



Communication is the Key!

Welcome to a new school year and the first *LEAdvocate* of the year! At LEA one of our goals is to keep members informed and the *LEAdvocate* is one of many ways we attempt to get important information out to you. We hope that

you will utilize the *LEAdvocate* to the fullest extent possible. If you are too busy to read it the day it arrives in your “In” box, please save it and refer to it as soon as you can. The *LEAdvocate* “back issues” are also always available to you on line on the LEA Web at <http://lincolneducationassociation.org/LEAAdvocate.html>.

Meanwhile, here are some things we want you to be aware of at this time:

ProCom Report

The joint LEA-LPS Professional Committee (ProCom) distributed their long-awaited report to members on August 1, 2008. The report was the result of work done by leadership of LEA and LPS as a result of the 2006-2008 *Professional Agreement* which had both parties studying teacher workload.

ProCom agreed on three premises:

- The certificated staff of Lincoln Public Schools are producing excellent results with student outcomes despite the increased workload and decreasing resources.
- The workload for all District employees has increased substantially because of the increased demands and the reduced resources that are available to the District.
- It is in the best interests of all students and staff of Lincoln Public Schools to work collaboratively to reduce the stress experienced by staff.

ProCom developed a series of immediate actions to be taken to address workload, actions to be completed in a few months, and some long term actions. **Two important actions taken by ProCom involved the *Professional Agreement* and the LEA-LPS “Best Practices” of Student Discipline handbook.**

In regards to the contract, the report states: “The parties will identify the sections of the *Professional Agreement* that relate to educator workload and to arrange to separately review those sections of the *Agreement* with their respective constituent groups.” LEA provided training to Faculty Representatives and Building Membership Coordinators in June and again in August regarding key elements of the contract and participants took a three-part “quiz” over the contract that led to lengthy, insightful questions and discussions. LEA is looking at the feasibility of putting the quizzes on-line at the LEA website and making the quiz interactive so that all members can become better familiar with the contract and its provisions.

Regarding discipline, the ProCom report states: “The parties agree that there will be a building plan for student discipline in place in each building, that the plan will be consistent with District policy, that the plan will be consistent with the jointly developed and adopted ‘*Best Practices*’ of Student Discipline handbook and that the plan will be implemented as intended. The staff of each building will review the building discipline plan annually within the first month of the school year.” At the annual Faculty Representative workshop on August 12th, FR’s received in-depth training on the rights and responsibilities of teachers (and others) in the “Best Practices” and were encouraged to work with their staff to see to it that this portion of the ProCom report gets implemented. Dr. Nancy Biggs, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, attended this portion of the FR workshop to become familiar with the training that

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LEA did. LEA also shared handouts and materials with Dr. Biggs who will train administrators on the “Best Practices” in September. **Important: If your building follows the BIST model of discipline for student interventions, BIST does not supersede or replace the teacher rights and responsibilities outlined in the “Best Practices” handbook.**

Members may read the entire ProCom report on the LEA web at:

<http://lincolneducationassociation.org/MinutesProCom.html>

The LEA Insider

The LEA Insider is distributed monthly to members. It highlights some of the member rights activities around the District and allows members to know not only what the Association is doing to protect and represent members, but what some of the many issues are that arise throughout the District. *The LEA Insider* also includes important dates of which members need to be aware. *The LEA Insider* is sent to members on paper copies, but archived issues can be found on the LEA web at:

<http://lincolneducationassociation.org/LEAInsider.html>

The LEA Web

The LEA website contains a wealth of information for members. Just a few of the highlights include: a copy of the **negotiated agreement**, **helpful articles** such as what to do if ever questioned by the police and **handbooks** dealing with Worker’s Compensation and Maternity/Paternity benefits. Other pages include FR Council and Board minutes, back issues of the LEA Express, and information about the leaders of LEA and how to get more readily involved in the Association. Access the LEA web at:

<http://lincolneducationassociation.org/index.html>

Saving Face

A recent television commercial has a boy announcing to a crowd at school all sorts of personal things about him and his family. The point of the commercial is that when you post anything on the Net, you might as well be telling the world—the Net is not a place where individuals have privacy or can or should expect that their postings will be private or anonymous.

Recently, LPS sent out the following directive which is worth repeating to members: “FaceBook and/or MySpace... are frequently viewed by parents and community members when searching for information about their child’s teacher. Staff who have pictures, comments, etc. that depict them engaging in unprofessional behavior may be subject to disciplinary action by the school district, up to and including termination. Unfortunately a number of educators set up websites during their college years and have not removed photos of their college activities. Staff should ask themselves if they would want you, as their principal, or their students, or parents of students, to view these pictures and captions. Hopefully by reminding them of how readily the public may access sites, staff will make sure their sites look professional...”

The directive from LPS is clear and like it or not, because educators work with children, educators are held to a higher degree of scrutiny and responsibility than most other professions. The best advice we ever heard about e-mails was this: “Never write and send an e-mail from work that you wouldn’t be willing to have posted on the lounge bulletin board with your name attached to it.” The same holds true of personal web sites members might have on the Net. Have fun with the technology, but always keep in mind that caution and discretion is always advisable.



COPING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE: A NEW SERIES



Unless you are very unique (and lucky beyond measure) you either have or will have a **difficult person(s)** to cope with in your life. It might be an administrator, a colleague, a parent, a neighbor, a family member, or a on-again/off-again friend. **Changing other peoples' behavior isn't like changing your socks. It just isn't likely to happen.** What you can do, however, is recognize some common difficult types of people, their characteristics and effects upon others, understand their motives, and develop your own strategies to deal with them.

In hopes of making your professional as well as your personal life a little easier, we'll be featuring some "difficult" types in this year's issues of the *LEAdvocate* and hope that the information will be of use to you. The articles are revised from information from Robert M. Branson from the

homepages of wmich.edu.

This issue's difficult person: THE SHERMAN TANK

Maybe you have a **SHERMAN TANK** in your life. You know the type: abusive, abrupt, intimidating, overwhelming; often arbitrary and arrogant in tone; accusative, contemptuous unrelenting, critical of others, overbearing aggressive, hostile. A true joy to be around... **NOT!**

SHERMAN TANKS tend to affect others by causing confusion, mental or physical flight, or a sense of helpless frustration that leads to tears or tantrum-like rage.

A **SHERMAN TANK** has a strong need to prove that their views are always right. Tasks usually seem clear and straight forward and simple to them. They become impatient if others don't see what to them is plainly there. When resistance to their own plans is perceived, impatience quickly turns to irritation, righteous indignation, or outright anger. They *always* know what others "should" be doing.



So how do you cope with SHERMAN TANKS?

1. You must stand up to them, look directly at them. Expect to feel distraught, angry or awkward, but say something of a standing up nature anyway.
2. Give them a little time to run down.
3. Don't worry about being polite; get in any way you can.
4. Get their attention, perhaps by calling them by name or by sitting or standing deliberately.
5. If possible, get them to sit down.
6. Maintain eye contact.
7. State your own opinions and perceptions forcefully.

8. Don't argue with what the other person says or try to cut him or her down.

9. Be ready to be friendly.

As with all TANKS, the message has to be: "Don't Tread On Me!"



LEA Will Be Visiting...

LEA President Arlene Rea and LEA Executive Director Jim Rea are making their annual round of building visits to talk to members about the new *Professional Agreement* and/or issues of interest or concern to members. Arlene and Jim will also have the pleasure during their visits to introduce to LEA members **Gina Parish**. Gina is a part of the NEA UniServ Intern Program and she will be working with LEA staff through November 25. Gina is from Northern California and comes to LEA with twenty years of public education experience and has a B.S. in Business Administration from California State University, East Bay (formerly Hayward). Currently, she's on a leave of absence from the Hayward Unified School District (HUSD) as an Employee Benefits Specialist. NEA's UniServ Intern Program provides potential staff persons with the skills training and work experience needed to qualify them to apply for UniServ staff positions throughout the US.

We hope that when your FR schedules a building visit from the LEA staff that you will be able to attend the meeting and communicate any issues, concerns, or comments you might have. Make your voice heard!

A BASIC RIGHT: A GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR EVERY CHILD