

Council to Improve Classroom Conditions

Meeting Discussion Summary October 29 - 30, 2019

Roundtable Discussion:

- Discussion was held on streamlining the google password process, EAL/FAL support, French Immersion middle school resources for treaty education, attendance taking in middle and high schools, application of the attendance policy, and management of unassigned instructional time

Complex Classrooms: Inclusive Education

African Nova Scotian Education Framework – Classroom Perspectives:

- The system needs to support authentic parental empowerment and engagement by identifying and eliminating barriers
- Meaningful relationships need to be built with the understanding of the barriers that parents see
- Barriers identified including the time factors, common understanding of academic terms, personal experience with school, school agenda vs parent agenda, etc.
- Discussion on singular vs collective (easier when you have a team to help you)

Scope of Practice

Performance Appraisal Tool:

- EECD co-chair with NSTU on provincial committee
- Connected to six teaching standards with self-reflection tools
- Provincial policy and process will replace regional/board, this will not be an extra evaluation.
- Piloting in two schools per region in January 2020
- Focus is professional growth: what do I need to concentrate on to strengthen my practice this year?

Complex Classrooms: Inclusive Education

Treaty Education Framework – Classroom Perspectives:

- Council was assured that if teachers are feeling that they are mispronouncing words or feel they need more information, the Mi'kmaq Coordinator in each region/board is available to respond to questions.
- Resources in development:
 - pronunciation
 - central resources depot for teachers
 - Grade 7/8 supports
- Framework and supports will be infused into curriculum and will not be an add-on through experiential learning
- Next Reconcili-ACTION grants deadline is March 15

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Complex Classrooms

Council Future Priorities Discussion:

- What's changed? What do we value?
- Several emerging issues were discussed as potential focal points for future discussion
- Discussion to continue at the November meeting, to prioritize the items

Sub-committee reports

Grant Sub-Committee:

- Council is considering a new grant program: Inspiring Relationships Grant
- Purpose would be to support schools as they implement the Inclusive Education Policy
- Council recognizes that one of the common elements at the basis of many recent initiatives and policies including the Inclusive Education Policy, CRP, the African Nova Scotian Education Framework, Treaty Education and Social Emotional Learning is relationship
- Grant will be open to all schools and details will be available to the system after the November meeting

Data Sub-Committee:

- Sub-committee will focus on identifying different forms and requirements for data collection; as well as definition of terms to ensure a common understanding
- Would like to consider more efficient way to get analyzed data to teachers so that teachers can focus on using the data rather than analyzing the data
- Committee will resume this discussion at the November meeting

Next Meeting: November 26th and 27th

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Future priorities:

- Several emerging issues were discussed as potential focal points for future discussion
- Structural changes to system (making meaningful connections)
- Time – value with initiatives, embedded, meaningful tools (provide the tools and the time to review/learn them)
- Think outside of traditional (more experiential learning)
- Technology in the way it helps us to improve teaching
- Raising the profile of teachers (celebrating everyday work) – more promotion of education
- Roadmap for teachers
- Class sizes
- Include topics in round table discussion summary
- Recommend the department that oversees the bigger picture can create a guiding document for teachers – message of what’s important – a vision of how it all fits together
- Data collection
- Tangible changes (i.e. substitute provided for teachers doing running records)
- Recommendations for expected tasks that do not impact student learning
- Common services bureau – rural schools strategy – need update
- What’s changed? What do we value?
- If everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority
- Inclusive education
- Everyone to go away and think of other topics for next month’s discussion

Inspiring relationships Grant:

- Open to schools through principal or group of teachers (principal must still approve)
- Outreach to communities/parents (busing, bar-b-q, concert, historical connection with elders)
- Minimum of \$2500 depending on number of responses, can go up to \$10K
- Allowing teachers to communicate, hire subs
- Mimic last grant with a set of guidelines, responses on how the funding was spent
- Break down barriers to parents, PD, focused and aligned to expectations, using relational approach
- Sub-committee will meet virtually over the next couple of weeks
- Want application timeline to be mid-December to end of January
- Council members can also send information out to their regions
- Promotion afterwards, pictures, twitter, what activities/items the funds were used for