

Eric Graves Memorial Junior High
Student Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes
March 5th, 2024

Meeting Time: 6:00PM

Members Present: J. MacDonald, J. Ross, Jennifer Barro-Ralph, W. Barro-Ralph, D. Taylor, L. Matsell-Streeter

Absent: J. Bruce

Principals Report:

- **Student Population:**
 - 188 students in total
 - Next year our enrollment will drop to approximately 165 students. This does not include any students who move into the area.

- **School News:**
 - In our efforts to re-brand Eric Graves and replace some of the murals and paintings to be more culturally relevant, we have received a quote for painting murals within the school. We have settled on one new mural that will be painted at the entrance of the school. This mural will say “welcome” in many different languages.
 - We are also looking at having our SLC’s art specialist come in and work with students to do another mural inside the school which would replace one of the current out-dated murals.
 - We are still waiting for the flags to be hung outside above our front doors. There has been a work order submitted for several months.
 - There are four out-dated and not culturally relevant murals hanging on the wall going up the ramp that we need to have taken down. There has been a work order submitted for several months for this.

- **African Heritage Month**
 - We have had 2 guest speakers in celebration of African Heritage Month arranged by Mr. Sheppard, our ANSSSW.
 - Kirk Johnson
 - Ifo Ikede

- We have also read short biographies about famous African Nova Scotian people each morning during announcements.
- Students of African descent have also attended cultural cooking sessions with Mr. Sheppard at the school.
- **Sports**
 - **Basketball:** Unfortunately they did not make it to the finals - they lost to GCJH.
 - **Badminton:** We just started try-outs for badminton. There will be a grade 9 team and a grade 7 - 8 team.
 - We have a regular volunteer from the neighbourhood, Craig Hynes, who has helped coach basketball, volleyball and is now holding a girls' skills session every Friday at lunch which is very popular.
- **Spirit Week**
 - We will have a partial spirit week in the days before March Break. There will be a twin day, a PJ day and a school colours day.
 - Friday afternoon before March break we will hold our student-of-the-month assembly and play several fun games in the gymnasium.
- **Music Therapy**
 - Ms. MacDougall, our Learning Centre teacher, has organized a music therapy teacher to come in every second Friday afternoon to work with students connected to the LC. The students thoroughly enjoy this session and have started inviting students to join as guests as a way to build relationships with students and staff.
- **Parent-Teacher Interviews**
 - These will take place on April 4th from 1-3 and 5-7.
 - We have decided, at teachers' request, to utilize an online appointment booking system for parents to schedule their interviews with teachers.
- **Cell-Phone Policy**
 - The new zero-use cell phone policy has been very successful.
 - Students have largely accepted the policy.
 - If students are asked to bring their cell phones to the office we have purchased a secure lock box to keep the cell phones in.
 - We have purchased wired headphones for students to use if they want to listen to music while working with a chromebook.
 - Our staff have reported increased student engagement in the classroom, a decrease in the number of students roaming in the hallways and hanging out in the bathroom.

- The office has dealt with fewer cell-phone related incidents as well.
- **Provincial Assessments**
 - We are in the early stages of preparing for the grade 8 provincial assessments (RWM8). These will take place in May.
- **Math**
 - We currently have a math coach working with both of our math teachers.
 - The math coach works to support math teachers in introducing new and innovative ways to help students relate to and improve their math skills.

New Business:

- **SAC Funds:**
 - There is \$8600 in the SAC fund
 - Some of this money will be put toward new murals

Future Meeting Date: April 9th, 2024 at 6PM

Meeting Adjourned: 7:00PM

Minutes prepared by: Jill Ross