

Our Vision Comes to Life.....Voices have been heard..... A uniform decision.
Dennis Larkin Ed. D.

Let me open this article with the bottom line right here at the beginning: After months of review, the administration has concluded unanimously and resoundingly that LCS will not introduce a school uniform for students. The verdict is in, the data is convincing.....the LCS community by a greater margin than any time in the past three years has expressed the opinion that LCS should not implement a school uniform.

This is the story behind that decision.

Back in October the PTO Executive Committee formally approached me to ask that LCS re-consider previous requests to implement a school uniform for students at our school. Recalling the heart felt and passionately expressed emotions the last time we looked at school uniforms, my immediate thought was that we have looked at this suggestion twice in the past three years why do we need to go into this again? However, wanting to honor the relationship we wish to have with parents and with the PTO leadership, I agreed that the administration would take on this request one more time.

In setting out to review whether or not LCS should introduce a school uniform we decided to develop a broad based process that would allow everyone in the community to express their opinion and that the process by engaging the community would allow the administration review this data and make a decision with finality.

Over the past two months we implemented an engagement survey to solicit the opinion of parents, teachers, support staff, teacher assistants. The engagement survey was designed to provide positive aspects of the school uniform and to allow each person to express a clear and simple opinion, yes, or no, do you support a school uniform at LCS? In addition, school principals Geoff Smith and Julie Olson held class meetings with students to show them examples of the uniforms that might be adopted and to listen to the comments, concerns and ideas of students from grade 3 through 12. I have every confidence that our process has allowed all who wished to do so to express their view on whether or not a uniform should be introduced to our school.

What is clear is that the positive aspects of a school uniform are understood and appreciated by most members of our community. A large number of participants indicated that they agree a uniform might promote school pride, might present a difference image of the school and would be reflective of the norms in Ghana.

What is also clear is that an even larger number of participants, while agreeing to these positive aspects of school uniform, do not want to have a school uniform at LCS. Students in particular, but also a significant majority of parents and teachers, feel strongly that an important part of the LCS identity is that our

community values individuals, nurtures independent thought, believes our image goes well beyond what we wear, and encourages students to self assess and to learn from their mistakes. We also believe that LCS should further our representation to the community by highlighting our vision and the Learner Profile in our programs, actions and engagement with others rather than using a uniform to identify our students.

The conclusion, based on the wide spread engagement of parents, students, and staff, is clear. The school administration is unanimous in making **the decision that we will not adopt a required school uniform for LCS. Equally, we are clear that we will**

- continue to implement the existing school dress code
- introduce to the Spirit Store merchandise that will promote the LCS brand and identity through an attractive and varied line of spirit items.

At the next Head of School Parent Coffee I will review the details of the varied input we have received from parents, students, staff and faculty via surveys, class meetings and parent meetings.