HAWK REPORT: APRIL 2012

One of the joys of writing a report is that you get to review all the great events that occured in the month. This is always fun in April as we always start with spring break. This year I was able to unwind in Hawaii for a week with my extended family. To then come home to a beautiful weekend was a bonus. It was the charge that I needed to finish up the year on a strong note. I hope that you all had an opportunity to spend some quality time with your families over that week as well.

The final sports team started this month with over 80 kids coming out for Track. Mrs. Broten, Mrs. Slinkard, Mrs. Austad and Mr. Dykes are quickly whipping (figuratively) these youngsters into shape. This is important to me as Spring brings out a lot of energy so best they burn some of this off on the track. I enjoy track the most at school because it is often the first sport that kids who do not normally compete, try. There is something for everyone which is what school should be all about.

The Future Freshman Parent Night was a huge success with over 90% of our 8th grade parents turning up to enrol their students into freshman classes. This is very encouraging to the high school seeing how concerned the studetns and parents are about successfully transitioning to the high school. Thanks to Mrs. Krem, Mrs. Patton and Mrs. Tell for putting on the event. Talking to the 8th graders, they are feeling more comfortable about high school. Knowledge is power in this case.

On the same night, Mrs. Cripe's class put on the inaugural Rube Goldberg night. Students had to design a device that completed a simple task. This sounds easy except that there needs to be eight parts to the device. Think of the Mouse Trap game to get a better idea. When I surveyed students about what a challenging, valuable activity was, many students said that this was. There were some wonderful devices created. The gym looked like something out of Frankenstein's lair with the various contraptions taking over the room. Thank you to Mrs. Cripe for putting on this event.

This month I am holding my first Parent Tour of the School. My goal is to make the school transparent to parents so that they have a true understanding of our goals for thier children. I am hoping that parents can also find ways to support teachers and thier students through this tour. Prior to the tour, I met with the parents to find out what they truly value in their child's education. I wanted to know what they deem as a successful student when their child graduates high school. By creating a lens, parents can be like consultants in the school and help us both learn how to support our kids better. As this tour is on the same day as the board meeting, I will let you know how it went in the next report.

Prior to the Board Meeting I will be meeting with my Parent Advocacy Group. This is our third meeting and I have really enjoyed the conversations so far. At this meeting we are

focusing on the essential questions that we want to put on a Parent Survey and the dress code. For homework, parents were given an article with a survey with the goal to come up with the key questions that parents would want to ask. We only want 7-10 questions as we know that a brief survey has a much better change of being returned then a long on. This will also allow staff and parents to get on the same page as to what is most important in a child's education at LCMS.

This year my problem of practice has been, "How do I know that the learning environmet at La Center Middle School is working?" This has been quite a journey for me as I have been trying to pinpoint what it is.