

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

CLARK-WILKINS SCHOOL

November 26, 2019

Anna Parrill Principal

Clark-Wilkins Updates

Goals and Objectives for 2019-2020

I. To create a positive, healthy and risk-taking school culture:

School-wide Behavior system

Throughout this past month, we have continued to reinforce expectations and common language around behavior expectations, specifically on the bus and in the cafeteria. A copy of the OWL Bus Expectations is posted inside every bus and is reviewed regularly with the students by the bus driver. Consistent review and discussion of these expectations with children at home is appreciated. A video of expected student behavior on the bus is in the production phase and is scheduled for release before Thanksgiving break. When we return from Thanksgiving, we will introduce a positive student recognition incentive tied to our school mascot, Hootie. Each week the bus(es) with the fewest number of bus incident reports will be awarded the Hootie mascot to share the ride to and from school. Hootie will have front seat privileges and greet each student as they enter and exit the bus.

Culture Club members spent time in the cafeteria during lunches to analyze what changes would facilitate a quieter, more enjoyable eating environment for students. A plan evolved, which includes new table arrangements, strategies from the Responsive Classroom Program to gain attention and signal for quiet, and an improved traffic flow in/out of and within the cafeteria. In addition to these environmental enhancements, we are launching an exciting positive incentive program ... the 'Golden Spatula' award! Just prior to dismissal of each lunch period, the Lunch Lead will select the class that best meets the OWL Cafeteria expectations that day. This class will be awarded an OWL sticker for their grade level chart. The next day, the 'Golden Spatula' will be placed in the center of their table. At the end of each month, the stickers for each class will be totaled. The class with the greatest number of stickers for the month will win a special 'formal lunch' on the first of the month. This 'formal lunch' will include a special tablecloth, decorations, and perhaps a special guest, or two, to join the students for lunch!

In addition to the planning phase of developing these new OWL Expectations, staff, students and volunteers were invested in developing a solid implementation plan. Brief training opportunities were scheduled with the PTA Lunchroom Volunteers. Changes to their responsibilities in the lunchroom have been documented and are available in a binder for them to reference as necessary. Training sessions were provided for Paraeducators to review these changes and the impact on their daily responsibilities.

At our most recent staff meeting, copies of table assignments and other pertinent handouts were available for all to review. Two second grade classes, Mrs. Bennett's and Mrs. Ladeau's, had great fun as the cast in a student video modeling the above expectations. All staff and students have viewed the video in their classrooms. We invite all parents to enjoy this video at home with your children and ask them to share their favorite part. Stay tuned for live implementation of the new OWL Cafeteria Expectations on Monday, 11/25/19!

Over the next month, we will continue to refine our effective school-wide system of behavior expectations. By our next newsletter, we will have developed similar OWL expectations and student videos displaying model behaviors across school settings.

II. To build and leverage positive risk-taking within a collaborative school community that prioritizes and embraces student-centered decision-making.

It's amazing that we are already heading into December. We continue to progress with this goal every month through the implementation of many teams and explicit efforts. We are leveraging the concept of voice and choice, not only with the students, but also with the staff. This month, we will be highlighting some of these efforts.

Teacher Leadership Committee

With representation from all grade levels Pre-K-4th, Special Education, Specialists, Interventionists, and Related Service providers, we meet monthly to discuss areas of needs for the building. This is an open and honest forum for us, as a committee, to take risks, share, collaborate, productively struggle and put ideas on and off of the table in order to improve instruction, student learning and the school culture. The representatives are the conduit for their teams, so they are responsible for the constant flow of information back and forth with their teams. Last month, we discussed our Open House format and the needs for discussing academic and programming with parents. In November, we talked about WIN (What I Need). We talked about how it got started, what the goals are and were, and whether, or not this is currently serving our students to the highest extent possible. In December, we will tackle the Literacy Celebration. We have a schedule of topics, based on the feedback I received during all of my meetings with staff over the summer, along with other topics that were generated during our first meeting. I appreciate this team and their willingness to be honest and vulnerable, at times, to better serve our school community.

We are also starting a **Para-Rep Leadership Committee**. Staff have chosen representatives from para-educators in Pre-K, Kindergarten, classroom Para-educators, reps from the STARS program, and from the My Time Program. There is more detail under the MTSS goal below, but in short, this is another group of staff members that we wanted to make sure has a vehicle for voice and choice in our school.

Culture Club Committee

Even the name gets you excited for meeting and moving the positive culture changes in the building forward. This is a positive, dynamic group of staff members with energy, positivity and great ideas. During our last meeting, we tackled the cafeteria expectations. The team came up with a detailed plan for our implementation of OWL expectations in the café and positive incentives for the classes meeting those expectations. I'll lead with "the golden spatula." Each day, the lunch leaders will choose those classes that displayed OWL lunchroom expected behaviors and give them the "golden spatula" recognition and physical golden spatula to be on their tables the next day. At the end of the month, the

classes with the most recognitions will have a Hootie Hot Lunch recognition where we will have table cloths, candelabras and other finery for the student lunch. In addition, staff, administrators, and maybe even Hootie, will dine with the class. Obviously, our end goal is a lunchroom that is respectful and fun while still being noise-manageable and where manners are the norm. Karen Eagan, who has been subbing for Kathleen Murphy during her maternity leave, has been leading this initiative. We created a video that was viewed by all classrooms and detailed information for all staff and lunchroom volunteers. We have common language and expectations that have been reviewed and modeled by all staff and volunteers. This program started Friday, November 22 with all classrooms at Wilkins receiving the “Golden Spatula.” Yeah!!! We will be sending home the videos (all Hootie videos) and Hootie expectations for the students to share with their parents and for the parents to reinforce with the students.

We also have a new Hootie logo that was designed for us. We had positive recognition Hootie stickers made for us that will be added to our recognition program. We will share with teachers, students and parents the purpose of the stickers and recognize any student that is wearing one in order to reinforce their positive behaviors. In December, we will also start the Hootie Shout-Outs during the morning announcements. This month we will continue with our Hootie areas of expectations to include recess indoor/out, hallways and bathrooms. We are being ambitious to think we can have all of this done in our 15 school days in December. Stay tuned. My end goal would be an assembly to kick-off the new year with all of our expectations in tack and many recognitions in place. We still are looking to add a monthly classroom recognition for those students exemplifying these behaviors...they will receive notoriety as a “Hootie Exemplary Honorary.” These students would get to earn time with Hootie, and possibly Mr. Holt, to engage in fun activities for a bonus time in the gym. We are still working out the details, so more to come.

Weekly Hootie Happenings for staff. As part of building and growing a positive school culture, we have a weekly staff newsletter. In the weekly happenings, staff send me notes of gratitude, shout-outs and recognitions to post about others. We have been doing positive weekly challenges as simple as having a meaningful conversation with a staff member that you might not know well to taking a positive picture every-day this week and reflect and smile as you look back at them during the weekend. In addition, we are posting videos and articles from positive psychologist Tom Rath, author of the **Strength Finder** and Tom Rath and Donald Clifton’s book, **How Full Is Your Bucket.** Additionally, we are including the Positive Impact Test and Jon Gordon’s, **The Energy Bus, The Seed, and Training Camp.** We also start every staff meeting with five positives, “atta-boys/girls”, or great kid stories. These are just quick ways to integrate positivity as part of what we do weekly.

Student Leadership

The *4th grade Principal’s Council* continues to be busy with many leadership opportunities. The Council led the Veteran’s Day assembly by sharing information about each branch of the military’s flag and fun facts about their group. They were assisted by several staff members that either served in the military themselves, or had a family member who served. I was very proud of the council. It is great seeing the students leading the assembly.

The council will be assisting with the “golden spatula” recognition. There is a rotating schedule for the council to do the tally in the café daily on the Hootie poster. The council will also announce monthly winners of the “fine-dining lunch award.” In addition, the council will be video-interviewing student teachers and new staff to Clark-Wilkins during the month of December. Each of the 12 council

members will construct their questions and lead their interviews. We will look to push those out to the staff and students to watch in order to get to know the new staff.

I am excited to announce that Kathleen Murphy will be heading up a *Grade 3 Assistant Principal's Council*. She is projecting sending out applications in January.

Hootie's Council (Student Council)

This group is being headed up by Amy Hanson and Alyssa Shorrock. We had great interest with nearly 40 applicants for both grade 3 and 4 students. 4th grade will be comprised of 14 students and they have already started meeting. Grade 3 will have 8-10 students on their committee, and they will be chosen soon and start meeting to discuss expectations, guidelines, and brainstorming ideas.

Here are some of the ideas that the Hootie Council is looking to accomplish this year: offering school tours to new students, greeting soon-to-be first graders on step up day at the end of the school year to try and ease their anxiety and help teachers, buddy read with STARS students, and contribute to the blood drive by handing out snacks and drinks. Also, creating posters to help spread the word and encourage adults to donate, and facilitate classes writing thank you notes during teacher appreciation week. Some fundraisers they are looking to focus on include: Toy drive (Dec), flowers for the small gardens in the spring, Animal Shelter (April), and the Blood drive (May). Key to their work will be finding ways to spread Kindness. I can't wait to share their good work with you each month.

Recess Rangers

I have the organizational meeting with Brenden Holt, Kim Smith and Gail Polio who will help lead this group. We have already met with all grade 4 teachers and representatives from grade 3. The purpose of this student leadership group will be to train interested and selected grade 4 students in an after-school training program and an in-school implementation program during Grade 1 recess. These students will have a 2 day a week schedule for an 8-week period of time to attend Grade 1 recess in order to lead activities with those students. The Rangers will have badges and whistles and a schedule of activities to focus on during their days. I envision a Monday morning check-in for all Recess Rangers for the week and ½ of the group working a Tuesday-Thursday schedule and the other ½ doing a Wednesday-Friday schedule for the 8 weeks. There is also the after-school training to support the learning and training. These students will need to be in good standings in their classroom because they will be leaving their classrooms in order to run their activities two days a week. I have been a part of this leadership and service-learning opportunity in every school that I have been a part of over the last 25 years. It is amazing what it does for the student leaders and younger peer relationships. I am excited about some of the new structures and staff members we are putting in place for success of the program at C-W. Applications will be going out the week of December 2nd. We have spoken about running 8 to 10-week groups depending on the numbers that apply. We will start with grade 4 and then extend it to grade 3.

III. To create structures and supports to build an effective Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

On November 20th, the Clark-Wilkins Response To Intervention (RTI) team demonstrated an effective RTI team meeting at a staff meeting for all staff. Using the new forms and problem-solving protocol, the team role-played the process following mutually agreed upon norms while staff members observed and then engaged in small group discussion. A great large group discussion ensued after the demonstration where staff were able to ask clarifying questions and offer feedback, which was overwhelming positive

in nature. A google slide presentation outlining the process was shared with classroom teachers to refer back to as concerns and the need for referrals arise for their students.

As we continue to process RTI referrals and conduct these meetings throughout the year, there will be a focus on looking for commonalities and or patterns in the specific areas in which students are struggling. This should assist in being able to identify areas for improvement with regard to tier 1 instructional practices as well as with our tier 2 academic and social emotional interventions. It is our hope and expectation that as we continue to improve our school-wide positive behavioral expectations and supports for all students, the number of behavioral referrals and need for tier 2 and 3 interventions for behaviors will decrease. Clark-Wilkins will have an administrator participating in regular SAU wide meetings led by Natasha Kolehmainen to collaborate on the implementation of MTSS across the schools.

Administrators and guidance team members have collaborated to create the “BAT team” (short for Behavior Assistance Team). This group will meet on a weekly basis to review student needs and response protocols as well as develop and improve tier 1 and 2 interventions for social emotional learning. To this end, the team gathered to watch a webinar on the topic of Social Anxiety hosted by Michelle Garcia Winner, Speech and Language Pathologist and founder of Social Thinking. The guidance team at Wilkins has also created a special space in the first grade wing that can be used for students needing a calming break outside of their individual classrooms. It is a small space, warmly lit with comfortable seating choices and various tools to help students improve their ability to self-regulate. It is also used for small group social skills and emotional regulation groups with students.

An initial training in crisis intervention was recently facilitated by certified CPI Instructors, Social Worker Lauren Bryan, and Assistant Principal of Student Services Kristin Morgenstern. About 20 elementary level staff members including newly hired paraprofessionals, case managers, classroom teachers and related service providers participated in this program. The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program is designed to equip staff with skills, confidence and an effective framework to safely manage and prevent difficult behavior. Staff will continue to receive refresher training on a periodic basis.

Our Clark-Wilkins paraprofessionals serve a critical role in helping students, teachers, case managers and related service providers throughout the schools in all settings. Several representative members of this group have been chosen to participate in monthly meetings to have their collective voice heard as well as assist in determining areas of need for ongoing training and professional development.

Assessment, Grading and Reporting

Progress Reports: All students at Clark-Wilkins received progress reports on Wednesday November 13th. This was our first progress reporting period using our Empower scoring platform. Throughout the Fall, teachers worked collaboratively to review common summative assessments that were to be included as part of the progress report. In addition, teachers utilized our shared rubrics to score selected academic standards and the work study practices. During the late start time on November 12th, teachers were provided with support in preparing progress reports and reviewing them. We are looking forward to continued professional development opportunities within our teams focused on Empower and collaborative scoring.

Collaborative Team Times: Grade level teachers have been meeting with their counterparts at MVVS to review our curriculum and share instructional practices. Each grade level sets their agenda based on their team needs. Some highlights from this month include kindergarten teachers working on reviewing strategies for teaching phonemic awareness and second grade teachers being joined by our reading specialist to facilitate a discussion on tailoring small group instruction for students in the classroom.

NWEA Score Reports: In addition to the progress reports sent home on 11/13, parents received Fall NWEA score reports for their students. These score reports contained results from their child’s most recent assessment and documented their growth over time for parents to review.

Facilities, Finance, and Operations

Grade	August	September	October	Average Class Size
PK3	16	16	19	8
PK4	21	21	23	11.5
K	97	97	97	19.4
1st	144	144	141	20.1
2nd	130	130	129	21.5
3rd	142	142	141	20.1
4th	138	138	139	23.1
Total	688	688		

Upcoming Events

Dec. 4 Staff Meeting - Clark
 Dec. 5 Steve Blunt – Clark MPR
 Dec. 6 Geography Bee – Team Rounds
 Dec. 9 ICS Meeting, 3:20 – 4:00 – Wilkins Conference Room
 Dec. 10 Late Start
 Dec. 11 Mentor Meeting, 3:30-4:30, Library
 Dec. 19 Holiday Parties
 Dec. 20 Holiday Parties – snow date
 Dec. 23 – Jan. 1 Holiday Recess – No school
 Jan. 2 Meeting – Wilkins (snow date 1/15)
 Jan. 9 Geography Bee – 1:30
 Jan. 10 Geography Bee Snow Date – 1:30
 Jan. 14 Late Start