

*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 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 thoughts that are of a speculative nature, and that are communicated for the purpose of decision making. Nearly all language in these notes exactly fit the description of deliberative.*

*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, i.e. personnel or student names or 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>*

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## 1.2.23 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. You are also always welcome to add comments to these notes if you have additional resources that would benefit the board. Rachel

## Board/Development - Training

- Board Goal #1 related to board member engagements for 2023

This is important to complete prior to the organizational meeting in January so that whomever is elected by the board as chair for 2023 is able to assign committees promptly. I received feedback from vice president<Redacted Text>, secretary <Redacted Text>, member <Redacted Text>, exiting member <Redacted Text> and incoming member <Redacted Text>. Below is content of any feedback that that required response:

\*Community Council was left off inadvertently from the table but belongs in 'Community Engagement'.

\*As a board, we expect members to work collaboratively. Engagements are not decision-making roles. It is incumbent upon members to do the work they accept and are assigned to the best of their ability and it is incumbent upon the other members to show that member basic respect for that work and trust that the other members are

indeed doing and reporting the work they do honestly and in the best interests of the work of the board and our students.

\*I cannot speak for how others might do it, but my approach as board chair has been to consult with each member about their interests and strengths in light of the needs of the schools. Committee assignments are not forced upon members. That said, individual member strengths are wonderful (we are indeed seven talented people) but we serve the needs, not our egos. I, for example, have expertise in art. You'll notice there is not an "Art" engagement. That's because it's part of curriculum and SHOULD be part of curriculum. I still support arts in our schools, but I do that at the 10,000-foot view as a board member and as a parent volunteer around my children's activities.

\*Additional scenario for consideration: If, for example, a member serves in the 'Internal Systems' engagement, that would involve being on the Safety Committee. The Safety Committee is a school corporation committee, headed by our Superintendent or his designee(s). (We are fortunate that <Redacted Text> has his safety certification in addition to our corporation safety officer, so we have more resources than the average school corporation.) When a safety meeting is scheduled, this is the high-level view, reviewing emergency plans, etc. The member would be invited to attend that meeting and could participate in the meeting as far as asking questions, etc. They might also participate in a Health & Wellness meeting that dealt with any change to a COVID plan (should that situation change). These two things have crossover, so it makes sense to bundle them. This does not give that member any special authority, but does allow the member to develop a unique expertise as a member, serve as a sounding board to our corporation leadership, and support the decision making of the board by sharing that expertise. The members of the board would need to trust that member to a) show up and do the work and b) to share their expertise with the board. Ultimately, the Superintendent would bring any voteable item to the board for a vote if needed.

\*WL City Council has never been a committee assignment and is redundant to other communications we have with city leadership. We are all citizens of WL and free to attend those meetings if we would like to observe them or participate as a citizen.

\*Communications Committee is not a functioning committee and is up for discussion among the entire board as part of our board goals this year. It is also an identified priority for the corporation under <Redacted Text> leadership. It may become part of the engagements through that process, but is not at this time.

\*There is no 'personnel or legal' committee. This is just typical superintendent/board chair communication. If at any time there are any items requiring action by the board, they are of course brought to the board.

\*For a functional board, which I know we all desire to be, members do have to trust the other members. If any board member finds they are duplicating, investigating or "checking" the work of the other members, in general, that should be an indicator that they are overstepping boundaries and not showing collegial respect to the member

assigned to the task. To be clear, this does not mean that we must agree on all items or that we cannot ask questions or for more information.

- Board Goal #2 related to communication.

I did not receive any additional requests for information to be assembled for consideration on changing the release of deliberative board materials. I have assembled the information already gathered in a file within the board chair notes. Additionally, I have included the thoughts of incoming member <Redacted Text> who would like to expedite the changing of policy and has repeated <Redacted Text> request that the policy change be put on the January agenda.

As a general point of clarification/education to all members, we do already have in place a mechanism for a member to force an agenda item to a meeting. A member can make a motion that an agenda item be added during a regular meeting when the board chair specifically asks at the start of every meeting if there are any changes to the agenda. The board member would motion, that would require a second, then it would go to vote. If the majority of the board votes to modify the agenda, the item would be added.

That said, it is IDEAL in the interest of collaboration if that conversation is had prior to the meeting so that a) the meeting is efficient and respects members time and b) so that staff and all members have the ability to review facts, ask for additional information, and are prepared to vote. This is the reason why, in interest of transparency, I invite members to contribute their thoughts in advance of the meeting, which is precisely what incoming member <Redacted Text> has done.

I reaffirm my recommendation to the board regarding the time frame outlined in my 12.17.2022 notes. *"Given there will be a change in the policy committee representation in January, I would recommend February work session, policy committee meet later in February, with first reading of policy in March Regular meeting."* My rationale is simply to allow time for members to review materials, allow new members to at least completed minimal new board member training, be able to have a well-informed discussion in public work session, and be able to give clear direction to our central office staff about any change in policy. Please take time to review the materials on this topic in the above noted file. Thank you.

- New Member Mentorship meeting rescheduled for 1/5 at 4:15 pm.  
Members <Redacted Text> to attend.
- New members <Redacted Text> scheduled to attend ISBA new member 'Basic Training' on 1/21

## **Meetings of the Board**

- Reminder, swearing in of members at 6:25 pm immediately prior to meeting.
- 1/9/23 6:30 pm Organizational Meeting, Regular Meeting, Board of Finance.

REMINDER: Board packet for the 1/9 meeting will be released by <Redacted Text> on Wednesday 1/4. Questions are due by Noon on Friday 1/6. (New members can bring those to our 1/5 mentor meeting for expanded discussion.)

- Reminder. Save the Date for the WLSEF Scarlet & Gray dinner 4/22/23

## **Community/Patron Feedback**

### **General Business**

- All APRA requests are complete at this time. *\*note, this does not necessarily mean that the requesting patron has received what they asked for. It could also mean that the request was not able to be fulfilled for some legitimate fault in the request and the patron has received a response requesting correction, but has not yet responded.*