

Parent Cats Meeting Notes
September 3, 2019

Board Member Attendees: Melissa McGrory, Joy Bach, Saba Lausch, Laura Ciezadlo and Jenny Quilty

Melissa McGrory, Parent Cats President, welcomed the group and provided an overview of the PCATS mission and reminded all that as a parent or guardian of a student at LHS, they are automatically a member of the Parent CATS.

Melissa provided an overview of the meeting guidelines:

- Meeting duration will typically be an hour, could be longer based on topics or number of participants
- In the interest of time, discussions may be tabled for future meetings to continue with the agenda
- Questions or topics should be kept to those that represent the students as a whole; individual issues should be addressed with teachers or Dr Koulentes individually.

Melissa introduced Cori Bjorklund as the Committee member for the College Resource Center (CRC) who was selected after the May meeting.

Melissa announced that the Parent CATs will donate \$10,000 to fund the school wish list which includes: mental edge curriculum for freshman, training course for a new LHS counseling dog, supporting the 2019/2020 real talk events, and health and wellness resources for the library.

Board Reports:

Joy Bach, 1st VP report: Joy outlined her role in coordinating and recruiting volunteers. There are many opportunities for volunteers, specifically help is needed with the Homecoming window painting and for someone to shadow Jim Connell to lead next year's window painting. Joy reminded the group that you do not have to attend these meetings to volunteer and there are several volunteer opportunities throughout the day.

Saba Lausch, 2nd VP report: The directory sales are closing on Friday, September 6 and have done well so far. This was the first time that they were sold at the Open House. This is a fundraising opportunity for Parent CATS so Saba asked all to consider purchasing one if they have not done so already. A Facebook post will be sent as a reminder of the sale.

Laura Ciezadlo, Treasurer: Laura reviewed the Parent CATS balance sheet and requested that two items be approved for the 2018/2019 Financial Report. In 2018/2019, we spent \$14,000 to fund the wish list items. Laura reviewed the budget for the full year for 2019/2020 and asked all to please review and approve. The budget philosophy is to break even and have money for the high school. The wish items are for the betterment of the general population vs individual requests.

Jenny Quilty, Secretary: Motion to approve May minutes. All approved, motion carried. Working to post minutes on the LHS site to comply with the ADA requirements.

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Dr. Tom Kouleres: Dr. Kouleres welcomed the group and introduced himself and encouraged all to attend. During Parent CATS meetings, Dr Kouleres will provide in depth reports of current events and projects. He provided an overview of the work that they are doing at LHS, gave a preview of information and activities that he'll discuss later in the year and gave us a tour of the pool. He introduced Jennifer Uliks, LHS Activities Director, who was present to share details regarding activities and clubs available at LHS. Jennifer was acknowledged by Dr. Kouleres as receiving nationwide recognition for an Activities Director.

The pool is the culmination of a two-year project; every student will use the pool during their 4 years of high school. It's the most used area in our school. The old pool is being converted to a dance studio and multi-functional space and should be completed around February 2020. It will be used during the school day and after school for dance programs. LHS is in the process to redesign all student learning spaces from a traditional classroom to a more energetic 21st century learning space. They don't want the space to dictate the learning instead they want to be able incorporate technology seamlessly. They are beginning the planning process to make a big impact on the library.

In terms of curriculum, Dr Kouleres asked teachers to take the DARING mission and use it in their curriculum, projects, experiences and assignments and making connections to the mission. They think that this graduate profile is what is needed for students to be successful outside of LHS in college, work, and beyond.

As the LHS staff, they focus on the core pieces of student learning:

- Equity – All students will be covered, they want all involved and all successful academically and emotionally
- Student social and emotional awareness – resilience and health are our focus, we are concerned about their total being not just as academic. Need emotional and intellectual intelligence.
- High impact instruction – asking our teachers to be reflective on what strategies they are using and identify what is working and what is not by how it is impacting our student learning. They will adjust in real time to impact all students learning in their classroom.

As an all school focus, Dr Kouleres will be discussing awareness, resilience and health with a focus on awareness.

- Awareness – want students to check in on who they are, how are they learning and who they will become. Want students to build empathy and awareness of others and their impact on others.

Upcoming, is October 16, DARING Day. This day will be a unique day of programming. The seniors do not have to attend school, they can explore what they want to do beyond LHS, to do college applications, college visits, internship interviews, meet with military recruiters, etc. Juniors will take the PSAT and NMSAT on this day.

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Freshman/Sophomores will be engaged in a program to focus on themselves and on their emotional wellness. It's a half day for Freshman-Juniors. More to come at the October PCATS meeting.

Per Dr Koulentes, it's the LHS goal, to truly be one of the healthiest schools in the nation, we are already a top school academically. He believes that it's a full systemic effort from school board to students. As a staff they are focused the systemic actions that improve the health of students and will focus on those topics during Parent CATS meetings, Real Talk events, and will invite Greg Loika to discuss the school counseling dog which will be in here in November. The dog will be a working dog with a schedule, mission and objectives. Other actions include creating an outdoor class room space and renovation of student learning spaces. For physical wellness, LHS hired 2 strength and conditioning coaches, and they are working with all 31 sports and PE classes. Working with a nutritionist in the cafeteria to support the strength and conditioning program. LHS is supporting the Wildcat Health and Mental Wellness group. We are building a lot of leadership programs for students and they are focused on promoting health and wellness to their peers.

We want to emphasize the Life of a Wildcat to help students be happier, healthier and higher performing. Teaching them to be positive role models.

This week is yellow ribbon week and the wellness leaders asked for two weeks, this week is self-care week and the kids created different events every day, including yoga, therapy dogs and indoor recess. The students promoted it and organized it.

Jen Uliks, Activities Director, discussed activities at LHS. Currently there are 3 types of clubs:

- Recreational Clubs
These can be started by students and are usually led by students
- Service Based Clubs
These can be started by students and can be led by students
- Academic Clubs
These may contain IHSA competitive academic clubs that may participate in competitions and require a higher level of commitment and are treated more like a team.

There are 76 clubs that fit into the three categories, and this doesn't include athletics or fine arts. There truly is something for everyone and students can start a club if there's something that interests them and is not represented today. However, she does do ask students, "would you join the club if you could not put it on a college application". She wants to make sure that your student is looking for something that interests them.

They are seeing an increase in student clubs meeting in the morning, which helps students to participate in a club and a sport or fine arts activity. The daily bulletin lists when clubs meet, and they are beginning to post meeting dates for the year.

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For recreational and most service clubs, students can go to one meeting and determine if it works for them, and/or they can try it out. However, they should find something that is of interest to them. Jen shared verbiage from college applications that they are interested in meaningful activities and the depth of their commitment vs the volume or number of activities.

95% of students are involved in an activity at LHS – 60% are involved in 2 activities, 89% are involved in 1 activity. The median is 2 activities. If you need help getting your student involved, please contact your LST or Jen who will help them find a club. LHS is setting record number for attendance for our dances, with over 1200 at Homecoming last year. Students do not need a date, and they come in groups or individually.

Committee Reports:

- Gym uniform: can be purchased in the spirit store and it's a fundraiser for LHS.
- CRC: great number of volunteers and if you have a freshman you can volunteer, and we have limited spaces available, just two days a week.
- Hospitality/Activities: Coat check volunteers needed for Homecoming – need 4-5 more volunteers. Turnabout dance is in February. Sign up on the volunteer link.
- Newsletter: Monthly newsletter, please provide story by 9/20 and if you didn't receive one, please subscribe.
- Spirit Store: Open Fridays 9:30-3:30 and need a lot of volunteers, it's easy and we'll provide instructions and training for volunteers. We are working to re-stock by the end of the week. Spirit Packs are student council.
- Community Outreach: Jim reported that Homecoming painting is Saturday, September 14. All businesses on Main Street received the requests and we have a sign up to volunteer for this event. We are getting the businesses to confirm, and Jen will confirm that club participation. The rain date is 9/15. Great community relations event as well.
- Website: Susie Erdal is moving the website to the Parent Organization link on the LHS site. The district will update the site.

D128 Report - Casey Rooney provided an updated for D128. She is a former LHS parent and Parent CATS board member. The school board is elected and adopt and oversee the budget for D128, manage collective bargaining process, and establish goals and policies for the district. The School Board meets twice a month, second Monday is committee meeting, 4th is general – public is welcome to both.

Old business/new business:

Joy Bach discussed Wildcat Health and Mental Wellness – part of DARING mission and is working directly with Tom and Brenda Nelson. First meeting is Monday, 9/23 7pm in room 6. It's an open forum, will bring speakers, and looking for input from parents. Current issues facing high school students, mental strength and support, maintaining wellness and self-care. Please come and it's for everyone and cover topics that matter. More information about the meetings and interesting articles can be found on their Facebook site.

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Senior Graduation Party – need parents to volunteer to organize the party. Contact Dr. Kouletes directly.

Ask Dr K:

- 1) *Standard Based grading – how was the feedback received and how will it be used in 2019/2020?*
We heard all feedback – positive and negative. Identified areas that were technical (teacher) and systemic. There's no district initiative for it, teachers work on course teams and the teachers design an assessment system that works for their topic and are meant to communicate learning. If issues with grading, go to teacher first then department head then go to Dr K.
- 2) *Butler Lake parking.* It's not a school parking lot, it's owned by the village. The Village allowed parking there for the last two years due to construction. The Village doesn't maintain during the winter and needs it to be a public lot and their public funds are at jeopardy. There are spots for all seniors on campus. Juniors have spaces at Brainerd and Dymond.
- 3) *CRC Staffing.* Amy does a wonderful job in the CRC, but many schools have multiple resources in a CRC, we are doing a full audit for D128 to see if we are staffed appropriately. We would make a proposal to our superintendents for a resource plan if needed.
- 4) *My student who is exempt from PE is assigned to the studio theater without desks making it difficult to study or do homework.* We are assigning them to places for desks and can go to the library, cafeteria or silent study area. If a student needs one, we can make it happen.
- 5) *Why Increase cost for family pass from \$50 to \$75.* Dr Kouletes will find out the answer.
- 6) *Unsafe drop off and pick up.* We are working on traffic patterns now and will continue to monitor it.
- 7) *Athletic uniforms.* We have a uniform rotation and every 3 years the team gets all brand-new uniform and the team must maintain the over time. Address all uniform issues with their coaches and we dedicate resources to purchasing them, some sports have parent groups that supplement them.
- 8) *Lunch hours – 6th hour lunch had restrictions on salad and sandwich bar line.* Chartwells had 3 resignations as school started and are now fully staffed and the issue should be addressed.
- 9) *Are there security cameras in the parking lot?* Bob Uliks, is the Security Director, there are cameras in all parking lots.
- 10) *Timing on ADA compliance – inconsistent in google classroom, websites, and can't share because of ADA compliance.* We don't have a single LMS, and parents should have access to Google Classroom. ADA website is a requirement and well -intended but it challenging to manage with 1000s of pages of content. Individuals can push to close groups but can't publish due to ADA. Contact the teacher or department chair to problem solve if you need information.
- 11) *Discussion regarding programs that have been introduced the last few years, would be helpful to understand the efficacy and results of the program (i.e. Green Dot).* We are constantly evaluating it, determining if students are learning and meeting their objectives and we should remove those that aren't. We can measure the programs and share the results.

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- 12) *Student athletes that need to leave early due to sports, why do we do it and can we limit it.* We need to evaluate how we can mitigate or restrict it. It's due to daylight hours so an issue mainly in Fall and Spring.