

LT Community Advisory Council
Consensus of Table Responses – November 1, 2023

1. What ideas do you have for continued articulation & collaboration between Associate School and LTHS that would support students/families as they transition to high school?
 - Parent mentors or parent/student list to be available to call or meet to talk about LT (ideas could be applicable from South to North Campus)
 - Incoming Freshman FAQs or social media
 - Website ideas like student council page
 - Including FAQ or info about SEL supports
 - Consider packaging of persistence data and the targeted audience
 - Post videos of day in the life or interviewing current freshman about classes (or upperclassmen)
 - Moving between levels is possible. Do parents/students know they have the power to request this kind of change?
 - Electives paper – make a list of freshmen only electives = whole list is overwhelming
 - Letter or videos that describe class levels. Welcome website is great! Parents may not understand levels. This info could be available prior to placement levels.
 - Offer roundtable discussion night with 8th graders and alumni (freshman) from same middle school (can discuss in person what they experienced and what they recommend/suggest to prepare)
 - Parents don't often realize in elementary/middle school that students get evaluated/placed at an advanced level. Communicate this earlier with parents, may help with parent involvement in HW etc.
 - 8th grade teachers visit freshman core classes?
 - Teacher questionnaire for ideas – common issues we face with freshmen (lack of reading the board, etc.)
 - We like the many opportunities for 8th grade – especially coming to LT for events
 - Demystifying the high school experience especially the size
 - Share the results of the readiness project
 - Buddy system
 - Mentor groups
 - More opportunities for 1st week “week of welcome” similar to a college orientation experience (Model Northwesterns Wildcat Welcome)
 - Good experience for mentors too, or this could be 8th grade course or modified summer school class – optional – instead of taking a summer school class
 - Have parent mentors
 - Parent panel
 - Small parent group
 - Student mentors
 - Specific LT sponsored FB page for incoming freshman – needs to be monitored by LT staff for accuracy and credibility
 - Process needs to start sooner, before 8th grade (6th or 7th)
 - Consolidation of communication, particularly for parents with students across grades/schools/campuses
 - Lack of collaboration re: special education students – list of resources
 - Articulation meetings with associate schools and LT re special ed
 - Peer mentor between HS and MS – clubs, organizations, advisory

- Share data with families as well (helps create better perception of overall situation vs. individual experience)
 - Need clarity on classes transferring credits (ie languages) from MS/JH to HS
 - Use RP! Introduces incoming freshmen to the practice/culture creating belonging before they even enter, empowers lower students as leaders (diverse group)
 - Peer buddy/mentor through homeroom/club, or community organization mentorship (PLCCA has a reimagine mentoring grant) soph-fresh, or senior – fresh or senior – 8th grade
 - Community resources
 - Guided support and encouragement for challenging academic levels
 - Transferring 8th grade credits like Spanish and math
 - How increasing this is transferred over and what it looks like/means
 - Counselors highlighting activities, clubs, events and community service etc.
2. In what ways do you think it would be beneficial for schools (LT & Associate Schools) to use the high school preparedness document with students/parents?
- Consider sharing the persistence data with parents and students all the way down to 6th grade
 - How is the document explicitly used during grade level discussion or school improvement planning at the associate school level?
 - Is there a way to build in some examples to further explain the document and ensure common understanding around it?
 - Placement letter – include more of the why the student was placed, include sample path for placements ie if a student is placed in Spanish II what will soph, jr. sr. classes be or math classes
 - Beginning of middle school – how are students placed into advanced math in feeder schools? Are parents aware of how these advance classes are beneficial
 - More transparency from HS placements
 - Decision map for placements – do I love this subject? Am I willing to put the effort in?
 - Create a document for parents and send over summer before their child starts 8th grade – like a cheat sheet for recommendations to help guide their student in 8th grade to freshman year
 - Bullet points were good
 - Share with parents it helps them understand what is expected. Condensed is better
 - 8th grade teacher could use in PT conferences
 - Is SEL included in this document?
 - Mirroring language and requirements among schools
 - Identifying the gaps
 - Explicitly teaching executive functioning skills such as note taking and test taking
 - Aligning work
 - Share info with parents in spring of 7th grade
 - Better/earlier alignment of school preparedness criteria to begin by 5th grade, specifically for curriculum.
 - Lt to lead/influence any curriculum changes at associate schools – coop style to spread out curriculum costs
 - For behavior/SEL pieces of document make sure self-advocacy is part of it.
 - Universal student records/tracking from K through 12. Better data for collaboration
 - Could there be differences for prep v accel v honors
 - Give preparedness questionnaire to middle school students and give feedback based out of the school preparedness document
 - Sharing (when it's available) the behavioral skills with parents

- Could these documents help some students transition from standards-based grading to HS grading (the district 102 does standards-based grading)
 - Should help development of curriculum in feeder schools
 - Preparing with time management/study habits – peer/upper classmates, what skills are needed most?
 - Reduce to a “1-page checklist” of what students will need (skills, connections, etc.)
 - Sharing data with families so they know their student’s unofficial placement
 - Not all issues are school related but individual
 - Highlighting a typical course progression by level (typical course timeline for advanced, excel etc.
 - A course graduation checklist like college
 - Tracking sibling’s ex attendance if one student is absent is their sibling in another school absent?
 - Side note on SEL – south is a lot to handle for kids coming in.
 - The culture is so different from the 8th grade culture – there are no older kids to set an example but there is still the mature behavior happening.
3. What important information do incoming students/families need to learn about/know about LT before incoming students start high school? What supports do students/families need during freshman year?
- Guided support/encouragement to challenge academic levels
 - Electives early on this is something that gets 8th graders excited.
 - Navigating the anxiety of the social aspect’s workload
 - Time management
 - Peer support groups relating to studying, time management, organization, etc.
 - Little fish big pond sense of belonging
 - Clubs following up and following through with freshmen
 - Explaining the access to social workers and counselors and explaining the importance of utilizing those resources
 - What different supports are available to encourage student growth and address inequity/achievement gaps
 - Belonging – safety – better learning: have more persistence from clubs and organizations that kids are signing up for. They don’t pursue themselves and then never are involved
 - How to get counsel/sw support (not for IEP or academics) many do not know who their SW is and or don’t know where to go to ask for help
 - Have a sporting event invitation to each school 8th graders to welcome them
 - School supplies info, locker info, basics for students “LT 101” or “Freshmen 101”
 - Q&A email box for students – questions from students to students – maybe student driven
 - Or FAQ – not academics but how do kids navigate the reality of LT
 - Expand curriculum path for more careers ex. Classes need to be taken if a student wants to be an engineer/teacher etc.
 - Parent mentors
 - Study skills for students and families
 - Managing
 - Know how to get help for your kid
 - Do a better job
 - Preview the clubs/extracurriculars/sports before the co-curricular event maybe in the spring of 8th grade it is very intimidating for the new freshmen at cocurricular night and kids often don’t get involved because of it
 - Suggestion – follow the clubs/activities/groups on social media for more exposure, encourage the parents and kids to do this

- Many activities may start in early summer (like poms)
- Centrally located info really helps
- Clear graduation requirements
- Understanding academic tracks to get placed in appropriate AP levels
- Understanding how clubs/activities/leadership roles are important for college apps and scholarships
- New format is awesome, I love the focused future freshman night. I feel well-versed in LT offerings and had community connections to help, yet I still felt overwhelmed as a parent. Having showcases and demos will really help kids understand their choices
- Knowing what to expect for AP specific classes and testing format
- Knowing nuts and bolts FAQ ex absences, making up work, bussing etc. homework
- Advice from students about class description beyond the LT catalog
- Additional information and clarity around grading practices because it is still fairly new.