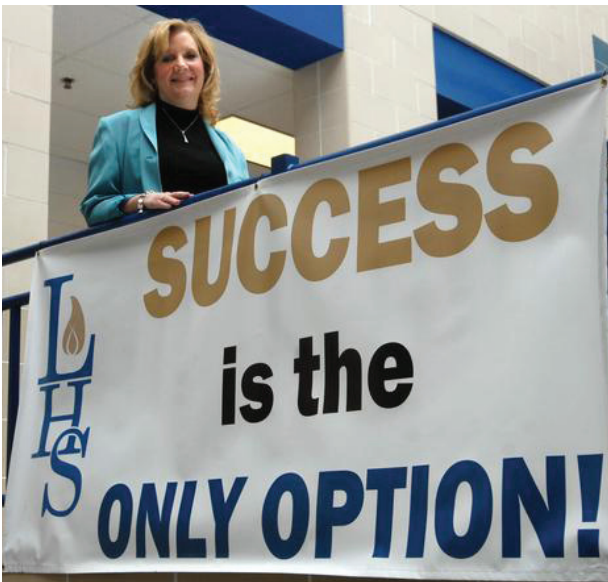


THE LHS TOM-TOM IS BACK TO SCHOOL

Upgrades in Hard Times

By Dylan Blaha
News Editor



Lemont High School Superintendent Sandra Doebert

Photo courtesy of Google

In the wake of a stagnant economy, Lemont Township High School continued to make annual upgrades in the Summer of 2009. The school completed the Julia Street parking lot, added ceiling projectors in every classroom, and placed over twenty new cameras sporadically around the school's entrances.

Regarding these upgrades, LHS Principal, Dr. Thomas Trengrove, stated, "You have to put them in order of priority. The school bought what everyone

thought was most important." Dr. Sandra Doebert [Superintendent], Joe Murphy [Business Manager] and Jim Poss [Director of Information Technology] were instrumental in securing the new upgrades."

Everything but the addition of a solar panel that now sits outside the third floor east corridor was purchased with the final money from the major construction project that took place two years ago, where the east side of the school was extended and a Performing Arts Center added.

continued on pg 2

IN THIS ISSUE...

pg 1.

Upgrades in
Hard Times

pg 2.

Upgrades in
Hard times

pg 3.

policy
statement

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“You plan for what money you know you have,” said Doeber. “These were the final elements of the construction project since it finished under budget.”

Every classroom at LHS is now equipped with a “light box” that enables teachers to project images from their computer onto a white screen. Trengrove described the instructional advantage to the new technology as “remarkable.” “It makes it easier to take notes now and you don’t have to keep track of as many handouts,” said junior, Arthur Laciak.

The extension of the Julia Street parking lot allows for more student parking. In the past, students would park in front of houses by the school even though it was prohibited, but now the administration hopes parking will not be as much of an issue. Doeber compared this improvement to the installation of the PAC because “it was clearly something people wanted.”

During the construction process two years ago, cameras were in place around the school but the viewing quality of those was poor. “You could see a person walking, but you couldn’t make out a face,” said Dave Clark [Assistant Principal and Director of Staff and Student Services]. “The new cameras are a higher definition and are definitely a notch up from the other ones.”

Contrary to the belief of some students, the cameras were not put in place to stop them from ditching class. They were put in place to address the ongoing concern for student safety and the issue of “unwanted intruders.”

Even though the solar panel now in LHS’ possession carries a \$11,700 price tag, it cost the school nothing. Science Teacher Karen Aleman wrote a grant that paid for this upgrade that has students asking, “What’s that?” Although it does not provide all the electricity LHS uses on a daily basis, the solar panel will make the school’s electric bill lower.

A final upgrade, one most students have not noticed, is a new walkway in the east parking leading to the football stadium. This allows the ticket booth to be closer to electricity and makes it easier for people to walk up the hill. “The old [walkway] was just too steep,” said Trengrove.

With the final money from the construction project spent, LHS knows that the present state of the national economy will lead to a long road ahead. “Obviously the economy does impact on the horizon,” said Doeber. “There’s no question about that.”

LHS has already started green initiatives to try and save the school money, such as the reduction of paper use and “turn off the lights” stickers on every light switch. A “Green Committee” has also been established to help with these matters.

Regarding future upgrades, Doeber said, “Regardless of the economic state, Lemont High School will continue to do whatever it entails to ensure a higher education for all students.”

The Tom-Tom Policy Statement

The Tom-Tom is a non-biased, equal opportunity, student run publication by and for the students. The Tom-Tom is owned and supported by the school administration. The faculty and the administrative staff will serve as the final voice on all controversial issues of the publication.

Lemont High School stands to protect, encourage and enhance free speech and is a forum for student expression. As an advocate of these ideals, the Tom-Tom allows for uninhibited free discussion of issues. However, the publication reserves the right to filter out or alter any inappropriate content.

As a school publication, we stand to protect the school and its students by seeking to report the news in a timely and complete fashion. The Tom-Tom will work independently from other news organizations and will actively work to minimize harm and/or defamation of character.

In order to deliver the news in the best possible manner, the editorial board will meet before assignments are given to the writers in order to discuss the priority of every assignment.

We will accept all criticism in the form of a letter to the editor but we reserve the right to choose whether or not to publish such letters. If we decide to publish a letter to the editor, we also reserve the right to filter or alter inappropriate content in the letter. All letters must be submitted with a name in order to be considered for publication, but we will publish the letter as anonymous upon request.

If it is necessary, a correction column will run in an ensuing issue.

The Tom-Tom reserves the right to accept or to deny ads.

If any other issues arise, the editorial board will meet and come to a joint decision in order to best serve the general public's interests.