

September 15, 2011

Union Bank, 4732 Calvert Lower Level 4:15p.m.

BUILDINGS NOT PRESENT: Adams, Bryan Community, Campbell, Cavett, Dawes, Elliott, Humann, Lakeview, Lincoln Northeast, Lincoln Southwest, Lux Middle, McPhee, Rousseau, Saratoga, and School.

“EARLY BIRD” DRAWING: Denice Hein of Culler Middle School won a \$25 gift card to Home Depot donated by Horace Mann.

CALL TO ORDER: President Jenni Absalon called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

CHECK IN/CELEBRATIONS: Faculty Representatives shared personal celebrations.

SPECIAL GUEST: Dr. Steve Joel, Superintendent of Lincoln Public Schools.

Dr. Joel spoke to the Faculty Representatives about the great work that occurred last year, specifically: the NeSA results for LPS, his school visitations, the Strategic Planning Process, and the work everyone does to increase the graduation rate. He stressed the poverty rate of LPS students, the need to find more ways to engage families, and emphasized that the hardest work we have ahead of us is reaching those students that are unsuccessful. LPS will be looking at ways to reach the households that do not have students in school, the need for improved technology, and the continuing increase in our student population. Dr. Joel stressed that LPSDO will continue to look for minority representation of staff in comparison to the student body and that LPS will continue to work with the Nebraska Legislature and state aid. Dr. Joel concluded his presentation by thanking every staff member for their diligence in getting LPS up and running quickly after the fire last spring.

DRAWING: Tracy Pettit, Kahoa Elementary School; Karen Dress, East High School; and Jamie Treat, Zeman Elementary School, had their names drawn to select a grab bag.

INTRODUCTIONS: Jenni introduced the LEA staff, LEA Board members, NSEA Board members, Capital District, the NEA Directors, and the LEA Negotiation team.

SPECIAL GUESTS: Kathy Danek, Mary Oestman

Ms. Danek spoke regarding the US Postal Service and encouraged Faculty Representatives to sign a petition that will be given to Representative Jeff Fortenberry asking him to co-sponsor and pass H.R. 1351, a bill to restore the U.S. Postal Service to sound financial footing without using a dime of taxpayer money. On September 27, 2011, they will be walking to deliver the petition to Congressman Fortenberry.

Ms. Oestman, representing the NEA Valuebuilder Program, spoke regarding the many programs that are available to members. She emphasized that the state retirement fund is being challenged as is Social Security and stressed that the NEA Valuebuilder Program can help those under 50. Mary gave a gift card to Dave Williams, Southeast High School, whose name was drawn from entrants.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The May 19, 2011, FR Council minutes were approved as printed.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Jan Olmstead

The financial reports for June, July, and August were approved as presented.

PROPOSED POLICY LANGUAGE CHANGE

Jenni explained the new proposed LEA Policy Language regarding Board Member Attendance.

FR Council will discuss and vote on these proposed changes to policy at the October FR Council Meeting.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:

President's Report--Jenni Absalon

A copy of the President's calendar for July and August was given to FR's.

Association Update—NEA is down 28,000 members. LEA is up 128 new members this year. This includes new hires and is an increase of 29 additional members from last year.

○ Member Relations

- Probationary Teacher Training—October 1, 2011, at the LEA office from 9:00 a.m. to noon. We want to include teachers who have been hired in the last five years.
- Shredding Event—October 1, 2011, from 10:00 to noon. LEA members may bring unlimited amounts of shredding to the LEA parking lot.
- Rebuilding of LPSDO—the LPS School Board has narrowed the selection of properties down to 9 possible sites. Jenni stated that copies of the results from the LEA survey were given to LPS Board Members
- Appraisal—Jenni reminded FR's of the Memorandum of Understanding that was written for the 9 specialized areas. Every group, except School Social Worker, was represented on the formulation of these rubrics. The idea was to keep these groups close to the teacher model as possible.
- Media Services Update—Nancy Larimer
Nancy demonstrated to FR's how to navigate through LPSDO's Professional Development Resources. This site has numerous staff resources, including the Charlotte Danielson book Enhancing Professional Practice.
- Cheer for LEA—October 15, 2011, at Bethany Park. This is a family event and will run from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Negotiations—Jenni announced that the Negotiations will begin to plan a calendar for the year.

○ Communications

- Member Survey—All members will receive a survey that will ask for necessary information from each member. Jenni asked FR's to encourage all building members to complete the survey.
- Publications—Jenni announced that the information that Nancy presented has been in the LEARN and she will rerun.

○ Community

- Harvest of Books—This is the 15th year for the annual book drive
 - Shredding Event—October 1, 2011.
 - The President of Eastern Nebraska Reading Council, Karen Heafer, presented a check for Harvest of Books for \$100 and donation of books.
- NSEA Children's Fund—Karen Heafer also presented a check of \$678.00 from the "Share the Plate" campaign with her church, the Unitarian Church. Jenni announced that the NSEA walk raised \$8,000 for the Children's Fund

DRAWING: A \$25 gift card was awarded to Joan Neukirch, West Lincoln Elementary.

"The Rights Stuff" – Dan Studer, LEA UniServ Director

Dan discussed the LPS Guidelines for Distribution of Laptops to Teachers - November 2010 and the LPS Policy Regulation 6441.1. Dan stressed to members not to give their password to anyone. This information will be put in a later addition of the LEAdvocate.

DRAWINGS: The names of the following FR's were drawn for grab bags: Michele Stevens, Prescott Elementary; Linda Nelson, Irving Middle School; Scott Buckner, Irving Middle School; Sally Wallace, Pyrtle Elementary School; and Deb Rasmussen, Goodrich Middle School.

Executive Director's Report—Jim Rea, LEA Executive Director

Jim updated the FRs on the following information:

- 1) LB 680: Senator Heidemann—This bill would impose a Defined Contribution/Cash Balance (DC) plan for future school employees in Nebraska. One of two public hearings will be held Sept. 26, 2011 in Omaha.
- 2) The LEA Leadership team has met with Lincoln Senators. The following Senator terms will be up for reelection: Kathy Campbell, Colby Coash, Ken Haar and possibly Tony Fulton.
- 3) The NE Legislative session will be 60 days and runs from January 4 through April 12, 2012.
- 4) Membership increases—Jim stressed the importance of increasing membership in LEA
- 5) Negotiations for a new professional agreement will begin with the annual survey in November and negotiations in March and/or April 2012.

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS: none

COMMENTS, CONCERNS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Individual Concern/Comment, Prescott Elementary

I would like to raise an equity issue for computer teachers. The machines in several building are now 10 years old. We are expected to teach 21 century skills on computers that cannot keep up with the new technologies. However, some building do not have the same problems, 3 buildings last year received laptops for their labs to test them, new building have newer machines. This year alone I have had 9 machines go down. While I recognize that LPS replaces these machines, with equally as old a machine, they still have to be added to your lab and "tweaked" to your environment, all of this takes time.

LPS Response

Computing Services endeavors to maintain computers on a 5-year replacement cycle. This year all elementary computer instruction labs were scheduled to be replaced. The 1.6 million dollars dedicated to replacement was placed on hold for this year. Computing Services is in agreement with the sentiment expressed in the statement and regrets the inability to remedy the situation in elementary schools as planned. Provided the budget is not withheld again next year, Computing Services has elementary computer labs as the highest priority for replacement.

Individual Concern/Comment

If we are to have students use technology in our classroom and it is even reflected in the appraisal rubrics how are we to accomplish that when we do not even have a desk top or a laptop for student use? Distribution had a ton of desktop computers in bins which would have sufficed for word processing and activity use for the students, why were those not refurbished for classroom use?

LPS Response

The Computing Services replacement plan includes computers for fixed labs and mobile labs along with laptop computers for teachers and computers for school offices. The plan calls for replacement on a 5-year schedule, however, funding has not been sufficient to maintain even labs on this schedule. Computing Services has no budget to maintain computers for classrooms and has permitted the retention of serviceable computers for classrooms. Computers sent to DC for auction are no longer serviceable, meaning there is no cost effective method to "refurbish" them for classroom use. Computing Services is actively reviewing low-cost solutions that would provide a computing device for classrooms that is capable of basic productivity tasks including web browsing, document creation and retrieval.

Group Concern/Comment, East High School

Pinnacle, pinnacle, pinnacle!!!! What a mess! Classes and grades mysteriously disappear then reappear without warning. Parents aren't happy, teachers are frustrated. Can't we please get this fixed – permanently?

LPS Response

The district's decision to move to a new version of the Pinnacle Gradebook was predicated upon access to features necessary to pilot the gradebook in selected elementary schools. The underlying structure of the Pinnacle Gradebook was significantly changed from the version in use last year. Computing Services staff worked throughout the summer with GlobalScholar engineers in an effort to resolve issues that surfaced once master schedules were complete and gradebooks could be generated. Issues related to scheduling, access, attendance, grading and reporting have been addressed. At the outset, characterizing Pinnacle as "a mess" was substantially correct and the number of helpdesk unresolved helpdesk tickets validated such an assertion. At this time such a characterization is no longer appropriate and the number of helpdesk tickets validates that assertion. Any solution that requires the use of technology is premised upon the maintenance of an environment that will be changed over time. The risk associated with change can be minimized, however, it cannot be eliminated. Computing Services has received assurances from GlobalScholar, and has seen progress, regarding project management and mitigation of reported issues. The environment has improved and will continue to improve in service to teachers, administrators, students and parents.

Group Concern

Why can't the guest login be removed from staff computers?

LPS Response

The guest login provides a convenient method for teachers to permit student teachers to access information using the computer without providing student teachers access to the teacher's account space. The inclusion of the account serves a security purpose and the login can be set so that the guest account isn't seen. Certificated staff interested in setting up their login screen in this fashion can receive help by filing a helpdesk ticket.

DRAWING for ½ day of Guest Teaching: Jan Enstrom at Randolph Elementary.

ADJOURNMENT: Jenni adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Olmstead

Jan Olmstead
Secretary-Treasurer