

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>

2.11.23 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

●Regarding Meeting Minutes. An additional similar question to member <Redacted Text> question was received this week from member <Redacted Text> requesting review of board policies related to the taking of meeting minutes. Their question reads:

We have several policies that specify the duties of the secretary (po0100, po0168.1, and po0171.3). They need to be updated to reflect current practice and to not contradict each other. For example, the policies currently state that the secretary: acts as a clerk during school board meetings, prepares the annual report of the corporation, records the minutes, and is responsible for the custody of the records of the board.

I have added this to the list for discussion by the policy committee. That meeting has been scheduled for 2/23. Included in this conversation will be the following vocabulary clarifications.

Record:

- 1: the state or fact of being recorded
- 2: something that records: such as
 - a: something that recalls or relates past events
 - b: an official document that records the acts of a public body or officer
 - c: an authentic official copy of a document deposited with a legally designated officer
 - d: the official copy of the papers used in a law case

The physical minutes themselves are examples of the 2a and 2b definitions of the word 'record'. The process by which the minutes are taken and retained as a permanent record of the activity of the board are an example of the 2c definition of 'record' that is used by this board and is common use by school boards in the state of Indiana for management of their minutes.

Clerk

- 1a an official responsible (as to a government agency) for correspondence, records, and accounts and vested with specified powers or authority (as to issue writs as ordered by a court)
- b: one employed to keep records or accounts or to perform general office work
- c: one who works at a sales or service counter
- d: a person (such as a law school graduate) who provides a judge, magistrate, or lawyer with assistance in such matters as research, writing, and analysis

In their role as "secretary of the board" the secretary is acting in the function of 1a which defines responsibility, not 1b as the person employed to keep the records.

●Thank you, members, <Redacted Text> who were able to participate in the morning educational programs for Professional Development day. There was wonderful feedback about the various sessions and in particular the student panel at the opening of the day. Thank you's sent to those students.

Meetings of the Board

- Reminder. Save the Date for the WLSEF Scarlet & Gray dinner 4/22/23
- Next regular meeting is scheduled for 2/13, 6:30 PM

Please note that <Redacted Text> received 37 questions this week from members. Even if one person only spent 10 minutes per question (which is an extremely light estimate), this amounts to more than six hours spent answering board member questions. Our Administrators are charged with the responsibility of managing the day to day operations of our schools. They want to serve the needs of the school board, but we as a board must also be judicious consumers of their time and not place our demands ahead of the needs of the students they serve. I would encourage every member to apply a single question to your thought process when making inquiries: How does this question serve students of WLCSC? If you do not have a clear answer to that question,

it may still be a valid question, but may have a lower priority and/or would be suited to board member training/mentorship opportunities.

- We will NOT be holding our 2/22 work session. It was replaced with the 2/1 work session.

Community/Patron Feedback

- x 1 patron through member <Redacted Text>with inquiry about GLCA coursework. Patron had already communicated with guidance staff. Referred escalation to building principal.

- x1 patron <Redacted Text> with inquiry about policy related to participation by homeschool students in WLCSC co/extra-curricular activities. Response sent with cc to full board.

General Business

- UPDATE: Here is response from legal counsel (CCHA) regarding the question.

“No law requires a certain number of readings for school boards to adopt/revise policies. It’s all governed by the policies the Board has set for itself. For WLCSC, that’s po0131.1 which requires two readings of policies except in cases of emergency. Some boards allow policies to be passed on a single reading (rare), most require two readings, and a few require three readings. It’s all preference of the Board. Though, practically, two readings have emerged as the best practice in order to allow the Board to read, digest, and discuss the policy at the first reading.”

I did not receive any communication from any member regarding this process, or any instance where a member does not believe this process defined in policy was followed. Repeating it again this week as a reminder and will remove from notes next week if no concerns are received that require further investigation.

NOTE CARRIED OVER FROM 2.4.23 chair notes:

In our work session, member <Redacted Text> commented that we had recently switched to the two-reading process for substantially changed and new policy and there have been times where the board has not followed this process. I do not believe this is a new policy. I completed a cursory review of that policy history and it has been in place since I believe at least 1996. I am not aware of any time where the two-reading process has not been followed. It is my recall that this policy is rooted in Indiana Code, question sent to legal counsel (CCHA) for clarification on legal code clarification. If any member has specific policies where they do not believe this process was followed, please feel free to refer those to me and I will ask them to be researched.

●UPDATE: I have received no request for any additional detail regarding the Q&A material available on the corporation website. Repeating it again this week as a reminder (deleted documentation to shorten notes, full document is available in 2.4 notes.) and will remove from notes next week if no concerns are received that require further investigation. NOTE CARRIED OVER FROM 2.4 CHAIR NOTES: In our work session, member <Redacted Text>shared concern with the posting of Questions & Answers on the corporation website, and suggested that process was in some way serving me personally and/or that I am personally the author of those questions and/or responses. As I indicated in work session, below I have provided details with regard to development of the Q&A questions and answers.

● Comment received from Member <Redacted Text> via email.

I attended the ISBA new member training in January. One of the points they emphasized was using procedures to ensure that all school board members have the same information. The ISBA attorney, <Redacted Text>, shared that school board members can send information and questions via email to all other board members. It was recommended not replying all to keep discussions at public meetings. The recommendation made sense to me and may help us communicate more efficiently and cut down on duplicate questions.

This can be discussed as part of agenda item for 2/12 regular meeting related to redaction and release of the board chair notes. Moving member email content to the weekly board notes. Any member should make me aware of any technical difficulty in accessing the comment feature on Box so a work order can be submitted to tech support.