



Sullivan West Elementary School

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Rod McLaughlin
Principal

Kevin Carbone
Assistant Principal

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Dear Parents & Guardians,

My hope is that this letter finds you in good spirits and good health. I am writing to explain the rationale for some of the changes to our schedule this year. As much as we are focusing on getting students back to a 'normal' school year experience, things are not yet truly normal and there are health concerns we must acknowledge and address. As most of you may know the Lunch/Recess period has been shortened and the Homeroom period has been extended. I would like to take this opportunity to explain the rationale for both of these changes.

The Lunch/Recess time has been reduced for several reasons. The main one being that we don't want large groups of students sitting in the cafeteria, unmasked for any longer than necessary due to the obvious health and safety concerns related to that. We have been trying to help our students realize they need to focus on eating first rather than socializing in order to be sure they have enough time to eat. We have also been experimenting with various lengths of time to see what the perfect balance is. With each day the flow of lunch and recess has gotten better and it appeared today that all who wanted to eat their lunch had plenty of time to do it. We will likely still add back a few more minutes in the coming days to ensure that students not only have enough time to eat but also get a full 30 minutes of recess.

In the lower grades the extended homeroom doesn't affect them because they are not departmentalized like grades 5 and 6. Therefore they can start instruction as soon as all their students are in homeroom. The extension of homeroom really only changes things for 5th & 6th grades. We made the change for several reasons. With all students having the availability to a free breakfast we need a bit more time to get all students through breakfast without them missing a portion of 1st period. By extending homeroom by 15 minutes we are also able to give mandated services such as 30 minutes of OT, PT, Speech or AIS Math/ELA daily without students missing class time. During this time students not receiving services and/or attending breakfast can get homework help and /or extra help from their teachers if need be. The 30 minute homeroom is also a time for us throughout the year to hold grade level meetings with 5th & 6th grades to discuss upcoming events or for honoring 5th & 6th grade student achievements without impacting class time. Finally the 8:45-9:15 time will also be a place for us to begin to develop a junior advisory period like the students will experience in the SWMS when they get to 7th grade.

If you have any questions or you wish to provide feedback please feel free to call me at 482-4610 ext. 2141 or email me at mclaughlinrod@swcsd.org.

Sincerely,

Rod McLaughlin
Principal

Kevin Carbone
Assistant Principal