

BLT Minutes
December 6, 2010

In Attendance

Corrie Kahn, Lyon Terry, Christine Helm, Rich Connor, Margaret Bolger, Bobby Mullins, Amy Efroymsen, Carrie Wheeler, Linda Cutler, Sue Allen, Ovidio Todoran.

Celebration

IPad Pilot project is rolling out. 5 iPads were delivered on the to the school thanks to a generous donation from a small group of parents. The goal is to put these machines with downloaded education applications into the hands of students who don't have ready access to technology. Protocols for this program are still to be worked out by Lily and Lyon (and possibly the tech team) to ensure that their use is optimized.

Question posed by Amy: Are there families at Lawton who need a computer in the home? Some parents are connected to companies who could donate them. The district would not process and accept older donated machines but if we had a list of families who needed them, the school could be a conduit. Christine has done this type of thing before. Staff will survey students to see where the need is and get back to Amy.

Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)-Professional Development Plan

The current plan for professional development (PD) came from a staff priority list created at the end of the 09-10 school year. PD is scheduled for all Wednesday meetings and early release days from now until June. Some meetings are whole staff focused on differentiation in reading, writing, math, and anti-bullying. There are other meetings, called Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), in which small groups of staff get together, look at data, decide on SMART (Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely) goals and strategies to meet them. Then a month later the staff return to evaluate data and progress. Teachers are evaluating student writing using a common writer's workshop rubric 3 times throughout the year. It was suggested that the staff use a common rubric from year to year in order in order to assess writing.

Although this PD calendar/plan is not public at this time, the PD is reflected in each of the C-SIP categories.

Christine reported that she updated the CSIP to include both goals focused on reducing the achievement gap and goals focused on improving the learning of all students. This shows expectations for all students at the school. The staff also needs to revisit the current version.

Community Outreach

Question posed: How should the school connect to and communicate with families, particular those with students who struggle?

Strategies in use this year to target students who struggle are:

- “All Day Student Intervention Team (SIT)” meetings in which all of the specialists heard from each teacher about the students who struggle academically and socially. Plans were developed for each individual student that included:
- Read Naturally
- Afterschool Reteach
- Tutors for reading (K-2) and math (3-5)
- LAP (Learning Assistance Program) support from Kathy Dial
- Kathy Dial reducing math class sizes in and grade
- Volunteer coordinator

We will use the MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress) test results to more closely monitor how these interventions are working. Our goal is to raise student test scores over the year.

Other things we could do that were discussed include:

- Math Night was cancelled last year. Could we promote and bring in more staff to help parents understand Everyday Math better?
- After school transportation, “late bus,” is not possible due to lack of funds.
 - Amy and Corrie will look into how to coordinate carpools for kids who might not otherwise have a ride home on the days when other parents are here. Can we put a check off box on the application: “Willing to give ____ students a ride home after the club if necessary.”
- Evening or morning computer lab open hours for students and parents to come and use the lab.
 - There is a blocker on our Internet so we could man this with a community volunteer up until 8:00 p.m. at least once a week.
 - Lily will ask the staff if anyone is interested for a morning shift.
 - Lyon will contact Helen Pitts about the possible recruitment of a community volunteer to do this in the evening.

Spectrum

Question posed: Where are we on this issue? Did the staff discuss it?

Christine apologized for a conversation in which she engaged with Mark Strasburger about spectrum in which she prematurely indicated a decision that was not in proper context.

She recognizes that this is a heartfelt and important issue to the community and the staff.

| The staff did have a discussion on Dec. 1st and will discuss it again on Dec. 8th.

Deadlines to make a decision are: K open houses in February and school choice applications in the spring of 2011.

There was a discussion about the anger and emotion this issue has generated due to a number of factors:

- Lyon Terry and Sue Allan meeting with Susan Enfield and Bob Vaughan with the staff proposal last spring.
- Lack of consistent leadership in the building to communicate school goals, philosophy and a mission statement.
- Lack of communication from staff about philosophy of instruction.
- Parents are concerned about not knowing if and how their students are challenged.
- How do parents evaluate that their child is being challenged?
- Some people feel their voice has not been heard.

Our Decision Making Matrix does not specifically address programs because those are district policy decisions. Many feel that the district has let us down on this issue. Christine pointed out that we have never had fully self-contained classrooms at Lawton and are unlikely to have such given our cluster and the new assignment policy.

Community Forum

Christine is no longer meeting with individual parents about this issue but instead is planning to host a community forum in order to communicate at the same time with the whole community. (i.e. We all care about challenging all students.) She has contacted an outside/non-biased facilitator for this meeting.

We don't want to host a circus so small group discussions, having a facilitator, respecting agreed upon norms and starting with statements of agreement would be positive.

It was thought that the meeting would be a net-positive if structured well. It would let everyone get ideas out there, but all present will still need to know where the decision lies with the school and the district.

At the Nov BLT meeting we agreed the BLT does not decide on Spectrum(or any curriculum) delivery. This decision rests with the principal, with staff and BLT input.

November BLT minutes were approved.

Agenda Items for next month

- How do we communicate with constituents about our work on the BLT?
- Writer's workshop.
- Developing a plan for allocating professional development dollars.