



Westlake Board of Education

Board Notes from Monday, Sept. 29, 2014, Work Session

VISION STATEMENT

The Westlake City School District will provide a dynamic, student-centered, 21st 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.

SPECIAL REPORTS & RECOGNITIONS

1. Dover Elementary special report/Helping Hands Program
 - a. Doug Kuhns and Sue Peplin – discussed program that provides interaction with typical peers to work with students with communication deficits due to special needs.

CAC REPORT

1. Tom Horowitz: The CAC's proposed topic for the 2014-2015 school year:
 - a. In anticipation of changes to the current elementary school building configurations, the CAC is proposing to research and identify current trends, effective concepts, and successes of new or remodeled learning environments for preschool through grade four. While our primary focus would be on how building space is used, an aspect of teaching strategies and how they relate to the use of space may be examined.
 - b. We'd like to provide an interim report in February/March, and final report in May.

- c. Carol Winter: asked if they could move interim report to January/February and final report to March/April to coincide with district discussions on elementary building spaces.
- d. Tom Mays suggested interim report in December/January and final report in February.
- e. Anyone interested in joining the Citizens Advisory Committee can go to the website – www.wlake.org – under the Parents tab for information.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/MASTER FACILITY PLAN UPDATE

1. Quality Profile – Westlake joined about 50 other districts across the state who, based on community feedback over several years, created reports on what makes a quality education other than what is on the state report card.
2. Report Card data – progress scores improved dramatically over last year. In overall progress and gifted students we have an A. Gifted was ranked #1 in Ohio. Lowest 20% increased from a D to a B. Students with disabilities increased from a D to a C. Our Performance Index increased and we achieved 23/24 indicators.
3. ACT scores provide another snapshot on student success. Our scores almost across the board have been increasing in the past 5 years. Since 2010, Ohio composite average increased 2/10 of a percent. In that same time, Westlake's composite increased 1.2x the state average. Participation is increasing while our scores are increasing.
4. National Merit Scholarships – 7 National Merit Semifinalists are in top 1% of students who are moving forward for finalist consideration. We are the highest of any of our public school neighbors.
5. 20/20 Vision Committee - working with Lesko Architecture on review of feasibility/costs on plans coming out of 20/20. We're looking at 5 buildings on 4 sites or 4 buildings on 3 sites. We're still looking at all of the properties to make sure when the group reconvenes we have accurate data.
6. WHS had IB Diploma Programme visit. Representatives from IB met with staff, students, parents, administrators. We will await word until after Jan. 1, 2015, if we were approved to move on to the next phase. Next week IB authorization visits begin at elementary buildings. IB process began four years ago to pursue IB World School status. Authorization is the final step to becoming a World School.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. To discuss evaluation of a public employee. No action was taken.

TREASURER'S REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Issued Then & Now Certificates for Spanish First Class, North Coast Council, Bricker & Eckler LLP
2. Approved student activity purpose statement and budget for WHS Dance Team
3. Established FY15 Temporary appropriations
4. Authorized Treasurer to return advance from Uniform Supply account to General Fund
5. Amended resolution #14-196, FY15 Temporary appropriations other funds

6. Amended Resolution #14-235, FY15 Additional temporary appropriations other funds
7. Accepted state funds from Le Chaperone Rouge Elementary, Montessori Children's School, St. Bernadette Catholic School, St. Pau. Lutheran School, Westlake Montessori School, Westside Christian Academy
8. Adjusted FY15 temporary appropriations
9. Adopted FY15 permanent appropriations and 5-year forecast
 - a. Mark Pepera: Found an adjustment needs to be made to our forecast. A tax receipt from an advanced payment should have been posted to a different fund. You'll see an adjustment in this fiscal year that impacts last year's budget. It was discovered in preparing a final report to the state auditor. It did not impact any programming. We are changing our processes to monitor things on a monthly basis. Even with this adjustment, the budget is similar. We still have a need for additional dollars. Overall our budget as compared to our previous two years' budget is down about 1.1%. Still trying to live within our means. It gets tougher and tougher with our fixed costs.
10. Approved participation as a pilot district in the OASBO/MCOECN Munis Program
 - a. Pepera: State software we operated under has never changed or been updated. It's still DOS based. It's a cumbersome system and difficult to produce desired reports. From an HR standpoint this system allows us to get a better handle on a lot of HR functions done on an annual basis. It will save time and create efficiencies. Westlake is a pilot. There has been a groundswell of districts clamoring for this. We have seed money set aside for the project. Petitioning the board to participate beginning January 2015. January 2016 is when it would be fully implemented. Endorsed by our state software development team and professional organizations. We'll become more efficient, more transparent and it will help facilitate educational programming.
 - b. We have monies available to us through our data center consortium (North Coast Council). Our first year cost is \$30,000. It's a full-blown financial and HR package. With this software it will truly be an electronic purchasing system that will save us money in paper alone. We're doing the best we can with the software we have.
 - c. Geoff Palmer: we're excited about the impact of this, which is substantial across the organization.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Accepted gifts and contributions from the Morgans, Nelson Vein & Surgical Services and Westlake Soccer Association
2. Approved classified resignation of Susan Ricci
3. Approved FMLA for David Basch, Aimee Guzowski, David Moorman and Brianne Huber
4. Approved classified employment of Susan Ricci, Heather Lopez, David Gamon, Linda Martin, Nicole Langelier, Susan Kantner, Nancy Danese
5. Approved classified resignation of Karen Mitiska for the purpose of retirement
6. Appointed classified substitutes and licensed substitutes
7. Approved Transportation Department drives and revised employee hours

8. Approved employment of Project Link personnel Alexandra Brinkman, Susan Pesta, Gary Rose, Zaeneb Ganim, Kristen Andrews, Colleen Mudore
9. Approved contracted services paid out of auxiliary services funds for Westside Christian Academy, PSA Affiliates, Daily Behavioral Health
10. Corrected certified reclassification of Hilary Patriok
11. Approved mentors for new staff members
 - a. Tracy Scully
 - b. Nick Miller
 - c. Hannah Losada
 - d. Christina Meecha
 - e. Cheryl Bendik
 - f. Heather Marinelli
 - g. Nicolette Miller
 - h. Julie Szucs
12. Approved supplemental resignation of Jennifer Butler
13. Approved supplemental employment
 - a. Michael Allan
 - b. Matthew Mayforth
 - c. Anne Dill
 - d. Michael Marcellino
 - e. Sean Murphy
 - f. Bill Bowles
 - g. Mike Thoms
 - h. Jen Seighman
 - i. Allison Lawrence
 - j. Joe Heiland
 - k. Nancy English
 - l. Hannah Lozada
 - m. Art Daniels
 - n. Jeff Short
 - o. Dawn Dawson
 - p. Kristen Pado
 - q. Alison Gregory
 - r. Joni DiRienzo
 - s. Kelly Smith
 - t. Jennifer Butler
 - u. Jill Murrell
 - v. Jennifer Dietrich
 - w. Laura Miller
 - x. Paul Hammond
 - y. Kelly Atkinson

- z. Hilary Patriok
 - aa. Lisa Forshey
 - bb. Daniel O'Brien
 - cc. Kevin Golick
 - dd. Rachel Gecik
14. Approved committee members and stipends for Local Professional Development Committee – Sandee Erdman, Colleen Mudore, Jim Patrizi, Jen Williams
 15. Dissolved Job share of Christina Meecha and Kelly Hoover
 16. Approved certified employment of Christina Meecha
 17. Approved stipend for kindergarten readiness assessment scoring for Kathleen Basen
 18. Approved agreements for admission of tuition pupils and purchase services for the 2014-2015 school year with ALMOSTfamily, TLC Home Health of Ohio Inc., ESC Cuyahoga County Interdistrict Agreement
 19. Approved LBMS 8th grade American Heritage tour 2015 field trip to Washington, D.C. (all costs paid by student fees)
 20. Approved Sunday facility use for Holiday Hoopla travel basketball tournament, American Cancer Society Relay for Life
 21. Approved lease agreement for 2014-2015 paid out of auxiliary service funds for AutoNation Ford lease of property for St. Bernadette's mobile unit
 22. Publicly posted previously approved construction change orders
 - a. Great Lakes Crushing, (\$4,894), rock hounds and reseeding
 - b. Mielke, \$864.43, replace damaged gas regulator
 - c. Great Lakes Crushing, (\$864.43), replace damaged gas regulator
 - d. SiteTech, \$1,467.90, remobilization of work activities
 - e. SiteTech, \$955.58, adjustment of fire hydrant
 - f. SiteTech, \$6,059.55, install & maintain additional silt fence
 - g. SiteTech, \$2,120.30, storm water inspection
 - h. SiteTech, \$2,451.16, adjust manhole castings
 - i. SiteTech, \$889.83, repair and fill low areas by baseball field
 - j. SiteTech, \$151.45, storm water inspection
 - k. J. Carr Construction, \$9,000, premium time clean-up
 - l. J. Carr Construction, \$538.41, additional ceiling tile
 - m. J. Carr Construction, \$1,998.83, CM trailer and phone-data expenses

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Approved first and final reading of Policy JGE-Student Expulsion
 - a. There was a legal change to the expulsion period for an appeal. This brings our policy into alignment with the law.
2. The policy subcommittee has been meeting for a policy update. We talked to NEOLA and our current provider, OSBA. Costs to conduct a thorough review and update of policies is identical. Between now and the next meeting there is a strong feeling to look at NEOLA.

3. Tony Falcone – We feel there's a need to audit our current board policies to make sure they are up to date, a web posting option to make them searchable. NEOLA has a more detailed service that comes with a higher cost. NEOLA exists predominantly to focus on policy services to boards.
4. John Finucane – District communications went out last week. Should we have discussion about who gets what.
 - a. Palmer – communication is always one of those things no matter how well you try to do it and how well you are at doing it, there is always an area for improving. I don't know there is an existing policy, but practice has been to address those immediately affected. We are aware there are some things that didn't go as planned. We tried to figure out some of the breakdowns. Our messages were targeted to everyone on the Dover campus. We discovered that Blackboard Connect had a disconnect. There was a loss of numbers and emails in their system. We're in the process of trying to figure out what happened at their end, what we can do better. We have to use situations as opportunities for us to improve. We realized there was an issue we didn't necessarily know of or had any way of knowing of a data breakdown at Blackboard Connect. We'll find ways all of our systems can communicate. We owe it to our community to know we can reach them. I was in communication with the police chief the night of and the morning of this situation. The police were in receipt of the information and communicated with us. Their belief was this was a hoax. If there were concerns at any level for our students, we would have taken the appropriate steps.
 - b. Falcone – I think there is a way to use Blackboard Connect for rumor control. I think there's some merit to over-communicating.
 - c. Palmer – our goal was to go through Blackboard Connect with an email. This was information, targeted to three buildings on this campus. We also went on social media as a second step. It was step two of our process. It wasn't an afterthought. It was standard operating procedure.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

1. Rachel Jewel – I was one of those people appropriately signed up for everything and got no notification even though my child goes to school in this building. My concern right now is looking forward. I have a list of things I'm worried about. I'm not looking for feedback. I found out as a secondary post from another mom on Facebook. If I don't go to the district's Facebook page, it doesn't show up in my newsfeed. I was signed up for Blackboard. I did everything I was supposed to do. The information didn't get to me or many of my friends. It's not the way we want to find out there's a problem at your elementary school. Talking with Mr. Barrett about how to get more people to sign up and get their information updated in your system. I'm going to email my friends and let them know that's what they are supposed to do. One thing we need to do is look as an organization how we do that. What we're doing now is not working. Is there a way if something happens that I am going to know about it? I appreciate that you brought it up.
 - a. Carol Winter – Will you contact Ms. Jewel to follow up and have a conversation with her? What happens going forward.

- b. Palmer – There is no resolution from Blackboard right now. It will depend on reverting back to old school communications. In the old days you relied on radio and TV. For other things you rely on paper going into hands for others. Goal of Registration Gateway is to have that feed into our student information system and that feeds into Blackboard Connect. We'll work on that. The other thing that has to come into play is a long-term solution. There are other systems out there we will need to evaluate. Right now we have to take every step we can to address the needs of parents.
 - c. Winter – PTA emails come through Constant Contact. A school of people are getting information.
 - d. Palmer – we have some very good things in place. We need to make sure they are all working and working the way they should.
 - e. Finucane – Blackboard has been used for a number of years. It's worked very well. It's bad timing with what happened. The system does work very well. This is just an unfortunate situation.
 - f. Jewel – if something happened tomorrow, is there a plan in place to get people their information?
 - g. Winter – If there was something we needed to communicate, we would rely on an old-fashioned communication system.
 - h. Palmer – we'd need to rely on TV and radio communications, telephone calls.
2. Stephanie Morgan – tomorrow we are doing a threat assessment management program with a focus on communications. We can also reach out to PTAs to communicate. We can also discuss this as part of our safety committee meeting.

The Board adjourned to executive session to discuss the employment and compensation of public employees. No action was taken.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: The next meeting of the Board is Monday, Oct. 13, at 6pm at the Administration Building, 27200 Hilliard Blvd.

For more detailed information on these items, visit

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