

Student Advisory Council - Thursday, February 17, 2022

In attendance: Suzanne, Cindy, Janine, Rebecca, Gerry, Leslie, Delores, Jeff, Donald

Regrets: Sonya

Back to School

- There had been a steady increase in absenteeism; therefore, each school has been asked to track and provide reasons, where possible
- Mental health and wellbeing are the top priorities
- This week, % of absenteeism has decreased from %40 to %26
- Chronic absenteeism makes up a small percentage
- We are always in contact with the families, and have offered supports where possible
- Province has recently updated the list of Omicron symptoms to include nausea and diarrhea Up to date information can be found on the Public Health Website
- Students have been supplied with cloth masks, as well as 6 rapid tests per student and staff member sent home last week
- Expecting another supply of tests in 2 weeks, although we still have enough on hand if families are in need
- Gerry inquired if the students who are absent can learn online at home? Suzanne advises that we support families the best we can with each individual family's circumstances, although in-class is preferred and encouraged
- Leslie inquired if students with chronic absenteeism can still pass the year. Suzanne stated that the students are worked with on a individual basis to ensure they have the tools to succeed.

Enrollment for Next Year

- We have 13 pre-primaries registered for next year, although it's an open registration and students are accepted up until September
- No new registrations yet for Primary, although our pre-primary class is at 27, which are all automatically registered
- Riverside is projecting many split grades for next year to abide by classroom caps.
- Currently 22 students in grade 5, and 12 are leaving are going to Malcolm Munroe for the French. Suzanne did inquire with the Centre for Education if we could get the Intensive French program, and this is being discussed a Senior staff members of the CBVRCE this week
- Gerry asked if there is an offset with kids coming into Primary and the grade 8s leaving. Suzanne advised that it does hold our numbers steady for class configuration, etc.

Upcoming Events

- Smoothie Day last week was a big hit, funded through the breakfast program
- February is Black History Month. The grade 5 students have been making a class book pertaining to influential black women. Each student will do research for the book, as well as on African Canadian Heroes

- In grade 1/2, the students have been reading numerous books related to the topic, including I Promise by LeBron James. Students worked on I Promise Pledges. These are just two examples of the various activities happening within our classrooms.
- March 21st is World Down Syndrome Day! Students will be encouraged to participate in this activity
- 5 CBU student teachers currently in lower elementary are doing quite well and are enjoying their placements at Riverside.

Funding

- Riverside received a micro-grant from CBRM to purchase snowshoes in adult sizes for our families
- We may host family-friendly events in the late afternoons, then look to a sign-out system for the weekends (weather permitting)
- Received another grant from Federal Government through Heritage and Culture, which will be put towards 8 drums made by Jeff Ward of Membertou Heritage Park
- Gerry suggests having the kids perform to the public once they've had experience with the drums
- SAC money allotted for this year has yet to be spent. Suggestions included an outdoor exercise area (similar to Open Hearth)., and a natural outdoor obstacle course area within the path

Peer Program

- This 20-week program works with several identified middle school students that may need some support in the area of socialization.
- Our student support staff is trained in the program, which is very interactive and rewarding to the students.

Round Table

- Suzanne advised that substitute teachers also receive Rapid Antigen Tests, if needed
- Leslie asked about study bikes. Suzanne advised that the school has 6 bikes that rotate between the classes. We don't have standing desks, but could be another feature to try out in a few different spaces with students that may need that support
- Leslie asked if volunteers are welcome back. Suzanne is cautious of bringing in volunteers just yet, although we will revisit in a couple of weeks, depending on COVID numbers

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 2th at 6pm

