

# La Center High School Board Report

## December 8, 2015

The first semester of the school year yields many accomplishments for students, both academic and extra-curricular. Students have made their choices and selected various organizations to explore and expand their learning opportunities. As our teachers are continually working to provide wonderful learning opportunities, so do several outside organizations. They have stepped up to support our students throughout this semester and we appreciate their help. Below are samplings of some of the many success stories that continually take place at LCHS.

**Arsenic and Old Lace** was performed by the Drama Department. This performance was received with resounding applause and feedback for their outstanding and hilarious production. Mrs. Rideout, the drama teacher, paid close attention to the detail of all parts of the play. The sets, props and costumes were appropriate period dress. Mr. Neiman's shop class built the flats that will be used in other plays. We thank them for their assistance in providing this support. If you didn't have a chance to see this production, you missed something special. One audience member shared that they enjoyed the play so much they went home to watch the original in black and white. They shared that they felt our production was much more entertaining. Congratulations to the entire cast for their hard work on this project.

**Fall Band/Choir Concert** – Mr. David Williams is new to our community as the band/choir director. His attention to detail at the concert has set the tone for the expectations of both the performing groups and the audience. Student performers were seated in the audience to enjoy and support the other groups, moving to the stage at their appropriate time. The gentlemen were in black tuxes and the ladies were in nice dresses. The uniformity of the program was wonderful. Musically, the groups were very good, especially for this time of the year. What I'm always amazed by is that the band is primarily of freshman and sophomores. Those students rose to the occasion performing challenging music that appealed to the audience.

Mr. Williams divided the choirs into three groups, with a small girl's ensemble that was conducted by a student. He then had all the girls singing, which was lovely, followed by the entire choir. Each group was very musical. Mr. Williams also had the choir perform at the Grotto this year, which was magical. This opportunity gave students an experience that they will not find in any other location. The marble throughout the Grotto provides a completely different musical experience than found in our high school commons or local establishments.

**AP Government Class** had a "Presidential Debate" where four students prepared to answer a variety of questions from the panel. The entire class helped these candidates prepare for the debate, covering all areas from gun control to issues with our borders. Two students represented the Democratic side and two students represented the Republican side of the debate. The guest panel asking a variety of questions was Dr. Mansell, Mr. Helm, Mrs. Bounds and myself. The students were well prepared, thoughtful in their answers and were able to work through moments when on the hot seat. All students in AP Government have an opportunity to learn a wide range of policies within the government and how our country operates the democratic system which then helps the students have a base to form their opinions on these issues. Mrs. Bounds does a

wonderful job providing students with both sides of the issue, which creates exciting and thoughtful discussions.

**Othello in 9<sup>th</sup> English!** - Our 9<sup>th</sup> graders were faced with the challenge to read, discuss, and write character analysis and present group activities on Shakespeare's *Othello*. During my learning walks in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade English classes, students have had the opportunity to really delve into character development. Several classes have taken a character in *Othello* and described how they could be a superhero in today's culture. Students also have had a strong taste of a classic from Shakespeare's works and many students enjoy this so much that they look forward to taking the semester-long Shakespeare class their junior or senior year.

**Extended Learning Bus at the High School!** – We are very pleased to have the extended learning bus at the high school. Students are taking advantage of the hour after school to work with their teachers, especially in the classes they are struggling with. We have also established a **Student Mentor Program** in the library after school. The counselors have asked several students to volunteer their time to help students on specific days of the week. Currently we have three upper classmen available to work with students Monday – Thursday in the library.

The data that we are gathering is beginning to show positive results that the time made available for the students who have been failing classes to stay after school and now have a way to get home is making a difference. The administrative team reviews each week the students F list and has taken on checking in with students who are failing 2 or more classes, helping students look for ways to be successful. This might even involve cleaning out their backpack! We are beginning to see students pull their grades up. Students are working with their teachers and in some classes are able to make up work, retake tests, turn in late assignments and get the additional support needed to learn the material.

**Phoenix 10 Graduation** – This November the Phoenix 10 group of students and their advisors participated in the Phoenix Graduation. Once again several parents shared how pleased they were with the personal growth their student had over the course of the experience. Not all students come away completely changed, but this opportunity has provided each individual with a learning opportunity that gives them time to reflect on themselves and determine what it is they want to let go of that holds them back. It also helps provide a direction of how they can move forward after the program ends through goal setting.

At this time and with sad news, the YMCA which has helped fund this program in collaboration with Synergo, does not have the grant money to continue to support schools with the Phoenix program. We are currently discussing how we can create something in our area with our own challenge course available. This might mean a program just for our students and maybe something that we can offer other schools as well. We are in the beginning stages of looking into a different way to connect with students. I will keep you posted.

**SBA ELA and Math State Assessments – Make-up Testing** - In November Mr. Gray, Mr. Rosenkranz, several teachers and I helped with the Smarter Balance Assessment for the English Language Assessments and Math Assessments for students that had not passed these assessments. This make-up testing provided those students who had not passed these tests with

another opportunity to do so. Also in January, we will have the EOC Algebra, Geometry and Biology assessments for those students needing to retest. In both cases we have about 20 students needing to retest and several are in the Special Education program. Many of these students will take the tests to show they attempted the test and in some cases the BAT team (Building Assessment Team for Special Education) will determine if the student needs to take a different test altogether. Each individual case will provide specific information of the student's ability on their IEP and what goal the team sets for the student to meet the state requirements.

**Update on College Prep** – As of today, over 40 students have applied to a college or university. This includes a small number of students who do not attend the College Prep class. The students in College Prep and a small number outside of the class have received in scholarships and grants offered thus far \$2,033,252. In the College Prep class students have completed 714 scholarship applications including national and regional scholarships. Currently, there are 5-10 major local scholarships students are working on and in January about 25 local scholarships will open up. The class is currently trying to meet Mr. DiStefano's challenge of 1,000 scholarship applications completed by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester. When we return in January, Mr. DiStefano's goal is to have all seniors complete and apply for F.A.F.S.A.

## **Athletic Report**

### **Football**

The team finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Trico League this year. The title game was played on Oct 23 against Kalama in which La Center was handed their first league loss in 30 games. The score was 13 to 19. Unfortunately, at the end of the game we had a long pass that was intercepted and Kalama ran out the clock.

The district crossover game was played on Nov 6<sup>th</sup> against Eatonville. The winner was declared the #4 seed from District 4 to play in the State Championships. Eatonville won this game and moved on to play in the first round. The LCHS team finished the season with a 4-1 league record and a 5-5 overall record. The overall record may not be encouraging, but remember that we challenged ourselves by playing much larger schools to increase the competition level.

### **Girls Soccer**

The soccer team finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Trico League with an 8-4 record behind King's Way and Seton Catholic. The overall record was 9-8 with 3 of the non-league losses coming from Washougal, Mark Morris, and Battle Ground. Again, the purpose of facing larger schools is to push the athletes to work hard and learn from their mistakes so they don't make them during league play. The team played Eatonville in the first round of the District Tournament on November 3. They came away with a loss, but had a very good season considering that the team had to learn a whole new coaching style and philosophy. The girls and their parents both had positive things to say concerning our new coaching staff. We look forward to the years to come under their direction.

## **Volleyball**

The volleyball team finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Trico League behind Kalama and King's Way. Their league record was 8-4, with a 12-7 overall record. Kalama was dominant during the regular season. In fact, La Center was the only team all season to win a set against them. The district tournament did not go quite as planned for the Wildcats. We matched up against Hoquiam on Wednesday, November 4, in the first round at Castle Rock, and it took all 5 sets to get the victory. The next opponent that evening was Kalama, and we lost in 3 sets. The team traveled to Montesano on Saturday, November 7, to face Seton Catholic in a loser-out match. The Wildcats achieved victory in 4 sets, and then matched up with Montesano with the winner going on to state and the loser being out. Unfortunately, we did not get the victory. Good job to our girls!

## **Cross Country**

The boys and girls cross country teams had success again this season. The boys placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Trico League Championships, while the girls came away as Trico Champions. Both teams qualified for state for the ninth season in a row with a 3<sup>rd</sup> place District finish for the boys and the girls were District Champions. While at the State Championships on November 7, the boys finished 15<sup>th</sup> and the girls finished 7<sup>th</sup>. Jenna Melanson placed individually earning a 7<sup>th</sup> place medal.

## **Boys Golf**

The only update to include in this report is the fact that we had one individual qualify for the State Championships in May. Austin Rider had a great 2<sup>nd</sup> day at the District Tournament and placed 8<sup>th</sup> with scores of 90 and 86 in the 36-hole tournament. Congratulations to him!

## **Wrestling**

It is exciting to see the numbers start to increase for our wrestling program. We currently have 24 wrestlers participating this season, which includes 19 boys and 5 girls. The elementary program that our head coach, Kyles Simmons, started a few years ago is also growing. This program will continue to help the sport grow in La Center. We will host the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildcat Wrestling Invitational this coming Saturday, December 12. We have 15 teams traveling to La Center to take part in this great tournament from all over Oregon and Washington. Some of the teams include: Cottage Grove and Estacada in Oregon, Forks, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace, Sumner, Edmonds-Woodway, W.F. West (Chehalis), and local area schools.

## **Basketball**

The girls' team is off to a great start this season with wins against Castle Rock and Woodland. The Woodland victory was very enjoyable as we defeated the Beavers for the first time in 4 years and it was the first game in their new gym. It will be an exciting season as we are a young team with 3 senior leaders.

The boys' team has also started the season off well with victories against Hudson's Bay and Woodland. Our new coach, Jeremy Ecklund, has instituted a different offense, which the boys are picking up well. The next game for them will be against Castle Rock, who defeated the Wildcats in the District Championship game last year.

**Dance Team**

The dance team performed for the first time at the Girls Basketball game during halftime on December 7. They did a wonderful job for their first performance under their new coach, Jodi Osborne. Their competitions begin in January.

**Hall of Fame**

This year, we will be honoring Forbes Lapp by placing him in the La Center Hall of Fame, recognizing him for the back-to-back state titles we won while he was the head coach. This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first state title, and all the players from that team will be coming to a dinner to recognize Forbes on Friday, December 18. Then, during the halftime of the boys' game on Saturday, December 19, we will recognize him again in front of the fans. We wanted to re-start the Hall of Fame recognitions following quite a few years of nonexistence. Matt sees this potentially being an every other year event or possible every 3 years, as long as the candidate pool for the Hall of Fame is adequate.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Patton  
LCHS Principal