

Westisle Family of Schools District Advisory Council

2018-19 DAC Members: Sandee MacLean (Westisle High), Ellen Rennie (Alberton Elementary), Jason Ramsay (Bloomfield Elementary), Kelly Shea-Rayner/ Monique Horne (Hernewood Intermediate), Teena Callaghan (Tignish Elementary), Ashton Grigg (Westisle student), Dominic Arsenault (Westisle student), Katie MacLennan (PEI HSF rep), Doug Lyon (ME Callaghan), Paula Walfield (Ellerslie Elementary), Jeannie Burden (O'Leary Elementary)

May 13th, 2019, Hernewood Intermediate

Guest: Harvey MacEwen, PSB Board Member

Discussion and Outcomes

Pilot Projects

- How pilot schools are selected was shared.
- Members were encouraged to connect with their Principals about exploring the barriers that may exist to allow more schools in this District to participate in Pilot projects.
- There was some discussion around the School Food Project and why there are no Western schools in the Pilot.
- Some feel that Westisle High should have been a hub.
- All members with an interest in their school participating in the next phase of the pilot should reach out to Katelyn MacLean, School Food Project Co-ordinator.
- There was a discussion about school capacity to participate in pilots as well as other programs.
- These initiatives need champions, and if there is no one available at the school level to take on the extra work, it may be a barrier for participation.
- All members were asked to go back to their schools and have discussions about barriers, so the DAC can offer some advice about how to overcome them.
 - **UPDATE: The Engagement Officer compiled a list of the pilot projects in the Westisle District this year and shared with the DAC.**

Communications

- There was discussion about how schools, the PSB and the Department can better communicate with parents.
- Several members stated that in other jurisdictions in which they have lived, there was a text based communication tool that was well used and had high approval from parents.
 - **UPDATE: The PSB is looking at a new software system to replace SAS, and texting functionality will be a consideration.**

Regional Representative

- Principals contact PSB staff directly when they have issues of infrastructure or student needs.

- The discussion evolved to come to the question: what are the roles and responsibilities of Principals, and are they overburdened with school inspections/infrastructure needs?
- A plan to complete a review of all schools 30 years and older to identify infrastructure issues is being contemplated.
- The idea of a Regional Rep will be carried forward for continued exploration.
 - **UPDATE:Principal's role and responsibilities were shared with the DAC.**

BYOD

- There was an update on the BYOD rollout.
- Members would like more in information.
 - **UPDATE: The School Readiness checklist was sent to the membership.**
 - **UPDATE: Jaime Matheson, BYOD project leader, will be booked for the Fall meeting to talk about the BYOD program as a whole.**

DAC Provincial Report

- The report will be forwarded to all members.

Arts and Culture in Schools

- A member noted her concern that Westisle seems to have a very heavy focus on school sports, with not as many offerings in arts and culture.
- While she sees the value of sport, she would like to see more in school and extra-curricular offerings and celebrations in arts and culture.
- Other members echoed this concern.
 - **UPDATE: Vicki Allen Cook, Arts Specialist at the Department, sent the DAC some information on how this District is engaged in the arts.**

Forward Agenda

- The items to carry forward for the Fall were reviewed.
- Members are invited to send any areas of interest to her to add to the list.

Outgoing members were thanked for their service. Your voices at the table are heard, valued and actioned. Thank you so very much for your time and dedication to the students of your District.

April 16th, 2019, Hernewood Intermediate School

Guests: Lori Ronahan, Leader of Innovation Flexible Learning, EELC; Dale Sabeau, PSB Board member

Discussion and Outcomes

Flexible Learning

- Lori presented to the DAC about the work at the Department with respect to Flexible Learning.
- Four (4) areas of focus are:

- Essential Graduation Competencies (EGC)
- K-9 Curriculum Update
- Flexible Learning Grades 10-12
- Forward Thinking
- EGC scope includes:
 - Citizenship,
 - Communication,
 - Personal-Career Development,
 - Creativity and Innovation,
 - Critical Thinking and
 - Technological Fluency.
- These competences 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 will have an Inquiry based approach to learning, with 6 Inquiry units per Grade, as well as student led questions.
- A pilot for Grades 1-3 will happen in 2019-2020, and a pilot for Grades 4-6 in 2020-2021.
- Ellerslie Elementary will be included in the grades 1-3 pilot.
- There were some questions and discussion about how schools get selected for pilots.
 - **UPDATE: Principals and teachers are sent information about upcoming pilots. Interested schools apply. A Committee selects the schools to participate, striking a balance between new and experienced teachers as well as geography. Participating teachers and schools are offered supports and guidance through the pilot process, including curriculum coaches, substitute time as needed and in-class supports.**
- 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.
- There was a question about if this will be the same for French Immersion.
 - **UPDATE: The pilot at Birchwood Intermediate is in both English and Late French Immersion.**

Non-Traditional Credits

- 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.

- There are ADP streams in Tourism, Aerospace, Agriculture and Bioscience, Business and Innovation and Marine Biology.
- Students can also participate in Co-op Work Studies (CWS) during the summer and earn 2 credits in a field of their interest.
- Several DAC members had never heard of Destination Imagination and requested information about this program be sent to the membership.
 - **UPDATE: Information about Destination Imagination was forwarded to the membership.**
- 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.

Transportation Pilot

- The Ellerslie/Tyne Valley area bus will now be permanent.
- The South after-school run will continue for the next year.
- The role of the DAC and the Transportation sub-committee were celebrated in advocating for these services to the District.

Regional Representative

- Jason shared that all 9 District Principals agreed in principle with the rationale he presented to them around a regional representative.
- Principals were clear with him that any new position this may create could not take away from any FTE allotments to their school.
- This role would be a non-instructional staff person, over and above the current staffing at the Public Schools Branch.

School Calendar

- The committee is meeting, looking at creating a 3 year calendar.
- The 2019-2020 School Calendar is now available online.

DAC membership

- Terms for members were reviewed.
- Parent reps serve a two year term with a maximum of one term renewal, for a maximum of 4 years' service.
- Students serve a one year term with a one term renewal, for a max of two years' service.

AEDs

- New AEDs that were recently purchased by Government for distribution and installation in Island schools.
- Discussion included AED ownership after installation, insurance and liability.
- The members would like to know the process that occurred around AED allocation.
 - **UPDATE: Late in the fiscal year, the government decided to allocate funds to ensure that all 62 Island schools have an AED (or two, based on school size – square footage and population). From the information the Branch had about AEDs already in place in schools and still within their service lifetime, they identified a need for 60 AEDs. These were purchased via tender, and are being installed this year. Schools with a newer, operational AED are eligible to receive a brand new one, but they must return the older one to the PSB. All 62 schools will now have the appropriate number of AEDs in place.**

January 14th, 2019, Westisle Composite High

Guests: Harvey MacEwen, PSB Board member and Erin Johnston, Assistant Director, Public Schools Branch

Discussion and Outcomes

Transportation

Ellerslie Bus

- All members present agreed that this pilot bus route should continue for the future. It has gone from one of the longest routes to one of the shortest.
- One member has a child on that bus and his pickup time has gone from 7:15am to 7:50am.
- There is still one long route starting at 7:30am and arriving at school at 8:45am. As a result, students are arriving just at the bell or later, and are not able to participate in the breakfast program.
- A member encouraged the focus to be retention of the current route, and to work with the PSB to reduce the length of time students ride one way to 60 minutes.
 - **UPDATE: in a discussion with PSB after the meeting, it was noted that this run is regularly timing out to 72 minutes.**
 - **This route has a lot of pick-ups and dead end turnarounds, 72 minutes is as close to 60 as they will be able to get with this route this year.**
- The Transportation subcommittee will draft a letter to the PSB requesting the continuation of this bus as part of its upcoming and future budgets.
 - **UPDATE: This letter was sent to the Board and Branch.**
 - **This route will continue for the 2019-2020 school year, supported in part by the Department of Regional and Rural Economic Development.**

After School Buses

- The PSB has supplied the ridership numbers for October to December 2018.
- Members were not surprised by the low numbers for the North run.
- Many students from that area have their own transportation.
- The South run is more popular and has consistent ridership.
- The transportation committee will formulate a letter to the Board of Directors asking for the continuation of this pilot for next year.

- Bloomfield Principal Andrew Stewart has asked that the students at his school be a part of the pickup during the periods of high after-school activity (basketball etc.).
- He has approached his parent community and they are supportive.
- DAC members were also supportive.
 - **UPDATE: The South bus run will continue for the 2019-2020 school year, supported in part by the Department of Regional and Rural Economic Development.**

Regional Representation

- A member gave an update on the concept of a Regional Representative Position he proposed at the last meeting.
- He has not yet been able to meet with Principals to gauge their interest in this, but will strive to meet with them as soon as possible.
- He offered some background to new members on the rationale for the position.
- He will report back to the DAC after meeting with the District Principals.

Funding Model

- Schools receive a budget for programming (supplies, instruments, bussing, etc.) based on their populations.
- Rural schools receive additional monies for transportation.
- There are a growing number of programs and initiatives being rolled out to encourage more people to move to rural areas.
- Several members agreed that their area is growing, and they want to ensure that is reflected in school budgets.

Capital Spending

- The upcoming Infrastructure Review of schools 30 years and older was discussed
- Older schools across PEI will be assessed by an outside company to deliver a list of recommendations for repair.
 - **UPDATE: The RFP has been issued and is open until March 31, 2019**
- Currently, Principals submit their needs and requests for repairs/replacements prior to the September 15th deadline for the PSB Board to submit their Capital Budget for the year.

Westisle Parent Letter

- A parent committee letter was submitted for review and request for DAC support.
- Westisle Parent Council is concerned about the infrastructure needs of Westisle Composite High School.
- The letter has already been sent to and received by Parker Grimmer at the PSB.
- The DAC as a whole supports the letter.
- There was discussion about how repairs and maintenance are carried out.
- Highest needs are first.
- The PSB is also encountering a lack of skilled workers to complete the jobs.
- It is a balancing act to keep maintenance up to date and moving forward with available workforce.

Oct 3, 2018 at Westisle Composite High

Guests: Harvey MacEwen, Dale Sabeau, PSB Board members

Discussions and Outcomes

Review of Outcomes and Roles

- The role of the DAC and the outcomes of the evaluation in the Spring were shared.
- There is hope for more DAC to DAC connections and direct feedback from the Board, Branch and government on advice given.

Transportation

- A new bus route was added in the District in September, to offset long bus rides for some students.
- One of the student DAC members goes on that new bus, and reports the bus is faster, less crowded and overall a more enjoyable experience. She is not using her car as much.
- Most routes are now at about 60 minutes one way, with adjustments ongoing as the year progresses.
- Discussions between bus drivers and the PSB should continue.

The after school busses are also in place – running Wednesdays and Thursdays.

- The bus travelling south is having greater usage than the one travelling north.
- Parents report that the number of stops and the time it takes is a barrier.
- Many students who this bus could transport have access to their own vehicle.
- The DAC as a whole would like the Transportation subcommittee to meet as soon as possible to review how all new routes are going and offer feedback on adjustments.
- Transportation remains a priority for this District.
- The subcommittee will continue to meet and engage with community and staff to identify ongoing and new transportation challenges.
 - **UPDATE: The Transportation Subcommittee met on Nov. 7th, 2018, Jan 14th, 2019 (with DAC as whole) and on Jan 30th, 2019.**

Engagement

- DAC members would like more engagement in the process of decision making around their identified priorities.
- The DAC has been requested to offer feedback on the framework for the Report Card review underway.

Cannabis

- The upcoming legalization of Cannabis was discussed.
- There are parent and student resources available to inform and offer ways to talk with kids about cannabis.

- The Cannabis Talk Kit was distributed to members electronically, and all were encouraged to attend and spread awareness about the upcoming Cannabis Information Session on Nov 22 at Westisle.

Student Choice

- Student choice remains a priority.
- Students continue to want more opportunities to explore course offerings, especially at the high school level.