

Andrew School Student Forum

Session Summary

Nov. 6, 2018

On Nov. 6, 2018, members of Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) senior administration met with Andrew School students from grades 8 to 12 to discuss senior high programming. Students sat in small groups and were taken through a series of three activities by table hosts, addressing the following questions:

ACTIVITY 1: What does your ideal high school look like?

- What does the school physically look like?
- What's the school atmosphere like?
- What programs and services are available?
- How does it influence your plans post-graduation?

Major themes:

- Options
 - More options
 - Flexible choice
 - Longer time in options classes
 - Mechanics
 - Cosmetology
 - Drama
 - Drivers Ed
 - Business options
 - Trades
 - Second languages
 - Music
 - Arts
 - Foods
 - Computer programming
 - Wood shop
 - Commerce
 - Life skills/adventure
 - Life skills like job seeking, resumes, taxes, etc
 - Actual options, not mandatory
 - More CTF/CTS courses
 - Career and life planning – someone to talk to
 - Options for non-core courses
 - More courses and options
- Programming
 - All courses taught by a teacher, no distance education

- Bigger classes
- Well-stocked labs
- Subject specialists teaching courses
- Ten minute breaks and longer lunch break
- Longer core classes
- Balanced core courses
- Structured flex time
- Respect
 - No vandalism
 - More strict policies on cell phones
 - Less bullying
 - Teachers dress formally
 - Everyone listening
- Sports
 - Better gym
 - Sports courses
 - Year-round sports teams – basketball, volleyball, baseball, girls teams
 - More students for sports teams and more sports equipment
- Community feeling
 - Students helping students
 - Laughter
 - Busy halls
 - Teachers helping
 - Talking
 - More people
 - Activities after school
 - Student clubs
 - Updated décor
 - More activities both in school and after school
 - Everyone learning

Other comments:

- Computers and technology used, people who know how to use it
- Better use of technology
- Cafeteria (for food and for taking a class)
- Adjustable temperature control in each room
- Desks instead of tables
- Permit energy drinks
- Vending machines
- Longer school days and more days off

ACTIVITY 2: What is missing from your ideal senior high and the current senior high program at Andrew School?

Major themes:

- Not enough people
 - Not enough people for sports teams or to offer enough options
 - Hardly any high school sports teams
 - Lack of students
 - Very few in gym class
 - Not a lot of options for friend groups
 - We need more students
 - We don't have enough kids in our school
 - Small social circle
 - Not a lot of friends
 - Not many clubs
 - With the amount of kids in gym class, you can't do much
- Teachers don't teach specific subjects
 - Teachers should teach what they're good at
 - Teachers should know what they're teaching (example, a teacher for each core subject)
 - No specialized teachers here
 - Teachers are limited
 - No life planning or people to talk to about the future
 - Lack of specialized teachers
 - We need specialized teachers
 - No specialized teachers for band, shop, photography
- There are very few options
 - No actual options are offered
 - No mechanics option
 - Only mandatory options are offered
 - No second languages
 - No courses you need for post-secondary
 - Commercial foods used to be a thing and I would like for it to come back, I would take it
 - Other schools have many other options and choices, and they can choose them
 - In Andrew School, we need more options for more learning for a future job
 - Lack of options for courses
 - Lack of technology classes
 - Lack of technology use
 - Not enough options
 - We don't have options
 - We need Business
 - No music course
- There is a lack of respect
 - Teachers don't dress formally
 - No respect
 - School is not taken seriously
 - Wasted classes
 - Very little respect
 - Some rules are unreasonable

- Kids with phones just listen to music
- Vandalism – things are broken
- In other schools, there's respect towards other students and teachers. In Andrew School, we need more respect towards each other and towards the teachers
- Lack of kindness
- Few sports and no after school activities
 - Not enough sports teams
 - Very few field trips
 - No planning for after school
 - A lacrosse team would be nice
 - Other schools care about their sports team and show up to practice. In Andrew, the sports teams don't care and the teachers staying after school are on the a team
 - We don't have girls' sports teams
 - No wheelchair sports
- No cafeteria or vending machines
 - No proper cafeteria
 - No concession
 - No lunch or food options
 - No cafeteria to buy food or have a course
- Infrastructure
 - Not enough desks
 - No air conditioning
 - Balanced heat or adjustable
 - No proper AC or heating
 - We have tables, not desks
 - Lighting is bad
 - No current or good gym equipment
 - No gym seating (bleachers)
 - No space to eat is a problem

Other comments:

- Don't allow energy drinks
- No well stocked labs
- Science supplies are bad and some don't work
- Really short breaks between classes
- Teachers don't communicate
- Short lunches
- Not enough learning
- Technology is misused
- Not enough group work
- No theme in Andrew (unlike Lamont, which has blue as a school colour)
- The school is small
- No room choice

- There should be structured self-directed learning
- Wood shop poorly supplied. It's better to bring wood home and use the tools there or the wood at home is better.
- School doesn't have enough money
- Not enough metal for welding
- Long bus ride

ACTIVITY 3: What are three important factors the Division should consider when making decisions about programming for senior high students in Andrew?

Major themes:

- Effective discipline
 - Give more punishment. Kids purposely get kicked out because they don't want to be there.
 - We stop bullying.
- More options for classes
 - If we had more options, maybe people would want to come to our school
 - Give students a slight choice for their classes
 - If we had more and better classes, more kids would come and kids would be less like jerks
 - Supervised self-directed options
 - Online courses
 - Options for specific things that kids choose
 - Better gym activities
 - Provide more options
- More specialized teachers
 - Get more specialized teachers and set up different non-core subjects
 - Our school could get more teachers to teach more options
 - Get teachers to teach only one subject
 - We could get more teachers of certain expertise to get us more classes and take over other classes so all teachers can have more prep time, giving us better classes and making teachers less stressed.
 - Have specialized teachers teach little kids then help upper grades
 - Keep specialized teachers at their subject all the time
- Increase technology use
 - Use a more technology-based curriculum to help students learn how to properly use technology
- New theme or renovation of the school
 - Fix the showers
 - Build a cafeteria
 - Vending machines
 - Upgrade the school so it attracts more people
- This school is fine how it is
- Offer a four-day week
 - Instead of early dismissal, have one Friday off per month

- We need more people
 - School needs more money and more teachers
 - We could have better options if we had more students and teachers
 - To get kids here, we need changes

- Advertise the school
 - No one wants to move to Andrew
- Access to sports
 - More students for sports
- Kindness
 - Make school kind
 - Be welcoming to other people coming into the school
 - Be respectful to subs
- Bus grades 10 to 12 away
 - Close school, make it a K – Grade 9
- Hire a guidance counsellor

Other comments:

- There should be more buses
- We have no after school activities and we should have after school sports
- Let us choose our options
- School should know what we want
- Have flex as a free period but more strict
- Be able to buy lunch at a cafeteria
- If things don't change, everyone will leave
- Girls can't be on a sports team because of how many students we have
- More people or switch schools
- Get rid of the flex and make classes longer
- There's lots of vandalism
- Relocate schools
- More funds, more students – more money should come to Andrew School
- Merge schools
- More field trips
- Need a different room for in-school suspensions (kids can use their phone in there)