

# Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa Education Committee



## NCWP Education Committee Members

Michele Cooley Strickland, M.Ed., Ph.D. – Chair  
Grace Yao – Co-Chair                      Matthew Tecele  
Andrew Kamm                                  John-David Webster  
Denny Schneider                              Bryan Williams

[www.ncwpdr.org/Education](http://www.ncwpdr.org/Education)



## MEETING MINUTES – February 25, 2015

Westchester Municipal Building Community Rm, 7166 W. Manchester Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Members Present: Grace Yao, Michele Cooley-Strickland (via telephone), Denny Schneider, and Matthew Tecele

Members Absent: Andrew Kamm, John David Webster, Bryan Williams

1. The meeting was called to order by Grace Yao, Co-Chair, at 6:32pm.
  - a. Four of the seven NCWP Education Committee (“Committee”) members were present.
  - b. The Committee welcomed the guests attending today’s meeting, including: Joe Davis (Carousel School); Janet Landon (Westchester Secondary Charter School, Principal/Co-Founder); Beth LaVane (Community Outreach and Opportunity Programs); Gwen Vuchsas (LAX Chamber of Commerce) and Ann Wexler (Westchester Parent Education Foundation and WSCS Co-Founder).
2. Approval of the Minutes from November 13, 2014 Committee Meeting was deferred because of printing problems.
3. Grace Yao was officially announced as the new NCWP Education Committee Co-chairperson.
4. Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2014 and January 28, 2015 was unanimous.
5. Announcements were made from Local Education Group Representatives:
  - a. **LMU** – Grace Yao announced the upcoming Race for Success on April 25, 2015 (see <http://raceforsuccess5k.wordpress.com/>)
  - b. **Otis College of Art and Design** – Matt Tecele announced the upcoming:
    - i. Kite Festival on April 11, 2015 10am-4pm (Santa Monica Pier). It is the 4th Annual “Gallery in the Skies” day of free kite-building and flying. For more information: <http://www.otis.edu/calendar/4th-annual-kite-festival>
    - ii. 2015 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, “The State of Creativity” on March 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm at LALive and March 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 in Santa Ana
  - c. **LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce** – Education Committee– Gwen Vuchsas Reported on the very successful First Annual Neighborhood School Expo held on February 11<sup>th</sup> at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Twenty-six local schools participated, nine local businesses, and the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa. It was very well attended by current parents and local residents who were planning to have children.
  - d. Local Schools - **Westchester Secondary Charter School** – Janet Landon (Principal and Co-Founder) reported the relocation challenges faced by WSCS due to the sale of their existing property. A discussion ensued to identify strategies and potential plans of action that the NCWP may execute in support of WSCS obtaining a location for the 2015-2016 academic year within the Westchester community boundaries.

**1** Our NCWP Education Goal: *To engage the Westchester/Playa del Rey/Playa Vista community in support of advancing the success of the local elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as that of the local colleges and universities, manifested by enhancing: i) School resources; ii) students’ educational experiences; iii) parental involvement; and/or iv) community partnerships.*

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## 6. New Business

- a. The LMU Family of Schools and NCWP Education Committee **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** was posted on the NCWP Education webpage (with a downloadable PDF <http://www.ncwpdr.org/westchesterplaya-schools-faqs-neighborhood-stakeholders>; see Attachment). Discussions were held regarding where to post/circulate the FAQ, including a link on the *HomeTown News* and *Argonaut* websites; posting it on the NCWP Facebook page (Grace Yao); WPDR and Westchester Next Door (Denny Schneider); Neighborhood Watch Block Captains; LAX Chamber of Commerce website; Playa Vista Sunrise (Grace Yao); Kiwanis (Denny Schneider); and local realtors. The Committee **voted** unanimously to follow up on these actions following approval from the NCWP Board.
- b. A lengthy discussion was held pertaining to the **request from Westchester Secondary Charter School** (Janet Landon, Principal/Director/Co-Founder and Ann Wexler, Co-Founder) to engage the NCWP's assistance in engaging our local representatives and stakeholders to maintain the school within the boundaries of the Westchester community. Currently located at 8820 Sepulveda Eastway, L.A., 90045, Westchester Secondary does not want to be relocated 7 miles away (classrooms in Crenshaw High School), but hopes to stay within half a mile or so of the heart of Westchester. The Committee **voted** unanimously to support this request and campaign to keep Westchester Secondary Charter School within the boundaries of the Westchester community using the actions permissible as a Neighborhood Council. Pending approval by the NCWP Board, proposed actions include:
  - a. Drafting a letter to Councilmember Bonin asking for his support;
  - b. Drafting a letter to our LAUSD Board Member, Steve Zimmer, asking for his support;
  - c. Sending communications to other relevant decision makers;
  - d. Presenting the letters to the NCWP Board for a vote of approval and submission to Councilmember Bonin and Board Member Zimmer; and
  - e. Identifying other ways to support Westchester Secondary Charter.
- c. Grace Yao proposed that the NCWP **Co-Host a Local Business and Community Leaders' Education Leadership Breakfast** with LMU and the LAX Chamber of Commerce to build a foundation of potential business partners in our local schools. This would involve inviting Darin Earley, Director of the LMU Family of Schools, to serve as the keynote speaker. The Committee discussed logistics and goals, then **voted** unanimously to co-host this action-oriented breakfast. A motion will be made to the NCWP Board to support the event.
- d. As originally discussed at the January, 2015 NCWP Education Meeting, further discussion was held on potentially planning to **Co-Host a Local Education Summit or Town Hall** for parents and local stakeholders to have Q&A with their local education leaders (e.g., LAUSD Board Member Steve Zimmer; State Assemblymember Autumn Burke, City Councilman Mike Bonin) to engage their support for strengthening our local publicly-funded schools. The Committee agreed that it would be best to expand the target audience beyond Westchester/Playa to include neighboring communities. The Committee unanimously **voted** to continue to pursue exploring the idea of an Education Summit

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or Town Hall meeting, with Dr. Michele Cooley-Strickland contacting the Education committees of the Neighborhood Councils of Del Rey, Mar Vista, and Venice to invite them to partner on this event.

- e. The following Education related events were announced (and are posted on the NCWP Education Committee webpage):
- 1) February 25, 2015 – 4:30-5:30pm (8820 Sepulveda Eastway, Los Angeles, 90045) at Westchester Secondary Charter School “Rally to Keep WSCS in Westchester”
  - 2) March 6, April 17, May 8 (LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce): LAX Coastal Chamber’s Education Committee monthly meetings
  - 3) April 11, 2015 – 10am-4pm (Santa Monica Pier) Otis College of Art and Design’s Fourth Annual “Gallery in the Skies” free day of kite-building and flying. <http://www.otis.edu/calendar/4th-annual-kite-festival>
  - 4) April 25, 2015: Race for Success - <http://raceforsuccess5k.wordpress.com/>
  - 5) July 25-August 3, 2015 (Special Olympics World Games, Los Angeles): Volunteer opportunities available now; <http://www.la2015.org>
7. Next meeting – The standing meeting time and location of the NCWP Education Committee is the fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm in the Westchester Community Room. The next two NCWP Education Committee meetings are: **Wednesday, March 25** and **Wednesday, April 22, 2015**.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

\*The public is requested to fill out a SPEAKER CARD to address the Board on any item of the agenda prior to the Board taking action on an item. Comments from the public on Agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the Agenda that is within the Boards subject matter jurisdiction will be heard during the Public Comment period. Public comment is limited to 2 minutes per speaker, unless waived by the presiding officer of the Board.

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In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the Board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at our website by clicking on the following link: [www.ncwpdr.org](http://www.ncwpdr.org) or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact the NCWP Education Committee Chairperson, Dr. Michele Cooley Strickland at [mcooley7@jhu.edu](mailto:mcooley7@jhu.edu).