

The notes below were written by the chair of the WLCSC Board of Trustees, Rachel Witt, and sent to the members of the WLCSC board of trustees, the Superintendent, and CFO of schools, date as noted. They were written as documents to aid collaboration and contain both informative and deliberative items. They are informal communication, written with the sole purpose of information to board members to facilitate individual members' ability to execute the task each were elected to do. They were not written for any form of publication.

Writing of these weekly notes and distribution to the board is voluntary and can be stopped at any time. A school board may decline to distribute information that is deliberative. Deliberative is defined in part as expressions of opinion or are of a speculative nature, and that are communicated for the purpose of decision making. Nearly all language in these notes exactly fit that description.

The Board Chair, in consultation with corporation and board leadership, is releasing these documents, only minimally redacted, as part of our ongoing work for transparency. Names/pronouns are redacted to ensure a first person voice. Other redacted language could include: Legally protected information, ie. personnel or student names reference, deliberative information where release of the information could potentially cause harm to a person or group of persons, or inhibit the ability of the board to conduct the business of the board.

Redacted Text is noted by <Redacted Text>

5.7.2022

Board Chair Notes

As always, these notes are confidential. If you have any item you are interested in more conversation about, please let me know. I will set up a time with you for a conversation. You may notice that I am adjusting my format a little bit for these notes. That is simply a matter of trying to both continue to disseminate information to board members and "think out loud" so we can do our best work AND trying to minimize the amount of time it takes me to redact names/pronouns, legally protected and deliberative information. Redaction is a tedious and time consuming process. You are also always welcome to add comments to these notes if you have additional resources that would benefit the board. Thank you for all you do to keep students as our focus. Rachel

Board/Development - Training

- Plans finalized for hosting ISBA Region 4 'Prospective Board Member Training' It will be at the Jr./Sr. facility the evening of July 11th. It is important to seek this training out for our community to help raise understanding of the governance role and responsibilities of a school board and its members. Well functioning school boards have a direct connection to student success. ISBA will share a public invitation/link with us when available for us to support their advertising of the event.
- Member <Redacted Text> asked about this in our 5/2 meeting. As another reminder: *'we anticipate a board conversation at some point, perhaps around the board retreat or other training, with regard to public comment at meetings and if we need to modify our process. Please review training materials provided last week and consider your questions/thoughts regarding this topic. We have confirmed that we are currently working well above the new laws in place on July 1, so there is not an immediate urgency to the conversation. I just want you all to be aware that despite our current focus in other areas, it has not been dropped.'*

Meetings of the Board

- 5/2 Regular Meeting held. Thank you for your preparation.
- First Saturday Feedback is scheduled for today, May 7, 9-10 am @Fresh Thyme Market.
- Schedule of Board Meetings. Based upon feedback from members, we will look to schedule meetings the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm for the 22-23 academic year. <Redacted Text> has prepared that for review. It is attached. I am aware there is a typo at the bottom, otherwise, please review this deliberative material for compatibility to your schedule and get back to me with your feedback.
- Hand raising to vote seemed to work well. It is a bit awkward for me on how to "say" it exactly, but I'll work on improving that. As a reminder from my earlier communication regarding meeting protocol, it is expected that in a meeting, each member will indicate they would like to speak, and be recognized to speak before speaking.

I have included that information I gave to the board in January below in blue here as a reminder:

It will not come as a surprise to any of you that I am no expert at Robert's Rules. We can also all agree that they are the parliamentary rule for our board per board bylaws and we've each raised our right hand and vowed to follow those.

We've heard from a member of the community at last month's meeting and I've also done some personal reading and work trying to understand better, do better and be better. Some of you are very skilled at this, but I thought it important that we all be on the same-ish page. Here is one article I found to be interesting about the history and philosophy of Robert's Rules:

<https://medium.com/@nextupai/the-history-of-roberts-rules-of-order-1d1d077b5def>

I have also gone and reviewed a couple of our more recent meetings and do see a couple of areas where we can do better.

1) We can more carefully abide by the one speaker at a time rule. I'm quite at fault for interrupting on a couple of occasions in recent meetings. In those moments, my intent was good. I was genuinely trying to just better understand what was being said, but my question should, by Robert's Rules, have waited until the person speaking was done. I think the new room arrangement which allows us to better see each other's faces will help. I'm also going to make a great effort to watch for signals from each of you that you would like to speak when we're in discussion on an item. I really appreciate your patience and if I miss your signal, I will not be in the slightest offended if you speak up. You can also let me know in advance of a meeting if you have thoughts/questions/opinions and I'll make a point of looking to you during the meeting to make sure you have an opportunity to speak if you still want to.

2) We can better abide by the idea of the discussion being actually a discussion, which means (basically) that we would best serve the outcome if we avoid communication in which we are lecturing or stating a lengthy case, but rather seeking to ask questions, state opinions and come to the best decision collaboratively. This, of course, requires trust among us that we can each have our turn(s) to speak, and that other board members will listen and value our thoughts when we do speak. To that end, I'd ask us each to consider if the comment we want to make is more than 2 minutes (roughly 280 words), that the board meeting might not be the place for the comment, the comment should be abbreviated, and/or it should be broken into smaller comments to allow for discussion between. If in a meeting, a single comment is stretching longer than two minutes, I hope you'll be understanding if I signal you a reminder. This also plays into the board practice of fully reading our board packet in advance of the meeting and asking questions of our administrators, <Redacted Text> in advance of the meeting. Not because we are trying to make decisions in advance, but because we want to come to the discussion BEST prepared to have a worthy conversation about the things that require conversation in our meetings. Many things do not require discussion. Sometimes worthy conversations are not board meeting conversations.

Again, I know some of you are very comfortable with Robert's Rules, so this e-mail may be a bit of an eye roll. I appreciate your patience as I learn and welcome your feedback. Thanks, Rachel

Community/Patron Feedback

- x1 patron <Redacted Text> feedback about board meeting schedule 22-23
- x1 patron <Redacted Text>confirming Feedback Session, cc'd to full board.
- x1 patron appreciative of work of the board.
- x1 parent <Redacted Text> referred to building principal.

Student Success & Safety

- Teacher appreciation events throughout our schools this week, cookie trays sent on behalf of the board to contribute to the celebration of our teachers. I thought you might also enjoy this opinion piece from EdSurge. <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-05-03-the-dos-and-don-ts-of-celebrating-teacher-appreciation-week>
- You may have heard that a proposed bell schedule for the jr/sr high was presented at both the parent council and student council meetings last week. This is not unexpected, as<Redacted Text>presented at our April Meeting, he has been working through an intensive and collaborative process to review and revise the schedule. As a reminder, it is not in the purview of the school board to set the bell schedule. This is not a "votable" item. Any patrons who reach out to us regarding the bell schedule should appropriately be directed to the building principal. Should they remain dissatisfied after speaking to the building principal, the next escalation is to the superintendent.
- Please plan to attend graduation Friday May 27th, Berberian Gymnasium at 7:00 pm
- As noted by member <Redacted Text>in our meeting, the WLSEF scholarship awards ceremony and reception will be held just prior to commencement. Many of the donors for endowed scholarships are present at this event. Please plan to attend.

General Business

- As we continue our work towards student success focused transparency, with review and discussion with legal council, these weekly board chair notes have come into question as potentially "disclosable". While I haven't written them that way, and could legally and honestly categorize them as "deliberative", I, with <Redacted Text>and board officers, made the decision to redact and release them on a routine basis. I have struggled with an explanation of how exactly this decision feeds student success, but I continue to return to the reality that I do not have anything to hide in my communications. <Redacted Text> I believe the benefit to our students is to help our community understand with as much clarity as possible the governance work of an effective board.
- <Redacted Text> have requested school corporation emails. School IT personnel will be in touch (or have been already) with details for setting that account up. If you have elected to switch to a school corporation email, it will be linked to your profile on the website. Please use it as your ONLY email communication for school board business. Please refer to policy 7540.05 as it applies to school corporation emails.
- Legal RFP: Binders with proposals are prepared, email was sent this morning to participating members for the purpose of scheduling the initial review. As part of this review, we will determine how most effectively to share this deliberative information with the full board. This is not as simple as comparing cans of beans on a grocery shelf, as it encompasses intentional review of how we use legal services based upon previous need for legal services, (much of which is protected information.)