



## **Westlake Board of Education**

### ***Board Notes from Monday, Jan. 15, 2014, Work Session***

#### **Vision Statement**

The Westlake City School District will provide a dynamic, student-centered, 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment. Our district will be characterized by high achievement, actively engaged learners, mutual respect, shared knowledge, pursuit of new skills and capabilities, collaborative learning, willingness to take action, a team commitment to data-driven continuous improvement, and tangible results.

#### **Mission Statement**

We Educate for Excellence ... Empowering all students to achieve their educational goals, to direct their lives, and to contribute to society.

#### **TREASURER'S ITEMS**

1. Approved 2014-15 tax budget

#### **SPECIAL REPORTS & RECOGNITIONS**

1. David Greenspan presented a proclamation to Dr. Daniel J. Keenan Jr. for Ohio Superintendent of the Year
  - a. Carol Winter: This is a huge honor. Dr. Keenan was named the Ohio Superintendent of the Year by the Buckeye Association of School Administrators. He is in the running for national Superintendent of the Year. We had a reception for Dr. Keenan on Monday including family members. Mr. Greenspan is our Cuyahoga County Council Ward 1 representative.
  - b. Dr. Keenan: Thank you for taking the time to be here. The application for this is what's going on in the district. It's all about the kids and what they are doing; the staff and teachers and community is what makes this award. I hope people recognize what goes into these types of things is the entire school community. It's a demonstration of what our school community values. You are here for the schools, our kids and our students.

We've had a lot of things going on with finances, but the priority is the mission and you have to demonstrate you are using your resources effectively and wisely.

- c. Winter: A leader is many things. We look for many qualities in our leaders. One of those not lost on this Board is your humility. There are a couple things going on with your leadership we value. You are looking at the world as a cup half full type of person. We'll always see opportunities in our challenges. But you have the humility to understand everyone here has a lot to offer as well and you are open to that.

## 2. Pay-to-Participate proposal

- a. Dr. Keenan: To date we have acted on Transportation adjustments. A year ago we made an adjustment in the spring to manage resources but still continue similar service. With the failure in November, we had to move to state minimum busing. Next Board meeting you will be asked to approve the route changes that go along with that and the reduction in force.
- b. Director of Human Resources Anne Pyros: The recommendation is made to implement pay to participate for athletics and extracurricular/clubs beginning spring 2014. A committee was formed and has met to examine how we would implement that in our district. We looked at Southwest Conference districts and trends in Ohio.
- c. Athletic Director Tony Cipollone: All current and future SWC districts charge fees, except Olmsted Falls and Westlake, ranging from \$700 to \$15. According to OHSAA, 48% of public school districts have pay to participate. Northeast Ohio districts had the highest average fees in the state. We are in top 5% of state in what we offer athletically. Considerations included offsetting general fund expenses, athletic costs, co-curricular/extra-curricular costs, transportation fees, student and family caps, financial assistance, payment options/plans.
- d. WHS Principal Tim Freeman: We looked at supplemental costs for coaches and advisors, 3- to 4-year participation numbers for athletics and clubs/activities, transportation costs. Fees were determined by using average costs of supplemental and participation numbers. Activities were tiered according to approximate costs. A 20% benchmark was used to develop fees.
  - i. Tier I-A\*: \$125
    - 1. HS baseball, football, wrestling, softball, volleyball, basketball, golf, soccer
  - ii. Tier I-B\*: \$55
    - 1. HS track, gymnastics, swimming/dive, tennis, cheerleading, cross country, lacrosse, marching band, Demonettes, Debonaires, majorettes, ...
    - 2. MS track, football, cheerleading, cross country, volleyball, wrestling, basketball, softball, ...
  - iii. Tier II-A: \$35
    - 1. HS science Olympiad, drama club, yearbook, tech mates, academic challenge, forensics

- iv. Tier II-B: \$15
  - 1. Hs French club, German Club, Latin Club, Spanish Club, Key Club
- v. \*Transportation fee (one-time annual fee): \$65 (will be pro-rated for spring at \$22)
- e. LBMS Principal Paul Wilson: We are recommending individual student caps of \$250 for a high school student plus a transportation fee for a total cap of \$315. Middle school student cap is \$110 plus transportation fee for a total cap of \$175. (Transportation fee is \$65)
- f. Athletic Director Tony Cipollone: fees must be paid by check, money order or credit card. Cash will not be accepted. Fees must be paid in fully by indicated due dates. For spring 2014 the due date is March 29. Payment plans, financial assistance or waivers are not available. Fees are non-refundable with the following exceptions:
  - i. A sport or club activity is canceled due to insufficient numbers
  - ii. The student does not make the team
  - iii. Student suffers a season-ending injury prior to the first game
  - iv. Student move out of the district prior to the first game
  - v. The student becomes academically ineligible before the first mandatory practice
- g. Pyros: the anticipated savings for spring 2014 is \$41,433. The anticipated savings for 2014-2015 is \$134,485-\$176,750. Anticipates savings are based on variables such as participation, student caps and multiple tier participants.
- h. Thomas Mays: Tier II costs determined same as Tier I? Benchmark at 20%, did you notice other districts were using that or did they randomly pick numbers?
  - i. Freeman: we were discouraged by the number unable to provide an explanation. It seemed like a threshold number that was arbitrary. We thought it was important to find a number that gave us the ability to explain why it existed, was reasonable and would maintain participation. As we look at reduction recommendations, near the 20% benchmark with course offerings, so it was a starting point.
  - ii. Cipollone: Hockey is self-funded so it is not included.
  - iii. Freeman: Hockey's expenditure would not contribute toward the cap.
  - iv. Mays: I think it's better to have an offering and a charge than eliminate the offering altogether.
- i. Barb Leszynski: have you considered some of the smaller teams like tennis could eliminate the transportation charge and get themselves to sites.
  - i. Pyros: we did talk about that, would there be situations where families or parents would choose not to pay the transportation fee and transport. We'd still require and provide transportation at this time. With our new proposal and as we implement we will continue to examine that.
- j. John Finucane: Benchmark information is important for making decisions. Are we planning on using this schedule for next year or will we revisit?

- i. Dr. Keenan: the discussion we've had for a year if we don't generate revenue to address the expenditures, then we either need to adjust expenditures or do something like this. My intention is to recommend pay to participate for next year. When finalized and approved, this will be for spring and next school year.
- k. Tony Falcone: I always think about the 30 second elevator speech to people. When it comes to sports and activities, the district will subsidize 80% of the sport or activity with the families contributing 20%?
  - i. Dr. Keenan: No, it's 80% of supplemental cost. Gate receipts will pay for equipment, tournament fees. Transportation will be close to 100%. Operations end in respect to tournaments will be paid out of gate and receipts. May be gaps filled in a given year. Transportation should be paid close to in full. May be some general fund gaps depending on estimates.
  - ii. Falcone: I think this plan is relatively affordable. The goal is to trim \$2.2 million from the budget. Are we realizing what we hoped to realize from pay to participate?
  - iii. Dr. Keenan: Absolutely. That may allow us to adjust in other areas, but we have to see what is realized. These are projected savings against the budget. If pay to participate reach projections would provide a bigger savings. The \$2.2 million doesn't erase the deficit spending circumstances schools face due to levy cycles and how schools are funded. Reality is we are making adjustments at the level, choosing a number with a rationale to be responsive to the levy failures. At some point in time, unless we defy the history of any other district, we'll have to seek funds in the future and keep it away from a double digit circumstance and avoid massive cuts.
- l. Barb Leszynski: My only concern is someone who truly cannot afford it, I don't want them to not be able to participate. Those who participate are better students. I'd hate to close the door totally on a kid who couldn't afford it.
  - i. Freeman: we considered it at length. We're not recommending it at this point. It would warrant some study on the right way to do those things. We can't confidently recommend a plan to address that. We looked at several districts. It's a difficult thing to build in an equitable and responsible way.
  - ii. Pyros: its' something we will continue to examine closely into next year.
  - iii. Winter: Did you consider the Demons Club to take that up?
  - iv. Pyros: we looked at organizations that might have scholarships or can take that up. We discussed all of those. To implement in spring at the onset was not an a recommendation at this time.
  - v. Freeman: one of the best things about our extra-curricular programs is the community support of those events. Demons Club is a non-sports specific support group. When you formalize that it precipitated a fragmenting of boosting. That proliferates over time. We're not discouraging that, but we

need to reflect on how to do that the right way to maintain the integrity and health of those programs.

- m. Dr. Keenan: This presentation was made to let the Board and community hear before I make a recommendation on Jan. 27. We get questions about a family cap. Across the board nature of this went from \$80 to \$700. We were working toward a rationale that connected with other decisions.
- n. Cipollone: In my discussions with coaches the message is this is new. We've never had this before and we'll have to do business a different way being very conscious of budget, what we need v. what we want. Coaches are very concerned. It's going to be a good test run in the spring to see how this will affect us.
- o. Winter: we've been looking at different ways of doing business. Using benchmarks and reasonable goals for costs and participation is a good rationale. We are a mission and a vision driven district. This follows with what we do.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Approved resignation for purpose of retirement for Karen Ormsby, Jacqueline Hollis and Leah Vandersluis
- 2. Approved certified home instruction by Kayleigh O'Neil
- 3. Amended vendor name on change order #294 from Great Lakes Crushing to Sitetech
- 4. Publicly posted previously approved construction change orders
  - a. SONA Construction, \$1063.97, repair existing roof leaks
  - b. SONA Construction, \$675.47, provide replacement door
  - c. SONA Construction, \$2284.02, provide floor leveling and replacement thresholds
  - d. SONA Construction, \$1811.83, provide grit strips and replacement thresholds
  - e. SONA Construction, \$2116.94, patch and match mosaic tile floors in toilet rooms
  - f. SONA Construction, \$1637.61, replace existing chase walls in toilet rooms
  - g. SONA Construction, (\$10,000) credit city inspection contract allowance
  - h. SONA Construction, \$1584.30, provide replacement ceiling tiles
  - i. Cleveland Vicon, \$486, replace keyed door mullion
  - j. Capstone Construction, (\$486), credit for replacing keyed door mullion
  - k. Turner Logistics, \$41.31, replace keyed door mullion
  - l. Capstone Construction, (\$41.31), credit for replacing keyed door mullion
  - m. EB Katz Inc., \$1860.01, provide backflow preventers on ice machines
  - n. Lake Erie Electric, \$1000.75, relocate power for dock equipment motor
  - o. Lake Erie Electric, \$714.35, provide control wiring for ansul system
  - p. EB Katz Inc., \$1303.81, install Solenoid valve for ansul system
  - q. Castle HVAC Inc., \$1237.50, furnish electronic solenoid valve for ansul system
  - r. Zenith Systems, (\$5414), deduct technology alternate
  - s. Cleveland Vicon, \$675, rework four door frames
  - t. Cleveland Vicon, \$167, add new door frame
  - u. Cleveland Vicon, \$342, add 2 new exterior door handles

- v. Turner Logistics, \$432.12, cost of service on changes to date
  - w. Capstone Construction, \$1025, relocate motor for dock equipment
- 5. Adopted 2014-15 school year calendar
- 6. Approved increase for all-day kindergarten tuition to \$2,500 (\$616 for reduced lunch and \$200 for free lunch)

## **BOARD ITEMS**

1. Discussion of policy on public participation at Board meetings
  - a. Carol Winter: Numerous people raised concerns at the end of 2013 about public participation. There had been concerns because personal attacks made at some point, we have students in attendance, so we wanted to make sure our policy addresses civil discourse and allows us to conduct meetings as we are supposed to by law. OSBA has guidelines for good governance. This is our only opportunity as one body to meet as board members and to meet with our administrators.
  - b. Tony Falcone: I was curious about what other districts do, so I looked at some. With regard to personal attacks, Bay Village has language about it. Lakewood is specific about no right to public participation. I think we have a very open policy. There is no room for personal attacks or unprofessionalism. I don't feel we need to change the policy that exists now.
  - c. Barb Leszynski: interesting that Lakewood does not provide that right. My concern with students present, everyone needs to be responsible for the way they handle themselves and the comments they make. I think the policy is fine as is.
  - d. Winter: We're not a public meeting, but we hold our meeting in public. Legally we do not have to allow public comment.
  - e. John Finucane: I attended a new Board member OSBA introduction. We're only able to meet in public, but it's not a public meeting. When anyone offers an opinion the understanding is that it is to the Board, which makes the decisions on how the district is run.
  - f. Tom Mays: the last couple of meetings of 2013, emotions were running high. I think you have a right to say what you want to say. The whole public hearing portion of the meeting has no restrictions, like letting us know what you want to discuss or signing in at the meeting. If we change the policy, would there be any violation of First Amendment rights? I don't think so because there are multiple opportunities to be heard. The question is are we trying to limit content? Whether it be disruptive speech or a personal attack, according to the law it's fighting words, which are not covered under the First Amendment. We're trying to run a meeting to talk about district policy. I think we'd be justified in adding language not content neutral, to specifically prohibit personal attacks, but I believe our policy as written implies that.
  - g. Winter: after reviewing it and doing research and looking at OSBA policy language, I agree we don't need to change the policy. On my end as the president, I will make a regular comment about what we expect during the various participation times. I would

recommend a welcome to a Board meeting brochure that is always here in this room and that we post the same content on our website to understand how the meeting is run and what an agenda looks like. I'd like to be more user friendly for the people that come to our meetings.

- h. Falcone: All of our email addresses and phone numbers are listed online.
- i. Mays: Carol is the spokesperson for the Board.

#### **HEARING OF THE PUBLIC**

1. Marge Widmar: as a retired teacher, it was always important to me, known to me and expressed to me that my job was to facilitate in the classroom the goals of the curriculum. The circumstances our teachers are in now, they must solve problems they've been given. Energies are being taken away from the classroom because the conditions are there with changes and challenges.
2. Cathy Axcell: Thank the administrators for putting together a data driven report. Appreciate you keeping it reasonable for families. Sometimes people are not aware of what you do with their comment once they make it. Sometimes they feel they should receive an answer.

The Board adjourned to executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations. No action was taken.

Meeting adjourned.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** The next meeting of the Board is Monday, Jan. 27, 2014, at 5:30pm, at the Administration Building for the organizational meeting.

For more detailed information on these items, visit

<http://beta.westlake.k12.oh.us/boe/meetingschedule/default.aspx>