



LA CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 101 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**BOARD WORKSHOP
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, March 14, 2023
7:00 PM
HS Library**

Board Members Present: Eric Lindberg, Win Muffett, Dorri Oldham, Craig Whited

Board Members Absent:

Superintendent: Peter Rosenkranz

Administrators: Matt Johnson, Greg Hall, Michael Nolan, Nancy Carner, Dave McIntosh, Gary McGarvie, Carrie Lindsey, Matt Johnson, Matt Cooke, Michelle O'Neil

Staff and Guests: Connie Majors, Nicole Andrell, Dave Holmes, Terresa Holmes, Amanda Miller

Minutes taken by: Tammy Lichliter

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. It was an informal meeting as it was intended to be an Administrative Linkage for members of the cabinet team to tell the board what is going well in their areas and what could be improved.

Mr. Rosenkranz, Superintendent, started by saying that after the student linkage held in February, the feedback was that the students felt heard. He is thinking about adjusting the next staff linkage to be in the same format of small group discussions.

Greg Hall, 3-5 Principal, started off the discussions by informing the board that he and Michelle O'Neil have changed the Highly Capable Program identification process. After doing some research at other districts, they found that they could make the process more efficient. Second graders will all be screened to see if they qualify. This screener takes 30 minutes to an hour. The old process of screening students used to take all day. We want all students to be in an environment that is best for them, so identifying them early makes sense..

Mike Nolan, PK-2 Principal, said that the reading program at the elementary school has been a real highlight this year. Kids are making progress and are excited when they go to the program. Building leadership meetings are expanding attendance. Discussions include what professional development topics they would like to see. Transitional kindergarten is a work in progress. The program started on January 12. The program is being adjusted along the way when they find something that is needed (like progress or report cards for upcoming conferences). This program is focused on preparing kids for what is ahead. Mr. Muffett commented that seeing the reading program in progress (at student linkage) was the best part of his day. The kids were focused and

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Minutes are draft until signed by the board.

you could see learning taking place.

Dave McIntosh, Middle School Principal/Associate Principal, discussed that 98% of students are meeting promotional standards. Only eight students did not meet standards for the first semester. For those kids, a plan will be developed with students that will be shared with parents to help them in their learning. He said that he was at the Student Leadership Conference the same day as the student linkage. He was impressed that our middle school students got up and spoke at the conference.

Matt Johnson, High School Principal, said that being a new principal this year, he and Gary are still learning and building relationships. He is pleased to be here and said that La Center is a special community. Seeing potential for improvement is a good thing. They have been talking about the future and are looking forward to seeing the positives that will come of it. Students want more A/P and college prep classes and they are planning for that. Currently, the freshmen are doing forecasting using the Xello program. The program coordinates with their high school and beyond plan. The administrators are able to see in real time the classes that they are choosing, it is going good! Also on the horizon at the high school is the construction program and more elective options.

Gary McGarvie, High School Associate Principal, commented that he is impressed that the district recognizes students that are on other pathways than college. Other districts focus mainly on college, so it really helps meet student's needs. He said that with the addition of 2 new principals and 2 new secretaries this year that it has been a lot of change for staff. Staff have been very receptive to the change. He added that late start Wednesday discussions are going great. These conversations turn into huge gains for our kids and it has been fun to see the progress.

Mr. Rosenkranz says that the data from screeners shows that our students are making progress. The last conversation at the cabinet meeting data was discussed. There was a concern from staff about sharing the data at the State of the District meeting, especially when scores at some levels had gone down. Eric Lindberg stated that he had a discussion with a co-worker that said that the school district they are in will not share scores with their parents. He let him know that scores are shared in our district. Michelle O'Neil said that teachers can feel defensive if scores are down. Sharing scores, along with telling parents what we are doing to help assist kids with getting their scores up, shows how we can grow. Mr. Muffett added that sharing scores shows we have a growth mindset. We admit that some kids need extra help and then show what we are doing to help those kids. Mr. Whited asked, "How can we solicit parents to help?" Michelle said that she provided a handout to teachers that they can give to parents at conferences this month. The handout has ideas on what parents can do at home to help their student succeed.

Matt Cooke, Director of Athletics and Activities, spoke about a few needs in the area of athletics. The high school bleachers are in need of replacement. There may be a way to temporarily fix some issues, but they will ultimately need to be replaced. The track is also showing some wear after 6 years. The quote received to repair the track was \$120,000. Thanks to Josh Soske and some connections he has, the track is going to be repaired this week for free! The last item was the ES Athletic Field is in need of some repairs as well. It does not drain well and gets too muddy for the soccer team to practice on. He will be looking into improving that field. He then went on to add

some positives in Athletics and Activities. High School Knowledge Bowl won 6th at state! The HS Wrestling team is receiving the team of the month award from WIAA. They will be presented the award on March 22. He added that athletic participation numbers are up. There is a JV softball team this year for the first time in 4 or 5 years and baseball could not take everyone that had interest in playing. He added that the Hall of Fame dinner sponsored by the Boosters was very well done. John Johnson and Christina (Cox) Copely were inducted into the hall of fame. The boosters did a great job.

Nancy Carner, Business Manager, said that this is always a very busy time of year for her. The revised budget, thanks to the levy passage, is finally done. Now she is working on the budget for next school year. She said that the audit is going well. There are only about three weeks left to go. They have been mainly looking at the food service department and how federal funds were spent.

Connie Majors, HR Specialist said that there is still a substitute shortage state wide, particularly at the elementary level. At the end of the year last year, we had 54 active subs. Right now, we have 82 active subs. Most of our para subs live in the community, but we still fall short in filling absences some days. The fill rate for teachers is significantly increased this year thanks to the addition of 2 long term subs that shift to fill absences if they remain unfilled on any given day. She added that the substitute pool goes down normally because a good sub will get hired, but she's glad to see improvement in the substitute area.

Carrie Lindsey, Student Services Director said that she started the year out without enough paras in Special Education. They had to bring in outside resources to cover some open positions. Right now there are only 4 outside paras still working in the district. Programs are running smoothly now with the 1-1 paras in SLC behavior classrooms, ALC, and life skills. They are still needing to work on caseload/overload in Special Education. The ES has hired an additional teacher, now we need to look at high school overloads.

She added that the department is moving to be focused toward all Student Services, not just Special Education. They also work on McKinney Vento and Foster Care programs. Improving identification of students for these programs will be the focus for next year.

Nicole Andrell, Technology Supervisor, discussed the challenges that the department faces. They are involved and work closely with every department in the district. Focusing resources and being efficient with time is a must since there are only 3 people in their department. Kelly Sullivan and Joel Shaw work very hard and serve the district well. The focus areas right now are Chromebook aging, security, and infrastructure. She said that parents are asking for a tool that they can use to see what their students are accessing on their Chromebooks. She found that the filter that the district currently uses has a tool that can be used for free. She is testing it right now with her own kids who attend LC schools and will be offering it to staff that have children in the district to see if it would be a good fit for the district.

She and Michelle O'Neil have been working on Educational Technology. Tech's focus is hardware whereas Michelle's focus is curriculum. Teachers that want a resource (such as a website to be unblocked for use in classrooms) can talk with the Ed. Tech. lead in their building who will then check with Michelle to see if the site is efficient and is in alignment with the

district's curriculum. If approved by the curriculum director, then the tech team can unblock the website.

She added that the tech group has been organizing and documenting the processes that they follow so that anyone on the team can step in when necessary. They are creating a video library to share when staff have the same question on how to do something tech related.

Tech has also been a focus of the current audit. The department has implemented a checks and balances so that not just one of them are responsible for handling the assets of the district and that there are no conflicts of interest. She added that it is going well.

Michelle O'Neil, Director of Teaching and Learning, shared that this is an amazing team. The district has leaders that care about their staff, families and students. It is incredible to see. She added that she has also spoken with the auditor about professional development offered in the district and has been able to show how we are using the funds that are provided to the district.

Mr. Muffett asked if there were any negatives to share? Matt C. had some negatives, are any other departments seeing negatives?

Michelle O'Neil stated that sometimes it can feel like we are taking two steps forward and one step back, but that means that we can identify things in processes that don't work. When we find things that don't work, we adjust. Nicole Andrell said that when there are challenges presented, most come with a solution to the challenge. At cabinet meetings, if someone does not have a specific solution, we discuss as a team how we can adjust the processes we are doing for a better outcome.

Matt Johnson said that there are parts of the high school that are in need of repair. There is a leaky roof and the facilities are definitely showing their age. We are looking at trying to secure grant funds to assist in those repairs.

The high school surveyed students in October and December. Overall kids were positive about their school, but here are some that don't feel connected, especially students that are new to the district. How can we be sure kids feel included and a part of the school? Mr. Muffett said to have a conversation with those kids and point out the positives. This could make a difference to that student.

Mr. Whited asked about drugs and alcohol issues at the middle and high schools. Dave McIntosh said that right now there is nothing at the middle school level. He has had to have a couple of difficult conversations with some parents in the past. Gary McGarvie said that drug and alcohol counselors would be helpful, but there are none out there to hire. He suggested that we reach out to an organization that would be willing to work with our students to help if the need arises, but we don't have the answer yet. Matt Johnson added that the HS has thought about possibly purchasing vape detectors, but have not because vape use has been down lately. Mr. Rosenkranz added that the MS and HS will be doing fentanyl presentations to help educate students about the dangers associated with drugs.

Terresa Holmes asked if there is a problem with “huffing” as she has found some whipped cream canisters beside the road near where she lives. No one on the admin team had heard of any issues.

As there were no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Board Secretary- Peter Rosenkranz

Board Chair – Win Muffett

Board Member-Eric Lindberg

Board Member-Dorri Oldham

Board Member – Craig Whited

Board Member- (open position)