

Report: Education Plan Public Meeting



Youth Round Table

January 11, 2016

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1. Summary

The very first consultation on the 10 Year Education Plan that David conducted was with his own Youth Round Table. The Youth Round Table is made up of youth from the high school and universities in the Fredericton South Riding: FHS, Ecole St. Anne, UNB and STU. Six members were present for this meeting. The consultation began with feedback on specific questions taken from the online government survey. There was some criticism of the narrowness of the survey, and a fair amount of divergence from the survey results. Some made a case for a total overhaul of the pedagogy, moving away from content regurgitation towards community-based projects and education that requires greater critical thinking.

2. Notes and comments

David asked for feedback on the following topics (based on the government's survey)

More attention needed for:

	Gov. Survey Results: %	Youth Round Table
Literacy	66%	4
Math	45%	0
Support all learners	38%	2
Mental Health	32%	0

Comments:

- Why is math there? Math took up so much time and yet it's not applicable to life. There's not enough attention to arts, and too much attention to math.
- Maybe there should be more emphasis on usable math, like finances, taxes.

Improvements Needed:

	Gov. Survey Results: %	Youth Round Table
Smaller classes	65%	1
Sense of belonging	55%	1
Support for mental health	53%	0
Better access to extracurricular activities	50%	0
Other		3

Comments:

- “Other”: Need more critical/logical thinking, not memorization. Need a full rehaul on “repeat and regurgitate” type of education.
- More hands-on learning. Smaller classes makes for a better sense of belonging, and more opportunities for creative learning, hands-on learning.
- Montessori type pedagogy, or Renaissance College type pedagogy, which is modelled on the Oxford program.

Most important skills to succeed in life:

	Gov. Survey Results: %	Youth Round Table
Critical Thinking	61%	4
Communication skills	85%	1
Active citizenship	29%	1
Adaptability to change	75%	0
Self-confidence	64%	0
Manage personal finances	43%	0
Ability to collaborate	43%	0

Comments:

- Also should have on there: Problem Solving and Personal Well-Being

What Needs to be done?

Inclusion - Need a focus on cultural and religious diversity. Need better supports to make inclusion possible.

Leadership - Provide opportunities for different types of students, not just student council types. Need more opportunities for community projects. Grants for classes to do community projects.

Teachers - In training, need to train them to deal with and recognize mental health challenges and learning disabilities. Problem: unfair that amazing teachers get the same pay as crap teachers. Should have bonuses for good teachers. More respect for teachers. Need more rigorous training for teachers, they should study the subjects they are teaching, should get chosen to teach subjects they are trained to teach, should get recertified regularly. University profs don't have any teaching training or requirements.

History classes need to be revamped. Only learn about WWI, WWII and the Acadian Expulsion. History taught from a white European perspective. Not enough on First Nations history. Need to learn more about global systems.

French - Access to French Immersion should be equal, all schools should offer it. Core French is a joke, lessons don't advance.

Grammar is not taught, there is no rigour in English so kids come out of high school unable to write properly. Need writing courses.

Mental Health - should have course or curriculum on mental health. Personal Formation/ Training includes everything from budgeting to mental health to sex ed to mindfulness.

Post-secondary Money - Raise operating grants. Students should have more say on how money is spent. Lack of communication between students and student union. More grants for student services (such as counsellors). Don't unite STU and UNB, they have very different cultures and identities. But, there could be more partnerships between the two. STU students should be able to use the Currie Centre gym, for example.