

**Lyons Township High School  
Community Advisory Council**

7:00 PM – October 21, 2009

**Minutes**

Documents sent earlier:

1. Agenda for the 10/21/09 LTCAC meeting
2. Notes from the 5/20/09 LTCAC meeting
3. 2009 – 2010 LTCAC Membership Directory

Documents distributed at the meeting:

1. LTCAC Meeting Dates, 2009 – 2010
  2. LTCAC Expectations of Members
  3. Mission, Vision, and By-Laws
  4. General Overview of C-chair duties for LTCAC
  5. Handouts entitled *More Students Will Learn More*
  6. Student Services 2009 – 2010 Contact List
  7. Lyons Township High School District 204 2010-2011 Draft School Calendar
- I. New Member Reception and Orientation (6:30 PM)
- A. Topics for the coming year. (Marilyn Kosin)
    1. December: discussion of programs available for mid-level students.
    2. February: budget and the web site.
    3. April: open.
    4. May: planning for the coming year.
  - B. Format of meetings. (Marilyn Kosin)
    1. Approval of the last meeting's minutes.
    2. Presentation from a Board member.
    3. Superintendent's report.
    4. Various other reports.
    5. Discussion of member concerns.
    6. A presentation on a specific topic.
    7. Questions discussed in table groups. Table seating is assigned to enable a mix of students, faculty, and community members for a broader feedback to the Board.
  - C. Role of members. (Ernie Froemel)
    1. Handouts: *Mission, Vision, and By-Laws* and *Expectations of Members*.
    2. Our role is advisory to Lyons Township School Board and Administration. We bring our perspectives and the issues of our constituencies to this meeting.
    3. We only meet five times during the year, so it is important to attend all meetings. Often what is discussed at one meeting provides background for future meetings. If you absolutely cannot attend a meeting, please notify one of the co-chairs – Marilyn Kosin or Joan Rykal.
    4. We also learn about what is happening at LT and can then dispel rumors or share information with our constituencies.
    5. It is important to participate in the table discussions so that we can present a comprehensive consensus to the Board.
  - D. Other processes. (Marilyn Kosin)
    1. It is important to ask questions to make sure everyone understands the presentations.
    2. Once we obtain the consensus statements from each table discussion, the Executive Committee reviews them and presents a consolidated report to the School Board. They want one consensus and one report for each question, which they then take under advisement
    3. We will continue to seek volunteers for officer positions for next year since current co-chair, secretary, and membership chair will be ending their fourth year.

- II. Business Meeting: Marilyn Kosin (7:08 PM)
- A. Call to order and Announcements
    1. Introduction of Officers: Marilyn Kosin, co-chair; Joan Rykal, co-chair; Ernie Froemel, secretary; Marsha Poore, Spanish teacher and membership chair. Marilyn, Ernie, and Marsha are finishing their fourth year, which is the term limit for LTCAC membership.
  - B. Approval of minutes from May 20, 2009
    1. Minutes approved as presented.
    2. Special thanks to Sara Bres, a junior who did these minutes.
  - C. Committee Reports
    1. None.
  - D. Superintendent's Report, Dr. Timothy Kilrea.
    1. Thanks to all who are serving on the LTCAC. Your input is important.
    2. Two of the items suggested by this group at the May meeting are on tonight's agenda.
    3. Besides the National Merit Semi-finalists, LT has exceeded the highest ACT score for the graduating class of 2008 with a 24.1. This is one of the important measuring sticks for high schools.
    4. Over the summer, over 1500 youth attended summer school. It provided both enrichment and remedial courses. There were eight students who graduated after summer school. About 3600 youth participated in summer activities, with the "Learn to Swim" program being the largest.
    5. Four capital projects were completed over the summer: renovated the north campus pool locker rooms; painted the bleachers at Bennett Field; painted and installed new ceilings in 34 classrooms; and, handled routine maintenance including new doors.
    6. LT hired 18 new staff – 13 faculty and 5 administrators.
    7. The H1N1 issue has resulted in a suspension of the attendance component of the final exam exemption policy for the entire school year. This is so that no sick kids come to school. The attendance component did improve attendance. And, students are being asked not to take undue advantage of the change. If students are sick, they should stay home; otherwise, they should go to school. The Board has asked the administration to look at other incentives for attendance. Right now, attendance is down about 1%, and we are watching it closely.
    8. The budget was approved in September. Capital projects earmarked for the past year were added to this year. The Board approved going to bid for some large projects: renovating the south campus girls and boys P.E. and athletic locker rooms; renovating the north campus science labs; refurbishing the north campus guidance suite; and, replacing the five boilers, which are about 55 years old.
    9. We are looking for input about the 2010-2011 calendar regarding the winter break. Right now, we have off the first full week before Christmas and the first full week after Christmas – December 20 through January 3. An alternative would be to work through the 23<sup>rd</sup> and then get the two weeks starting on 12/24 as a break. This will be a question for the table groups.
    10. *Othello* will be in the Reber Center October 22-24. *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* will be there November 19-20. The Special Education presentation of *Grease* will be November 21-22. The Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band Concert will be November 10<sup>th</sup>. Parent-Teacher conferences at south campus on November 11-12. No school on Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, Veterans' Day (observed.) Thanksgiving break is November 25-27. Future freshman night is December 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - E. School Board Report, Dr. John Polacek
    1. Thanks to all for serving on the LTCAC.

2. The Professional Learning presentation by Scott Eggerding describes the most exciting educational innovation in the 20 years.
- III. Discussion of Members; Concerns and Issues: Marilyn Kosin (7:23 PM)
- A. Q. How does the Board think late start/early dismissal is going?
    - A. This will be one of the questions for table discussion. The first one was met with student and parent displeasure. Since then, we continue to make improvements.
- IV. Student Support: Academic, Social and Emotional
- A. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Scott Eggerding (7:26 PM)
    1. LT is in the process of accreditation through the North Central Association (NCA). LT is a founding member of NCA, which determines school quality through periodic reviews. There will be a review visit in the spring. They are interested in input from the community, from stakeholder groups, from students, and from faculty. So, the LTCAC will be asked to be part of the review process. They are looking at vision and purpose; governance and leadership; and, teaching and learning. Is the school documenting and using results through the use of data? What are the resource and support systems? How are the stakeholder communication and relationships? And, is there a commitment to continuous improvement? PLC is part of the commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.
    2. (A seven minute video about professional learning was shown.)
    3. PLC is a philosophy and way of changing how we do things. It is a consolidation of best practices, a way of thinking about schooling at all levels. It asks how we can be sure we are offering the best we can offer in all areas.
    4. It is the shared mission, vision, values, and goals; the collaborative team's focus on learning; along with collective inquiry into best practices in current reality; action research and experimentation; commitment to continuous improvement; and, orientation towards results. These add up to a community of learning professionals.
    5. There are three big ideas:
      - a. We accept learning as the fundamental purpose of our school; and, therefore we are willing to examine all practices in light of their impact on learning.
      - b. We are also committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of high performance teams. The teams are critical – teachers cannot get better by teaching by themselves. Collaboration is a systematic process where we work together interdependently to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results. There are seven keys to collaboration in a PLC:
        - (1) Focus on learning, not teaching.
        - (2) Time for collaboration in the school day. (Hence the late arrival and early dismissals.)
        - (3) Focus the teams on critical questions.
        - (4) Make products explicit.
        - (5) Establish team norms to guide collaboration.
        - (6) Pursue specific and measurable team performance goals.
        - (7) Give teams frequent access to relevant information.
      - c. We assess effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. We're working with Business Intelligence software to look at data over time, and have entered a consortium with five of our six feeder schools to share information. We focus on results in two ways:

- (1) Identify students who might need more time and support.
  - (2) Identify strategies to improve teaching each essential skill and concept.
6. Characteristics of change from standard to PLC school:
    - a. From focus on teaching to focus on learning.
    - b. From curriculum overload to less, but more significant content.
    - c. From infrequent, individual summative assessments to frequent commonly developed formative assessments.
    - d. When students don't learn, from individual teachers determining the appropriate response to a systematic response.
    - e. From teachers working in isolation to collaborative teams.
    - f. From a focus on inputs to a focus on results.
    - g. From infrequently recognizing a few to creating lots of winners and celebrating success.
  7. Handouts: *More Students Will Learn More*. Current focus is on the first two essential questions:
    - a. What do we expect students to know and be able to do?
    - b. How do we know when a student has learned something?
  8. Questions:
    - a. Q. What is the scope of a collaborative team?  
A. It depends on the division. Special Education uses skill-based categories – reading, math, etc. Others are starting with big picture themes and then meeting in smaller teaching teams to determine how the essential outcomes match the bigger themes and do a 9 through 12 progression. Others may be more elective-driven and will make sure their electives have the essential skills, so they meet in skills-based teams.
    - b. Q. Is the idea that we are trying to get more kids in AP?  
A. It's not about getting more kids in AP, but does give kids the confidence to take an AP course. There is a culture that says our kids can't do it. Our honors class is only 10%, which is small for a school like LT. If we are able to break things down to the essentials and they are able to have the confidence of mastery, they then will have the confidence to move on to higher levels. We also have to look at AP courses that are about doing more rather than learning more.
    - c. Q. Can you share this PowerPoint with this group?  
A. Sure. There is also a brochure that distills these concepts. It is available here and online
    - d. Q. What has been the staff reaction?  
A. It has been quite positive. It has generated a lot of discussions.
    - e. Q. Why is one of the six feeder schools not sharing data?  
A. They had a data analysis system in place before we did. Their data is not compatible.
    - f. Q. Are the district 102 collaborative meetings similar to this?  
A. Yes.
    - g. Q. Were schools with higher ratings using PLC?  
A. This is a philosophical discussion. LT has used five levels of tracking for a very long time. Other schools have only two. So there are more students in the "can do" pool and they are less stratified.
    - h. Q. Will this have an impact on the five levels at some point?  
A. It already has. There is a proposal to eliminate transition level in science this year. Humanities has already removed the transition level. And, we are moving that way in math. What can we do to help students learn

more? If it is the level, we question the level. If it is the curriculum, we question the curriculum.

- i. Q. Is there comparable data with other schools on issues like study halls and hours of homework?
    - A. There is comparable data about what courses students take, graduation requirements, expectations, and study hall support. The question remains how do we meet the needs of all students?
  - j. Q. Within the five levels, it seems to be easier to go down than to move up. There seems to be a ceiling.
    - A. When we have the central outcomes fully mapped, we'll be better able to move them up and down.
- B. Response to Intervention (Rtl): Donna Bredrup (8:04 PM)
1. It is a systematic way to help more students learn more.
  2. There are two questions in response intervention that can help understand why things came about.
    - a. Why do some students struggle academically? If so, how can we improve their achievement and how do we know when it is working?
    - b. Why do some students exhibit behaviors that get in the way of school achievement? If so, how can we improve behavior and how do we know it's working?
  3. Those are some of the elements that get answered in the Rtl process.
  4. Rtl comes from a long line of efforts to improve student achievement. However, Rtl has done a fantastic job of incorporating several different initiatives and bringing them under one umbrella that systematically works together, for example, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). By 2010-2011, state law will require schools to have an Rtl plan in place.
  5. Earlier models required evidence of failure before starting an intervention. However, research indicates that earlier intervention leads to greater success. Rtl applies to all learners and identifies struggling learners earlier. It is all based on data-driven decision making.
  6. Rtl provides regular interventions for all students in both academic and behavioral areas.
    - a. Tier 1 – core level – 80% of the students. Here, the intervention is preventive and proactive in creating a curriculum that works for most. There is universal screening for all students, e.g., EXPLORE.
    - b. Tier 2 – supplemental – 15-20%. Rtl provides at-risk students with targeted interventions as well as the fundamental learning experiences.
    - c. Tier 3 – increased intensive instructional intervention – 5%. Rtl calls for small group interventions and is assessment based.
  7. Problem solving is an important component of all levels of Rtl and incorporates the processes of defining, analyzing, implementing, and evaluating.
  8. Questions:
    - a. Q. Where did the tier numbers come from?
      - A. They are based on national research.
    - b. Q. How close is LT to those national numbers?
      - A. We need to look at that. The AYP shows that about 77% of our students are meeting or exceeding standards, which is close to the 80% of Tier 1.
- C. First Class Principles and Anti-Bullying Efforts: David Franson (8:30 PM)
1. There are five first class principles:
    - a. Treat each other with dignity and respect.
    - b. Keep our school neat and clean.

- c. Solve problems creatively – stop, think, discuss.
  - d. Fit language and behavior to audience and environment.
  - e. Be responsible and accountable for what we say and do.
2. These principles appear in many places: the student handbook, in discussions with 8<sup>th</sup> graders, in the APG, on signs on both campuses. These are more people rules than school rules and apply to everybody.
  3. Bullying is everywhere, not just local, not just America.
  4. LT makes every effort to deal with it: at staff institutes, and by making books on the topic available. Barbara Coloroso, author of *The Bully, The Bullied, and The Bystander*, will speak at the Reber Center on January 19, 2010 at 7:00 PM. Pages 70-92 of her book describes parenting styles that create bullies or victims.
  5. There is a new campaign called “Reach Out and Report (ROAR),” which encourages the “bystander” to step forward and report bullies. There are posters throughout both campuses.
  6. There are also posters for the “Speakup Line.” More bystanders are stepping up and using the “Speakup Line.” It is an anonymous tip line where parents and students can report unsafe or inappropriate behavior. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the reports come through voicemail;  $\frac{1}{4}$  through e-mail. Reports are catalogued, tracked, and distributed to the relevant people.
  7. Parent University (2/7/2010) will have a session on bullying.
  8. Recently received a Pillars Grant to develop a high school age level program to counteract bullying.
  9. An important goal is to challenge and change the perception that bullying is normal behavior.
  10. Questions:
    - a. Q. How would someone caught bullying on school property be disciplined?
      - A. Discipline is in the student handbook. It could range from verbal reprimand to out-of-school suspension, depending on the circumstances.
    - b. Q. Is most bullying boy-to-boy or girl-to-girl or boy-to-girl or girl-to-boy?
      - A. All combinations are possible. Girl-to-girl are the hardest to manage and resolve.
    - c. Q. Are feeder schools being invited to the Coloroso talk?
      - A. Yes, and she will also be visiting these schools.
    - d. Q. Will Barbara Coloroso talk to students?
      - A. Not during the day since she will be visiting these associated school and it is an institute day. However, they can come to the evening talk.
- V. Small group discussions (one consensus per table, per question.) (8:52 PM)
- A. How can we improve the achievement of students who struggle academically/behaviorally?
  - B. To further the goals of PLCs, should we continue with the late start/early dismissal schedule or find other ways to create time in the school day for teachers to meet in their PLC groups? Please suggest any suggestions you may have.
  - C. What ideas do you have to assist LT in promoting appropriate behaviors that are consistent with our 1st Class Principles?
- VI. Adjournment (As small group discussions ended.)