to schools.

## Custodian Allocation

- Currently, custodians are allotted based in the sq. footage of the building, not on the enrolment.
- Westwood has a low sq footage but a high student population, and would like additional custodial hours.
- This DAC would like to see the allocation criteria re-evaluated to reflect the needs of the school, not just the sq. footage.
- Members were encouraged to work with the local Home and School to reach out to the PSB to let them know their position.
  - **UPDATE: An additional 3.5 hour position was allocated to Westwood in the Fall of 2018.**

## Homework

- Many members feel that homework loads and expectations are inconsistent across classrooms and grade levels.
- They would like to see better teacher communication about how much homework is being assigned.
- It was mentioned that perhaps some members could sit on the Chtown DAC Homework subcommittee, should it continue this year.
  - **UPDATE: A Charlottetown DAC member came to the December meeting and presented its work on this shared priority.**

## Space

- There was a discussion about the lack of space in District schools.
- Members will ask at their local Home and Schools to see if this is a District wide issue.
  - **UPDATE: The Province has allocated funds to examine the infrastructure and future needs of schools over 25 years old.**

## School Choice

- DAC members would like to see student offered more opportunity for course choice, including ½ credits.
- Members would like a Dept staff person to give them some information about this possibility.

## Cannabis

- Cannabis Talk kits were distributed to interested members.
- Members were encouraged all to attend the Cannabis Info session on Oct 9th at Charlottetown Rural.

## Engagement Requests

- All members were asked to provide feedback on the Report Card review framework, and to review the new PSB Strategic Plan and Safe and Caring Learning Environment policy.