

Principal's Opening Day Report to the Raymond School Board

Bob Bickford, Principal, Iber Holmes Gove Middle School

2022-2023, Aug. 29, 2022

<p>Overview & Acknowledgements</p>	<p>As compared to the last two years during the pandemic, we had a fantastic opening day! The faculty had their rooms ready. Todd and his team did an amazing job of deep cleaning the school over the summer. Everything was spotless and shining! We had a productive three days of in-service preparing for the opening of school. We had the opportunity to celebrate the outstanding academic performance of our students on the SAS assessments at the end of last school year. It is obvious from those results that our staff and students worked hard last year despite everything else going on around us. We focused on getting back to the basics to continue our students' academic growth for the coming school year and a re-introduction to Respectful, Responsible and Cooperative behavioral expectations. Mrs. Cunningham has been leading the working around the implementation of the MTSS-B behavioral expectations.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>All the buses arrived with students safely on board! A couple of buses were late in the morning arriving around 8:00 am. A couple of buses drove by students on their bus stops, but almost everyone made it to the first day of school. Pretty typical first day of school challenges. In the afternoon the last bus left the middle school at 2:55 which is a little later than normal. I've asked parents in the Parent Ram Reminder to arrive later in the drop off period in the morning and later in the pick up time frame. The first two days of school traffic was backed up onto Epping Street for 15 minutes, morning and afternoon.</p>
<p>Enrollment</p>	<p>4th Grade: 92 5th Grade: 71 6th Grade: 84 7th Grade: 88 8th Grade: 88 422</p>
<p>Staffing</p>	<p>The faculty and staff that we have are doing a great job! Everyone is engaged with teaching and learning taking place! Although not as many openings as we started the year with last year, we still have many open positions which once again has almost everyone else trying to cover the responsibilities of those open positions.</p> <p>Currently we have 5 teacher openings and 5 paraeducator openings with very few, if any applicants for any of the open positions. We are in need of a Spanish, a Computer and a Health teacher. Currently we do not have anything happening with world languages at the middle school due to the lack of qualified applicants and the high school schedule not having sufficient seats available in their first block classes of Spanish or French. Our new PE teacher is going to teach both Health and PE content during what would normally be his PE classes. Not all of either curriculum will be taught or assessed. Our current Tech Ed teacher is going to teach both the Tech Ed and Computers curriculum. Where there is no formal computer instruction at the elementary school, the computer curriculum will be the focus of the content in Teach Ed for the lower grades with more of the Tech Ed curriculum in the upper grades. We also have two special education teacher/case manager positions open. Because of the shortage of UA teachers we have had to ask the librarian to be part of the UA rotation for students until such time as we can fill at least one of the three open positions.</p> <p>The 8th grade case manager position remains open. Our new Social Emotional Learning Program is awaiting a teacher to get final approval from the NH DOE. The students who have been identified that would benefit from the services provided by the SEL are in our school, but we don't have anyone yet to provide those services. Barbara Kelly, our Dean of Student Services, is working with the case managers we do have to provide Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) to the students we do not currently have a case manager for and Barbara is taking on the case management of those students.</p> <p>The five para openings are shared para positions. All of our 1:1 positions are filled with paras or in one case a substitute who has committed to working every day. There are currently no para's doing duties while classes are in session. This has resulted in the entire administrative team doing the lunch and recess duties from about 10:30 am to 1:00 pm. For example the principal and one substitute are covering a lunch with 175 students.</p>

Challenges	<p>Our faculty and staff are ready to have another very successful academic school year and are excited about their success from last year. Unfortunately the number of ongoing open positions is having a ripple effect throughout the school, similar to last year. We are very fortunate to have so many people willing to take on more than what is expected. They do it for the kids. I continue to be very concerned that it will have a negative effect on these folks and we will continue to have relatively high turnover rates. It was not that many years ago when we had zero turnover in our staff.</p>
Upcoming Events	<p>Monday, Sept. 12th is a District In-Service Day; There is no school. The first Parent Core Group Meeting is Monday, Sept. 12th at 7:00 pm, in-person or through Google Meets. The state primary is Tuesday, Sept. 13th. We ask parents to be extra cautious when dropping off in the morning and picking up in the afternoon. Many of the voting public is not familiar with our routines for drop off and pick up. Picture Day is Wednesday, Sept. 14th. Our photography company, Geskus, will be sending information directly to families. The IHGMS Open House is Thursday, Sept. 22nd, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm. Come visit your child's teachers And visit their classrooms. Friday, Sept. 30 is a faculty inservice for Teachers and there will be no school.</p>