

PLCSF Board Meeting
March 4, 2013

*Roll call via sign in page
Meeting called to order, 4:34pm*

Laura Caffo, President: Call the meeting to order; Introduction of Amy Kinseth

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Presentation, Amy Kinseth 4th grade teacher at Loma Portal

- Materials for Teachers, compiled by Amy from various websites around the country
- Georgia has a great CCSS program
- www.illustratedmathematics.org
- Standards are written out in kid language and activities by strand
 - By grade
- Printables
- All organized by grade, K-4
- Some standards may not have activities, but most do.

Laura: What about activities and standards for grades 5 and up?

Amy: Check out www.illustratedmathematics.org

They are easy to find, but they are time consuming.

There are links on the home page, as well as resources and links for the principals

Michelle Huber: Can we link this to our website? Or have this information on our website?

Amy: Sure! Anyone can go onto Loma Portal's website and access the information.

Suzy Reid: We can just link the "Common Core Information" page to our cluster site. This way we don't have to copy and paste and miss updated information.

Cluster Survey Answers, principals:

The idea is to find out the largest topics affecting our cluster.

1. Safety – limited parking, PA systems at all schools
2. Common Core Standards – roll out curriculum and systematic plan for staff development
3. Staff support to adequately address special needs students (health and academic)
4. Title I

Note **The following includes feedback from Margaret Johnson, Principal at OB and Sandy McClure, Principal at Silver Gate:

WHAT ARE THE THREE LARGEST TOPICS AFFECTING YOUR CLUSTER?

1. Safety-PA systems needed for all schools, limited parking
2. Common Core Standards-role out curriculum and systematic plan for staff development
3. Staff support to adequately address students with disabilities or IEPs/504s-additional SEA or SET support, increased counseling and psychologist time
4. Title 1-losing categorical funds. Some schools do not have the demographics to support foundations

to supplement budget cuts. With low budgets, we have to scrimp to put together supports for students. This is slowly eroding the intervention support for students that need assistance. Looking at budgets this year, it is obvious some of the schools will struggle to have enough budget to support library, computer etc.

5. Having to be REACTIVE vs PROACTIVE with the District because of last minute communication from District Level to Cluster Level
6. Increased class size
7. What input does our Cluster have in the hiring process of principals/teachers?
8. What influence/weight does our Cluster carry in the District?

WHAT DOES YOUR CLUSTER DO WELL?

1. Community involvement by parents and local business is outstanding
2. Use of site ILT's
3. High Standards/academic performance/expectations for student achievement and behavior
4. Professional Learning Communities are strong
5. Principal alignment/math vertical planning with principals

WHAT DOES YOUR CLUSTER NEED TO WORK TOWARD IMPROVING?

1. The academic spectrum-teaching in a way to bring up our basic and below basic learners while at the same time teaching academics to our high achievers that advances their learning
2. Continue collaboration-opportunities for teachers to plan together across the cluster
3. Benchmarks to reflect academic goals
4. Use of itinerate staff and special education staff across the cluster in a collaborative way

Sabrina Busselt-Carlton: I would argue that class size is also an issue in our cluster, based on past staff meetings. How many people have contributed to this conversation? When do they need this by?

Laura: Two principals responded to my email.

Bobbie Samilson: We didn't really get any time to respond to this. Can we go back and discuss a bit more.

To me, the questions seem very broad.

1. We all want our students to be well and move on to college. CCCSS is important and it needs planning, but we need a budget in order to make that happen. We just got our budgets today and I have 1/3 the Title I dollars I've had in the past.
2. Safety, definitely.

What exactly are they looking for? They've already asked us the top three things for Prop Z and Prop S...

Sabrina: I think that's really our top concern: communicating with the district and getting them to listen to us and hear what we're saying.

Glenda Gerde: Special Education is up there on the list; it is definitely something that we need to focus on.

Christy Scadden: So, is that something that the whole cluster agrees on?

Margaret Johnson: If you knew what we all talk about at the Principal's meetings, you'd know we all agree.

Marvin Estrin: So often we are reactive in a short time frame and we don't have enough time to really focus on what we could be doing as a cluster.
Staffing is definitely an issue. We need continuity across the spectrum.

Laura: Speaking of staffing; we're thinking about when we hire a new principal and when we are looking at adding staff, do we have a voice at the district.

Bobbie: So, "what input do we have in the hiring of staff for our cluster?"

Sabrina: How is the cluster's opinion/preferences weighted and how much weight is it given when the final decisions are being made?

Ian Law: Looking at the paper from last week, quoting Mr. Barrerra, I think the mission of our group is to discuss governance. If we have disingenuous conversation, where does that get us?

Kristen Rone: I feel like we have an impact, but it tends to be more reactive. Can it be more proactive? They've got to know that we're going to fight when we aren't happy.

Laura: I will send this back to the district and we'll see what we get.

Question: *What does the cluster need to work toward improving?*
Continue collaboration opportunities for teachers to plan together across the cluster.
Benchmarks?

Bobbie: We don't really have anything to work on if we don't have any say.

Scott Barnett, Board Member: I think there's a few things going on in this survey (it's the first time I've seen it).

The district is moving toward the community model for quality schools. We had a workshop and came up with a process that staff would want to go through in order to get to a point where we can quantify these several things. We'd create a committee and then each school site would set up a committee. There is an effort being made by Cluster Presidents to get together and discuss the issues facing them, instead of waiting for the board. Low and behold, two days later the BOE comes out with this Cluster Leadership conference.

We have our 12 Quality Indicators, and they could be different at each school site. We can't really have a district committee when each site is so unique.

This survey still isn't helping us to determine what we need to do to help our clusters.

Sabrina: Is this a baseline data gathering process, or is it informative?

Scott: This is a data gathering.

Sabrina: Whose study is this? Is this based on anyone else's study? Or is it just something the district made up?

Scott: It's really a BOE/district created thing. This is really not something [the BOE] can measure quantitatively, because it is really the school sites that should be determining these indicators. I say you respond to the BOE honestly and let them know if it's too soon, if you can answer it, great.

Glenda: Do they want an assessment tool by Sept?

Scott: Well, most parents look at schools based on their API, which they may not really know the meaning of. It's not really based on API entirely, it's the cleanliness, the neighborhood, etc. I think we should survey every employee, parent, student at the schools. The goal is to have some sort of measurement by which to grade the schools, by Sept.

Marvin: If we look at how we assess students, we test them, see where they need support. Is this something there is a concern about?

Glenda: We just got another budget cut. We're in survival mode right now. To create a tool to assess where we're at now, it may be hard to do.

Laura: I think perhaps we just spent

Guest: (former board member) It doesn't sound like the board is really clued into what the clusters want. This survey doesn't really reflect what the clusters are trying to do.

Laura: So if we all agree, we can respond that we need more time.

Melinda Albright: What about the budget?

Sabrina: Some of us feel that if we don't answer now, our voice won't be heard. If we do need more time, then we need to respond that we'll get back to them at a specific time.

Bobbie: What is it that they really want to know, is it based on the 12 pillars?

Scott: Gil is really the one you should be talking to about this. I think you should survey all of the staff at each school.

Matt Spathas: I think this is very reactionary, like what was said earlier. There was a framework created by this cluster years ago. Some agreed, some didn't. The new normal is to do more with less. I think we should dust off the framework or create a new framework. If we want to have a conversation about what our framework should be or what we want it to be...

Gil Gutierrez: The way I would frame this questions, is that they were brought to the cluster executives. How does this work play into what you already do. What is the overlap. They aren't asking the individual schools. They'll do that later. What, as a cluster, are you focusing on? Some clusters are focused on matriculation or fundraising. What are you focused on as a cluster? There may be some areas that haven't been addressed.

Michelle: There has been a lot of information shared today. I say we respond with the language "includes, but is not limited to:"

ACTION ITEM: Board members: Please think about this, we will continue this conversation.

Scott Barnett, Jog-a-thon update:

Jog-a-thon – had a discussion with legal staff and colleagues. It’s not an Ed Code issue, not a district issue, it’s an administrator policy. Someone somewhere signed a policy. It will be easier to solve this. At some point, there will be a new Administrative Policy that will state what is allowed and what is not. I will have something from the SI office, but it doesn’t mean

Gil: It’s lifted as long as it is tied into an academic purpose.

Scott: More good news, we will start the environmental process and planning for the lights at Pt. Loma HS. The question now is what we want for the community.

If you have any questions regarding the process on the hiring of the new Superintendent.

Kristen: Gil, can you email the principals regarding the Jog-a-thon?

Marvin, VAPA:

DREAM Program

We have an interesting professional development opportunity for third and fourth - and probably second grade - teachers on how to use visual arts and theatre activities in their classroom to improve students' reading and writing skills.

Point Loma Cluster Schools Foundation
Strategic Plan: Learning Environment Area of Focus

GOAL 2: Develop an Engaging and Inspiring Learning Environment

Michigan Department of Education: “Research shows students with an education in the arts outperform others by virtually every measure. Moreover, learning through the arts can help level the playing field for youngsters from disadvantaged circumstances.”

- Integrate VAPA into the K-12 curricular areas as a means to encourage creative thinking and empathy; attributes that are sought by the work force as well

Marvin Estrin saw an article in the UT San Diego about a grant from the James Irvine Foundation to train teachers on how to infuse visual arts and theater activities into their curriculum; and contacted Dr. Merryll Goldberg, a professor at California State University San Marcos to learn more.

DREAM is a partnership between the North County Professional Development Federation (NCPDF), California State University San Marcos (CSUSM), and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) funded by an Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The program was initiated and carried out in the North County. Over the years they've worked with schools in San Diego - and are currently working with a King-Chavez site. Their goal is to be able to serve as many teachers as possible and from as many districts as possible.

The DREAM project provides professional development for participating teachers through a combination of yearly summer institutes and ongoing in-classroom coaching. In order to study the professional development model, some teachers only attend the institute and implement their learning throughout the year on their own, while other teachers receive ongoing support from an arts coach throughout the year following the institute.

The summer institute leaders includes Dr. Merryl Goldberg as well as two other university professors (theater and literacy), Brenda Hall from the county office, and an art teacher from the High Tech High schools, and professional artists.

Teachers from our cluster can attend the institute, or they can host a separate institute for our teachers – whatever our cluster would like. They will probably also accommodate teachers in grade 2 this summer as well.

We discussed this at the Point Loma Cluster Schools Foundation Executive Committee meeting last week; and wanted to see if our elementary schools might be interested in learning more about the program.

Dr. Goldberg would be happy to come talk in person...and they can also arrange for a visit to some classrooms at school with DREAM teachers.

Glenda: I think it's great but right now I think we're bulking up on Common Core training right now.

Tanya Belsan: I think the principals, staff and cluster have all agreed on the non-fiction writing being a focus for us, with professional development, so the VAPA addition may be too much.

Sabrina: I would be willing to read more about it. I think it's very difficult to go from the macro to the micro way of thinking...

Jack Vallerga, Cabrillo National Monument:

I sent out fliers, Cabrillo is starting their 100th anniversary celebration this year. We are looking for donations for Cabrillo. Cabrillo is in the process of securing a grant for food, etc. We'll find out about that in May. I might need some help from teachers, volunteers, etc.

I want to take the opportunity to talk up the media teacher at Correia. He is giving me some resources to film some things about Cabrillo Nat'l Monument.

First grade teacher comes to the monument and has her kids collect trash. Then they took the trash and made art out of it, and then turned around and auctioned off the Common Core Performance Assessment Task

Cindy Marten, new Superintendent

Came to Central from Poway, doing some pretty amazing things.

Horace Mann alumni, graduated from La Jolla Country Day. Different experiences. College in Wisconsin, majoring in child education. Came back for family. First teaching job was in a private school for seven years. Learned about really fabulous teaching at the private school. Learned how to teach through a writing workshop method. Saw that kids were learning not from their backgrounds, but from excellent teaching.

I went to Poway when SDUSD was going through restructuring.

Reading specialist working at the lowest performing school. Out of 21 elem. schools it was the lowest performing school, 51% Title I. It was a case of the haves and the have nots. Wasn't willing to accept the institutionalized segregation.

Began a reformation at the school, and it became one of the highest performing schools in the Poway district.

"When you change a belief system, you can change a child's life."

If I'm going to affect change, I had to learn on the front lines. It's not just rhetoric.

I believe in the 20/20 vision, the mission of the district. Quality school in every neighborhood. All of the voices (of stakeholders) need to be heard.

I'll lead it, I'll be a part of it, and I'll be listening.

Matt: Misleading perception of our community, we're actually 45% FRL. Congratulations and thank you.

Sabrina: What is the BOE's vision and mission and how do you see a cluster's voice affecting the district?

Cindy: The BOE is looking to the cluster's to see if they can help tell us whether or not the schools are meeting indicators. As for governance, the BOE is having a hard time with... Perhaps the cluster boards can be more like the DAC.

I am collaborative. When I make decisions, I'm a consensus builder. If every cluster has a different mission and vision, then it would create chaos. We need to work on that. We need to create a clear priority of the clusters.

Melinda: What's your philosophy on Choice and VEEP? We have people choice in because of schedules, not necessarily because of a good school or not.

Cindy: Your neighborhood school that's right down the street should be your first choice. First and foremost, your neighborhood school should be the first considered. People still have a choice. We aren't there yet, we're working on it. Once you have quality as the first choice, then perhaps the choice to go somewhere else may change.

Laura: How do you make the neighborhood school the best?

Cindy: That's the work that I was chosen to do. One of the first things to do is to see what it is we consider a quality school. The how is what's complicated. I do have a vision that it's possible. How do we build systems and structures around what we see as our goal? We'll develop that process when we

Jason Hunley, Correia teacher: View on charter schools?

Cindy: I changed my opinion [of charter schools] after seeing Waiting for Superman; I didn't think a charter could come in and fix everything. I have now come to believe that there is room for all of us. I'm okay with charter schools as long as they accomplish their mission. What I'm really about is children getting a quality education. If you're getting it done, then I'm happy. I've seen a lot of charters come and go. I was approached many times to turn Central into a charter. I committed to making it work as a public school.

Jason: When I see a failing charter, and it doesn't get shut down, I get frustrated.

Cindy: My main point was that if the charter is getting positive results, then it's doing its job. I can more clearly inform on whether or not systems are working because I'm an instructional person, I have that experience.

Matt: Charter schools versus “Traditional schools”, charters can get closed, but traditional schools don’t. Tell us more about data.

Cindy: I use data to inform my instruction. Data should be used as a tool, not a weapon. It should help inform whether or not something is working. It’s not my job to produce a test score; I’m producing...tax payers invest in us. The return on your investment is more than a score: actively literate, productive person who can contribute to the world. By-product is a test score. I’m not here to produce test scores, that is not what drives me. There is a bigger mission. Data isn’t good or bad, data is neutral, and it’s informative. It doesn’t tell me if a teacher is good or bad. If it isn’t what you want it to be, that’s what you need to work on.

Melinda: Speaking of budget, how will you address staffing, etc.

Cindy: Without clear priorities, we are spending money on things that don’t help us meet our goal or mission. It’s a community dialogue. What priorities do we need to set? We need to come together with one mission. We have been spending money on things that were for other goals, other missions, and it no longer lines up with what we are doing now. Sometimes you need to have hard conversations and make difficult decisions. I was told that I was unanimously chosen by all five BOE members. There is enthusiastic, unanimous support. So I have that going for me.

Guest: My daughter is on your instructional staff. Where do you get your inspiration? How do you get the “crab apples” to come with you?

Cindy: It’s not hard, when a child is at the center. When people say they’re here for the children and have a hidden agenda, it doesn’t work.

Guest: It’s the “We.” Let us show you how we do it.

Cindy: It’s the way I engage them.

Student: As a student, it’s empowering to now that you think of us as more than a test score. As a district, what are your plans to ensure we’re all seen as more than a test score.

Cindy: When my budget is clear and priorities are clear, it’ll be easier to do that. The BOE and the district’s mission is to have a quality school in every neighborhood and the 12 indicators. I don’t really think that API really plays into those indicators.

Guest: Regarding the revolving door at the Area Sup office; it impacts us here at the cluster level. Do you have any sense about the Area Sup structure?

Cindy: I believe in a core stable staff. I want to attract them, and appease them so they won’t go anywhere. I want to make sure the team is stable and in it for the long-haul. I’m a San Diego girl, I’m in for the long-haul, and I’m not going anywhere. That’s what I did at Central and I continue to do so.

Laura: Thank you for putting our children first.

Cindy: I work for the children, the parents, and the community.

Scott: [Selecting Cindy Marten as the new Superintendent] was the most important decision I've made, and will probably ever make. I am very happy to have her here.

Vote on amended By-laws

Tanya Belsan Motioned to approve the by-laws as written in the email sent out to the board members.

Laura Caffo Seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned, 6:30pm