

# Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa Education Committee



## NCWP Education Committee Members

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

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



## SPECIAL Meeting Minutes – July 31, 2015

First Baptist Church – Fellowship Hall, 8540 LaTijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045; Phone: 310-645-5755

Members Present: Michele Cooley-Strickland (Chair), Grace Yao (Co-Chair), Andrew Kamm, Denny Schneider, Bryan Williams; Members Absent: Matthew Teclé and John David Webster

The meeting was called to order by Michele Cooley-Strickland at 8:45am.

The Committee welcomed guests attending today's special meeting, including:

Herb Child (Deacon, First Baptist Church); Marius Denisiu (WSCS Board); Barbara Ford (Westchester Business Owner); Sandy Menotti (Westchester Neighbor and Parent); Bruce Milligan (First Baptist Church); Eileen Powers (Educator); Fred Sutton (City Councilmember Mike Bonin's Field Deputy); Chris Tschlis (WSCS Teacher); and Gwen Vuchsas (LAX Chamber of Commerce Education Committee Co-Chair); and Ann Wexler (Westchester Secondary Charter School, Co-Founder).

### Action Item One: Support the Proposed Re-location of Westchester Secondary Charter School (WSCS) within Westchester

The NCWP Education Committee ("Committee") continued its assistance in engaging our local representatives and stakeholders to support maintaining Westchester Secondary Charter School (WSCS) within the boundaries of Westchester. As reported in the July 22, 2015 Committee Meeting, a potential re-location site had been identified merely 0.3 mile from its original location. Today's "special" Committee meeting is held at that site: First Baptist Church, 8540 LaTijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045. The Committee heard from representatives from the neighboring community. They had been informed of this Committee meeting and two upcoming opportunities to express their views regarding the school's relocation via flyers reportedly distributed by WSCS to approximately 800 households. Westchester stakeholders in attendance enthusiastically supported the school moving to First Baptist Church (e.g., *"It's nice to have a community school that serves our community."* – Sandy Menotti, Westchester neighbor). A petition was presented that was signed by five residents that stated, *"We live in the area surrounding the proposed location of Westchester Secondary Charter School at 8540 La Tijera, Los Angeles, CA 90045. We support the school and are in favor of its new location."* First Baptist Church representatives also conveyed their enthusiastic support and commitment to WSCS. Committee members further discussed the relocation issue and unanimously voted to approve a Motion to present to the NCWP Board at its August 4, 2015 meeting. The **Motion** stated:

BACKGROUND: Westchester Secondary Charter School (WSCS), was originally located at 8820 Sepulveda Eastway (corner of La Tijera), L.A., 90045, and had to seek a new property as its original location was sold. According to the WSCS co-founders (Janet Landon and Ann Wexler), LAUSD proposed to relocate WSCS seven miles away to Crenshaw High School. The NCWP has worked to support the maintenance of WSCS within the Westchester boundaries. Half of WSCS's student body is from Westchester, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista, Baldwin Hills, Ladera Heights, and View Park/Windsor Hills, with 30% from Westchester specifically. Continuing to advocate for local educational assets to remain easily accessible to Westchester, Playa del Rey, and Playa Vista families is a worthwhile NCWP endeavor.

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**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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**DISCUSSION:** For several months, the NCWP Education Committee has acted to engage the community and our elected officials to support WSCS' efforts to remain within Westchester, as this charter middle- and high-school (6th-11th grades in 2015-2016; 6th-12th grades in 2016-2017) is a local asset to Westchester, Playa del Rey, and Playa Vista. Due to tenacious collective efforts, WSCS has procured a new potential site for their school beginning the 2015-2016 academic year that is in Westchester and less than half a mile from its original location: 8540 LaTijera Boulevard (First Baptist Church), Los Angeles, CA 90045. WSCS administrators are asking for community support of the relocation of their school onto the site of First Baptist Church.

**MOTION:** "That the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa supports the relocation of Westchester Secondary Charter School onto the site of the First Baptist Church located in Westchester at 8540 LaTijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045, subject to all applicable City permits and approvals."

### Action Item Two: Co-Host Local Education Event (Possible motion(s)):

Discussion continued from the July 22, 2015 NCWP Education Meeting to develop plans for **Co-Hosting a Local Education Event** in the early Fall for Westchester, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista parents and local stakeholders – and perhaps neighboring Westside communities. The Committee decided to recommend to the NCWP Board that there are two local education events in the Fall and unanimously voted for two **Motions**:

1) **Booth Sponsorship and Presentation: LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce Second Annual Neighborhood School Expo (see attached Motion):**

**MOTION:** "That the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa supports the proposal to sponsor an information booth and make a presentation at the LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce's Second Annual Neighborhood School Expo tentatively scheduled for October 2015."

2) **Westside Public School Education Event Featuring Elected Representatives (see attached Motion):**

**MOTION:** "Subject to the approval of the event budget, that the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa hosts a Westside Public School Education Event featuring elected officials and school representatives in the Fall of 2015 for Westchester, Playa del Rey, and Playa Vista parents and local stakeholders, inviting the collaboration of the neighboring Westside communities of Del Rey, Mar Vista, and Venice to have the opportunity to hear directly from our local education elected officials to understand their plans for strengthening the quality of our local publicly-funded schools."

The next NCWP Education Committee meeting will be **Wednesday, August 26, 2015** at its standing time and location, 6:30pm at the Westchester Municipal Building Community Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:19am and was followed by an optional **tour of First Baptist Church**, the potential site of Westchester Secondary Charter School (8540 LaTijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045).