



Westlake Board of Education

Board Notes from Monday, 3/21/11 Regular Meeting

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. WHS to be honored by the College Board as a nationally recognized school for achievement. One of 388 high schools across the nation that increased our participation 20% and increased achievement by 4% or more. Emphasis on kids taking AP exams and scores are above the national average.
2. LBMS and WHS top finishers in state for respective competitions. WHS 2nd and LBMS 3rd.
3. Environmental class working on Bicentennial projects with the city.
4. Ensembles traveled to Columbus to receive excellent honors.
5. Hilliard Principal Mary Flanagan will retire at the end of the year. Principal at Hilliard for 24 years, completing 41 years in education. Outstanding local educator for PTA. Northeast Ohio District honored her with the same award.
6. March 23: OSBA will honor Andrea Rocco for her service on the board for 10 years.
7. Addressing questions and concerns about the budget and Governor's plan.
 - a. Discussion with Jean Bishop about Planetarium program discontinuation. Due to part of commitment to IB Primary Years Programme. Need to offset 10-20% decrease in state funding for next year.
 - b. Reduction in force with art teacher and committed to 0% increase in budgets. 2 years with no operational increases.
 - c. Going to try to offset two positions with IB coordinator positions. Worked through 4.5 FTEs in addition to reduction last year.
 - d. March 15 provided glimpse of how state will account for \$8 billion deficit. Still much to untangle about overall impact. As we continue to watch those changes, we may be looking to adjust what we do.
 - e. This week talked about gifted coordinator position being cut down (administrative position). Other reductions in gifted resources support, high school math, middle school

special education and reading intervention positions. Anticipate potentially another 2-3 reductions next year.

- f. Goals in change in education as presented by the governor's office. Looked at points in new proposed changes at the state level. Many we are well in line with, others we'll have to work on:
- i. Regional support needs to be increased – partner with vocational services, consortiums
 - ii. Lower health care/insurance costs – Westlake one of first in region to have spousal clause in insurance. Suburban Healthcare Consortium something we are involved in. May be looking at more regionalization in insurance.
 - iii. Emphasis on digital innovations/online alternatives – began offering this school year. Distance learning, ombudsman program.
 - iv. Online differentiation – Read 180, Rosetta Stone, data management system. Online interventions.
 - v. Online professional development – 3rd year in Public School Works trainings.
 - vi. Consolidation of food service – ours one of few in state that runs in the black. We don't have a required breakfast program.
 - vii. Transportation consolidation – we do some of that.
 - viii. Building maintenance/operations
 - ix. Encourage volunteerism and private donations – began Partnership Advisory Council, food services assisted by Cleveland Clinic, advertising at events/website, leasing cell tower.
 - x. Educators need to take responsibility – our evaluation involves professional growth goals centered around CIP that takes student achievement into account.
 - xi. Decisions driven by student results – CIP is data driven and remains compass for school district. Added response to intervention program, ties into data monitoring system.
 - xii. Choice and competition embraced – credit flexibility, post-secondary options, Chinese after school program, KidzArt, STEM
 - xiii. Technology is integrated
 - xiv. Rank schools based on performance – set expectations in CIP based on potential in reaching, as well as measure against state and national and international levels.
 - xv. Encourage creation of innovative schools and zones – one of 10 recognized in state for program of excellence and STEM, senior capstone project, IB, service learning
 - xvi. Give parents takeover rights
 - xvii. Close chronicling of failing schools
 - xviii. Investing in our schools
 - xix. Encourage shared services
 - xx. Healthcare pooling
 - xxi. Federal stimulus funds are gone next school year

- xxii. Tangible personal property tax and kilowatt schedule – will have a great impact on us in regard to our state funding.
- xxiii. State foundation aid decreased – overall state funding decreased. We're about \$500/student. State for non-public aid is \$950. See that expanding. Concerns about 3 bills working to expand charter schools and support of vouchers. All 3 would take our tax dollars.
- xxiv. Dollars will be moved from state/regional budgets to school budgets – see potential for set asides (mandates). If reduced, will allow us to choose things that match our values.
- g. Dollars for Scholars took place Friday. PTA's largest fundraiser. Fund 10 scholarships for graduating seniors. Seniors lost for first time in 3 years.
- h. Demons Club has a Night at the Races on Saturday.

TREASURER'S REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorized return advance from Project LINK and ABLE Tri-C Fund
2. Accepted the amounts and rates as determined by the budget commission and authorized the necessary tax levies and certified them to the county auditor
3. Adjusted FY11 appropriations

ACTION ITEMS

4. Accepted gifts & contributions from:
 - a. Cathy Allen
 - b. Burning River Roller Girls
 - c. Helen Campana
 - d. Lisa Forshey
 - e. Pam Griebel
 - f. Bill Huron and Linda Lehecka
 - g. David and Peggie Leaver
 - h. Lynn Locksey
 - i. Kevin and Elaine Muche
 - j. Richard Muche
 - k. Cathie Murphy
 - l. Thomas and Therese Pasadyn
 - m. Tom, Brenda and Alex Schultz
 - n. Norma Todd
 - o. Mimi Verdone
 - p. Mary Kay Auger/Westlake Food Service
 - q. Westlake High School Staff
 - r. Anonymous
 - s. CCAP Enterprises, Paul Misterka
 - t. Dennis and Krysty DiFranco

- u. Energizer Inc. Employees
 - v. GreenQuest, Bud Hagy
 - w. Hungry Howie's Pizza, Andy Sanford
 - x. Marc and Jan Kelemen
 - y. Elizabeth Dieterich
 - z. John and Amy Wirtz
5. Approved resignation for purpose of retirement for Roger Meadows and Mary Flanagan
 6. Approved FMLA leave for Lorrie Knapp, Tina Bacik, Deborah Yehlik, Patricia Riegling, Bob Patton, Emma Loving, Dottie Kozak, Judith Spitzer, Rusty Mackenzie, Jessica Neimeister, Mark Quinlan
 7. Approved classified employment of Beth Hudak
 8. Approved seasonal employment of Jed Failo
 9. Approved classified substitute resignation from Judy O'Brien
 10. Approved certified substitute resignations of Danna Daso, Beth Mays, Gina Simeone
 11. Approved classified substitutes Lynn Brandt, Tammy Dull, Paula Jones, Rex Urban, David Collopy, Christina Efpraxias, Carolyn Klokey, David Delzeth, Nancy Fox
 12. Approved certified substitutes Kara Blackburn, Megan Stilla, Amy Franklin, Beverly Strempel, Jennifer Staff
 13. Approved reclassification of certified staff member Tom DeLuca
 14. Approved 2010-11 supplemental contract resignation of Jennifer Parker
 15. Approved 2010-11 supplemental contracts for Kristen Stuckart, Scott Sullivan, Kyle Romansky
 16. Approved 2011=12 supplemental contract for Regan Pore
 17. Reappointed certified substitutes for 2011-12
 18. Reappointed classified substitutes for 2011-12
 19. Approved administrator contract renewals for Renee Bailey, Kim Bonvissuto, Pamela Griebel, Michael Laub, James Sanfilippo, Marilyn Verdone
 20. Approved stipends for International Baccalaureate meetings for Kim Geletka, Chelsea McDonald, Jennifer Doyle, Rebecca Kowalski, Hun Piazza, Kim Toncar
 21. Approved 2011 Camp Link summer program and 2011 Camp Link parent/student handbook
 22. Approved WHS Key Club field trip to 62nd annual key Club District Convention
 23. Approved Sunday building use
 1. Approved support of middle and high school financial literacy and college and career readiness

MASTER FACILITY PLAN PHASE I REPORT

1. Treasurer Mark Pepera presented a financial report on the building project to date.
2. MKC Architects and Turner Construction presented the budgets to date and indicated both buildings are still in the value engineering phase.

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS REPORT

1. Getting ready for spring sports season.
2. Addressing potholes in parking lots.

BOARD ITEMS

1. Suicide Prevention Education Alliance – Tim Sullivan is a Board member of the organization. Links for Life golf outing. Call for participation.
2. Questions on Planetarium
 - a. 4 schools took advantage of it. Provides nice advantage for students, but need to funnel dollars with budget cuts facing us from the state. Looking at creating a credit flex course at the high school after hours. Trying to balance full time equivalent teachers with this position.
3. Tim Sullivan: Empathize with position of teachers. Here in Westlake our accountability is too low – tenure makes it difficult to weed out inefficient performers, cannot reward outstanding performers, cannot take middle performers and incentivize them to become outstanding, last-in first-out layoff policy. Ask if there are evaluations we have in place that cut against this or is our system more accountable than what I think it is?
 - a. Dr. Keenan: We may need to tighten to be in line with what the state lists. We have the ability to incorporate PPGA (professional goals and growth assessment form). CIP refers to student achievement and progress. Things discussed and included in goal setting. In infrequent circumstances, have addressed through that process to improve.
 - b. Sullivan: Our education system is not doing enough for our children or taxpayers. Too little accountability and too much cost.
4. Board Processes
 - a. Tom Mays: Duty of president is ensure processes are followed. Have to consider as a board the sunshine laws. Emails going back and forth should not try to initiate discussion as it may interfere with Sunshine Law. Must follow process of how we share our thoughts and ideas. Recent letter to the editor signed by a board member but was not shared with the rest of the board or the administration. Contacted by media to comment on the letter. As a board we are elected by the public to provide the best education possible within the means provided by our taxpayers. We need to be upfront with our fellow board members and not appear to be blindsided. Section BBAA-E states a board member legally a board member only when the BOE is in session. Letters to the editor not a proper use of this process. We have enough concern about the district and taxpayers to openly debate the issues we face and to be able to openly discuss. Ask we agree to openly discuss issues that arise with the entire board. OSBA representative talked to us last year about this not being a proper use or best practice. They are willing to come back and speak to us again or to have our legal counsel come in. We're all concerned about having the top district in the state. Ask each board member to work within policies established. Only way to move forward is through open dialogue.
 - b. Nate Cross: Good idea to have legal counsel and OSBA come in. They represent different points of view.
 - c. Sullivan: Agree with following policy. We are trustees for the education of our children. Agree with following policy manual. There are gray areas. The schools belong to the people. These are public schools.

- d. Andrea Rocco: Democracy is not served when there is a communication between elected officials not done in the public. This community is best served when all 5 of us come together to discuss what we think can be best done for the kids who go to these schools while we're trying to save money to run these schools. Should only be done in an open meeting. Don't know why we need an attorney to tell us what is common sense. If there is something to be discussed, can only be done in an open meeting that has been posted. We still have a collective bargaining agreement and something we must abide by until there is a change in the law. Stunned by comment that Westlake is underachieving. To compare Westlake to a district that is struggling, taken over by a private entity is not comparing apples to apples. Always important to look at what we have and think how can we make it better and stretch the taxpayer dollars. Already stretched levy into 6 years. We should talk about what we have here in Westlake. The four of us (with exception of Mr. Cross) all signed on to last collective bargaining agreement and legally bound to follow that.
 - e. Carol Winter: We need to look at our performance as a board member. We need to be good communicators and set a good example about following the rules. Once a decision is made, we speak with one voice. It is our relationship that will move this district forward. We need to make a commitment to follow policy and bring concerns to the board room and not the media. We discussed open communication. Our role is to leave this district better than when we came here.
 - f. Sullivan: Another Board member has criticized myself for the supposed failure for not sending my children to this school but choosing to represent on this board. We are trustees sitting between taxpayers and children. I provide a balance. Ms. Rocco has her children in these schools and is unbalanced in her devotion to those constituents. Until that is accounted for, we can't move forward. We should listen to our last meeting at our next meeting. I supported the last collective bargaining agreement as a new board member and trusting in my fellow board members. Maybe I would've done things differently. I have every right to be up here and be a trustee for the education of our children within the financial parameters of our taxpayers.
 - g. Cross: I will wait until the minutes are finalized and comment then.
 - h. Mays: Mr. Sullivan and I have had contact about trying to maintain civility. I look forward to the 5 of us doing the proper work of this district.
5. Nate Cross: Wrote a letter to the editor last week. Wrote the letter as a citizen to share my opinion. Presented a thoughtful argument relevant to where we are headed. Passed out a resolution based on numbers from financial forecast, to be discussed at April 18 meeting. Offering a resolution to facilitate candid discussion on where this district is headed in a public way. We've been spending less than what we received. I've been paying attention to 5-year forecast. I have acted in the interest of the district and what is best.
- a. Sullivan: You've been subject to a lot of pushback, bullying. You are doing good work and your best and a gentleman to deal with it the way you do.
 - b. Rocco: The premise that eventually the district will not have money is nothing new. Unfortunately the way public school funding is in this state was not decided by us.

Anyone who understands the way our schools are funded, increasing expenses and decreasing revenue are things we have to deal with. We try to best work within the framework we are given. Pending any big change, we must go back to the public and ask them if they want to support education in the way they know it. Basic school funding is always this rollercoaster.

- c. Winter: We do retain local control and our community has told us they expect a balanced approach. They want an excellent program at a value.
 - d. Sullivan: we are on an unsustainable path. If we do today for the next 10 years what we've been doing for the past 10 years, it will cost 50% more to run our district. We have to stand up to rising costs. It's not sustainable. The enemy is always Columbus. Where can we control costs? Let's start doing what's in our power and stop blaming the bogeyman in Columbus.
 - e. Mays: We all want to have the #1 schools in Ohio. And we have to do that within the parameters of what the taxpayers gave us. They started in 1846 funding schools through property taxes. Let's resolve to come in April with some solutions on how we're going to approach this.
 - f. Cross: hope to have a discussion to rely on our experts to allow us to put together a financial plan. Let's do a projection for 5 years to see where we will land to help us with decisions.
6. The Board is considering changing their April 18 board meeting date.

Hearing of the Public

- 1. James Wang: 2002 graduate. Wanted to show support for Planetarium program.
- 2. Mark Leonard: Hope through these discussions you keep the children front and center. Embarrassed by the conduct I've witnessed. What was called into question was issue of ethics and something in a document you bring here. You owe an apology to me. Would like to see you conduct yourselves in a civil manner. I expect as a business leader in this town, a parent of children in this district and a homeowner that this board keep my children front and center. Ask you calmly discuss this. There hasn't been any neglect by this board previously.
- 3. Dave Centa: Questions. Find information on website very lacking. Give board members an opportunity to give their perspective. No one sees the other side of the argument unless they sit down and listen to these meetings. Asked about how IB trip was paid for (grants, donations, etc.). Solvent through 2013 – leads me to believe we'll be bankrupt after that. Request to get millage on the website. (Information within tax budget from January).
- 4. Bob Plantz: I also am embarrassed by what took place in this forum. To take as much time as you did with subtle and not so subtle innuendos is a terrible waste of time. Question about the facilities budget, is that immune to changes in the state budget? (Revenue stream is protected for capital improvements).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. The Board adjourned to executive session for the purpose of conference with attorney involving tax valuation dispute.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: The next meeting of the Board will be a work session on Monday, April 18, at 5:30pm at The Board of Education offices.

For more detailed information on these items, visit

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