

**Lawton Elementary School
CAS Team Meeting # 7
March 3, 2011 (Office Conference Room)**

Members

Present: Christine Helm, Susan Dowd, Lyon Terry, Peter Hubbard, Bryan Hester, Mark Strasburger, Kimball Mullins and Roger Daniels (SPS Advanced Learning Department Consulting Teacher)

Absent: Shirley Rybock, Kaycee Pomeroy

Quorum Present: yes

Proceedings

Meeting called to order by Christine. Members signed in.

I. Review Norms

Christine read and reviewed the meeting norms.

II. Approve Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously as edited.

III. "Word on the Street"

A team member reported a conversation with a parent who has decided to leave Lawton and pursue advanced learning education options elsewhere in the SPS. This parent also reported 3 others in the class who were making a similar decision (a move to another SPS or private school.)

A parent has asked about why there was no representation on the committee for Special Education students and asked how grouping will affect Special Education students. Many Special Education students at Lawton are twice-exceptional, meaning they have both gifted and a Special Education designations. Those students will be placed along with gifted (Group 1) students. Special Education students range in ability and will also receive intentional classroom placement, like all students.

IV. Proposal

Christine distributed a copy of the Challenge All Students at Lawton Draft Proposal which outlines the Problem Statement, Draft Plan, Commitments and 3 Options. This plan was presented by Christine at the staff meeting on March 2nd and staff was asked to vote on the three options presented.

The CAS Team discussion of the Draft Proposal included the following;

- Include the terminology Walk to Math and Walk to Reading since staff, students and families are familiar with those terms (ability grouping for Math was included in the proposal but did not use the term Walk to Math)
- There was additional discussion of which students are in Group 1 and Group 2. The SPS has a definition for gifted and Lawton will use that designation for Group 1 students.
- Is the proposal aligned with what staff had intended when they presented the petition for a change at Lawton? There will have to be grouping of some kind in order to meet SPS guidelines, and cluster grouping was the model that Robert Vaughan authorized. The staff vote is due to be counted on March 4th, so we can not say if cluster grouping is what the staff intended for change.
- Does the cluster grouping model create more lopsided classrooms? Are we exchanging one problem for another? In some ways it will be easier to deliver Special Education services if there are several students in one classroom.
- Does this resemble tracking? No because placement in a group is fluid and does not stay with the student for the duration of their time at school. The grouping classification is intact during the school year only, then staff evaluate where that student should be classified for the following year.
- Some maintain that how you group students is secondary to the quality of teaching. The way teachers deliver instruction and the way teachers differentiate instruction is more important than the class configuration of students.

The group also discussed the evaluation and reporting component of a change to cluster grouping and how that data will be compiled and how outcomes will be reported back to the community. Robert Vaughan spoke to this in his email and it is important for all families to see how this program is functioning. This year will be a baseline and Vaughan will compare it to next year to measure progress using the MAP scores. There will be some kind of communication/report back to the community, but we're not sure what that will look like

A member proposed having the CAS Team meet periodically (monthly, quarterly) to measure outcomes, discuss successes, address opportunities for improvement, troubleshoot challenges and provide a forum for communication to and from the Lawton community. This was received openly and thought to be a good idea.

A change to cluster grouping is asking teachers to do things differently. Teachers already differentiate, but this will be enhanced differentiation.

The team agreed that the messaging part of the change to cluster grouping is important.

V. Plan for BLT Meeting

The CAS Team did not reach consensus in supporting the move to, and implementation of, cluster grouping. Members who are willing and able were asked to attend the BLT meeting on 3/7 in order to answer questions as to the process. Christine will report on the team's work. She will also have the results of the vote and will present the proposal to the BLT.

VII. Additional Discussion:

Roger provided more background on the Fall MAP scores of Spectrum students at Lawton. District-wide Spectrum students score 95% and Lawton Spectrum students scored between 95% and 96%. This is on the Fall, 2010 MAP.

Christine reported on her conversation with Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles creators of the cluster grouping model. Identifying students through the CoGAT is significant. Lawton would adapt our definition of the gifted cluster(s) to make sure it aligns with the SPS definition (Spectrum.) Dina has grown the gifted program in her school district and her experience is: with cluster grouping, students have more access to gifted education; more students have tested into the gifted cluster and once cluster grouping was rolled out, Dina found there was less labeling and classroom placement was more seamless.

Christine has arranged for Dina to come to Lawton for Staff Professional Development on March 18th.

VIII. Additional Meeting and Scheduling:

The March 3rd was our final meeting.

BLT Meeting is March 7th

The Community Meeting is tentatively set for Tuesday, March 15th.

Meeting adjourned: 5:20 pm

Minutes submitted by: Kimball Mullins