

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WESTLAKE CHARTER SCHOOL
Board Meeting, Library**

July 28, 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 6:38PM

B. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

		present	absent
1.	Cliff Blakely	_X_	_____
2.	Howard Chan	_____	_____
3.	Phil Nanni	_X_	_____
4.	Jules Tran	_X_	_____
5.	Stefanie Cruz	_X_	_____
6.	Jason Spence	_X_	_____
7.	Michelle Acquisto	_X_	_____
8.	Michelle Ellis	_____	_____
9.	Yvonne Wright	_____	_____

II. PUBLIC SESSION

A. BOARD COMMENTS

Cliff Blakely – welcomes new members, Michelle Acquisto, Jason Spence and Yvonne Wright

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.)

C. REPORTS

1. Financial Report – Ana Barillas-Mendez, presents CSR reports, nothing has changed with the adopted budget. Need to add 21K federal money. Need to have flexibility with budget as we are expecting additional cuts later on.
2. WAVE Report – Paul Hobie, New family BBQ on the 18th. Thanks everyone for coming. Jules Tran, Lisa Kaplan and Teri Burns also attended. Golf tourney set for 9/25. Special WAVE mtg. 8/3 to approve budget. 1st WAVE mtg. 8/17th at 6:30 in BASE room.
3. Principal's Report – Bob Capp
4. Facilities Update – Scott Dosick
Cliff Blakely asks for update on the driveway modifications
Scott Dosick – The city has submitted a 5K bid for the work still waiting for bids on gate and concrete work. Estimating 10-15K
Phil Nanni – The proximity between driveway and crosswalk seems very close.
Scott Dosick – Additional signage will be needed.

III. ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR ACTION:

Consent Agenda - All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion followed by a roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless the Board of Trustees, audience, or staff request specific items to be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate action. Any items removed will be considered after the motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

A. Accept and approve minutes from May and June board meeting

B. Accept monetary donations

C. Accept and approve revision to lottery application for 2010-2011

Motion: PN

Action: Approved

Second: SC

Vote:

ACTION ITEMS – REGULAR AGENDA

D. Accept and approve revisions to Strategic Plan

Cliff Blakely – An extensive discussion was held at the strategic planning meeting. I would like to incorporate Lisa Corr’s notes and agendize for next mtg.

Phil Nanni – Make changes, approve and publish on website.

Motion: PN table for next board mtg.

Action: substitute prior role call

Second: CB

Vote:

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

Cliff Blakely – There was a lot of discussion at the last meeting in additional to emails from parents and staff all of which essentially say the same. I can tell you that we all agree that small class is a benefit, no one disagrees. What I’m interested in hearing from the public is why we should increase class sizes. The only reason I would consider doing this is for budgetary reasons. Our dwindling funds are a concern; this board has been fiscally conservative. Our positive reserve is dwindling. It’s not something that we can ignore. That is the only reason I can think of right now that I can think of to approve increasing. Even with that I am hesitant to increase.

Stephanie Cruz – I think it a reality that all schools face not just WCS. My concern is what grades; I think K & 1 are developmentally not ready. I like to flush out the grades a little bit more.

Phil Nanni – We are kind of at an imbalance already. If we keep that same structure we will have a certain population of kids who will not have the benefit of WCS. Do we want to balance it out through the grade level so that year after year we have the same class size? It does appear that research supports small class size. And that supports our charter. I struggle with how do we support the budget and honor our charter. My only answer is fundraising. My concern is will we have the support of the parents to go out and fundraise to support the board and the school. We have three major fundraisers a year because we didn’t want the kids fundraising all year long with candy etc. I can tell you from the golf tournament that it’s the same group of people doing the fundraising. In my mind we should be fundraising at the level of 200K a year to have all that we want to have at this school.

Cliff Blakely – I think we as a school we have to do better to put out the message to the parent population that the things we do at WCS come at a cost and we are not reimbursed for those specialties by the state. If we want to continue to be the school that we are it’s going to come at a cost.

Chris Santa Croce – what is the cost we get per student?

Cliff Blakely – The school gets about 5500 in ADA money per kid. If you have CSR it’s an extra 20K per class. Depending on how far you increase you get penalties. We use that cost as an estimate.

Steve Korvink – I hear increasing fundraising and class size and I mentioned increasing attendance rates. I haven’t heard from the board ideas for communicating that to the parents. I think there is missed opportunities about that key piece.

Scott Dosick – Last month the concern I raised was the impact to NUSD and the relationship. Charters do pull money from the district as a whole. The net hit to the district is roughly 2500 per student that we pull from the district. Part of their budget the district increased the class sizes across the board, even if we

vote to increase we will still have small class sizes compared to NUSD. The district is voting to fully loaded classes at their level. 26 K-3. We could find ourselves not getting paid for Spanish, Art and BASE if we want to continue those programs we will have increased expenses. How much will this net us?

Cliff Blakely – If we add 12 kids to the school 3 per class, 50K net, if we added 10 kids 5 kids in one class, 43K net. That gives you an idea of the financial effect of adding kids. Can we use those funds? absolutely. Ana has told me the state hasn't decided if they are going to fund growth classes. We may not get anything next year and they may make it retroactive. Potential 40K hole in our budget that we may see. Adding kids can plug the hole.

Rubylynn Blakely – I know that I work for a large company and they are cutting back especially charitable contributions, that's one of the first things that get cut. We need to educate the parents and ask them to step up. At the town hall we should ask them to think of fundraising, and teach them about absences. There are so many ways that we can raise money, we should have a break out session and come up with ways to save money and support our school.

Lisa Corr- I think that the board should hear from the teachers and the administrators to hear how they feel about increasing. Even with the proposed increase we would still be below the rest of the district. I want to know how they feel, that's more important to me than how parents feel. I agree that parents need education about the independent study option to make up for absences. I would volunteer to committee to educate parents. You may want to look at an expulsion policy for absences. You could choose to remove a student for excessive absences.

Vivian Nolan – If we add 1 child to every class how many would that be all together?

Cliff Blakely – 3 in each K-2, 2 in third. 15 total

Vivian Nolan – 1 child doesn't seem like much

Cliff Blakely – The loading ratio I gave is just an example

Jeanette Rog – As a teacher, obviously I'd like to keep 20-1 so the students would continue to get quality. If there is no other fiscal opportunities I'm asking you to add 2 or 4, because of group lessons. It's easier to get material and for classroom management.

Ana Barillas-Mendez – I understand and agree small is better. Fundraising is great however you cannot budget and count on that. It's an unknown amount and is not consistent from year to year. Federal Stimulus is 1 time funding 75K last year 21K this year but we don't know about October. NUSD will be reviewing Westlake's charter but will not approve fiscally unsound school. The CSR funding is flexible in the penalties, right now you can increase by 6 students and be ready if you loose the 20K.

Cliff Blakely – Bob can you speak to this for us? 3 teachers have expressed they will sacrifice if that's what we are asking them to do. I'm very proud of them.

Bon Capp – I've been thinking a lot about this since June 30th. and what's to gain vs. lost. I'm about student achievement. It's best gained with small class sizes. I've seen that since 1996 when CSR was implemented. That's my biggest concern. If we were to take more students on for financial solvency it will take 4 years to back off from the increase. To go back down to 20 would take attrition which will take 4 years in which there is a possible compromise in the students' education. I propose we look at this issue again in February decide in April or May for next year. I'm not in disfavor but don't count me as in favor, this can affect our achievement. If I were asked to make a recommendation that would be it.

Sally Alden – If the economy remains the way it is we may need to take hard look at what is important to educate our children. To look at adding two extra classes next year would that help to spread overhead?

Phil Nanni – Do you mean accelerate the current growth plan?

Sally Alden – Correct, would that be a feasible option.

Elizabeth Williams – What is the reserve number. What is a realistic goal?

Phil Nanni – A healthy reserve would be above 500K

Michelle Acquisto – Appreciate what Bob said, as a teacher I'd like to see that small class size. I've taught 35 fifth graders. It is doable but it is a lot of hard work. If it's purely economic I'd say increase by 1 or 2. If we can financially do it let's wait until February and reassess. In the mean time fundraising will be more goal oriented.

Cliff Blakely – Before we vote I want to elaborate on how I feel about Bob's idea. We brought an experienced administrator to tap into his experience and I'm really excited about what he and Kate can do to further our academic progress so it really resonates with me when he says this can impact our academic excellence. It causes me a concern about who we are. Balancing the academic with our budget needs is difficult. I feel that if we add students now it would be in a haphazard manor just to get some numbers on our board. That said we have to plug the hole in our budget. If we don't do this we will have to consider further budget cuts.

Stephanie Cruz - Agree

Michelle Acquisto – I would like to make a motion to deny the increase in class sizes.

Motion: MA	Action:
Second: SC	Vote: 8 – yes, 1 abstain

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Strategic Plan

Possibly construction bond application

Charter Renewal – discussion and action

BASE director

VI. ADJORNMENT 7:54pm