

Lawrence School
School Council
MINUTES
January 5, 2010

Members Present: Anu Advani, Monica Crowley, Kelly Hardebeck, Rachel Katzmann, Stephanie Leung, Joanna Lieberman, Rick Rogers, Kate Silbaugh, Lora Smid.

Others Present: None

Timeline for Updating School Improvement Plan

Rick reviewed district expectations for developing new School Improvement Plan. Since our current plan is new and written as a three year plan, our new plan will primarily be an update. Rick asked members to begin thinking about possible new goals we may want to consider. We will begin to update status of current action items and discuss possible new goals in March/April.

Reading on Vision

Rick distributed a reading called “Visions of Good Schools” from Roland Barth’s book Improving Schools from Within. This reading will be read by faculty as preparation for January 19 faculty meeting on vision.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 2, 2010 – 8:00 am

Subcommittee Meeting Notes

Data Team Subcommittee

- Monica conducted an extensive inquiry since our last meeting to discover what system-wide literacy and math assessments take place town-wide. She created a flow chart demonstrating what assessments take place in each grade level, who administers the tests, and where the information is stored. Our next step is to discuss how we are using the information to inform teaching and learning practices. We also are interested in examining if the timing of particularly assessments in certain grade levels is optimal and consistent.
- Transitional Folders currently contain a placement sheet with academic info, behavioral information, and other relevant details (such as if a second language is spoken). We are currently working on re-organizing the folders. They are alphabetized for the whole school at this time; re-grouping them by homeroom might make the folders more user friendly.
- A next step would be surveying the faculty on how useful they feel the current assessments are, how different teachers are administering/grading the exams, and what changes/new practices would be preferable.

Vision Subcommittee

Revised plan for PTO meeting:

- Parents will be provided two samples visions written in style of Coddling and Kotter so they have something to respond and add to. These will be available on the PTO website prior to February PTO meeting.
- We will still ask parents to offer their own personal visions, but will use two prompts:
The kind of school I want my child to attend would....
When my child leaves this school, I would like him/her to have (learned, achieved)
- We will make copies of readings (Barth, Coddling and Kotter) available in the library for parents who want to go more into depth on the issue. (We had difficulty finding on-line resources that we could use with parents).
- Rick will write and Kelly will edit sample Coddling/Kotter visions following January 19 Faculty Meeting. These will be featured in the PTO Paper on February 2 and used at the February 9 PTO Meeting.

Safe, Just & Caring Community Subcommittee

Our goal for a “small win” this year: To set up a series of 3-4 meetings about a topic (such as attention issues, the transition to teen years, especially the social changes), for parents to share concerns.

The goal of these meetings would be to improve the common language and information between home and school, and to help parents make connections that might help them better address these issues in the future.

The general idea is to develop support/ affinity groups around issues in order to talk about various topics. The rationale is that all parents want to help their kids, but don't get the opportunity to share, look for help

Why would this benefit Lawrence?

- As PTO is like a parallel-type of meeting, but it is mostly business, and doesn't offer enough time to discuss things.
- Similar to Lincoln's “Tuesday's coffee (ask someone at Lincoln about the format- maybe Anu can ask a teacher that teaches at both schools?)

Steps to take:

1. Contact Shaina/Carol- (Kate will talk with Shaina). Ask about Parent Discussion Forum
2. Set up 3-4 meetings about a topic (actual dates, times, locations), and a format for each meeting. Maybe Guidance counselor could talk a few minutes to open up the meeting. Then, present it as an opportunity for parents to share concerns, what has worked, offer resources.

Potential Topics:

- transition to teen years
- ADHD (attention issues, especially differences between boys and girls)
- Kids and technology

- 3- Develop a forum/ routine/ protocol for the forum series.

If this worked well, we could use the similar format to develop similar affinity groups/ discussion forums. Hopefully, we would create a path/timeline/ format, and ask parents to take the initiative from there. After the 3-4 meetings, then there could be future meetings at the discretion/ interest of involved people.