

## **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 welcomed back Mrs. Royal, our middle school Guidance Counselor. We also welcomed Annaliese Dunn, Social Worker, to our team. Along with Mrs. Simard, Elementary Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Royal and Mrs. Dunn provide comprehensive guidance and therapeutic support for learners. In addition the counseling department is coordinating staff and student educational opportunities related to a variety of health, wellness, and social-emotional topics.

Mrs. MacEachern, Math Specialist, and Mrs. Kelly, Literacy Specialist, continue to provide coaching and professional development opportunities for staff to improve instructional practices. They continue to review and recommend appropriate instructional materials to meet the needs of learners. In addition, they work closely with Mrs. Almon, Reading Teacher, and Mrs. Grande, Title I Math Teacher, to provide direct instructional support for our learners.

We have a few staff who have shifted positions. Mrs. Emery joined our special education team and Mrs. Ouelette is our new 6th grade STEM Teacher. Mrs. Clark-Turner has remained with Ellis as a paraprofessional. We also welcome two other paraprofessionals: Mrs. Emerson and Mr. Kazan. We had a new addition in our main office as well. Mrs. Bert joined our team and brings with her a great deal of experience and positive energy.

TeacherEase is Ellis' new student information system and parent portal. The parent portal gives families access to current learner information, as well as access to progress reports and report cards. At the beginning of each year, the back-to-school paperwork can now be completed online. Teachers can also communicate directly through TeacherEase and the weekly newsletter is also sent through the system.

Our Personalized Learning initiative is gaining momentum. 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. Learners are setting goals, monitoring progress, and reflecting on outcomes. Our middle school learners are focused on a variety of community service projects and self-directed learning opportunities. Our younger learners are given opportunities to make decisions about what and how they learn, which has resulted in increased engagement and a joy of learning and exploration. Our learners are independent, thoughtful, and focused on personal success!

Our Responsive Classroom initiative has also ramped up this year. 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. Our staff are taking the opportunity to connect and build positive relationships with learners. Common language and expectations are being used throughout the building. Ellis is building a community of learners that are kind, thoughtful, and aware of how their actions and words impact their own learning and the learning of others. A positive, focused, and cooperative learning energy can be felt and seen throughout the building.

Ms. Manteau and Mrs. Kimball continue to provide our learners with a double dose of weekly wellness instruction. Wellness classes provide physical education and movement opportunities, as well as instruction on health-related topics to ensure our learners are developing physical, social, and emotional practices for future success.

Our learners are accessing a variety of online learning resources to support instruction. Programs such as Achieve3000, Dreamworks, and IXL can be accessed at school and at home to build literacy and mathematics skills.

Most recently, Ellis received a Robotics Education grant to build an in-school and after-school Lego program for our learners, which will begin in the 2019-2020 school year. In addition to facilitating the development of a Lego program, Mrs. Crowell, our Media Specialist, is planning a girls coding club. Mrs. Crowell also provides direct instruction on computer science competencies and our learners participated in the annual hour of coding the week before winter vacation.

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.

Monthly parent forums have been scheduled throughout the school year to address a variety of topics, such as suicide, drugs, vaping, future high school options, school safety, and the Title I Program. These forums are an opportunity for families to gain knowledge, ask questions, and provide feedback on topics important to learners and the larger school-town community.

All of the staff at Ellis School are committed to ensuring our students are well-rounded and prepared for current and future success. With the support of families and the community, we know that our learners will be able to dream and achieve all they desire.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon DeVincent  
Principal