

LCSD Parent Summit with the Board of Education
November 9, 2015, Lake County High School
Notes & Next Steps

On Monday evening, November 9, 2015 about 20 Lake County School District parents and community members joined the Lake County School Board at a parent summit. Amy Frykholm kicked off the meeting with a presentation of initiatives that schools are working on. Outgoing Board Member Megan Coffin; current Board Member Harmony Jump; student representative Emma Collins; and incoming Board Member Ellie Solomon also hosted the event. Director Frykholm explained the Board's new governance model, Results-Based Governance. [View Amy's presentation here.](#)

The district also distributed a "Who's Who" document to help parents navigate who to contact for what. We also introduced and distributed the [Power of Partnerships Parent Survey](#), which we are administering this month both on paper and [online](#) for the second year in a row.

Parents then had the opportunity to share ideas about what they would like to keep, scrap, adapt and imagine for our schools. There was also the opportunity to ask questions. Parent comments and questions, as well as the district's response and follow up, were as follows. Parent input is in black; **district response and next steps are in purple**:

Things the District should keep doing...

- Kudos to Principal Stephanie Gallegos for listening and responding to parents; she has been amazing.
- Muzzy is the right step in the direction of providing language learning at all grade levels.
- The pre-collegiate program; it's a great program.
- Parents observe that West Park seems well organized and teachers are engaged and excited. Keep it up!
- Thank you to the West Park teachers for supporting my individual student who has had some academic difficulties. My other students are very happy at LCIS.
- My third grader for the first time is very happy to go to school every day. Thank you!
- Wendy Scott is providing lots of information to new GT parents about what to expect.
- We appreciate that the district has listened to parent concerns and in many instances responded.
- We appreciate that the district, through CREW, is teaching students how to treat each other and communicate with each other. Particularly we appreciate this in an environment where we are losing communication skills by being glued to "our gadgets."
- Our graduates are being successful in college. They are prepared and had good experiences in LCSD that prepared them for post-secondary options.
- (Via email) A fantastic arts and drama program that supports amazing work such as the recent production of Beauty & the Beast!

Things the District should scrap...

Things the District should adapt...

- Provide parent training for support with Common Core standards and learning how to support students with homework.
Parents expressed that it can be challenging to help their students with homework when things like math are taught so differently now. We will work with schools to develop training opportunities to support parents with Common Core. District lead and contact for follow up: Kathleen Fitzsimmons
- Make sure that technology in schools is being used for education and the greater good. Manage cell phone usage in school / class.
We heard that there is pressure for kids to have and use cell phones, and that they (and other technology) can be a distraction from learning. We will work on enforcing appropriate use policies and monitoring the impact of technology on learning. District lead and contact for follow up: Principals
- Send out write up of parent summit meeting notes sooner.
On it! District lead and contact for follow up: Kate Bartlett
- Parking situation at the intermediate school. We need a better parking lot plan for drop off and pick up at LCIS.
Two LCIS parents have volunteered to work with Kate Bartlett, Todd Coffin and Stephanie Gallegos to observe and collect data, then brainstorm solutions to improve the flow of cars for efficiency and safety. Thank you! District lead and contact for follow up: Kate Bartlett
- Ensure that substitutes are well-trained.
This year, Kathleen Fitzsimmons and Stephanie Gallegos have both worked to expand training for substitutes in topics like classroom management. We have had one substitute return to us from another district because of the training we are offering. District lead and contact for follow up: Kathleen Fitzsimmons
- Consider a different Spanish-learning program for older kids (other than Muzzy).
Muzzy was a starting point for language-learning this year, and we will continue to evaluate other tools and curricula to support both English and Spanish learners as we head into next year. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman
- Enforce stricter safety policies about who can enter our schools and how freely. Ensure that with the addition of the School Based Health Center the high school knows who is coming in and out.
Student and staff safety is our number one priority. We have done and are doing many initiatives to improve safety in our schools this year, including replacing emergency radios, installing a system to locate 911 calls and rewriting our Emergency Operations Plan. Currently, we have video surveillance and a secure vestibule at LCHS. We are

looking into physical security enhancements at the other schools. In addition, we agree that welcoming environments and offices are key to school safety. We want to hear from you about how welcoming our schools are; please complete our parent survey! District lead and contact for follow up: Principals for school-specific issues, Kate Bartlett for district issues.

- Work with parents who have content knowledge to use them as experts in classroom learning. These parents could also provide career pathways direction.
Great idea and this is a central part of Expeditionary Learning. To facilitate this, we will develop a calendar of upcoming learning expeditions and needs of classroom experts, and will then publish this list to recruit community volunteers who could enhance student learning on these topics. District lead and contact for follow up: Kathleen Fitzsimmons.
- Set clearer expectations around ANET testing. Students felt like they didn't know how to take the test and thought it was confusing.
The Achievement Network (ANET) assessments we are using in grades 3-8th are definitely harder and more closely mirror our new state assessments (PARCC). We want kids to get accustomed to this, and it will take a little bit of time. Wendy also emphasized ANET assessments are not meant to be punitive, but rather to help students and teachers see, "Here's what we know and here's what we don't know." With no NWEA testing in the ANET grades, parents expressed some frustration at no longer having a mechanism to see how their child is stacking up. We understand this and hope that the PARCC student reports that will be released in the next few months will help. With regard to ANET, we will re-evaluate how and when we are communicating results to parents. Thanks for this great input. District lead and contact for follow up: Emily Bordogna & Wendy Wyman
- (Via email) Add signs to make it clear where to park at Lake County High School.
Yes, the new parking options at LCHS can be confusing, particularly to visitors. We will present this problem to the Building Operations Leadership Team at LCHS to see what solutions they can brainstorm. District lead and contact for follow up: Graciela Hess.
- (Via email) Add cameras or security measures at Lake County Intermediate School to ensure that students' belongings are kept safe.... Or use lockers.
Thanks for raising this concern. We will share it with LCIS administration so they can work on cultural norms and systems to prevent this from happening. District lead and contact for follow up: Stephanie Gallegos

Let's Imagine...

- Imagine a time when we are not just teaching our kids to read but actually building a community. Have heard about a community where higher level readers are going to work with younger learners, where kids are taking ownership of other kids.

With the implementation of CREW, we are already starting to see students hold each other accountable for the culture and climate in the school. We agree that expanding this to academic learning is a great opportunity. In fact, LCHS is currently launching an academic peer tutoring program where students can receive community service hours by performing as trained tutors for their peers. We welcome your continued ideas around this. District lead and contact for follow up: Principals

Questions

- How are we ensuring that Gifted and Talented students and higher performing students are moving forward as the district moves forward? Also one parent commented that there is a big difference between online school and LCHS and her daughter is overwhelmed by the pace.

Wendy Scott is our new Gifted and Talented Coordinator in the district, and she is currently focusing on updating goals for all GT students as well as supporting teachers in differentiating for these students. She is also organizing initiatives such as 7th and 8th grade GT students each taking on a special project, some with local experts. Last year, Lizz Holm and Melissa Hill led the creation of a GT Parent Board. Parents are wondering where the group has gone and would like to see it revived. We will pass this feedback along to Wendy Scott to be sure this becomes a priority. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Scott & Wendy Wyman

- How are we making sure that students, particularly K-2, are getting preventative support?

There are several initiatives that the district has undertaken with regard to prevention and serving the “whole child” to remain healthy. These include: West Park and LCIS both have full time counselors, which is unusual; all three schools have behavior support staff; we have a school psychologist for the district; breakfast in the classroom is served district wide; we have recently opened a School Based Health Center with mental health and medical services.

- If we have concerns about our child and we want to pursue extra support or ask about testing, what is the process?

We heard parents say that they don’t know how to seek this extra support or testing; we will clarify that process for each school and communicate it. Never hesitate to contact your child’s teacher as a first step. District lead and contact for follow up: Principals

- What have we heard from parents who have left our district?

In the spring of 2015, we completed a research study in which we collected data from families who have choiced out of our district. What we learned was that these choices are very individualized and factors include: academic needs of individual students; behavioral expectations for kids; special programs (dual language and arts); and teacher quality. Also because parents work often far away, parents sometimes want their kids closer during the school day. Learning styles is also a factor. We will continue to ask this

question so that we are improving our schools as much as possible in response to parent and student needs. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman

- What has the school board decided about students who are technically out of district, but want to participate in activities such as sports, drama, etc.?

By statute, students who are enrolled in another district can participate in interscholastic extra-curricular activities that are not offered in their district. Students who are enrolled in another district cannot participate in 21st Century programs because the grant dictates that the program is for kids enrolled in this district. The question of whether students can enroll in academic classes less than half time is a question we are currently working on. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman

- What about social promotion from grade to grade and holding kids back if they are not ready to move on? We want to make sure we don't just socially promote. We want to make sure we have really high level classroom experiences for kids.

Research doesn't support just holding kids back because unfortunately they often just end up having the same failed experience again. Therefore, we are working to implement a shorter cycle of identification and intervention so that we are solving problems before we have to retain students. However, retention can be and is a viable option for some students. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman

- Could we have an assessment acronym glossary and overview?

Yes! Please see the attached one page assessment overview. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman

- What are the district's biggest challenges?

We believe we are making a lot of progress with climate and culture in our schools. We knew we had to start with this work in order to create safe learning environments where students could take academic risks. Now, we are shifting our focus to achieving the academic results that will demonstrate that our students are able to do grade-level work successfully. This is our major focus for this year. District lead and contact for follow up: Wendy Wyman

- (After the meeting) How do we ensure that representation at events like this mirror our community population?

Ensuring that our schools and our events are inclusive and representative of our community and student population is a huge priority for our district. We welcome the community's ideas about how to improve our outreach and mechanisms for building our district community. We want all parents and families to know that we value and respect their input. Thanks for helping to spread this word! District lead and contact for follow up: Kathleen Fitzsimmons