

# **Annual Report for La Center Middle School 2010-2011**

## **Our School...**

La Center Middle School, serving students in grades six through eight, shares a 17-acre campus with La Center Elementary. Seen as a hub for the community, the facilities are consistently used after school, in the evenings, and on weekends by various local groups. Several local youth organizations meet at the school on a regular basis. Additionally, the La Center Community Education Program provides adult and youth activities at our facility. For information on any of these programs, please contact the Middle School or district offices.

## **Condition of the Building**

The La Center Middle School building was originally built as La Center High School in 1961. In July of 2003, the new construction and modernization project approved by the voters began. With the completion of the project in October, 2004, students, staff and parents now have use of a modern facility for the educational and community needs. Student and staff security was an important aspect of the project design that included 36,000 square feet of new construction, and modernization of 71,000 square feet of existing structures.

## **Parent and Community Involvement**

LCMS is grateful for the tremendous parent support that we receive every year. Your feedback and assistance is very important to us. If you are interested in volunteering or being added to Mr. Cooke's email list, please email him at [david.cooke@lacenterschools.org](mailto:david.cooke@lacenterschools.org). Mr. Cooke will send via email volunteering opportunities, monthly school updates and surveys regarding current school concerns.

## **School Improvement Goals 2011-2012**

- \* Continue the development of professional learning communities through the Lab Classroom Project based around the teacher's Problem of Practice
- \* Analyze, understand and implement the three learning conditions (learning trust, high cognitive demand lessons and flow of information) to improve student learning
- \* Improve educational opportunities for all students
- \* Provide opportunities for students through Advisory to prepare them for high school, post-secondary education and future careers.
- \* Improve the student culture and learning environments based on comments made by students in the Student Culture Survey
- \* Develop assessment tools to assess student learning as a result of the Learning Conditions

## Standardized Tests

The Measurement of Student Progress (MSP) is administered each year to all students in late April/early May. Below are the percentages of students who met the standards in each of the tested areas:

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>		<b>State</b>
Reading	62.6%	70.6%
Math	48.4%	58.8%
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>		
Reading	63.2%	56.5%
Writing	67.7%	71%
Math	60.2%	57 %
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>		
Reading	72.6%	68.7%
Math	60.5 %	50.4%
Science	71.8 %	61.6%

## 2010-11 Highlights

### Student Accomplishments

#### Music Program

Two 6th grade students, Renee Hollopeter and Grace Nelson, auditioned in the summer and made it into the Portland Symphonic Girl Choir. Seven choir students auditioned for the Junior All-State Choir. Two of the students, Hailey Macho and Haley Wilson were named to the All State Choir

LCMS hosted the Lower Columbia River Music Educator's Association choir festival this year. Nine schools participated in this event. The choir received a 1 and 1- which is an outstanding score. Jefferson MS and Alki MS stayed an extra 1/2 hour just to watch our group perform. The judges commented not on how well our students sang, but how they presented themselves all day. This is another example of the results that occur for students who live their school lives in a culture of respect and high expectations. Students are not told 'you better behave'. It is just what they do. Thanks to Mrs. Slinkard, the custodial team and the flexible PE teachers for making it all come together.

Twenty three choir students from grades 6-8, participated in the LCRMEA (Lower Columbia River Music Educator's Association) Solo/Ensemble festival. The students sang a memorized art song or Italian Aria in front of a judge and received advice and a score. All 23 students received either a 2 or a 1 (with a 1 being the highest score.)

In March our Jazz Choir was the first middle school invited to participate in the Clark College Jazz Festival which has been going for over 50 years. They also performed at Clark College's Evening Concert through a "special guest invitation" and performed between the college's women's chorale and their jazz group. This was a great honor and the girls performed very well.

Kevin Mairose was selected to the All-State Band. This is not an easy achievement so it is a testament to the quality of our band and choir programs.

### **Athletics**

There were many individual and team successes in LCMS athletics this school year. Cross country was undefeated for the second year in a row. All four volleyball teams had winning seasons. The wrestling season ended with a tournament in Woodland where we came away with five champions. The eighth grade boys' basketball team went undefeated. Over 80 students participated in track this year and most have stayed eligible throughout the season. We were victorious in every meet and came second in districts.

### **Student Led School Improvement Programs**

The leadership class raised \$260 in order to improve the weeded area between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade wings, purchase a ping pong table for lunch activities and also to get a photo taken by a helicopter of a LC logo made by the students themselves.

The leadership students also met with the Young Ambassadors from the elementary school and discussed what leadership in the middle school meant to them. They are an energetic group led by Ms. Tyrrell and we appreciate all of their efforts.

In December, LCMS started the Save our Scraps program which had been successfully implemented at the high school under the leadership of Rebecca Morris' Project Study group. Three of our students and Ms. Tyrrell had the opportunity to separate all of the food scraps from the garbage and were amazed by the amount that is thrown out. The program has reduced the amount of waste by 15 bags per day.

An exciting new venture in the second semester was our Educational Leadership elective. Twenty students were selected to tutor students in classrooms from elementary PE to middle school choir and math. This is a structured class where our students worked with younger students in reading groups, science labs, math tutoring or leading small band and choir sections. Students were required to write a bi-weekly blog and it was great to read how they have grown in their abilities through their experiences. For the 11/12 school year, we have forty five students signed up for Educational Leadership, which is double from this year. We also have twenty teachers signed up which is also doubled. The first class of student tutors has done such a remarkable job that promoting the program was easy. We are very excited about the program next year and hope that this becomes part of the educational culture at both schools.

Fifteen leadership students represented La Center at the Middle Level Leadership Conference at Shahala Middle School in Vancouver. Mrs. Broten and Ms. Tyrrell

accompanied the students. The Leadership students also went to Doernbecher Children's Hospital to begin preparation for our penny drive.

Mr. Holmes, Mr. Ecklund and Mr. Cooke addressed concerns from Highly Capable students that they are not being challenged. During this meeting the students analyzed a variety of assessments provided by the staff members for cognitive demand. They also gave feedback on how to make work challenging. The next part of the seminar was to design an assignment that would challenge them. The staff really enjoyed the energy of the students when they were given an opportunity to design a challenging project.

The students at La Center Middle School raised \$5,000 for Doernbecher Children's Hospital through the annual Penny Drive which is coordinated by the ASB. LCMS has now raised almost \$20,000 over the last four years.

### **Extended Learning Opportunities**

Once again, our 6<sup>th</sup> graders enjoyed a fun week at CISPUS. We appreciate the generous support given by the La Center Casino Foundation who donated \$10,000 again this year. They have now donated over \$80,000 to this cause. We would not be able to go to CISPUS without their support. The students came home tired, but new friendships were made and a team atmosphere was created which is as important as they work their way through middle school. As mentioned, one of the keys to being a successful learner is trusting each other and CISPUS builds a good foundation for that. Thanks to the staff, parent volunteers and student counselors whose efforts make CISPUS a positive, safe experience for our kids.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders went to Mt. St. Helens for a science field trip in September. What was so impressive was that we only planned the field trip a week ahead because we were waiting on a date that a geologist would be able to speak to the kids while they were there. The biggest problem was that the Mt. St. Helen's staff said that we needed to have one chaperon per five students. This meant that we needed about 50 chaperones. Once you took out the teachers it meant that we needed 35. We asked for parents help and once again they came through.

On November 16th, the 8th grade class, as part of the Advisory program, was able to tour a college campus. The students had the choice of three campuses; WSU Vancouver, Clark College and Everest College. It was important for our kids to have that experience as we want them to start thinking about post secondary options before they get to high school.

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade students also attended the High School Career Fair for the first time. Our goal with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders was to expose them to career and college opportunities so that they start thinking about their career pathway before they get to high school. I appreciate the hard work of the high school counseling staff and Ms. Patton's willingness to open the high school to the future freshmen. I also thank the community members for

volunteering their time to discuss their careers. ANOTHER example of the community rallying behind their kids.

### **Community Involvement**

On September 9<sup>th</sup> LCMS hosted its annual Welcome Back BBQ. We had about 450 people attend, which was a good crowd considering that the weather was not cooperative. Mr. Shucka and I are grateful to still have our hair after about 30 rogue hotdogs combusted on us in the middle of the event. Certainly livened up the evening. We appreciate the support that the community gives our school and never take it for granted.

The La Center community once again rose to the occasion to help our students. There were many families of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students that could not meet the financial requirements for CISPUS. I sent out an email one Friday afternoon in mid September and by Tuesday our parents had donated over \$1,350 so all students could attend. I am overwhelmed by the generosity, but not entirely surprised because this happens every time I ask for help. LCMS appreciates our parents and it truly is a building block for our success.

### **Staff Accomplishments**

Mrs. Slinkard attended the annual American Choral Director's Association Summer Institute in Tacoma in July. Choral Directors from all over the state were there to read through music, learn new vocal techniques, and exchange information regarding upcoming events. Rhonda Slinkard auditioned and made it into the Portland Symphonic Choir. Rehearsals started in August, with the first performance on September 25<sup>th</sup> at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in Portland. This is the official choir that sings with the Oregon Symphony Orchestra and this performance in September was Mozart's "Mass in C Minor" with the Oregon Symphony.

Mrs. Broten continued her work as one of the writers of the Reading and Writing MSP Exams in Olympia.

Mrs. Cripe was part of the State pilot range finding grades 5-8 for the MSP. She also attended a week long institute for the GK12 grant. If that wasn't enough she attended one day training as part of a NSF science research project that has developed content enhancements for the Diversity of Life kit.

Mr. Calabrese attended the Birch Bay Band Director's workshop held at Lynden High School, Lynden Washington. The workshop focuses on playing, evaluating and scoring new and old music available for the band classroom in grades 5 -12 and some college works. 80 of the most active band directors in the northwest attend this week long workshop - the longest running workshop of its kind in the country. "Reading and scoring the music is the focus of the week, but networking with other successful band directors, picking their brains and learning new methods is a bonus for small school directors..."

Mrs. Austad spent one week of her summer Pilot Item Range Finding for the MSP. This was held in Olympia. She was selected to be involved in this state level committee to determine anchor papers for scoring purposes for MSP.

This summer, Mr. Ecklund completed year number two of a three year program called Academies Creating Teacher Scientists (ACTS) sponsored by the Department of Energy. Four weeks were spent working at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico with a geologist and her research team. This time was spent being immersed in the geophysical research she is currently working on, other lab projects and an Earthwatch Expedition with ten high school students from around the country.

Mr. Cooke presented at the Annual AWSP Conference in Bellevue on October 4<sup>th</sup> with Superintendent Mark Mansell. The topic was 'Putting the Learning into Learning Walks.' We expected about 25 people and ended up with 70 which were very encouraging.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Tyrrell, Mrs. Austad and Mr. Cooke presented to the WSU Vancouver campus about bullying. This team presented a different approach to addressing the issue of bullying. The LCMS approach is that bullying is a by product of a much wider problem which is school culture. If a school creates a climate for students where they feel valued, have a voice and are engaged, then students focus on positive elements of education and don't get into bullying. Are we perfect? No. We still have bullying concerns, but we have in my opinion a small scale and a method to address it when it comes up.

Four staff members presented their findings of being a student for the day at the April in-service. Each teacher followed a particular student's schedule and documented their day. Some of the 'learning nuggets' that they got from their experience were:

- Students have to adjust to six different teaching styles every day
- Students act differently with different teachers
- If a teacher talks too long it is easy to lose focus/get sleepy
- Students are hungry by fourth period so it is hard to concentrate
- There is a lot of juggling involved in being a middle school student

Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Cripe presented at the GK-12 end of year presentation at WSU Vancouver on May 24<sup>th</sup>. LCMS would like to thank Sean Rooney and Josh Edmonds for their work at our school. Their experiences give a new perspective in the classroom and Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Cripe learned so much from them, as did our students.

LCMS Special Education Staff hosted three meetings with members of the ESD 112 Special Education Cohort. Administrators from ESD 112 and teachers from Hockinson and Kalama attended these meetings. Our focus was on making the learning environments for our students more student centered and also assisting Special Education students to be advocates for their own learning. The goal is to create a Student Led IEP.

## Professional Staff

- This year we welcomed Mrs. Haynes to our staff as our 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Special Education teacher. Mrs. Lock left our staff to be the Associate Principal at La Center Elementary.

## La Center Middle School Staff Roster

Mr. Cooke	Principal
Mrs. Austad	6/7 Grade Math
Mrs. Brightbill	6 Language Arts, Study Skills, PE
Mrs. Broten	7/8 Language Arts
Mr. Brothers	7/8 Social Studies
Mrs. Brown	Maintenance
Mr. Calabrese	Band, Vocational Technology
Mrs. Calnan	Library
Mrs. Cooke	7/8 Language Arts
Mrs. Cripe	7/8 Science
Mr. Ecklund	7/8 Science
Mrs. Gaston	Resource Room Aide
Mrs. Hantho	Aide
Mrs. Haynes	8 Special Education
Mrs. Hendrix	Maintenance
Mr. Holland	6/7/8 Math
Mr. McCoy	Athletic Director
Mrs. Moore	Aide
Mrs. Mosby	7/8 Health
Mrs. Peterson	Assistant Secretary
Mr. Pritchett	7/8 Social Studies
Mrs. Richards	Head Secretary
Mrs. Rubadue	Resource Room Aide
Mrs. Schneider	6 Science/ Art
Mr. Shucka	7/8 Math
Mrs. Shufeldt	Aide
Mrs. Slinkard	Choir, Reading, Drama
Mr. Sutton	6/7 Special Education
Mr. Totten	6/7/8 Health
Ms. Tyrrell	Outdoor Ed, Leadership, PE
Mr. Westerberg	6 Social Studies, 7/8 Art
Mrs. Whelchel	6 Lang. Arts, Art