

Ellenvale Junior High

School Advisory Council

October 10, 2023

1. **Attendance** - Scott Wadden, Michelle Doolan, Cindy O'Handley, Therese Boudrea-MacKinnon, Charmaine Willis, Karen Mills, Denise Shellnut, Margie Pike, Tyrone Ross, Kelly Ing
2. **Ellenvale SAC Bylaws** - Margie Pike will be our new chair, Denise Shellnut continues to be our community member, and Mr. Wadden will put out an invitation for students to join. Margie will see if she can find some more community members as it's good to have 3. Our new chair will come in and meet with Mr. Wadden to sign the bylaw.
3. **Principal's Report**
 - Pink Day was Sept 13th
 - We have a good amount of money to support breakfast program
 - Mr. Wadden just received the results from last year's RWM8 and will generate a report and send home the data soon. Results from the grade 6 assessment will come out later this year.
 - this is the 3rd year for Ellenvale to participate in the CBC music contest
 - Terry Fox dance still needs some chaperones
 - We had the Nourish Your Roots fundraiser and the money raised supports breakfast and lunch program for students
 - There is still no date for the African drumming sessions but they will happen.
4. **Student Success Plan**
 - a) **Provincial Assessment Data** - mentioned in Principal's Report
 - b) **Student Survey Data** - Student well being was a focus at one of our PDs in September. Staff went through the data and we all recognize that students don't feel safe in the hallways. We are making sure teachers are visible in the hallways and at the door greeting students as they enter the classroom. We are also allowing students to share their strengths and interests so that teachers can direct lessons around these and have students more engaged in their learning. This will help them feel more comfortable in the classroom.
5. **New Business**
 - a) **SAC Allocated Money - \$5449.00.** There has been no official word on the amount but it has always been \$5000.00 plus \$1.00 per student which should take us to \$5640. In the past we bought chromebooks as we are working towards a 1-1 ration of chromebooks to students. Mr. Wadden asked SAC members to think about how we want to spend the money.

- b) **Student Fee Report** - Ellenvale does not collect a student fee.
- c) **Schools Plus** - We have been fortunate to have Katherine Cooper and Christine Riordan who are connected to the community and IWK. They are supporting some of our families. Ms Cooper is doing a Green Team with some students during lunch to support lunchtime activities.
- d) **Class Configuration, Schedule, Lunch** - New schedules will start on Monday, Oct 16th. We were able to avoid a $\frac{7}{8}$ split class by reconfiguring teachers' schedule. At present we have grade 8 classes with 32 students, so the change will mean that we can have much smaller class sizes (23/24) for the English grade 8s, which will support a better learning environment. At times there will be 3 smaller classes in the gym. Mr. Wadden talked to other schools where this happens to learn some strategies. He also talked to the phys ed teachers about strategies. There will be one lunch break, not two, and the grade 6s will have a morning recess. Having two lunches was difficult to manage as there were not enough lunch monitors, grade 6s students had difficulty joining school lunch activities, and they felt they were eating too early in the day and their afternoons felt very long.. When Mr. Wadden talked to some grade 6s, they told him they felt they were disconnected from the rest of the school. There is a lot of space outside for students so we will create different zones for the grade 6s if they do not want to mix with the other students. We have a new basketball court that will be ready in the next few weeks. Also, most grade 8 and 9 students leave the grounds for lunch. Mr. Wadden is sending home emails to communicate this with families today and is expecting a lot of questions but hoping the community sees the need for this change. The grade 8 students know something is going on but nobody has been told their new class yet.
- e) **Other** - some questions were asked about the change in schedules. Ms. Mills was wondering if there would be more support hired, such as resource teachers, since we will have more classes. This is not the case as our allotment is based on the number of students not classes. She was also wondering if consideration was given to those students who work well together and should stay in the same class. This was considered, as well as parent requests. Ms. Shellnut wondered about recess. This will still take place for the grade 6s from 10:35-10:50. Margie Pike was mentioning that we could think about using SAC money to help fund some art activities since we are getting a drama teacher coming to the school. She was also wondering when the high schools come to talk with Ellenvale grade 9 students. This happens in the new year and students are guided through the process with the support of guidance counselors. Usually the school principals, math leads, O2, IB, FI and Afrocentric leaders come to the school to talk about their programs. There are also opportunities for the students to go as a group to the high schools. HRM is trying to get into the schools to talk to students about various job options. This has been a high school focus but now they want to try to get into the junior highs. There is also a focus on the ANS community. Mr. Wadden mentioned that she should reach out to Mr. Gabriel and Ms. Willis to coordinate that.

6) **Suggested Meeting Dates** - all good

7) **Meeting Adjourned** - 4:45