

Minutes – PACE Meeting December 11, 2020

Virtual meeting – 12 – 4pm

Mi'kmaq Acknowledgement

The meeting began by acknowledging that it is taking place in Mi'kma'ki traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Affirmation

The acknowledgement was followed by an affirmation.

Approval of the Agenda

Council approved the agenda

Approval of Minutes

Minutes to be approved via email.

Welcome

Minister Churchill welcomed new members, Samantha Graham and Lesley Keeley, to the Provincial Advisory Council on Education. He thanked all members for their participation and contributions and talked about the advisory role of PACE, encouraging members to continue to provide observations on education in their communities.

Inclusive Education Discussion – Developmental Evaluation

Dr. Jess Whitley and Dr. Andy Hargreaves presented on the draft findings in their Year 1 Interim Report. An overview was given on the findings and recommendations, based on interviews with key stakeholders throughout the Nova Scotia education system and the analysis of the network school applications.

The draft findings are being finalized in a report. Dr. Whitley and Dr. Hargreaves talked about how the pandemic impacted their work, but they will still be able to provide significant feedback based on their pre-pandemic work. They talked about new and changing roles, shared vision and communication, collaborative professionalism, emphasizing student well-being, focus on policy development, and the pandemic influence. Once the findings are finalized, Dr. Whitley and Dr. Hargreaves plan to publish them in a report to continue to keep the public involved in the process.

PACE members raised questions about the preliminary findings identified by Dr. Whitley and Dr. Hargreaves and discussed their views, feedback, and observations regarding the evaluation of the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. PACE will continue to discuss inclusive education and their views and feedback in future meetings.

Update on 2020-21 School Year

EECD provided an update on the school year and answered questions. The approach of working closely with public health to implement the appropriate measures in schools has been working. By staying closely connected, guidance can be updated regularly, and students can remain in school, which is the best place for them. EECD outlined the approach that has been taken when a case is identified in a school, including notification, contact tracing, and at-home learning days to allow for investigation and deep cleaning. An update was also provided on the use of Federal funding, which will be spent on purchasing 32,000 new Chromebooks, enhanced school WIFI, PPE, ventilation maintenance, touchless water bottle fillers, the purchase of 32,000 new Chromebooks, enhanced cleaning, math and literacy programs and food programs.