

BLT Minutes
January 3, 2011

In Attendance

Amy Efroymsen, Corrie Kahn, Margaret Bolger, Bobby Mullins, Carrie Wheeler, Rich Conner, Christine Helm, Melissa Denke, Lily Ulmer, Lyon Terry, Linda Cutler, Kelsey Fatland

Celebrations

Christmas Tree Fundraiser was a success. The PTA ordered 50 less trees and sold all trees. Raised more money than last year.

There was a good turn-out for the Community Meeting that was held on Monday, December 13. Christine Helm was pleased with the number of parents and community members that attended and that so many staff members were present and spoke at the meeting.

First day back from Winter Break went smoothly and there was good energy and an excited buzz in the air.

Ms. Hensley's class and Ms. Rybock's class will attend a Jean-Michel Cousteau talk at Benaroya Hall on February 2nd.

Lyon reported that Don Brown (a Lawton parent) has volunteered to supervise the computer lab two nights a week so it will be available for parents and students to use during those after school hours. After their next meeting about the computer lab, Lyon agreed to put out a flyer advertising the hours the computer lab will be open.

Approval of Minutes from December meeting

Corrie motioned to approve the minutes and Christine seconded.

After School Clubs and Volunteer Carpools

Corrie is researching the possibility of parents providing a carpool service so more students can attend the afterschool Homework club. Corrie reported that she had approached Helen Pitts about the idea of having parents help volunteer to drive carpools so that all students who have been encouraged to attend the after school homework club/reteach program can attend without having to worry about transportation. Helen's concerns are about the district's legal ramifications and liability issues. Corrie also reported that Ms. Dial was very interested in this idea and she will check into who is not currently coming to the afterschool homework club/reteach and see if it is related to lack of transportation or not.

If it is too logistically difficult to use volunteer drivers, ideas were discussed on how we could make it more informal using a parent to parent poster, for example, offering rides home for students.

Christine said that she would check with the Seattle Public Schools Legal Department about the volunteer drivers idea.

BLT Communication with the Lawton Staff and Community

It has been noted that communication between the BLT and the Lawton community needs to be improved. Bobby Mullins will check that all minutes from BLT meetings are posted on the Lawton website (after they have been approved.) In addition, the binder that holds the hard copies of all BLT meeting minutes will be stored in an easily accessible location (perhaps in the Staff Lunch Room/PTA room.)

Margaret Bolger also offered, as the Community Liaison, to post the most recently approved minutes on a bulletin board in the hallway. Margaret attended the Fall General PTA meeting to introduce the BLT, its purpose and the members. She offered to attend the Spring General PTA meeting as well to give a more specific report on items discussed at BLT throughout the school year.

Christine emphasized that the Staff representatives on BLT need to report back to their constituents and ask for feedback and issues to be addressed at future meetings in return.

The parent representatives on BLT all hope to better represent their respective grade levels or special groups of students. Ideas were discussed on how best to report items addressed at the BLT meetings to the entire Lawton community and in return how to collect concerns and feedback.

BLT members will look into emailing their respective constituents with a link to the most recently approved minutes and with the next month's BLT meeting agenda in hopes of gathering issues, concerns and/or feedback.

Bobby will email the upcoming month's BLT meeting agenda to Christine for approval. The proposed agenda will then be forwarded to the BLT members who will distribute it to their constituents via email in hopes of receiving feedback on the issues to be addressed or other concerns that may not be on the agenda. All feedback should be returned two weeks prior to the next BLT meeting. (We meet the first Monday of every month.) Each meeting will end with time for BLT members to report any concerns, issues, celebrations, or other feedback received from their respective communities.

Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

Question posed by Bobby: The CSIP focuses entirely on academics and more specifically on closing the achievement gap, but how can we include the valuable enrichment programs in Music, World-Culture, Art, P.E., etc. into the CSIP as a way to document the schools commitment to these programs?

The discussion that followed focused on whether or not CSIP is the best venue for that. CSIP is a very structured district document that is geared toward SMART goals that can be measured through data collection and analysis. Lily reported that the CSIP form might be changing again in February based on her most recent EdTech meeting. Christine will look into how to either add these community/enrichment goals into CSIP or how to create a different document that will clearly state Lawton's commitment to these programs.

Melissa brought up the point that PTA almost entirely funds these enrichment programs and that the PTA should be listed as a partner in the CSIP. Christine said she will add the PTA as a partner under each of the CSIP goals.

In addition, there was a discussion about how best to align the staff's funding priorities and the PTA funding priorities. Last year, Melissa was invited to be part of the school's budget planning meeting and would like to be involved again this year.

Writer's Workshop and/or consistent Writing Curriculum

Question was posed by Bobby: Last year money was allocated to roll out Writer's Workshop; what did the staff decide? What is planned for the writing curriculum across grade levels?

Carriereported that Cathy Bledsoe presented the staff with an opportunity to adopt Writer's Workshop last year, but it was presented as an all or nothing deal. Some staff were hesitant about the parameters of the program and so the discussion was effectively tabled. Christine plans to approach the staff again about Writer's Workshop.

Decisions about curriculum are not within the BLT domain.

Challenge All Students Team (CAST)

After recent discussion with the Latwon staff, Bob Vaughn, from the district's Advanced Learning Department, has included Lawton as one of the sites in the district where teachers will be trained on how to implement "cluster grouping." Christine would like to form an advisory team of Parents and Teachers that would do a book study on the book chosen by the Advanced Learning Department: "The Cluster Grouping Handbook How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All and discuss how Lawton should implement the "cluster grouping" model in order to best meet the needs of all Lawton students.

Christine wants this CAS team to reflect the diverse Lawton community and will include both Staff and Parents. Staff should email Christine to volunteer and Christine will look into getting clock hours for those volunteers. Parents who are interested will be asked to fill out an application. Christine will create an application in order to help her select a diverse and committed group of parents for

the team. Christine anticipates having the application ready by Wednesday, January 5th in time to be included in the newsletter. She will also post it on the website. The deadline to return these applications will be Tuesday, January 11. The meetings for the CAS team will be every Thursday afternoon starting Thursday, January 13.

Plan for allocating Professional Development dollars

Christine reported that she has enough money in the school budget for 1.5 days of sub time for each staff member. She wants to create a process by which she can more equitably distribute professional development dollars among the staff.

Melissa proposed that perhaps the PTA could build up a Professional Development line item to support the staff.

Proposed Agenda Items for February BLT meeting

- Welcome and Celebrations
- Approve Minutes from January's Meeting
- Update on CAS team
- Initial Budget report
- Update on Documenting School Goals (both academic and enrichment)
- Everyday Math Informational Night with SSIA
- Follow Up on After School Activities Transportation
- Feedback/Concerns collected from the Lawton community

Kelsey motioned to adjourn the meeting and Amy seconded.