ECS Grade Rep Notes 12/4/15

GENERAL
School lunch - concerns regarding how 'kid friendly' the menu seems to be
(need to get without tomatoes or peppers mixed in already, plain option - home made chicken noodle soup - more kid friendly healthy options)
- kid committee to add more kid friendly options
- portion size increase for upper schoolers - kids are starving
- so busy picking stuff off that their lunch time is over and they haven't eaten
- Parents need a Wednesday Folder with everything in it
- love weekly email blast
- discrepancy between what kid says and what parent reads from school

KINDERGARTEN
- There have been 33 hikes since the beginning of the year (last hike 12/10/15)
- would like more communication (emails/pictures) from teachers about what's going on in class (there is a literacy sheet but not much else).
- Parents are hearing from their children that they are having long days, lack of time for crafts, and short time for lunch
- It would be helpful for parents to prepare somehow for the major shift in expectations/school culture at ECS- perhaps something on the website or email blast? These are some of the unique things at ECS that may be helpful to include: (this is in process as we speak!!)
    - hikes outdoor classroom time
    - independent learning time
    - route to go on the hike
    - when hikes are happening via email
    - longerday and this is why
    - snapshot of a typical day - highlight in the WW of a typical day of each grade - or on twitter feed picture with brief description
    - cultural expectation of the difference in MS

FIRST GRADE
- like the pics and info that come home

SECOND GRADE
- happy teachers are the nicest
- parents as a whole seem happy
- holiday party and movie
- theme about movies - minimize or justify
- share what the teachers are doing like Vicky with PBS in WW - or on the website
- should not show the polar express it is a christmas movie and it is seen two consecutive years by that group

- can the school have a theme each year about different cultures around the world for the holidays
- social giving component - toiletries to homeless shelter

THIRD GRADE
- all seems to be going well; no trending concerns to report

GENERAL UPPER SCHOOL
- one kid is being disruptive and the whole group gets punished - same names of kids, good gets are getting ostracized - collective punishment is not OK - other kids need to understand
- glad to see progressive discipline policy @ lower
- Jaleah has a team getting this in place via flow chart adjusting the current flow chart
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FOURTH GRADE
- 4th - group of 4th grade parents - unhappy with the consistently of communication in 4th grade in academic area - no returned graded work, parents have no way to benchmark where their child is if they are not getting feedback from the teacher
- schoology is inconsistent and out of date - teachers point to it to look for grades and there are no grades there
    - *We continue to work with Todd Hoffman, our director of technology, to improve the overall use and quality of use for Schoology. The 4th grade team is working closely with him to make sure there is consistency moving forward.*
- parent can't understand what is going on based on a grade, get so little back that they don't know what they are struggling with
- can't expect the teachers to be the sole person responsible for their education
- parents are not as involved as they want to be
- folder that comes home weekly that shows what they have done and what has been graded - sign off on it?
- want to put an A on the fridge
- parents can see other student's work and teacher comments on all students work
- parents don't really like it - hard to navigate
- they like google drive
- 5th grade doing well with communication
- 6th grade school dance?
- dances are socially important

SEVENTH GRADE
- Math is largely project based; explicit connection missing between projects and math skills; ie long division; better balance needed between math skills and building of collaborative skills

- traditional pieces are missing
    - *Students receive the traditional math instruction during the launch and in small group sessions with teachers.*
    - *The projects are the "glue" that holds the unit together and gives the students a reason to learn the math.*
- math homework?
- projects are not lending themselves to the content skills - building a car but can't do division
    - *Long division (the standard algorithm) is just one way our students are learning about division. I agree that we need to do a better job communicating with families about the scope and sequence of our math curriculum so you know what is being taught and when.*
- math makes them nervous - are the kids getting what they need, a lot of kids get out of ECS and are struggling with math in other schools
    - *I think we need to do a better job of connecting with our alumni. I'm not sure we have an accurate accounting of how they are doing in high school math as a whole. We are working on creating an alumni group so we can collect data such as this from all students, not just a few.*
    - *We follow the Common Core math standards which have all students learning Algebra content by the end of 8th grade. All students will be able to take the Keystone exam if they would like to (in order to start high school in the advanced track). This is different from before where only a select few were able to take this exam.*
- skills taught, homework, advanced classes made good math students - projects don't give them the skills practice
- Gayle to communicate to parents about detracking - parents looking at other schools because they are worried about math
- share information like this as soon as possible
- PSSA math scores are depressing
    - *Math scores across the state went down this year and are just one measure of our student's mathematical abilities. This year we are focusing more on the MAPs assessments (our benchmark assessments taken 3 times a year) in order to track student growth and progress toward grade level norms.*
- want kids to assimilate later but they are not proving that they are able to in math
- more likely to leave in 6th
- send home work to help support the gaps