

I.E. Weldon Secondary School

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Principal
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Kevin Ray, B.P.H.E., B.Ed.
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September 28 2020

Principal's Report

COVID-

The school has been suitably prepared by our caretaking staff to comply with all of the guidelines from the Haliburton Kawartha Pineridge Health Unit. The video I shared with all families and on our website before school began highlighted many of the changes that were required. The caretakers have been working hard to maintain their twice-a-day cleaning schedule. The students have been very compliant while on the school property regarding mask protocols, social distancing expectations, hand sanitizing and other expectations. There is still work to be done when off school property and during our staggered lunch breaks. Reminder announcements have been given daily to remain diligent. There will come a time when warning will move to fines from our community partners if students are still not complying with COVID expectations when off school property.

Timetable-

We are now working in 22 day blocks, one credit at a time, to minimize student interactions. Mid term reports will be completed after 11 days, which will be a mark update. Staff will be contacting students at-risk of not successfully completing a credit. Final reports will include comments and learning skills in a more typical fashion. A typical day now involves a three staggered lunch breaks to minimize student interactions, a 75 minute supervised study hall, cleaning breaks and scheduled mask breaks.

Staffing-

We had just under 200 students choose to learn at home. This resulted in us having to rebuild our timetable, as we needed to cut 40 courses from original schedule (we staff based on student enrolment in classes). To staff the LearnAtHome program, we had 6 teachers leave our school. This presented challenges with new hiring, which wasn't completed until after the school year started. LearnAtHome has its own administration, guidance, and staff, so it is being run as a separate entity to support the other 5 high schools in the board. They are limited in what they can offer based on student enrollment and staff qualifications.

Office Staffing-

Our office manager Mary Robinson retired on August 31st. Our new office manager is Kristy Chartrand, who is joining us from the Board office. We also have a new attendance secretary, Julie Mah. Our guidance secretary Mike Rose is retiring December 18th. When Mike is replaced, it will mean that we have had a 100% turnover in the office staff since I arrived last September.

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School Improvement Plan- The teaching staff have been challenged with redesigning courses to fit into a 22 day block. It's not as simple as just teaching previous lessons grouped together. They have also had to redesign how they are assessing courses as well, so this has been the focus so far this year. Mental health resources were also reviewed with all staff during one of the August PD days.

Extra-Curricular Activities- Most activities are currently postponed. There is going to be a interschool virtual chess tournament running. A modified Terry Fox Event is also being planned for October 9th, but it will not involved student cohorts intermingling. The planning is ongoing. Many typical upcoming events, such as a fall dance, Terry Fox assembly, We Day, school pictures, grad pictures , Honours Assembly, and the IB grad are unable to take place. Orange Shirt Day will still be taking place on September 30th. Parent-Teacher Night will not involve physical meetings, and we will likely get direction to host short meeting via Google Meet.

Communication- The school will be using School Messenger to communicate with parents. This system was just recently fixed, as we were not able to send messages for approximately a week after start-up. Teachers will be using Google Classroom as their learning platform. Teachers will also be using email, texts or phone calls to contact parents.

Edwin Devices- This year, all grade 9, 10 and 11 students will be provided an Edwin device, which is a Chromebook outfitted with an Edwin platform. This platform contains curriculum resources, which is continuing to evolve.

Ray Este