

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WESTLAKE CHARTER SCHOOL
Board Meeting, Library
June 30, 2009, 6:30 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 agendized 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 6:36PM

B. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

		present	absent
1.	Cliff Blakely	_X_	_____
2.	Howard Chan	_____	_____
3.	Phil Nanni	_X_	_____
4.	Jules Tran	_____	_____
5.	Stefanie Cruz	_X_	_____
6.	Christina Thorall	_X_	_____
7.	Peter Skipper	_____	_____
8.	Michelle Ellis	_X_	_____

II. PUBLIC SESSION

A. BOARD COMMENTS

Phil Nanni presents service award to Christina Thorall for participation on the WCS board.

- B. 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. AUDIENCE/VISITORS PUBLIC DISCUSSION – This agenda item is included for the purpose of giving anyone in attendance an opportunity to ask questions or discuss non-agenda items with the Board of Directors. If visitors have a complaint about a specific employee of the school, they will be requested to submit an oral or written complaint to the employee's immediate supervisor as required by Board Policy #08-03 (Please note that the public portion of all meetings is recorded.)

None

C. REPORTS

1. Financial Report – Ana Barillas-Mendez – I met with finance committee to review and update 09-10 budget. Last meeting the budget was updated with current data. Currently showing a positive balance. Additional budget cuts will change budget numbers for years 11,12 and 13. Teachers given 3% step increase. No COLA for anyone, a couple of years before COLA is anticipated. Increase shown is because of enrollment. Estimated rates are reflected in years 11,12,13. State cash flow is critical, deferring or partial apportionment payments are expected.

PN – Not a pretty picture

CB – Ana so the recommendation is to really evaluate expenditures and positions?

AB – Yes, that is correct.

SD –Last week at a district budget mtg. mentioned stabilization funds 25K for WCS is that in this budget?

AB – Yes, the first portion of that is already reflected in budget. 75K fed stimulus money. I anticipate the balance coming in October.

2. WAVE Report – Paul Hobie

You have been given a flyer for the new parent BBQ we would love to see your there to welcome the families. We are also actively planning for the 5th annual golf tourney – Lanie Holmer is chairing the event with Phil Nanni. We new WAVE board members Karen Bartells, and introduced.

CB – Is the tournament at Teal Bend?

PH - Yes

3. Principal's Report – Bob Capp

The last several weeks have been busy and fulfilling for Westlake Charter. On June 8 we began the transition from the interim principal to the permanent principal. Many things have been accomplished and many more are “in the works”

To note several that have been accomplished, Natomas Unified has cancelled their Summer School for elementary students. With that news, we have

created our own Summer Intervention Classes for students at the Far Below Basic, Below Basic and a couple of the lower half of Basic in Math and Reading as identified by the NWEA assessment given at the beginning of June. The classes will begin July 27 and run through August 7th at a cost of approx. \$2400. The parent's of the students that qualified have been contacted and agreements have been signed with them in support of the program and the promise of attendance.

We have also imaged the 30 computers that were delivered some time ago, and plan to install them this summer into the classrooms. Cost was \$0.00 to do the imaging.

Our first 5th grade promotion activity went smoothly and was a great time – kudos to the promotion committee and to Mr. Liles. Also thanks to Mr. Liles for promoting the Field Day activities and to Kate Burwinkel for her outstanding job of organizing it. Special thanks to all of the parents that made the Field Day a success with their participation at the stations.

We have had the opportunity to hire three new teachers to Westlake Charter. Kate Burwinkel and I have paper screened 480+ applications for the two positions and narrowed that number to 6 candidates for each position. Kate and I then developed 14 interview questions and interviewed all twelve candidates and further narrowed that number to 3 for each position. Then a representative from each grade level as well as Kate and I conducted a second interview of those 6 candidates and ranked each one for the two positions. The top candidates from the two grade levels (kinder and fifth) were then invited to interview once again with Kate and I and, obtaining some essential assurances from them, we have offered both of them employment as our newest teachers at WCS. First, let me tell you about Danielle Holoday.

Danielle Holoday: Danielle comes to us from Twin Rivers Unified School District where she taught 1st grade for the past two years. She comes with superb recommendations from her former supervisors and university advisors. At Dry Creek Elementary in Twin Rivers she was named the “Teacher of the Year” for 2008-09. She created and designed lessons using Smart Board and Senteo technology. She directed the school production of “Annie” for all K-6 students. She designed and implemented programs to meet the academic, intellectual and social needs of each of her students.

Caroline Cathey: Caroline comes to us from B.A.S.E. by way of Texas. She has taught 5th grade at St. Hope Public (charter) School and in the Irving (Texas) Independent School District in the fourth and fifth grades. Her accomplishments at BASE speak for themselves. She is fluent in Spanish and is very eager to teach. Her experiences also include a teaching assignment in Venezuela. She has a passion for teaching and supporting children's needs by doing whatever it takes to assist them.

To fill the position left vacant by Shanine Coates, we pulled our #2 candidate from last week's interviews, since she narrowly missed being our top candidate. We've contacted our hiring panel from last week and they are enthusiastic about her appointment. Her name is Jessica Ashby and she comes to us from the Folsom-Cordova School District where she has taught 1st grade since 2006. Before that, she taught 2nd grade in the Davis Joint Unified School District. I know you'll appreciate her from the minute you meet her.

We will post the new position for BASE right away.

We have arranged for several afterschool programs to begin after school begins.

Kidzart, which is a 1 hour class every Tuesday for students to learn to draw. The fee is \$67.50 for a 5 week session

Mad Science which is a 1 hour class every Monday which emphasizes hands-on science. The fee is about \$80. For a 6 week session.

We've contacted a credentialed and very experienced music teacher to also teach after school band. The fee would be \$10 per hour.

We've spoken to the staff about fee based after-school enrichment classes with an enthusiastic reception and will work with BASE to develop. We also are working on an intervention program, though not for a fee.

The Transition Advisory committee has worked diligently to revise schedules, rework the Staff Handbook, rewrite the Parent Handbook to become a Student/Parent Handbook that will come to this board soon for approval. We've also initiated several events to begin in August for community building.

Stay tuned for more exciting things for our school in the coming months.

ME – Is the band going to be grade specific?

BC – We will start out with 5th grade and recorders and then work in the rest. We are working out days, going to host a parent meeting to introduce the program.

CB – Is the summer school program cost absorbed by the school?

BC – Yes, intervention or remediation should not be fee based.

PN – Has there been a positive response for summer school?

BC – Yes, very positive, forms sent out and responses have been received.

CB- How will the computers be used that were purchased from the triathlon fundraiser?

BC – The hard drives have been imaged and we are hoping to put the computers in the classrooms during the summer.

4. Facilities Update – Bob Capp defers to Scott

SD – Del Paso construction started for the signal/crosswalk. I anticipate it will be operational by the start of the school year. We can't do the loading zone on the street – too expensive at this time. The city of Sacramento provided estimates for widening driveway or providing 1 in and 1 out. The District and the city will share the expense. Discussions are ongoing between NP3 and the district for classroom uses. Mike Cannon will provide a new campus map. There are enough classrooms for 0-10 school year. 2 new (5 years old) portables coming in July. Weight room given to WCS for PE teacher use. The discussion continues about RSP teacher assignment. N wing grant clarification: the grant is actually for half of the 1.2 we have to match the rest – asking the district to assume responsibility. A 2 story modular is an option for N wing. The grant is good through 2012, can apply for an extension.

PN – Are we talking about replacing N wing with modular in 1 year?

CB – Not quite, they come mostly assembled – 8 months.

ME – When will map be available from Mike Cannon? Is it different?

SD – Not different just clearly marked with WCS and NP3 buildings.

CB – How do we gain during that designation process?

SD – They understand our growth needs, the message being delivered is that we are a valuable school as well as NP3 and we should have the same treatment.

RB – What is NP3’s leverage?

SD – They are seen as an extension of the district. Relationships with the district office suffered from past history with parents and district. Message is changed and relationships are being mended.

PN – continued thank you for your efforts with the district

5. BASE – Caroline Cathey – no update provided.

CB – Aimee can you tell us the status of the BASE furniture?

AW – With the corporate donation secured by Rubylynn Blakely we were able to purchase tables and chairs and they were delivered today.

III. ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR ACTION:

A. Approve principal recommendations for hiring of K, 2nd and 5th grade teachers

BC – resumes sent to board

Motion: PN	Action:
Second: CB	Vote: Unanimous

B. Accept monetary donation for BASE

Motion: SC	Action: substitute prior role call
Second: CT	Vote: Approved

B. Accept and approve final revision of adopted budget for FY 2009-2010

PN – We need to watch spending very carefully. Next year will be lean, critical for fundraising efforts to be robust.

CB – Parent participation is a crucial part of fundraising to support the budget

Motion: CT	Action: substitute prior role call
Second: ME	Vote: Approved

C. Accept and approve staff handbook

BC – The contents are essentially the same with changes made to the grouping of topics.

CB – who was on the committee?

CB – KB, CT, JR, PS, ME, AW, MA

PN – It’s nice to have this document in place for next year.

CB – Good to have clarity and continuity. Thank you

Motion: PN	Action: substitute prior roll call
Second: SC	Vote: Approved

D. Approve increasing class size in grades 1, 2 and 3

CB – Ana has prepared documentation for review and discussion.

Ana –Found info from school services shows penalaties. Recommends and increase of 4 -5 students per class no less. If you increase by less the penalty doesn’t make up for ADA. No decision for growth funding. May not receive growth funding for 2nd grade addition.

SC – What would the class size be

PN – 24 -26 up from 20.

AB – WCS can actually add another class with no penalty, there’s no penalty for new classes

CB – If we added to existing classes we would be penalized.

AB – The state is not funding class size reduction

PN – Will they take away funding for current classes?

CT – If we went to 26 in 4 – 5 would that help or does it have to be in 2nd

AB – I would recommend increasing 4th and 5th as well

PN – The reason we are looking at this is because of budget. We are bringing kids in late 4th and 5th, they aren't getting the full benefit of Westlake. Financially it makes sense if we loose because of penalty but gain in ADA. But how does it impact the teachers and students.

CT – So we'd bring them in at 1st grade instead of 4th?

PN – Are we keeping class size lower in K?

SC – How would this effect quality of their education?

CT – There is a significant difference between 20 -22. 1st grade is equally sensitive as K.

DH – Below basic kids would be impacted by incoming 1st graders. The burden would be tough on the teachers with the reading lessons.

ME – I would like to hear more from the teachers.

PN – From a board perspective, we are looking at all sides. This is something that could support our budget in the future years, depending on how many kids are added. 100K would take our ending balance up and future drop off would not be as drastic as projected. Staff feedback is important but financial stability is crucial to the existence of the school. There is going to have to be some balance between financial health and quality of education delivered.

ME – Is it all or nothing? Could we implement it in phases? Does that make sense?

BC – It is counter intuitive to think we'll do a better job with more kids, also to do nothing. It's going to get worse before it gets better. I'm not in favor of adding more students but it sounds like to remain financially solvent we might have to. As soon as the state goes back to financially healthy we must be prepared to go back also.

SC – Are we talking about implementing this for the 2009 -2010 school year?

PN – At the strategic planning meeting the focus was on providing quality education so that this year we can really focus on it. Adding student would add pressure to our staff.

CB – Ana can you clarify 4- 5 kids per classroom?

AB - Yes

PN – Looking at this 2 ways, there is little penalty for adding 1 student financially we have to go much higher to see a benefit.

ME –What do we see for 4th and 5th ?

CB – Would the impact be less?

BC – For 5th it would be less.

CB – 2nd grade should be coming in fluent in reading. K & 1 are all over the place so it's unpredictable.

ME – Would it make sense to do it in two grade levels now and wait to see the state of the state for next year?

BC – The longer we have our kids the better off they'll be when they leave.

Sally Alden – I really believe in keeping small class sizes for differentiation. STAR testing shows reading is still an issue in 2nd. Parent's would be upset if their child is in a larger class. What about the possibility adding more lower classes and then narrowing as they get to the older grades?

ME – I'm very familiar with that model, funneling, somewhat works for the school. I'm concerned for upper grade classroom sizes.

Scott Dosick – I would ask the board to consider political ramifications with the NUSD. Could impact district relationship, would be taking money from the district.

Jennifer Driscoll – I understand there is a need for the board decision for increase, more in favor of more creative options such as home room concept for 2nd and 3rd. What about adding a whole 3rd grade at the same time as adding 2nd?

Michelle Acquisto – I recognize and appreciate Debbie Hightower’s support of 1st grade and the burden on the teachers for absorbing 5 additional students. Also recognize troubling times and that sacrifices will have to be made. 1st grade student will not get the same quality of education as last year. The 1st grade teacher team is very strong. 1st grade is a very heavy developmental year on the children, days are very long for them and there is a heavy push on the academics. Classroom size is already tight. Coming into 1st grade they not very independent yet and it takes more teacher time to work with them. If we do increase I do ask that you consider doing it at the kinder level as well so that the transition is consistent but I would not recommend either K or 1st.

Jason Spence –Preemptively I know we are in a financial mess and whatever we need to do to make it work is ok. Classroom size is a big issue. We will have to live with this decision for 5 years. We cannot get rid of the additional students if things improve with the state. Academics will suffer with increase. If it’s something we have to do then we’ll do it.

Tracy Chatters – I’m wondering about grades 3, 4 and 5 if we increase to 27 would be able to add a full time instructional aide to balance out the ratio.

Setve Korvink - Seems that we are right around the state average?

CB – 96% is the our average, we need to make parents really aware of ramifications of pulling students out of school for trips and the impact on ADA.

BC – An excused absence is only medical, health or bereavement –it costs the school for that day. 29 minutes or less is considered tardy, 30 minutes truant.

Steve – How are we communitating that to parents?

Tracy Chatters – LA unified sends out a “bill” to parents

PN – Feedback from the district regarding class size increases would be nice but I think I know what the feedback would be.

JT – They just voted to increase to 25 – 27 in elementary

PN – NUSD doing it for financial solvency, I do appreciate that. I hope they have understanding of our situation. Not acting means possibly dipping into our reserves or cutting our services. I don’t want to ever go down that road but it is a reality.

JT – I just found out that state budget was vetoed

PN – I would like to see a committee to further study.

CB – Increasing 1 class and using that as a cluster class is also an option. I would like to have more feedback from teachers and parents on that idea. Problem is that next meeting is August 4th. There is a possibly of calling a special meeting.

CB – I’d like to table the action item for July.

SC – I thought it was rushed to begin with.

ME – If the state takes away the CSR funding then the one 2nd grade class could be increased. I agree with Bob that we have to do something but I don’t want to delve into 3 grade levels.

CB – issues – what would be the structure 1 class increase by 4 -5 , more than 1, which grade(s) do we start at. I want to know that we have reached out to the district and gotten feedback or buy in. Teacher input on cluster idea, how would it work, what would the impact be.

PN – Leave the action item more generic – don’t specify the grades.

Motion:
Second:

Action: Tabled for next meeting
Vote:

E. Approve spending approval guidelines

CB – Phil?

PN – 2K cap on 1 time spending

AB – The business office needs guidelines for 2nd signature. Usually 2 – 5K. Limit set for board approval.

PN – Approving cap for 2nd signature

AB – auditor question for PO, currently 5K cap. OK to leave it at 5K

PN – Bob?

BC –2K is fine

Motion: SC approve 2K cap

Action: Substitute prior role call

Second: PN

Vote: Approved

F. Approve growth loan

CB- The school applied for growth loan for 65K, approved. Issue is do we want to accept it, have until mid July.

AB – I need enough time to complete required documentation

CB – This appears to be more of a bridge loan to bridge gap for current expenditure needs. Do we need it?

PN – I was all for in until saw the interest rate and additional fees attached. It’s not much better than a bank loan. Such a small amount for such a high interest rate.

CB – I don’t see a real need for the additional expenditure, we’re ok until next year

BC – The loan is less than the stimulus payment we’ll get for free.

AB – When we applied for it we didn’t know about the stimulus money

Motion: None

Action:

Second:

Vote:

IV. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Lottery Process (Michelle Ellis)

Kind of goes hand in hand with parent participation. We haven’t had the opportunity to hold parents accountable. It would be unfortunate if a sibling or staff member losses a spot due to someone not being truthful.

CB – Asking for tax return would be a big obstacle

BC- Applications for free and reduced lunch are used in the district.

Tracy Chatters – We should have them fill out the free and reduced lunch form

Elizabeth Driscoll – We could make it required for first day of school or they loose their spot

SD – 54% of NUSD are title 1

Steve Korvink – What guidance can school services or Axa provide?

BC – Charter school assoc. or Axa

PN – The bigger picture is the charter renewal, founding parents will eventually phase out.

AW – Can we change the question to be more clear?

CB – ask Lisa for guidance, agendize it for next meeting

B. Parent Participation/Volunteer hours (Cliff Blakely)

CB – At the strategic planning meeting we saw that parent participation hours clearly not where we want it to be. This board is prepared to tighten up on this issue. In years

past we have used the carrot instead of the stick. We have talked about a threefold approach to get out the info that this is important and required. Report hours on the report card with the children's grades.

PN – If they haven't completed their hours they should consider buying them. And we should send them a letter. Not interested in collecting the money but more interested in the building of the parent volunteers.

SC – It ultimately hurts the school for the parents not to contribute – we need to get tough.

PN – A letter is appropriate. It's the first step in stressing the importance. There's an imbalance there that has to be corrected. It's extremely frustrating.

BC – there should be a plan to deal with the immediate issue but also change the culture. We need to speak to that culture every chance we get. Aimee and I are going to create a job board and post it in the copy room.

PN – To an extent that is correct but some people are ignoring it. Culture change is good as a long range plan. A meeting with the principal has to happen this year.

SD – What is the reason people aren't reporting their hours? Maybe we should publicize parents who have hit record highs.

ME – Everybody enjoys recognition, recognizing them every meeting might create enthusiasm.

DH – What about awards for kids whose parents meet the hours?

C. Student/parent handbook (Bob Capp)

As I mentioned we created a student parent handbook which is more comprehensive. We used a template from another charter school. Our hope is to have it complete for the August meeting but more realistically it will be September. Discipline approach

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. class size increase
2. title 1 issue on lottery application
3. minutes
4. strategic plan

VI. ADJORNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41pm.

Next meeting, July 28, 2009