

LAKE FOREST HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, September 6, 2011, 8:30 a.m.

Present: Dr. Harry Griffith, Jay Hoffmann, Jim Thiel, Jim Sullivan, Jen Knight, Beth Coughlin, Anne Sorensen, Sharon Golan, Monty Edson, Nicki Snoblin

- I. Opening of school
 - a. *Reorganization:* With Mike Cyrus having left, his duties have been redistributed to Harry, Jay, Jim S., and Jen. Merry Quinn's duties have been picked up largely by Jim T. Jim S. is taking the lead on changing teacher evaluations to comply with new laws. Harry will provide a detailed District 115 organizational chart.
 - b. *Enrollment:* September 1 enrollment numbers were presented. There are 70 students new to the district this year.
 - c. *Class size:* A report of class sizes on day 6 was presented. Official figures will be generated from class sizes on October 1; at that time a report will be prepared showing comparative class sizes for the last 20 years to demonstrate the trends over time.
 - d. *Link Crew/STS (Student to Student):* The STS program, in which students volunteer to help orient new students, etc., has existed for 10 years. The Link Crew is in its second year and works with incoming freshmen. The emphasis of Freshman Orientation Day has shifted from the logistics being a high school student to understanding the culture of the school. The program is student-run and involves 100 upperclassmen, who organized a clap-in on orientation day. Jen will present on these topics at the September board meeting.
 - e. *Teacher Evaluations:* Jim S. will be responsible for all non-tenured teacher evaluations and has been analyzing the impact of two new state laws, last year's Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) and this year's SB7. A joint committee (teacher and administration) must be in place by December 1 to begin development of a compliance plan and will have 180 days to complete this task. Under PERA, 50% of a teacher's evaluation must be based on student performance and growth, but the parameters are undefined. Compliance dates are partly dependent on the state providing sustainable funding for the program, but the first possible year for PERA evaluation is 2016. Effective immediately, evaluations must be four-tiered (excellent, proficient, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory) instead of the current three-tiered system (excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory). This change was made in response to an ISBE study of three large districts, where 93% of the teachers received excellent ratings. The state is to provide a default compliance plan by September of 2012, which will be implemented if the joint committee fails to develop a plan within the 180 day time period.
 - f. *Polzin Services:* Jim S. reported that consultant Jim Polzin has been working with the faculty for the past few years in developing a mentoring program and best practices for classroom teaching; 60 teachers in 4 years have volunteered for the year-long program. Mr. Polzin is studying our past evaluation practices and will advise on the new process.
- II. Tentative 2011-12 board reports schedule
 - a. *September:* Jen will report on the emotional wellness initiative and its shift from a district initiative to a part of the underlying culture of the school that focuses on meeting needs as they arise and giving students leadership roles. There are metrics available, such as the School Climate and Culture Inventory, which is taken by all students, most faculty, and as many parents as will respond.
 - b. *October:* 2010-11 End-of-Year Education Report; Jim T. will present on student services/college counseling.
 - c. *December:* Dr. Julie Cooley will give the Student Assessment Report.

III. Education Reports

- a. *Student Services Department:* Jim T. reported that the department has been busy with schedule changes and holding the first senior seminar of the year, with the first senior parent seminar set for September 8. Schedule change requests are now handled by individual counselors. Student and parent survey results indicate a need for better communication with parents. All counselors will participate in parent seminars over the course of the year. Parent meetings are held in the evening with a recap the following morning. Parents are kept in touch by email. Easier ways of accessing student services information on the website are being investigated. For the open house on September 13, all counselors will come in a half-hour early to meet with freshman parents. Last year's college report shows good acceptance rates.
- b. *NSSSED:* Julie has been meeting with special needs parents and is also now on the NSSSED finance committee. Monty is to attend NSSSED board meetings. NSSSED will be conducting a cost study. District 115 currently has only two students in the NSSSED educational program and six in the transition program. Harry is considering the possibility of renting space at Gorton Community Center to house our own transition program. We would still be able to place students with NSSSED as needed. In summary, we are halfway through an 18-month process, we are still studying the possibilities, and Julie is keeping in touch with parents.
- c. *2020 Vision:* This project, which started last year, is led by a nine-member super-committee from all three districts as well as subcommittees for each school. The three realms they are examining are (1) personal and civic responsibility, (2) learning and thinking skills, and (3) communication literacies. They are currently researching the feasibility of e-textbooks and digital course materials, articulating 21st-century learning among the districts, Google apps/cloud computing, and gathering and sharing data with other districts, including distance learning. Examples of learning and thinking skills are curiosity (scientific inquiry), problem solving, and creativity. The first step is to define the framework, and then each department will be phased in. Jim S. will report on this to the board at a later time.
- d. *District Dashboard:* Each of the committees will be looking at the dashboard on the district website to evaluate the data presented relative to the committee's goals. Education Committee members were asked to review the dashboard before the next meeting and bring their thoughts on the current content and any ideas for more or different data. Monty suggested that the dashboard should be designed with deliberation to reflect what we are trying to accomplish with each of the district's goals.

IV. Next meeting: Monday, October 3, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at East Campus.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF EDUCATION-RELATED REPORTS

Topic	Month Presented	
	Education Committee	Board
Emotional wellness (Jen)	September	September
Dashboard discussion	October	
2010-11 End-of-Year Education Report	October	October
2011-12 Goals and Objectives	October	
Student Services (college report, counseling) (Jim T.)	September	October
Student Assessment Report (Julie)	November	December
Workshop on 2012-13 Goals and Objectives	January	February