

**Lawton Elementary School
CAS Team Meeting # 1
January 13, 2011 (Office Conference Room)**

Members

Present: Christine Helm, Susan Dowd, Lyon Terry, Peter Hubbard, Bryan Hester, Mark Strasburger, and Kimball Mullins.

Absent: Shirley Rybock and Kaycee Pomeroy

Others Present: Roger Daniels (SPS Advanced Learning Department Consulting Teacher)

Quorum Present: yes

Proceedings

Meeting called to order by Christine. Members signed in and signed up for meeting responsibilities (minutes taker (Kimball), snack (Christine), norm watcher (Lyon), timekeeper (Peter))

Christine welcomed the group, thanked everyone for their participation and reviewed the letter that went to the Lawton community explaining the CAS Team selection process and identifying team members.

I. Getting to know each other

Team members introduced themselves, identified a favorite elementary school teacher and expressed why they were interested in serving on the CAS Team.

II. Guiding Principles and Team Selection Process (Christine)

Christine reviewed the guiding principles outlined on the agenda (attached). Christine is accountable for the plan and wants it to be successful.

The team was assembled with the following consideration to allow for a balanced team: parents new to Lawton and parents who have been at Lawton longer, parents of children in primary and intermediate grades, parents with different opinions on the self-contained and cluster grouping models, staff with experience teaching advanced learners and staff with experience teaching grade level students. All chosen candidates expressed a desire to learn about the cluster grouping model. Meeting goals include: rich discussion, safe environment, acknowledging positive intentions, setting procedural guidelines, and a transparent process.

The team will make a report to the BLT at the conclusion of the project. The BLT knows of the CAS Team and agreed to the formation, but it is not a decision making body. According to the BLT Decision Making Matrix, class placement decisions rest with the Principal.

Christine sees Spectrum as a district program. The SPS Advanced Learning Department (including Robert Vaughan) is aware of the work of the Lawton CAS Team. Roger Daniels informed the team that program placement decisions and enrollment decisions are made by SPS Administration (Superintendent, CAO, and program placement team) and the School Board) with input from Dr. Vaughan and others in the Advanced Learning Department.

The intention of the team is not to explore many different options, but to review *The Cluster Grouping Handbook, How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All* and see how this model would work at Lawton. Arbor Heights and Hawthorne (other Seattle schools) are implementing cluster group models as an interim solution since both have brand new Spectrum programs with lower numbers of Spectrum students. The handbook was recommended by Robert Vaughan. Roger Daniels added that the handbook was purchased by the district as a professional development tool to help support staff at schools with newly developed ALO programs (Emerson, Dunlap, MLK, Leschi and West Seattle Elementary). Dr. Vaughan has given Lawton the authorization to investigate cluster grouping and will monitor results and student growth (compared to results/growth during the self contained/grouped model).

III. Establish Group Norms that govern individual and group behavior to keep us on track and successful

Team members discussed the norms as listed on the agenda. All the norms were kept on the list. "Stay on topic" was added as a norm. Team members are working on behalf of the whole school. Members of the Lawton community are welcome to pass on feedback and questions to any CAS Team member. Team members will bring that information to the next meeting and the discussion and/or answer will be in the minutes and available the next week. Team members agreed to follow this process and refrain from discussing meeting issues in the interim.

Minutes will be routed to the team by the Saturday following the meeting. Members will 'reply all' with comments. Final minutes will be voted upon at the following meeting and posted to the Lawton website by the following day and available for review by Lawton community members. Approved minutes will also be posted on the bulletin board at school. Kimball will request adding a CAS Team page to the website where all the agendas, minutes and related material can reside.

IV. Meeting Housekeeping

- Role signup for next meeting: (1/20/10): Norm watcher – Susan; Snack – Bryan; Timekeeper – Peter; Notes – Kimball
- Calendar meeting dates:
 - Jan. 20th CAS Team meeting (3:30 – 5:00; office conference room)
 - Jan. 27th CAS Team meeting (time TBD; potential school visit)
 - Feb. 3rd CAS Team meeting (3:30 – 5:00; office conference room)
 - Feb. 10th CAS Team meeting (time TBD; potential school visit)
 - Feb. 15th CAS Team meeting (3:30 – 5:00; office conference room)

(note: date change to Tues 2/15 because of the Thurs. 2/17 World Cultures conflict)

- Feb. 24th small CAS Team Meeting (because of Winter Break)

Other follow up and important dates:

Mar. 7th BLT Meeting (CAS Team Report and Recommendations)

Mar. 10th Community Meeting

Mar. 15th – 31st SPS Open Enrollment period

Please email Christine if you are unable to make a meeting.

- Reading Assignment: Read Chapters 1 and 2 of *The Cluster Grouping Handbook, How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All*
- Suggested Predictable Agenda: The team decided on the meeting agenda format that we will follow.
 - > Review and Approve Minutes
 - > Norms Review
 - > Word on the Street
 - > Book Discussion & related activity
 - > Next Steps

Word on the Street is an opportunity for team members to report feedback regarding what we have heard from and what is being discussed by the community. It is also the time for team members to bring questions from the community back to the group.

V. Issues (Define the problem)/Goals

- Lack of equity in classroom placements
- Feeling that classrooms are unequal (feeling from parents; unequal visually, behaviorally)
- Keeping the same social groups – kids are always in the same classes; some kids feel like they won't see a friend again;
- Students in the Spectrum program know who will be in their class and who their teacher will be the following year, whereas non-Spectrum students do not. Spectrum students have been observed discussing this with each other and it creates a perception of special treatment
- Some kids work well together, some don't; current Spectrum model limits options to make social and academic groupings that work productively.
- Limits flexibility when forming balanced inclusion classrooms
- Lawton has a wide range of kids (academically, behaviorally, developmentally, motivation) to place in the appropriate class
- District wide, growth of Spectrum class often happens between 2nd and 3rd grade, and this has often been the case at Lawton as well (more parents test, more kids move to the Spectrum designated school)
- Math and Reading will still be delivered at an accelerated pace (via Walk to Math and Differentiated Reading. Possible implantation of a Walk to Reading program)
- Kids who do above grade level work, but who aren't designated Spectrum, often balance out the non Spectrum classes (they still do walk to math); with less classroom placement flexibility, those students are divided into smaller groups to balance classrooms, which dilutes that grouping as well. Want them to achieve in all areas.

- Spectrum is a SPS defined program, with a specific deliver model. Belief that changing the Spectrum delivery model makes it an ALO. Concerns about rigor.
- Parents made conscious decisions on school choice based on presence of the Spectrum program as defined by the district. Feel like the rug is being pulled out from underneath them.
- 40% of Spectrum students live outside their current reference area boundaries. (i.e. Lawton is not their reference school)
- Some families are considering leaving Lawton because of Spectrum changes
- Lawton has never had enough students at any grade level to completely fill a classroom with Spectrum only students. It has been and is close to having those numbers, but has not done so in the last five years, if ever."
- Lawton has never had a Spectrum waitlist

Goals:

Team goals not set yet. Next meeting goals: minutes out by Saturday, reply all w/ edits.

Meeting adjourned: 5:00 pm

Minutes submitted by: Kimball Mullins