

KES Town Hall Meeting - Tuesday, December 7, 2021

School is very large -1042 kids as of today. Through conversations with grade level chairs as well as our site based team, many conversations come back to the size of the building. Carline, double run buses, trying to get everyone through the lunch line makes it challenging. We have two new trailers on the property near the back playground. The playground will be re-fenced so students are protected from the road. Ms. Heilig will eventually be going out there. We are over class size law in first and second grade. A new second grade class will be added and there will be a blend of some advanced first graders. This will alleviate strain on class sizes. The other mobile unit will go to the fourth grade Mandarin class (currently in a resource room that will then go back to OT/PT).

We have welcomed back Felicia Moore. She is currently teaching STEAM but will transition to that second grade classroom. A new STEAM teacher will be coming soon. Pre-Covid, STEAM was a big fundraiser and we want to get back to it.

We continue to focus on literacy. Every teacher in the building is taking LETTERS training from the state. It is a literacy based training that helps teachers understand beyond just the why of literacy. We have pulled back on meetings with staff to free up time for teachers to get this training completed.

We also are focusing on our WOW experiences. As we all came back to the building, we wanted to be intentional with our experiences with learning. We want to give students opportunities they will be talking about years into the future.

From a leadership standpoint, we are trying to promote the value of visibility. There is more presence when students walk in the door.

We have lots of social emotional concerns as far as how kids are feeling and acting. This is unlike any past years. We are having conversations and this year won't be "typical." We are going through a response to a traumatic event. We are communicating expectations and there are consequences to keep kids from doing things they shouldn't do.

Dual language advisory board spots are still open for parents of students who are not in the immersion program. This will probably be two to three times per year virtually.

Concerns to get a "feel" from parents: car line issues in the afternoon (second hand knowledge - Mr. Vaughn has not seen this himself). A lot of people show up very early and get out of their cars to walk around Nesbit. This is a fire concern if there was an emergency. Please stay with your vehicle.

We have had an abundance of critical responses this year - adults being critical of other adults. This was addressed in our site based meeting as well. Parents are quick to respond about behavior and grades. Our first response as adults should be to seek to understand. Asking

questions is okay and we would like you to do that before sharing opinions with others. Please trust our professionals. When Mr. Vaughn came to KES, the one thing many said was that what makes KES the best is our teachers and staff. Please trust that if they gave your child a grade or issued a behavioral consequence, there was a thought process behind it.

Are you noticing a difference in your kids?

Parents responding:

Yes, students are coming home talking about behavior. There sounds to be not too many consequences being given at school.

Vaughn response: In respecting the dignity of the child, others will not know about the consequences and feel like a hidden factor. It's hard for students to see something and there appears to be no consequence. Conversations with students and families are happening behind the scenes.

Behaviors are different and oftentimes inappropriate. Parent believes it may be mostly based on viewing social media/youtube.

Vaughn response: We are growing digital awareness but when we leave these kids for just a minute, they can learn things they shouldn't be learning. Check into your kids' history on phones/devices.

Parent recommended screenstrong.com as a good resource to help parents navigate how to safely allow children to use technology.

Vaughn response: Common Sense Media is also a good resource. It is difficult to protect our kids but the more aware we are, the more likely we are to have a positive end result.

Can parents restrict chromebook access?

Vaughn response: if you have something specific, like youtube, we can put in a help ticket and have that done for your child's laptop. We can't just block youtube for all because it has some resources that teachers may use. A restricted mode takes away most items on the Google platform which we use.

If you are a parent with a middle schooler (or recent middle school student), we would like to have a virtual night with current middle school parents sharing their experiences. What do parents have to prepare for and how do we have to prepare our children for? Please reach out to Mr. Vaughn if you would like to be a part of this.

Parent said a pine tree is very dangerous when exiting the car rider line. Mr. Vaughn will look into making that safer.

Please have your kids get as much rest as possible. Sleeping enough really helps encourage good behavior.