

ELLIS SCHOOL & THE FUTURE COMMITTEE  
Thursday, August 13, 2015 Meeting  
6-7:30pm, SAU 83

AGENDA

Call to order was held at 6:05pm. Larry Dobson, Betsey Cox-Buteau, and Sharon Polleck were in attendance.

Review of Minutes of July 8, 2015 – The minutes of July 2, 2015 were approved with corrections to the date and time of Sharon Polleck’s arrival.

Question for discussion this evening -

**1. 1:1 Technology – Is it needed? Is it worth it?**

Discussion surrounding this question moved from a discussion of 1:1 technology to technology in general. Much literature is still speculative, but the general discussion led to the following belief statement.

“We strongly encourage the use of technology in whatever capacity it can be used to increase student learning.”

With the final topic being discussed, the work of the committee being almost done, the committee discussed the next step. This step is to present the belief statements to the School Board at the September 15<sup>th</sup>, meeting. To prepare for the meeting, Betsey will:

1. Create a document of the belief statements that includes a bibliography of the articles referenced during discussion.
2. Members of the committee will choose several beliefs statements to read to the Board and speak to if needed.
3. Put the committee on the School Board agenda for 9/15/15.

Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm. The next time the committee meets will be at the School Board meeting on September 15, 2015 at 6:45pm at the SAU for the School Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsey Cox-Buteau

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BELIEF STATEMENTS TO DATE:

1. Students are best served when given the instruction and time to learn what they need to learn before moving on, in other words, students move at their own pace of learning and mastery.
2. There needs to be a well-defined mastery scale used to assess the readiness of students to advance along their learning continuum.
3. For number 1 to be successful there must be a learning culture established that support ageless learning and mixed age levels learning together at times.
4. Parents are expected to support the culture and be an active, integral part of such a system.
5. This system might be more effective with some kind of intrinsic student reward structure built into it.
6. A five level rubric should exist for each required instructional standard that clearly defines the expectations of performance against that standard.
7. Student achievement progress should be available to parents on an ongoing basis through secure electronic means and updated at a minimum of weekly or bi-weekly.
8. We believe that the evidence is clear that parent involvement and interest in their students’ educational experience and progress directly impacts their students’ achievement. Here are some collected suggestions:
  - a. Parent workshops for instruction in how to work with their children on their homework in various subjects
  - b. Parent school partnership groups
  - c. Home visits by educators
  - d. Parent conferences that allow for longer sessions
  - e. Parent questionnaires about their children’s learning styles and habits
  - f. Online resources on the website for helping with certain lessons
  - g. Online postings of workshops held

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- h. Parent assistance with improving executive functioning for their child
  - i. Send home ideas for home-based instructional activities to reinforce learning
  - j. Parent peer pressure to “get involved”
9. The length of the current summer break allows some students to regress academically. This slows the pace of learning for all students.
  10. A more balanced school-year calendar would improve academic achievement and reduce student and staff burnout.
  11. Single-sex education is a practice still under exploration and inconclusive at this time. Therefore the committee makes no recommendation regarding its use at Ellis School.
  12. Students can and should be grouped to learn in a way that best meets their individual needs, and regrouped at reasonable intervals during their progression along a curricular continuum. This grouping may transcend age, homeroom, and grade level if it allows the student to be more successful.
  13. We strongly encourage the use of technology in whatever capacity it can be used to increase student learning.

Topics for research were:

2. How to level a school in the most effective way for learning? By age? By ability? Etc.
3. How should learning be reported to parents?
4. What is the best, most effective type of parent involvement? What does it look like?
5. How should the school calendar year be structured for students to learn and not lose?
6. Does separating the genders make a difference in learning? If so, at what age is it most effective?
7. What kind of grouping works most effectively for students to learn most efficiently?
8. 1:1 Technology – Is it needed? Is it worth it?

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