

# Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa Education Committee



Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2014

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

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

## **Education Committee Members**

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

**Members Present:** Michele Cooley-Strickland, Andrew Kamm, Denny Schneider, and John David Webster

**Members Absent:** Grace Yao

1. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Michele Cooley Strickland, Chair, at 6:30pm.
  - a. Four of the five NCWP Education Committee (“Committee”) members were present.
  - b. The Committee welcomed the guests attending today’s meeting, including: S. Bhatt (The Incubator School, Founder); J. Davis (Carousel School); J. Landon (Westchester Secondary Charter School, Principal/Founder); M. Teclé (Otis College of Arts and Design); and B. Williams (LMU Family of Schools)
2. The Minutes from the October 22, 2014 Committee Meeting were approved.
3. Announcements were made from Local Education Group Representatives:
  - a. **LMU Family of Schools** – Bryan Williams described an upcoming event at Emerson Gardens.
  - b. **Otis College of Art and Design** – Matthew Teclé described:
    - i. December 4<sup>th</sup> at 9am: Otis’ campus improvement plan would be presented to the Planning Committee; the public is invited to demonstrate their support.
    - ii. April 11<sup>th</sup>: Otis College of Art and Design’s 4th Annual “Gallery in the Skies” free day of kite-building and flying. <http://www.otis.edu/calendar/4th-annual-kite-festival>
  - c. Local Schools:
    - i. **The Incubator School** – Sujata Bhatt (Founder) provided an overview of The Incubator School. It is a start-up LAUSD pilot school which originally opened with 60 students and 5 teachers in 2014-2015, and this year has 118 students and 9 teachers. Next year (2015-2016) it expects to enroll 220 students from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades, and will continue to expand until it serves 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Incubator School has a 1:1 laptop program, is tech based and collaborative with real world experiences. It is a 1/3 blended learning, 1/3 design studio (science and social sciences) and involves socio-emotional learning and a lot of electives. They adapt to the future and embrace learning by doing. Ms. Bhatt strongly encouraged the Committee to visit. It is co-located in Building K, Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet High School campus.
    - ii. **Carousel School** – Joe Davis gave a brief overview of Carousel School. It serves Special Needs students. Joe said there are 160 students on a couple of campuses; ages range from 18 months to 22 years, serving infants to 12<sup>th</sup> grade and adult students. Soon Carousel will open a program for people who graduate out of the program. Joe said he has been a member of the Facilities staff but is currently on hiatus.

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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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## 4. New Business - Action Items:

- a. A brief discussion was held regarding the November 4, 2014 **NCWP Board Meeting that highlighted two local schools**. Presentations were made to the Board from Principal Debra Bryant of Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet High School and Principal Christina Wanz of Wright STEAM Magnet Middle School. It was concluded that this was a worthwhile endeavor to facilitate renewed community-school relationships through the NCWP. There will be plans for more presentations of this nature to the Board, as well as to organize local school tours for the NCWP Board and Education Committee members.
- b. The **NCWP Education Committee webpage** ([www.ncwpdr.org/education](http://www.ncwpdr.org/education)) was reviewed and discussed. It has been updated by Michele Cooley-Strickland, who will continue to update it monthly with particular attention to education-based events that may be of interest to local stakeholders. The question of how to make the webpage easier to access was unanswered. However, guests at the meeting (Matt Teclé – Otis; Sujata Bhatt – Incubator School) offered to assist improving the graphics. The Committee is committed to using the webpage as a resource to the community.
- c. The NCWP Education Committee and LMU Family of Schools **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** generated at the September NCWP meetings and edited at the October meeting were discussed and voted on.
  - i. The **goal** is to “demystify” the local school options for Westchester/Playa del Rey/Playa Vista residents; engage stakeholders in the local schools (e.g., local realtors in promoting the benefits of local schools, providing opportunities for stakeholders to explore how they may contribute to the local schools); and provide accurate information that may assist parents in enrolling/retaining their children in our local schools.
  - ii. **Following a discussion:**
    - 1) By unanimous **vote**, the Committee voted to accept the FAQ.
    - 2) It was also decided by **vote** that, once it is in its final form, the FAQ would be **posted/circulated** as widely as possible, including potentially:
      - i. NCWP Education Committee webpage
      - ii. LMU Family of Schools website (if possible).
      - iii. Send/email to local real estate organizations notifying them of this new resource.
      - iv. Send/email to local community organizations as a resource.
- d. Education Committee member attendance at **relevant local education meetings** was identified as important and at least one member would:
  - i. **Plan to attend** other local Neighborhood Council Education Committee meetings, such as Del Rey and Venice.
    - 1) December 3, 2014 at 7pm (Del Rey Square): **Del Rey Neighborhood Council Education Committee Meeting** (Co-chairs: Wes Farrow, and

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Mariana Aguilar);

<http://www.delreync.org/education#sthash.aSGqA7zu.dpuf>

- 2) December 9 at 6:15pm (Venice High School): **Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) Education Committee.**

<http://www.venicenc.org/committees/education-committee/>

- ii. **Consider attending** other relevant local education meetings which are posted on the NCWP Education Committee **webpage** and may be listed in the *HomeTown News* as part of NCWP Outreach. We are constantly seeking other local education events to share with the public, including:

- 1) December 5, 2014; January 14, 2015, February 11, March 6, April 17, May 8 (LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce): LAX Coastal Chamber's Education Committee monthly meetings
- 2) February 11, 2015 (Covenant Presbyterian Preschool Campus): LAX Coastal Chamber's School Expo showcasing the local elementary, middle, and high schools.
- 3) April 25, 2015: Race for Success  
<http://raceforsuccess5k.wordpress.com/>

- e. Discussions regarding **expanding Education Committee Outreach to Local School Communities** were held, including the plan to continue communicating with local principals and perhaps expand to Parent-Teacher Organizations regarding the re-vitalization of the NCWP Education Committee and encourage attendance at our meetings. It was concluded that the Committee should schedule tours at several local schools in the month of January.

- f. Other suggestions for **enhancing community connections** were discussed. John David Webster stated that reading the Agendas for the LAUSD Boards and watching their televised meetings is very informative. Janet Landon stated that the LA School Report is available online.

5. Next meeting – There is NO meeting in December. The next two NCWP Education Committee meetings are: **Wednesday, January 21, 2015** and **Wednesday, February 18, 2015** (6:30pm, Westchester Municipal Building Community Room).

6. The meeting was Adjourned at 8:00pm.

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