

Pine Lake Preparatory Leadership Report September 23, 2015

Strategy I – Programs

Lower School:

We are officially back in the swing of school as our new classes and schedules become routine.

Discipline Plan

Teachers have introduced LS Discipline Plan, and students have been part of building a matrix of expected behaviors in the school. Students earn PAWS (Pride, Attitude, Wise choices, Safety) for positive behavior and have opportunities to “fix” negative behaviors with PAWS Plans. Parents are an integral piece of the plan; the policy, procedures and behavior matrices have also been shared with parents. We are off to a PAWSome start!

mClass Assessment

Teachers are currently testing students (K-3) in reading as part of the Read to Achieve law. This data is used for teachers to target instruction, to plan differentiated reading groups and to intervene when students indicate they are struggling learners.

BOG3

We completed the 3rd Grade Beginning of Grade assessment in Reading on September 3. 81/126 students earned a 3, 4 or 5 and 45/126 earned a 1 or 2. These are the same results we received in 2014-15, and based on the Level 1 and 2's, we have built in instructional passages that the state has shared with us for purposes of providing explicit instruction on the types of questions being asked on the assessment. We have also developed intervention groups with Ms. Miller and Mrs. Smith to work with students who were not successful on the BOG (reading/comprehension vs. test-taking skills). We also held a Read to Achieve Parent Night on Sept. 16, to assist parents with questions and concerns.

Spanish

Our Spanish Immersion program is in full swing in kindergarten. Students have adjusted well and are already following directions in Spanish and jumping into the language. The focus has been on routines and vocabulary in these first few weeks.

Our 30-minute daily Spanish instruction is also off and running. Students are actively engaged with Ms. Franco and Mr. Blanco in fun and engaging lessons. We are seeing the benefits of daily exposure, especially in grades 3-5, where students are already demonstrating their conversational skills.

Middle School:

School Report Card – Middle School

In June, we reported on state testing data and were very pleased with our proficiency rates in each grade level and department. This month, Pine Lake received data specific to our school grade and

growth score. We celebrated the school grade of an A and also the fact that, as a Middle School, we met or exceeded growth in 6th, 7th and 8th grades, in both Math and English/Language Arts, during the 2014-2015 school year. Hats off to the Middle School staff!

Crosby Scholars

On Monday, September 14th the Middle School hosted the Crosby Scholars for a parent informational meeting. The Crosby Scholars program for middle school students is dedicated to the college planning process. Students and families who enroll in the program have the opportunity to attend academic and personal enrichment workshops, study skills courses, ACT/SAT courses, receive advisory services, and participate in college admission and financial aide workshops. All students who apply are accepted, and the program is entirely free.

Middle School Expedition News and Dates

The Middle School expedition dates have been finalized and posted to the website. During the months of September and October, we will host informational meetings for families regarding grade level specific trips.

6th Grade – YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly (April 6th – April 8th)

Situated in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville, North Carolina, the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly offers an environmental education program that supplements PLP's science curriculum. Surrounded by mountain streams, wildflowers, valleys and spectacular views, students will have an opportunity to learn in an active and hands on environment.

7th Grade – Washington D.C. (March 9th – March 11th)

Washington D.C. provides a backdrop for the Social Studies curriculum and offers students the opportunity to explore historic landmarks. The U.S. Capitol, the National Mall, US Holocaust Museum, Embassy Row, National Archives, Arlington National Cemetery, Air and Space Museum, Natural History Museum, White House, American History Museum and the National Zoo are among the many stops.

8th Grade – Atlanta (April 13th – April 15th)

Atlanta provides an opportunity to sleep with the fishes and live to tell about it. Students will have the opportunity to spend the night in the world famous (and largest) Georgia Aquarium. Other stops include the World of Coca Cola, Sparkes Skating Rink, the Cyclorama, Stone Mountain historical site and park, Zoo Atlanta, Martin Luther King National Historic Site and The Varsity.

National Junior Honor Society

On Monday, October 5th, the Middle School will induct select 8th grade students into the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS). NJHS is an organization that promotes recognition for middle school students, who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship and character. Membership in NJHS is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a student at Pine Lake Preparatory. Eligibility for National Junior Honor Society is limited to 8th grade students who have maintained a 3.8 combined G.P.A in seventh grade and excel in the five NJHS pillars/ideals – scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship and character.

Upper School:

TRaIL (teaching relevance and innovating learning)

We are in the beginning stages of a partnership with Discovery Education to help us answer the “whys” of using technology. This partnership is centered on a three-year PD plan, creating a cultural shift toward problem based learning and how we interact with students in our classrooms. We have gone through 2 days of Administrative PD geared toward STEM transformation and STEM leadership. Teachers have been through 3 preSTEM sessions aimed at enhancing technology integration, student engagement, and centers based learning. We have 5 additional days (September 23 as the next) on the calendar for teachers to spend time learning how to create STEM fortified lessons.

Additional components of this program will entail a community roll out in January, where the goal is to have students run interactive experiences for families and visitors. Summer camps for June/July 2016 are also going to be an extension of the STEMformation (TRaIL) program. More information will come as we get closer to June 2016.

AP/PLtW /Dual Enrollment Course Enrollment

We have 13 advanced placement classes offered to Pine Lake students. In these classes, we have enrollment of 331. An additional 3 students are taking AP classes through NCVPS we do not offer in our classrooms. The Project Lead the Way engineering program in the Upper School currently is serving another 67 students. Another 20 students are taking part in the Career and College Promise program where they can earn both college credits while still in high school. Each of these categories is impressive for a school our size.

Athletics

The Pride is actively competing in 6 Upper School sports during the fall 2015. It’s our expectation the nearly 110 student athletes taking part in interscholastic athletics will represent Pine Lake in exemplary fashion, while learning about sportsmanship and life. The anticipation is building toward the September 4th playing of games on the new fields at the Pine Lake athletic complex.

Testing

The PLAN test will be administered to all 10th grade students at Pine Lake on October 7, 2015. This is a pre-ACT test directed by NCDPI. On October 14, 2015, 10th and 11th grade students will have the opportunity to take the PSAT/NMSQT. Information has been sent to families about the importance of both tests. Juniors will take the ACT at Pine Lake in March 2016.

Strategy II – Resources

Lower School:

Math in Focus

Teachers and students were excited to receive MIF materials. Each student in the LS has a textbook, and teachers have access to manipulative kits and online resources. This completes our textbook adoption in math.

Moby Max

We have renewed Moby Max for the year. We use MM as a universal screening, as well as to target specific gaps students have in both Reading and Math. With this information, we are able to create intervention groups and to track student growth.

Enrichments

This month, we rolled out our Lego Robotics and Junior Engineers program and the first wave of optional Enrichments (called Explorations in the past), including a math-tutoring program tailored specifically for our MIF program.

CORE Ready

Teachers received the last of their CORE Ready language arts materials, including accompanying mentor texts. Mrs. Waufle, Reading Specialist, has processed them for us, and they are being utilized daily as the core of our literacy instruction.

Middle School:

Staff Development

In an effort to provide growth opportunities for our staff, the Middle School recently participated in staff development specific to Edmodo, SchoolNet and SAS Curriculum Pathways. On Thursday, September 24th we will host Discovery Education for additional professional development specific to their streaming software and content resources. I will say that many of these opportunities and their subsequent utilization have been made possible, because of the new and reliable laptop that every teacher and student has available. I appreciate the board's efforts in helping to make that reality.

Upper School:

Enrollment

The Upper School opens the 2015-2016 school year with more students than we've had previously. Our senior class has 119 students, juniors 144, sophomores 139, and freshman 142 – a total of 544 students as I type this report. Our goal is to be around 550 students 9-12.

Building

Carpet is installed (mostly) and we can begin to move beyond the great flood of February 2015 in the Upper School. The final tweaks should be taking place on September 23, 2015.

Strategy III – Culture & Community

Lower School:

Curriculum Nights

Curriculum Nights were held over 3 days in early September. Overall, 80% of our families attended, as teachers shared the curriculum and activities for the year. Parents received information on academics as well as field trips and volunteer opportunities. We also held a used uniform event in conjunction with Curriculum Night.

Read to Achieve Parent Night

As parents receive BOG3 results, parents typically have questions about the requirements of the law as well as the process for their child. In order to explain the Read to Achieve Law to parents and what it means to their 3rd graders, Mrs. Sims will hold a Read to Achieve Parent night on Wednesday, September 16 in the ACC. This will not only be an informational meeting, but also a venue to answer questions and address concerns.

Sustainable Garden

The LS will hold its 4th annual Garden Day in which students rotate through stations and learn about our garden. Students will plant seeds and learn about plants, nutrition and composting. A huge thank you goes out to the committee and volunteers who worked hard to clean up our garden in early September and who are manning the stations for Garden Day. Throughout the year students will plant, water, weed and harvest directly from our PLP garden.

National Anthem Day

Students gathered in the halls to sing the National Anthem as a school on Monday, Sept. 14.

National Arts Education Week

To celebrate The Arts at PLP, Upper School chorus and string students visited the LS and gave short, impromptu performances to students throughout the week. We saw as many smiles from the US students as we did the LS. The connection between schools is what makes Pine Lake special.

Middle School:

Parent Teacher Conferences

The week of September 21st through September 25th, 2015 has been designated for family conferences at the Middle School. It will be our goal to accommodate any family/parent who would like to have a meeting with an individual Academic Partner. September 23rd is a no-school day for students and an Academic Partner workday - families that choose will have the opportunity to participate in a drop-in conference with their child's teachers between the hours of 11:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Upper School:

Clubs

Student Council is the first of the Upper School clubs to get moving. They will hold information sessions and class elections in early September.

The Engage/Excel Club will begin the school year with a dedication and celebration of the new Freedom Shrine installed in the Upper School back in June. We were hoping this would have already taken place, but with the Senior Experience the tentative date for this will be September 23rd – in conjunction with the other events of the evening.

September 15 was Upper School Club Day. Students (all 9-12) had the opportunity to see the variety of extra curricular opportunities available during the 2015-2016 school year. The day was a success, and many students were able to begin getting involved in some aspect of Pine Lake beyond the classroom.

Honor Society inductions are coming quickly. We will have two nights where we celebrate the achievements of many of our wonderful Upper School students. One night will recognize our more academic honor societies, and a second will be dedicated to recognizing the fine art honor societies.

College Planning

The Upper School College Planning Team has many activities planned for the start of the school year (all dates can be found on the school calendar and the College Planning web page). These will include college planning nights for each grade level (senior, junior, sophomore, freshman), culminating in a college fair on September 30, with over 50 colleges and universities setting up their tables in the Upper School. Students will have the opportunity to visit with admission representatives and gather information to help better develop goals beyond Pine Lake.

Curriculum Night

Families will have the ability on September 24, 2015 to follow their student's schedule to learn about the educational direction of each of their student's classes. Teachers will provide an interactive insight into learning that will take place throughout the school year. This will not be a syllabus review session.

Family Conferences

We will have our annual Family Conference opportunity on Wednesday, October 7 following the administration of the PLAN test. Staff and teachers will be available from 1:00-7:00 p.m. for drop in-style conferences. Families will be able to come and spend a few minutes to discuss specific student and/or class concerns. Families may also request a specific time outside the Family Conference Day by making an appointment with individual teachers.

Character Day

The Upper School and Lower School will, again, create a shared experience with Character Day on October 30, 2015. Upper School students will participate in book readings and other classroom celebrations. We are planning on a reciprocal day for LS students to come to the US in the spring as well.

Technology Update:

Tickets

231 New tickets generated (Avg 10 tickets per day)

- * 84 User Account Issues
- * 54 Add\Change Requests
- * 30 Software Issues
- * 25 Network Issues
- * 24 Hardware Issues
- * 8 Info\Inquiry Requests
- * 6 Phone Issues

83 Tickets active and unresolved

2015-2016 Device Rollout\Student Devices

- * 6-12 new device rollout complete, technology being heavily utilized in 6-12 classrooms
- * K-5 iPad device rollout (5 iPads per classroom) scheduled for week of Sept 21st

Infrastructure\Network

- * Wifi network performing well after emergency upgrade to software on Meraki access points. Meraki acknowledged issues with software version after repeated support calls.
- * Internet speeds improving but still remains less than optimal due to the following:
 - May 2015 upgrade of connection not fully completed by internet provider resulting in less available bandwidth than before upgrade. Issue discovered Sept. 1st, upgrade completed on Sept 7th.
 - High demand based on consistent use of technology in the classrooms
 - Additional Internet upgrade initiated Sept 17th by DPI due to heavy utilization, despite 30-day requirement of high usage.
 - Firewall security device provided by DPI to be upgraded as result of utilization. Current firewall provided was replaced with blade server to improve Internet speeds during recent issues.

Calendars

Pine Lake Preparatory Events Calendar:

<http://www.pinelakeprep.org/pinelakeeventcalendar.html>

Athletic Calendars:

Games & Practices:

https://docs.google.com/a/pinelakeprep.org/spreadsheets/d/1dIFlABIKBsf1jN_dIIlMI6MDFrq3MpKC0sj_aBHcdt8U/edit#gid=1943333432

Games and Addresses:

https://docs.google.com/a/pinelakeprep.org/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AjREuF3UdHTTdHFPMmZ3eDY5X2x4MIJ6a3B0dmtUNkE&usp=drive_web#gid=3