



LA CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 101 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**BOARD/STAFF LINKAGE MEETING
MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 11, 2022

3:15 PM

MS Commons

Board Members Present: Todd Jones, Wendy Chord, Eric Lindberg, Win Muffett, Craig Whited

Board Members Absent:

Superintendent: Peter Rosenkranz

Administrators: Michelle O’Neil, Greg Hall, Dave McIntosh, Lauri Landerholm, Matt Johnson

Staff and Guests: Nicole Andrell, Andrea Austad, Denelle Eiesland, Scott Holt, Kristy Schneider, Brian Clegg, Sara Clegg, Andrew Helm, Kathy Griffith, Karlene Kitchel, Joni Hancock, Daniel Thiessen, Connie Majors, Kellie Braaten, Carrie Cablay, Warren Westerberg, Kate Denney, Tammy Brightbil, Stacey Roy, Todd Brothers, Becky Rembisz, Miranda Gray, Kathy Bounds, Stephanie Holmes, Megan Volkman, Meredith Ott, Pete Poppert, Kim Hollopeter

Minutes taken by: Tammy Lichliter

Mr. Jones called the meeting to order with the flag salute at 3:17 p.m. He then opened the floor to staff to bring comments or concerns to the board. Staff brought the following concerns/comments to the board:

Phones- HS Teacher said that the students are “checked out” and on their phones constantly. She said that she surveyed parents and most are for teachers taking the students’ phones away while they are in class. Teachers cannot compete with cell phones when trying to teach. Is there a way for the board to do something about this?

Mr. Jones said that there is a policy that states that teachers can make the decisions in their own classroom regarding phones. If the teacher preference is to not allow phones in their classroom, the board will back that teacher. The teacher replied that then it is not consistent with teachers across the board and that makes it a struggle. Is there a way to survey teachers regarding having phones in class to see if the policy should be changed? Another staff member said that the policy regarding personally owned digital devices not being used in class should also be updated. It should state that school issued Chromebooks are the only devices are allowed for use by students in class.

Para Staffing – ES teacher thanked administration for expanding ways of finding recess aides/paras at the elementary school. She added that the help makes a huge difference, but that help is still needed especially where reading programs are considered. She said that parent volunteers cannot

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do it as training is needed.

Mr. Rosenkranz said that after the levy passed, the district tried to find staff to fill open positions. MS had to shuffle schedules after school had started, which was not ideal. Classified staffing is based on the prototypical model, so the district has to budget accordingly for them. He added that the district is hiring 2 long term subs to fill gaps where subs are needed and the HR Department will continue to try to find subs to add to the sub list and fill open positions.

Preferred Pronouns – MS staff member commented that some people were upset about students being asked what their preferred pronouns are. He said that it gave the opportunity for all students to have their preferred pronouns used, not just a few. The worry is that kids could be left out if it is left up to the students to bring this information up. The staff member added that some kids were happy that it was brought up. Statistically lgbtq kids have a high rate of depression and suicide.

Mr. Rosenkranz said that he is still processing the pronoun comments. He said that this issue is something to be aware of and that some parents were caught off guard as they think it promotes counter culture or is political in some way. We as educators need to stay in our lane of serving kids. There has to be a middle ground. Kids have the ability to identify themselves. More conversation needs to happen on this subject. He added that the intent was good to try to better serve kids by calling them what they want to be called, but how do we navigate this and make it better for kids. He said that the district needs to have more conversations regarding this subject on how to handle this going forward.

Mr. Jones said that the health curriculum requires parental notification before you discuss issues with kids. If a teacher feels the maturity level of the class is up to the conversation, then parents should be aware of what you are discussing in class. Parents wonder why something is discussed in class when it has nothing to do with the subject being taught. He said that he leans toward parental notification for transparency. Mr. Jones later added that teachers need to be careful to not become too close to kids. It is a very dangerous place to be, especially when talking about sexual or gender issues. Another issue is Cispus. He is almost certain that Cispus would go away if parents were informed that boys can be housed with or use the same showers/bathrooms as girl students and vice versa. It is state law.

Mr. Muffett added that transparency is the issue here. Parents feel that teachers are keeping secrets from the parents. NY Times article said that 70 percent of parents are against gender being taught in school. The board does not want something to be hidden from parents. Parents want to have a relationship with their kids' teachers, but they don't want to be caught off guard. You open yourself up to parent anger by keeping something from the parent. Also before discussing issues in your classroom, be diligent. Ask yourself "Would my behavior be considered transparent?" Perception can be different and teachers need to be careful.

A HS staff member said that she surveyed students on google classroom which parents have access to. She added that she did not get any emails regarding the subject. This was done to support kids and prevent embarrassment on the teachers' part so she wouldn't use the wrong pronoun for a student.

Behavior Issues – An ES staff member said that behavior issues have risen considerably in the classroom especially in grades K-2. There are some serious student needs. She does not know how to support those kids’ emotional needs. She needs to be able to teach the other students in her classroom without the constant behavior issues coming from a few students.

Mr. Rosenkranz said that the district has to work under the restriction on sending kids home based on WA state law. We are not alone on this issue.

Mr. Jones asked about the SEL specialist at the ES and how that went. Joni said that when she was in that position, she worked with parents. Some parents need help in the area of discipline. Parents need classes or support groups on how to deal with behavior issues. It was her goal to do that, but the position was cut.

Late Start Wednesday – Why is this being discussed now?

Mr. Rosenkranz said that the district is processing information being brought forward from concerned citizens. The strategic plan was discussed at a meeting last week. The question is when the work is being done. Parents want kids in front of teachers, which is not a bad thing, but we also need to think about quality vs. quantity. Wednesdays give time for collaboration and professional development discussions. People are starting to see the value to late start Wednesdays when they hear about what is being done.

Mr. Whited added, “How can we as a group help with learning loss?” He said that one piece is Wednesdays. Is there a better use of the time? We need to listen to all stake holders and talk about what is best for kids. It is not only one person that is bringing this concern forward.

A HS teacher added that sometimes the best time for teachers to meet is in the morning because their afternoons each week are filled with parent meetings, helping students after school, or having to be in IEP or other meetings after school.

Another concern is that parents need daycare options for late start Wednesdays as the ASK program is currently full.

Mr. Jones thanked staff for attending and for their comments/concerns.

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

As this was a workshop of the board, no action was taken.

Board Secretary- Peter Rosenkranz

Board Chair – Todd Jones

Board Member- Wendy Chord

Board Member- Eric Lindberg

Board Member – Win Muffett

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