Focus Group: LMEA Officers
Date: 4/2/14

SWOT
1. Strengths:
   a. Resources, like revenue and parent support
   b. Human resources, like teachers and support staff
   c. Quality of facilities/learning environment: well equipped, safe, and clean
   d. LMEA (labor) and the District (management) have negotiated a contract that helps to recruit and retain highly-qualified staff

2. Weaknesses:
   a. Timely communication from central administration to staff
   b. Clear communication from central administration to staff (i.e., emails can be confusing and/or ambiguous)
   c. Central administration seems detached from those who they supervise and who carry forth initiatives
   d. Initiative fatigue
      i. Puts stress and strain on our system
      ii. The system becomes less productive because it is overloaded
   e. Time for training; a message is delivered, but the time to implement the message isn’t planned for

3. Opportunities:
   a. Expand summer school offerings
   b. Partner with local colleges
   c. Expand use of technology
   d. Participate in pilots; help teachers to feel empowered to take risks and try new ways of thinking and doing

4. Threats:
   a. Conformity; too much emphasis on the same programs and same approaches in the elementary, middle, and high schools
   b. Standardized testing that drives instruction and students’ experiences in school

Key Questions
1. What should school look like ten years from now?
   a. More autonomy within the buildings among teachers
   b. More time for teachers to collaborate
   c. More autonomy within courses for students to personalize their learning

2. What should a Lower Merion School District graduate look like? What are the skills, attitudes, and dispositions that we want for all students?
   a. Enthusiastic about learning
   b. Creative, inventive thinkers
   c. Active citizens

3. What do we value as a District? How do we hold onto our traditions while simultaneously embracing change?
   a. Cohesion (i.e., collaboration and cooperation) between professionals and support staff
   b. Collaboration between LMEA and central administration
   c. Uniqueness; not being a “cookie cutter” approach to education