

Lynn Classical High School

School Council Agenda

January 8, 2014

Special School Council 6:30

Core Values and Beliefs

The Lynn Classical High School mission is to meet the needs of all of our students and ensure they become knowledgeable, conscientious, productive, and self-reliant learners who are college and career ready. The school community shares in the responsibility of providing our graduates with the 21st century skills necessary to be successful on a local and global scale. We celebrate our diversity, cultivate creativity and respect, and take pride in knowing our school is safe and supportive for all.

Topics to be Discussed

1. Math Presentation:

Mark Johnston the Math/Technology Department Chair gave an overview of technology being used in the classrooms and Study Island capabilities. He explained a variety of areas where they could improve achievement by using these tools. Some areas where we are using these tools currently are to improve grades in math class, MCAS preparation and SAT scores.

The conversation then focused on the disparity between our students G.P.A's and their SAT scores. Administration shared ideas from recent meetings brainstorming about why this is and what could we incorporate/change to help aid in this issue. Some possible reasons are that 9th and 10th graders are extensively trained on the methods of taking the MCAS tests and the skill set needed to be successful on the SAT are very different. We also are looking at average SAT scores and we have students with very low G.P.A's taking the test because they can take it for free with fee waivers that may have decided against it in the past because they only had the G.P.A. to apply to community college and did not need the scores for entrance. This would only be true of our lower performing groups and we still have a lot of work to do with our highest performing students because many of their scores are not where they should be.

Some possible solutions are to reinstate SAT prep in our day curriculum next year. We have also put in place an afterschool SAT course for this spring. North shore community college will also be doing an SAT prep course for the Early College Students. The Northeastern bus will be working with at least two cohorts during the year to improve SAT scores and has already seen success with as large as 200+ points with a student. Mark also talked about using Study Island within the Math courses especially Junior and Senior year to train students in the test taking strategies within their courses after they have completed their MCAS during their sophomore year. Mark explained that the practice problems can be set up in a game like manner to increase the likely hood of practice on the students own time. He also stressed that connecting

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with the students with the real life consequences of achieving on standardized tests like SAT and college placement tests can save them tuition money and time when they go to college because they can start in high level math courses rather than preliminary or even remedial math courses. Donna Doucette our guidance representative also filled us in that they are implementing large changes within the SAT which will make it much more like the ACT so that further instruction on changing test taking strategies may be necessary.

There was also conversation around engaging unmotivated students and how to teach reluctant learners and student with a variety of educational needs. The tightening of the technical school admittance requirements have left us with a subgroup of students that are struggling in the traditional seven hour day without as much of a hands on experience.

2. Academic Parent Teacher Team program next year

The second meeting of the APTT program was much more successful then the first meeting with the parents that attended seeming much more comfortable and able to be active participants. The administration credits the change in groupings of parents and the more interactive format for the improved experience.

The team brainstormed possible barriers to parent participation and engagement as well as looked for ways to break these down. There is still a level of frustration over parent involvement with both academics and discipline throughout the school. The school council all believe that raising the level of parent involvement will positively affect achievement.

The students brought forth the idea that to improve motivation and achievement positive peer role models will make a big difference. They feel that many adolescents are reluctant to take direction from adults but would take advice from their older peers.

They suggested a student help center manned by successful upperclassmen to help with advice and problems. They also felt a peer mentoring program could be very successful if they could be selectively paired so that the students could relate to each other.

They also said that guidance bringing the Naviance tools into the classroom has been helpful by giving students helpful information as well as increased face time with all guidance counselors. It has increased the ability to be comfortable asking any of the guidance staff not just their own counselor if they have a quick question or small task to be done for them.

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3. Volunteer Shoveling:

The school committee discussed the possibility of starting a volunteer shoveling program within Lynn Public Schools like some of the surrounding communities. We talked about how we might do that and asked for ideas and possible parental involvement. Suggestions were the Key Club and National Honor Society. We agree that we could try to put together neighborhood teams so that students would not need to travel to volunteer locations in inclement weather. We thought that parents may be able to identify some community members in need of the service. We also talked about the possibility of getting a mandatory credit hour of community service for graduation and next steps.

4. Massachusetts School Report Card Discussion and Suggestions

The school council discussed the Massachusetts School Report Card and the Level 1 status. Administration wants to continue to improve and address subgroups that have been traditionally underperforming on state testing. We also talked about current strategies that we are using to re-engage students with poor attendance and drop outs.

If you would like to see either the overview or the full version of Lynn Classical's Massachusetts School Report Card follow the links below.

Report Card Overview:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/ReportCard2013.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=01630505&fycode=2013&orgtypecode=6&>

Full Version of the Report Card:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/ReportCard2013.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=01630505&fycode=2013&orgtypecode=6&>

Future School Council Meeting Dates: 6:00 Student Activities Room

March 5, 2014

April 9, 2014:

The School Councils:

1. Assist and advise the principal in adopting goals for the school
2. Assist and advise the principal in the identification of the educational needs of the students in that school.
3. Assist and advise the principal in the review of the school budget request.
4. Assist and advise the principal in the formulation of the school's improvement plan.

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It is important to note the School Council plays an advisory role in assisting the building principal to organize and implement a School Improvement Plan which not only addresses the areas in which the school intends to comply with the requirements of the Educational Reform Act, but also how the school intends to meet those system-wide goals and policies adopted by the school committee. Membership will consist of the principal, teachers, parents, students and community members.