

Report of the Ellis School Principal

Ellis School continues to grow and evolve as we shift to a personalized approach to meet the needs of our learners. We are committed to providing students with the best curriculum, presented in the best methods, by the best staff in New Hampshire. Our goal is to ensure our students are prepared to continue their education at high school and beyond.

This current school year, we were fortunate to gain a few key staff members at Ellis School, as well as see a few individuals return to Ellis in different roles. We welcomed the following new staff: Mrs. Lena Vitagliano, Building Level Special Education Coordinator; Ms. Jennifer McCullough, 3-4 Special Education Teacher; Ms. Sara Detollenaere, K-2 Special Education Teacher; Ms. Charlene Caswell, 5-6 Special Education Teacher, and Ms. Lanchoney, Speech-Language Teacher. We are also honored to have Mrs. Katy Clark-Turner as part of our guidance counselor team and Mrs. Suzanne Ingham as part of our front office team.

Mrs. Jennifer Scott and Mrs. Andrea Bancroft have shifted from their respective special education positions to the classroom. Both have successfully transitioned to second grade classrooms where their passion and dedication are seen each day in the classroom and hallways. Mrs. Deb Almon, retired kindergarten teacher, has returned to the team this year as a Reading Teacher. She works closely with our Reading Specialist, Mrs. Erina Kelly, to provide literacy intervention and support for our learners.

As we shift to a personalized learning school dedicated to meeting students where they are and building competencies in academics as well as work study practices, it was important to provide our all of our learners with an opportunity to have voice and choice in their learning. Ms. Lauren Wesnak has joined our 7th and 8th grade team as the Personalized Learning Teacher. She is providing our middle schoolers with an opportunity to explore topics of choice while also developing effective work study habits, collaboration skills, and critical thinking strategies.

Another addition to our staff has been Ms. Lauren Manteau. Ms. Manteau will be working with Ms. Kimball to provide our learners with a double dose of weekly wellness instruction. Wellness classes will provide physical education and movement, as well as instruction on health-related topics to ensure our learners are developing physical, social, and emotional practices for future success.

The Ellis School continues to offer personalized learning options for our learners. Personalized Learning is the approach of looking at the individual student and their learning needs. We know that all students learn at different paces and are at different levels. Our Personal Learning Coaches are piloting strategies throughout the building and are working closely with educator peers to look at the learning profile of students and record their academic strengths and weakness, motivations, and goals; which will lead to a personal learning path that students help develop and allow them to demonstrate competency in various academic areas. It also allows for students to be responsible for and in control of their own learning. By having

ownership and voice, students are more engaged in their learning. This year many grade level teams, including Team Good Vibes, are building community and providing flexible learning environments based on personal learning preferences and learner needs.

Over the summer, the Ellis staff was trained in Responsive Classroom strategies. Responsive Classroom is an evidence-based approach to education that focuses on the strong relationship between academic success and social-emotional learning (SEL) and empowers educators to create safe, joyful, and engaging learning communities where all students have a sense of belonging and feel significant. During advisory and morning meeting, educators connect with students, build relationships, and set expectations for the day. Responsive Classroom strategies are implemented at various points throughout the day, as needed, to facilitate positive interactions and clear expectations. Responsive Classroom coaches, with guidance from our Responsive Classroom consultant, provide support and feedback on the implementation of strategies throughout the school to create a positive learning environment.

Through one-to-one computing in grades two through eight, our learners are able to access a variety of learning platforms to support and supplement classroom instruction, such as Achieve3000, Dreambox, and IXL. Achieve3000 is a Lexile reading software used in kindergarten through eighth grade, that continuously adjusts the complexity of the text to individual students. This allows students to access curriculum at their reading level. Dreambox is a mathematics program that is used in kindergarten through fifth grade which continuously adjusts to a student's mathematical abilities; similar to Achieve3000. Lastly, IXL is another program used in fifth through eighth grades which offers adaptive lessons in Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Science. All of these programs reinforce and support the instruction from our teachers and the students' learning.

Educators and learners are also using Google Classroom; a free service from Google. Google Classroom is a blended learning platform specifically for schools that provides for creating, collaborating, and sharing documents in real time. Google Classroom also makes the home to school connection much more seamless.

As stated earlier, our goal is to prepare our students to be lifelong learners and be prepared to enter high school. All of the staff at Ellis School is committed to ensuring our students are well-rounded and prepared. By working with the community, as a whole, we know we can meet this goal; ensuring success for all students.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon DeVincent
Principal