

**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
WESTLAKE CHARTER SCHOOL  
Board Meeting Minutes  
February 26, 2009**

**7:00 pm**

**3800 Del Paso Rd, Sacramento, CA 95834**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTATIONS TO  
THE BOARD BY PARENTS AND CITIZENS**

The Westlake Charter School ("School") welcomes your participation at the School's Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of the School in public. We are pleased that you are in attendance and hope that you will visit these meetings often. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our School. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, the following guidelines are provided.

1. Agendas are available to all audience members at the door to the meeting.
2. "Request to Speak" forms are available to all audience members who wish to speak on any agenda items or under the general category of "Public Comments."
3. "Public Comments" is set aside for members of the audience to raise issues that are not specifically on the agenda. However, due to public meeting laws, the Board can only listen to your issue, not respond or take action. The Board may give direction to staff to respond to your concern or you may be offered the option of returning with a citizen-requested item.
4. With regard to items that are on the agenda, you may specify that agenda item on your request form and you will be given an opportunity to speak when the Board discusses that item.
5. Members of the public may request that a topic related to school business be placed on a future agenda by making a request to the Board President. Once such an item is properly agendaed and publicly noticed, the Board can respond, interact, and act upon the item.
6. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and upon request, the Charter School may furnish reasonable auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities. Individuals who require appropriate alternative modification of the agenda in order to participate in Board meetings are invited to contact the Board President.

**I. OPENING**

A. CALL TO ORDER AT 7:09 PM

B. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

		<b>present</b>	<b>absent</b>
1.	Paris Coleman	_X_	_
2.	Ting Sun	_	_X_
3.	Phil Nanni	_X_	_
4.	Gretchen Hanson	_X_	_
5.	Jules Tran	_	_X_
6.	Stefanie Cruz	_	_X_
7.	Christina Thorall	_X_	_
8.	Peter Skipper	_X_	_
9.	Michelle Ellis	_X_	_

## **II. BOARD COMMENTS**

**None**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS** This portion of the meeting is set aside for the audience to make comments or raise issues that are not specifically on the agenda or for those that are on the agenda. These presentations are limited to three (3) minutes per presentation and the total time allotted for non-agenda items will not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. Members of the public may speak on agenda items during the time when the item is addressed by the Board.

**None**

## **IV. ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR ACTION:**

### **A. Appeal for lottery admission**

Paris Coleman – describes letter of appeal from parent seeking admittance to the lottery. Peggy McAllister sent email advocating her behalf. One other time this has come before the board.

Gretchen Hansen – To the best of board recollection have we allowed this before?

Paris Coleman – I do not recall the specifics, I do remember that was outside the normal parameters of established procedures. Board considered and made an exception I think it was during the first lottery period.

Gretchen Hansen – Stephen has anyone else approached with a similar request?

Stephen Liles – We have had 10 calls.

Phil Nanni – No comments right now I want to take a minute and read the letter from Ms. Torres-Garcia

Paris Coleman – I didn't have a chance to do as much research as would have liked. What I would want to do is consider any appeal from any parent in a similar situation. This is someone with an existing sibling preference and the likely hood is that this child would be enrolled with that sibling preference. That does have some consideration. I asked if there were any parent hours were on the books but I didn't find any, that doesn't mean there aren't any but there aren't any recorded for this year.

Christina Thorall – I would like to say from personal experience the parents are a very active and supportive I had Eduardo in my 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class.

Paris Coleman asks for public comments –

Ms. Lucas – I would like to vouch for Ms. Torres as parent volunteer for Sutter's Fort she was a big part of the field trip as a parent volunteer for 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Ms. Mendoza – I also vouch for Ms. Torres

Ms. Torres – First thanks for everyone's support. I am so sorry that I made this mistake. My son is 5yrs. old is very excited about coming to school. All he knows is Westlake Charter School. My son only talks about coming to Westlake Charter School. He likes school a lot and wants to go to the school where his brother goes.

Our parent hours have not been an issue in the past.

Paris Coleman asks for other public comments – none

Paris Coleman asks for any other board comments:

Michelle Ellis – As we think about parent hours and how hard it is to get committed parents and here we have one. We have benefited from her family and we wouldn't want to loose what she has to offer.

Gretchen Hansen – Just to verify the other phone calls have any others identified themselves as Westlake families or anything?

Stephen – No

Paris Coleman – I appreciate that others who called may not have identified themselves as WCS families and they didn't escalate to the board. What I look at is

harm, harm to the families who have missed the deadline, harm to the school if we set a precedent like this. Fortunately for Ms. Torres this board meeting was scheduled if it had not been scheduled we wouldn't be here having this discussion.

Motion:	Action:
Second:	Vote:

**B. Approve 6<sup>th</sup> grade expansion proposal**

Paris Coleman – since the last board meeting the board has received another proposal has everyone reviewed it?

Yes from all

Gretchen Hansen – Do we have a revised budget from Ana?

Paris Coleman – No, I have talked to Ana and she is on phone stand by if we have questions tonight.

Michelle Ellis – If we call her would she have any revisions?

Paris Coleman – no

Phil Nanni – I missed the last board meeting, I want to start by saying that I was very impressed with the second presentation, I thought it was well thought out and a lot of thought was put into the expansion. I still have some reservations about expanding. I want to share, we are currently in a build out plan that we committed to for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>. That will add approx. 96 more students to this campus. Some of the solutions identified will be needed for the current build out plan. The need for 4 additional classrooms are still a concern. I don't want to see more portables. Right now our playground undersized for our current size. The school does need to expand to middle school but I still question the time. I just received a phone call from Heidi Van Sandt about H.Allen Height opening and adding flexibility to shifting funds. This is a difficult year for Natomas and there are lots of external factors affecting the school – fundraising etc. Several parents have emailed expressing similar concerns about adding things that will affect our current program. I feel that more time is needed to investigate what a middle school would look like. We have not enjoyed a full year of stability, leadership, curriculum, campus etc. and I'm not willing to do that again this summer. Any type of expansion of this nature requires a strong commitment. I want to see a solid plan that has the support of a broader audience that includes NUSD. I want to ensure the longevity of the school. The strain on the staff and the board is not ok. I'm concerned that we don't have a material revision with NUSD. NUSD is having their own difficulties and to ask for more support for our school is just bad timing. They might do it but at what price. I'm concerned very much about the physical limitations of the school until I have a guarantee that we will expand to the east instead of the west.

Michelle Ellis – In addition to Phil I think we have a great document a great start for an expansion. I believe we did a lot of research in a short amount of time in starting the original school. In developing a program that is different from the rest of the district takes time. I'm not in favor of K-6 but I am in favor of K-8. We will not be doing 6<sup>th</sup> grade justice if we have to dump them into middle school instead of continuing on with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The curriculum and scheduling can be looked at. I don't like jumping the facilities gun without knowing what the district is going to do. I already have concerns about the playground. Need to work on many curriculum issues that will be left behind if 6<sup>th</sup> grade is added because the 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum will take priority. I don't want to dilute what is already being offered to K-5. I'm all for K-8 model research but it's the timing I can't commit to.

Gretchen Hansen – I commend the expansion committee on work put into

presentation. I am also uncomfortable with not having updated financial information. NUSD has not received direction from the board about H. Allen Height. I hope to see that soon which will free up space at Natomas Middle School. We don't see any layoffs but still looking at a 4 million dollar shortfall for next year. Categorical flexibility wouldn't impact Westlake Charter School.

Michelle Ellis – Another concern I have is parking, the signs that put up in the street and then removed, do we know why?

Christina Thorall – From the beginning I always wanted to see K-8. Phil Nanni and Michelle Ellis articulated my thoughts very well.

Peter Skipper – nothing

Paris Coleman – I spoke my mind last month. Nobody on the board is against K-8. In fact I won't vote for 6th unless 7th and 8th are following. I appreciate the presentation, it is very well done. I could very easily say to Mr. Liles use this as a place to start, give me a model and come back with financials, come back with a viable plan. You're the one who will have to implement it and have it done sometime in May. I have confidence in Mr. Liles and the staff that they can pull it off, but at what expense?

Phil Nanni – The other thing is the scheduling, we have to pay close attention to how this expansion would impact the specialty program. Make sure the expansion doesn't take away from the other grades unless that's our plan in which case it needs to be clearly communicated to the public.

Michelle Ellis – As a charter we aren't required to adhere to CA state standards but we do agreed to follow it. PE is affected by the proposed PE schedule. The PE teacher is already frustrated by PE and the recess overlap. Scheduling at this school has never been easy.

Lisa Corr – A correction to Michelle Ellis's statement, we are obligated to adhere California state standards. With our minutes no but yes for California State standards.

Gretchen Hansen – The minutes are designated by Education code. That's the only one that's covered by Education code.

Paris Coleman asks for public comments –

Robynne Rose – I would like to specifically address problem and solution pages of the presentation. I attended the NUSD board workshop and found out that if H.Allen Height isn't opened this year money won't be there after that. I feel that the board is going to open it. I feel that we should have updated financials from the business office. It's very disappointing and misleading. Michelle Ellis mentioned that NUSD has a 6-8 model. We need to think outside the box as we did when we started the school. Lastly NP3 is on the agenda for March. We are home grown, NP3 came from Sac city. That puts us in a better position to argue for expansion. If we are not in the game NP3 will get all of the facilities and we'll get nothing.

Barbara Ros – I would like to address the scope and sequence sections. The information was pulled from content standards, current K-5 curriculum includes continents, the middle school would study world history and that ties in to K-5 learning. Middle school students would be ambassadors with younger grades and act as mentors. I'm excited to see that math and science are already on target. We would continue on wouldn't have to create new curriculum.

TC – I have been teaching for 11 years, and I stepped into help with curriculum and schedule training. I reviewed the scope and sequence and things are aligned with the curriculum already in existence. With the proposed master schedule set up each grade only loses 5 minutes of specialties. As grades are added an additional specialty teacher would be added. The schedule is just to show that it can be done. Currently specialty teachers don't have prep time and our proposal is realigned to give specialty

teachers real prep time. It can be done without hiring new teachers right away.  
Sherri Sanders – I am here to address the documentation portion specifically parent hours. For the last 3 years I have been a parent hour coordinator and in the past we have been frustrated that there isn't total cooperation. Our family alone has contributed 100 plus hours. The list of families in our proposal shows parent support for 6-8 expansion. Parents are in support of this school, when they see something that needs to be fixed. We would like to see collaboration with board to see what we can do to make this happen. We have been working hard to address concerns. The school was founded because of parents who wanted more and who will work for more.

Peggy McAllister – I whole heartedly support a K-8 expansion but I have some serious reservations about lack of planning time. I feel that we need to plan ahead. I have been to 90% of the board meetings and I have worked hard for Westlake. Finances are a concern for me I would like to see specifics of what is needed, what is to be offered and how will we pay for it. For the past 2 years WAVE has been functioning on the fact that we are short about 900.00 per student. Fundraising is a major portion. Are we going to be asking for more fundraising and in these economic times is that fair? We need to have absolute financial answers. Parent participation is still an issue and we will need to be specific about what is needed to make this happen. I love to help with the expansion but I can't help get it done by fall. We have many lists of excited parents but when it comes down to it there is about 5 -6 people who actually do it. Regarding the staff I'm not sure of their issues but it's all going to fall on their shoulders so we need to have their 100% support.

- C. KD – In response to Peggy my understanding is that 6<sup>th</sup> grade can be part of elementary. We still have more time after that for planning for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. Should have a corrected budget, shouldn't be voting without accurate numbers. Also HAH decision is important to know, should wait until that decision is made before voting. Other middle schools don't even require Spanish so we are teaching our children and then dropping it for 3 years.
- D. RH – Has concerns about the rest of the school. WCS has been our family, never a perfect time for having kids for expanding. NCS does not have any foreign language, doesn't want to give it up but maybe that's a compromise. Would like to see options other than what's available. I do understand your concerns but there is only one parent who has to make the same decision as me. But when the rest of you are in the same spot as me you will feel the same way as me.  
Sherri Sanders – In response to Peggy's questions about committees the committees were created to deal with each grade level expansion. We should have accountability for parents who aren't meeting their hours.  
Lisa Corr – I'm in a tough spot as both legal advisor to the board and parent. As your attorney I understand your comments and concerns. As a parent or as a board member I would be inclined to look at us as a family. I support this expansion even though I know there will be repercussions for my own two children, there are always growing pains. If you don't vote for expansion tonight maybe a compromise would be future resolution to help kids coming up the ranks to help them succeed in middle school.
- E. JC - Concerns about the timing. Would love to see a plan that shows what the expansion would look like over the next few years. We owe it to the administration, staff, community, students to be a part of the decision, allow the teachers to be a driving force behind the expansion. Financial concerns, cut the specialties and increase class size not a good option.  
Jackie Dosick – I can answer Michelle's question about the street parking. The city hit a snag about the signage. The city's legal department is concerned about biking community and liability issues. The city is studying and looking into other scenarios. There is no timeframe available but I will update the board and the school as new

information comes in. The cross walk project is still on trying to fast track it so it can be done by end of summer. Regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> grade expansion all comments tonight very well thought out. Coming into the school I get the feeling that the board feels opportunity for expansion has passed. If you vote it down I hope it doesn't kill the issue entirely. It's amazing how much energy was harnessed once the word got out loud and clear that this was on the table again. If the issue is not passed we will lose a whole crop of dedicated parents and if you do vote it down try to put in place some sort of mechanism to follow up and continue the expansion process. As a charter school we are the scrappy dog that needs to fight for everything like facilities

Paris Coleman – The financials are not available, the expansion is not only a financial issue. We don't know what the state is going to do. The program can be made to work but what would that program ultimately look like so that staff, and parents are happy.

Phil Nanni – I have a question for Tracy, with the proposal specialty classes would only reduce 5 minutes per day correct?

TC – yes

Phil Nanni – By my calculation over the whole school year that's 25 hours less.

Michelle Ellis – How would teacher salaries be affected? Teacher prep time weighs into compensation, how would that change?

- F. TC – Plan doesn't include specialty addition so that money can go back to teacher salaries. In Charter school always compensated less but union dues aren't a factor, personal expenses are an issue. 4% union dues

Michelle Ellis – The teacher survey is not in 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal there's no teacher input.

Barbara Ros –The initial information about teacher survey was incorrect. Teacher survey offered and teachers were encouraged to communicate to their board rep.

Christina Thorall – An email was sent to the board on behalf of teachers.

Michelle Ellis – The word collaborate comes up a lot and now that we have a staff to I don't want to make the decision before March 11<sup>th</sup> when the NUSD may make a decision that impact facilities.

Robynn Rose –For the record I have met with Stephen and Kate a few times to discuss the issues.

Paris Coleman – It's not the parents who will do this work, it is the job of the principal and the staff. Parents can help but you can't make the decisions. I have heard from two teachers who are in support of expansion. Teachers from Teacher Senate communicated some concerns to board. I do not know how many teachers are represented in the email but I did receive some concerns.

Phil Nanni – I am sympathetic to audience comments and I want to keep expansion project alive. Is it possible to make a motion that would allow further planning on an expansion.

Lisa Corr – A whole new action item has to be put on the agenda can't amend a motion already on the agenda.

Paris Coleman – I motion that this board not move forward with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade expansion in 09-10 academic year.

Motion: PC	Action:
Second:	Vote:

## VII. ADJORNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 P.M.

**Next meeting, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30 PM**