

**Lyons Township High School
Community Advisory Council**

7:00 PM – December 17, 2008

Minutes

Documents sent earlier:

1. LTCAC Agenda for the 12/17/08 meeting
2. LTCAC Minutes for the 10/15/08 meeting
3. LTCAC October 15, 2008 Meeting Consensus Table Answers to Board Questions
4. Roster of LTCAC members

Handouts:

1. Folder with various materials regarding LTHS Staff Recruitment and Retention
2. *Roar*, Fall/Winter 2008

I. Business Meeting (7:00 PM)

- A. Marilyn Kosin called the meeting to order.
 1. The meeting topic for today was changed because of a change in the schedule for selecting a new superintendent.
 2. The February topic is still being developed.
- B. Minutes from the meeting of 10/15/08 were approved.
- C. There will be a planning committee to search for new officers.
- D. Superintendent's Report, Dr. Kelly
 1. The superintendent search has slowed down. Hank Bangser, the CEO of Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, will be running the search. He will talk with the Board in January; present a slate in February; and, interview in early March. There should be a new superintendent by the March Board meeting, and that person will be at the April LTCAC meeting.
 2. The first day of school next year will be Monday, August 24, 2009.
 3. *U. S. News and World Report* awarded LT a silver medal. There were two gold and seventy silver medals in Illinois.
 4. All municipal bodies have to report their taxing levies. LT is reporting a 6.8% levy to capture new property taxes. If it is not reported, that money will be lost. This does not mean that taxes are being raised.
 5. During the third week of November, there was a threat written in a bathroom at South Campus; and, there were a couple MERSA cases reported. Letters were sent home in both cases.
 6. Finals are January 14 and 16.
 7. The theater group will present *Steel Magnolias* on January 22 and 24.
 8. LT is watching the weather. If there is the amount of ice predicted, the school will close. Check email and phone messages on Thursday night. There is a new Superintendent's conference call system that streamlines decision-making.

9. There are contingency plans for Brownstock, which is a music festival on the last day of school.
- II. Discussion of Members Concerns and Issues (7:12 PM)
- A. Q. How did the lunchtime lockdown work out?
 - A. That went very well. Police and fire observed and provided positive feedback. They were impressed by the exercise. This time, blinds were used to block visual access to the classrooms. If students are quiet, an intruder could not tell if anyone is in the room.
 - B. Q. Where was the incident in the bathroom?
 - A. North Campus.
 - C. Q. Are restrooms locked during certain periods?
 - A. No, restrooms are not locked during the school day. Some are locked before and after school. Others may be locked due to vandalism or for repairs. If there is no running water or access to lavatories, the school cannot be open.
- III. Overview of the LTHS Staff Recruitment and Retention (7:20 PM)
- A. Dennis Kelly, Superintendent
 1. LT models desired student behavior through its staff. And, the administration models desired behavior in their interactions with the staff.
 2. LT always wants a balance of people, new and experienced, age, gender, etc. Staff are diverse and drawn from all over the country.
 3. Kids and teachers are vital to the success of a school.
 4. In the old recruiting model, schools received many inquiries. If they didn't have an opening, they would simply discard the letters. If there were openings, the school would send an application form. Interviews were only conducted after the school year was concluded. Often there were as many as 600 applications for 2-3 openings. It was very indirect and labor intensive. The very best schools didn't recruit at all.
 5. Between 1972 and about 1988, the process changed due to large numbers of retirements and increases in technology that allowed for online applications.
 - B. Tim Kilrea, Director of Human Resources
 1. Specialty areas need early recruiting, for example, the aviation program.
 2. LT uses an online program, as do most of the other schools. There is a single application that can be directed to different schools.
 3. The booklet, *Recruit Illinois*, was developed at LT. It is now used by many personnel offices. The desirable traits for teachers and coaches were developed with LTCAC input.
 4. At LT, recruitment is a year-long process. We attend about 25 job fairs per year, and over 70 faculty help in recruiting. Interviews involve kids, staff, support staff, and central office administrators. Hiring is done in May-June. We recruit for the next couple years.
 5. The hiring process begins with preparation in September through December. In January, LT starts interviews, and students are enrolling in

classes for next year. That drives recruiting. For example, this year, we had to increase scuba and decrease P.E. Retirements, leaves, and resignations impact recruiting. A hiring process timeline is shown on page 11 of *Recruit Illinois*. Last year, LT interviewed over 1500 and hired 19.

6. LT is part of the Northwest Personnel Administrators group that includes schools from all around the Chicago area. The group hosts a significant job fair every year at the College of DuPage. LT sends about 65 recruiters to interview applicants.
 7. Division chairs screen the online applications and interview using an in-house committee that includes 3-4 teachers and a student. They will interview 6-8 candidates and send 3-4 to the district office. At the district office, candidates are interviewed by Dennis Kelly, the campus principal, Tim Kilrea, Scott Eggerding, and David Sellers. Most superintendents do not interview candidates, Dr. Kelly is the exception.
 8. We post job openings on the LT website, at the regional office, on listserves, and with professional organizations.
 9. Students are included in the interview process. Parents usually are not, except for some performance groups like choral.
 10. The recruiting and interview process is only half the issue – once people are on board, how do we retain them? There is a four-year induction and mentoring program that takes a new teacher from their initial certification through the tenure decision.
 11. Q. What percentage of LT teachers are LT graduates?
A. There are 58 of 585 employees, which is about 10%. That is spread over all categories -- teachers, support staff, grounds crew, etc. We are seeing many kids who graduated wanting to come back and teach, but we can't have the entire staff composed of LT graduates.
 12. Q. How young is the staff?
A. The average teacher has roughly 8 years of teaching experience.
 13. Q. How many teachers have their Masters degree?
A. Sixty-eight percent have Masters or higher, and it is growing. We'll attach the teacher profile from the guidance office to the minutes. It includes some demographic information.
- C. Bobbette Pulliam & Dorina Spiering, Induction and Mentoring Coordinators
1. A packet was distributed containing materials given to teachers during their first couple of weeks at LT. Before they arrive, we send fact sheets to them and their mentor. The expectation is that teachers and mentors will get together before school starts. On the first day, we work on what it means to be a mentor or a protégé. At the end of the first year, the mentor and the protégé fill out evaluation forms.
 2. The LT induction and mentoring program has a fantastic reputation. It is a four-year comprehensive program of fostering. It facilitates personal and professional growth. The first year facilitates and encourages the teacher, providing opportunities for collegial sharing. In the second year, working with the mentor is optional. The teachers learn principles and practices

- related to the Peaceful Schools Initiative. The third year concentrates on professional development. The fourth year works on leadership.
3. In the intensive first two weeks, students are included. New teachers have the opportunity to spend some time with students and ask them any questions they want. Teachers are encouraged to attend the students' reading luncheon.
 4. The program also provides a social outlet. There is a 100-day celebration at a local restaurant and an end-of-the-year celebration.
 5. The program is also flexible, responding to new teacher needs.
 6. Q. How many teachers leave because they are unhappy?
A. None, although one left because of homesickness.
 7. Q. How many teachers want to be mentors?
A. We want seasoned teachers as mentors, but we've been decimated by retirements.
 8. Q. Why does someone want to be a mentor?
 9. A. The teachers are proud of what they've accomplished and want to share that and make a difference.
 10. Q. The four-year program helps professional growth. How does the mentor help in that growth process?
A. Mentors help in the natural course of contact.
 11. Q. Who helps a new teacher get their Masters degree?
A. The mentoring program pays for them to have a substitute in their classroom for professional development workshops. In year three, they may get tuition reimbursement.
 12. Q. Where do tuition reimbursement funds come from?
A. They come out of the general fund.
 13. Q. How many teachers are not retained after four years?
A. The average public high school loses 30-50% within five years. LT typically loses only those who move away. We rarely terminate someone. If so, it is usually because of a bad match – they may have talent but are uncomfortable teaching.
 14. Q. What is the link between coaching and teaching?
A. Staff are teachers who happen to coach something.
 15. Q. How does a teacher get into coaching?
A. It is based on interest and learning. At the beginning of the year, a long list of co-curricular activities is published and teachers may express their interest.
- D. Ryan Darrah & Amy Huckstadt, 1st Year Faculty
Renee Leiter & Michael Morrison, 2nd Year Faculty
1. Teachers introduced themselves and explained why they came to LT, what they remembered about the application process, and what it is like to work at LT.
 2. Q. How do you describe the culture of LT?
A. The bar is set really high for student and teacher achievement. Expectations are at the highest level – do the best for your students every day. There is a sense of palpable opportunity here. There is wide

buy-in that this is a good place to be and that we could do good things. There is a sense that tradition breeds responsibility.

3. Q. How do teachers view Edline? Is it a burden?
 - A. It is not a burden. It is a way for parents to get access to what their children are doing. There is a three-week contractual requirement to update, although many update more often. We are here to create personal accountability and Edline helps do that since everything is online and available. It can also be used as a teaching tool.
4. Q. Were there major surprises in the first year? Are there modifications that you would suggest for the induction and mentoring program?
 - A. It was difficult to collaborate with the mentor since there was no common time for collaboration. It might be helpful to tweak the mentoring program for experienced teachers. For example, take things to the next level for those teachers who already understand discipline, classroom management, setting up the classroom, and paperwork.
5. Q. Are there any worries about a new superintendent changing the tone of the school?
 - A. No, there are enough people interested here in maintaining the culture.

IV. Small group discussion, please complete per table and turn-in (8:58 PM)

- A. Take a few minutes and review the *Desirable Teacher Attributes* and *Desirable Coach Attributes* on page 5 & 6 in the Recruit Illinois Manual. Make a list of suggested revisions to each of these lists.
- B. You have heard the overview of LT's strategies to recruit and retain quality teachers. What suggestions or ideas do you have for LT to improve in this area?
- C. One goal of our recruitment process is to involve students and, when possible, parents in the process. Provide any additional suggestions on ways we can accomplish this goal.