



MEETING MINUTES OF
THE GOVERNING BOARD OF
WEST40 INTERMEDIATE SERVICE CENTER #2

The West40 ISC #2 Governing Board Meeting was held on Friday, September 8, 2023, at 8:00 a.m., at 415 Lexington Street, Maywood, IL 60153. President, Dr. Jennifer Kelsall called the meeting into order at 8:01 a.m.

Board President, Dr. Kelsall declared a quorum of West 40 ISC #2 Governing Board was present at 8:07 a.m.

I. Roll Call:

Present: Dr. Jennifer Kelsall, Dr. Ed Condon, Dr. Kristin Kopta, Mr. Stuart Brown, Dr. Aldo Calderin, Dr. Leah Gauthier, Ms. Kylie Lindquist, Ms. Elieen Piper-Simpson, Ms. Kathleen Tomei and Ms. Dana Wesolowski .

Not Present: Ms. Mary-Rita Moore

Also present: Emily Adams, Steve Bogren, Suzy Dees, Ben Lewis, Renee Makris,

II. Approval of September 8, 2023 Minutes: It was moved by Dr. Ed Condon and seconded by Mr. Stuart Brown that the West40 ISC#2 Governing Board approves the minutes as presented. On call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Dr. Jennifer Kelsall, Dr. Ed Condon, Dr. Kristin Kopta, Mr. Stuart Brown, Dr. Aldo Calderin, Dr. Leah Gauthier, Ms. Kylie Lindquist, Ms. Elieen Piper-Simpson, Ms. Kathleen Tomei and Ms. Dana Wesolowski .

Nays: None The motion carried without dissent.

Dr. Kelsall turned the meeting over to Dr. Mark Klaisner who recognized Ms. Jessica Janeteas and Mr. Nathaniel Abad (not present) for their 5 years of service and unwavering commitment to the students, families, and districts they serve.

Mr. Ben Lewis, Leyden ALOP Area Director, and Ms. Emily Adams, Leyden Site Coordinator, both shared Ms. Janeteas's professional growth within the organization, adding “Ms. Janeteas has risen through the ranks from an intern to the current position of student advocate.” Ms. Adams, reported Ms. Janeteas has been a pillar of support at the Northern Tier, going beyond the call of duty to help bridge gaps between students and parents, teachers, and her colleagues. Ms. Janeteas was praised for her outstanding resourcefulness, creativity, and empathy.

III. Presentations:

Financial Report - Ms. Crisiti Tyler

Ms. Tyler reported that the month of August was a good one, ending with a \$2.3 million dollars in fund balance. EBF funding has begun, thus the organization will receive an additional \$460,000 each month (overall \$5.1 million dollars). Renovations at the Lexington campus are closing; expenses are now on capital projects.

Two of the Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools (EANS) grants are coming to an end **Sep 30, 2023** . However, ISBE has contracted West40 to continue processing the “straggling” invoices until January 30, 2024. For this task, ISBE has agreed to pay West40 \$100,000 a month.

Assistant Executive Director Report - Dr. Jayme Tighe

Dr. Tighe highlighted the role of the Cabinet using an organizational structure unique to West40. The organizational structure is focused on the students served on the top with different aspects of the organization that feed into that structure, including the role of the Cabinet.

Dr. Tighe defined the Cabinet as leaders of West40 through all the different programs, including Dr. Klaisner, senior and area directors, directors of specific departments such as the Facilities, Remote Learning, St. Joe’s campus, etc.; a total of 26 directors oversee all the departments and programs within West40.

Dr. Tighe described the Cabinet as serving two functions: the development, implementation, and monitoring of the strategic plan and building the organization’s capacity as leaders. The 5-year strategic plan is used during Cabinet meetings (usually 3-4 hours a month). Included is a monthly, 3-hour meeting where 75% of the time together is spent focused on the strategic plan. The remaining 25% is focused on building capacity. New this year is an additional 2.5 hours meeting held on a monthly basis focused on building the capacity as leaders. During the summer retreat, one full day was devoted to building capacity in this area. When necessary, some outcomes and actions, priorities, and goals of the strategic plans may be carried over.

Starting fiscal year 2025, the organization will start surveying stakeholders so as to develop new priorities, outcomes, and goals for the next 5-year strategic plan to roll out in fiscal year 2026.

During the next governing board meeting, Dr. Mike Popp will present an overview of the first three years of the strategic plan to report on what has been achieved and highlight the direction in which the organization is headed. The second part will address building our capacity as leaders. For example, one of the strategic plan outcomes is focused around equity:

“West40 continues to build a culture of inclusiveness and support for a variety of our internal and external communities' needs' and lead equity-focused efforts in each of the spheres of influence”.

The Cabinet's focus is to work through an equity lens facilitated by Dr. Mike Popp and Dr. Julie Morris. The purpose remains to continue to grow as individuals our levels of consciousness around race and all other forms of equity, regarding our beliefs, feelings, and knowledge-based actions, as well as new levels of consciousness around race and all other forms of equity in order to build systems for the success of the students, staff and the communities West40 serves.

Executive Director Report: Dr. Mark Klaisner

Building Updates:

Dr. Klaisner reported the West40 Lexington campus renovations are almost complete. At this time, occupancy permits will be granted once the elevator is certified. Dr. Klaisner praises Ms. Tyler and her team for their fiduciary leadership.

Renovations at St. Joe's campus have begun. Demolition has begun, open bids, and once the funding model has been established, the construction will resume. The focus of this campus is to serve traumatized youth. West40 leaders continue to meet with representatives of the Lurie's Children's Hospital and State agencies which oftentimes delays progress.

Staff Growth:

Dr. Klaisner highlighted the capacity growth in each of the departments (with the exception of the Licensure department). The Comprehensive Educational Services department for example added three additional staff to cover threat assessment and safety, they have become recognized statewide and nationwide and their expertise has been solicited by different states. Currently, they have contracts with local schools, and in the North and South Cook areas.

Teacher Shortage:

West40 partnered with ISBE to host the Visiting International Teachers's (VIT) conference and orientation. Over 60 international teachers have been recruited from Central America, Poland, the Far East, and Ukraine; ISBE sponsors a three-teaching contract and welcomes them into our regions.

West40 has a premier partnership with Grand Canyon University's (GCU) 8th-grade program "Thunder Vision". The main objective of the program is to encourage people to seek out teaching as a profession. The program's focus is recruitment, retention, and support and they also provide a series of lessons that are delivered to the classroom. In the next couple of weeks, superintendents are invited to an interactive session on the work West40 is doing in partnership with GCU to support the teacher shortage endeavors. Ms. Suzy Dees added the partnership has a two-pronged approach on how to build your own pipeline to grow your own and how to support the current teachers.

Dr. Klaisner expressed concern about the data of past rates of content tests of college students. The data highlights rates are very low and clearly shows there are different degrees of pass rates for different ethnicities, and that there are consistent patterns across the areas, thus West40's interest to help support young teachers. These programs continue to see more and more out-of-state enrollments.

Dr. Aldo Calderin asked for additional clarification regarding the GCU the educators' service agreement and GCU's religious affiliation that may present a conflict of interest with religion and state. He plans to share that service agreement and feedback from their lawyers with West40. Dr. Klaisner added that in the past West40 has partnered with private and public institutions running parallel tracks.

Food Distribution (from St. Joe's)

New to West40 weekly delivery of approximately 700 meals (grab-n-goes, hot meals, etc.) to families. West40 has partnered with local grocery stores to pick up fruits, vegetables, meats, and more, oftentimes dated a month out. Student Advocates work with the Student Services department and the Heart 2 Heart store coordinator to help narrow this need.

ALOP Capacity

The ALOP continues to grow, touching the lives of students in over 80 schools, this year nearly reaching capacity by mid September, hence the addition of fifteen new student advocates.

Comments from the Board:

Dr. Condon asked if any type of research has been done to understand why school systems do not have support to meet the needs of ALOP students, to which Dr. Klaisner responded that as a team West40 is looking to collect the data on both ends. Dr. Klaisner believes West40 is more efficient given the opportunity it has to hire student advocates to fill those gaps, adding "The driving force of the leadership team is to never supplant but to support".

Dr. Kelsall stated that with the change seen in the student population at her school and with the resources that fit into budgets, it is hard to continue a customized approach to meet the needs

of each student. Ms. Kyle Linquist added that the number of students in need and the different levels of needs, specifically the most vulnerable students, continue to increase thus making it difficult to meet them where they are. Mr. Stuart Brown added that perhaps the structure for supporting those needs has not caught up yet. With future legislation and laws changing he is optimistic schools will be able to help meet the individual needs of each student alongside organizations like West40.

IV. Public Comment:

No one chose to speak.

V. Adjourned: Member Dr. Ed Condon moved, seconded by Ms. Eileen Piper Simpson. Be it resolved the West40 ISC# 2 Governing Board hereby adjourns at 8:46 a.m.

The next West40 Governing Board Meeting will be held on Friday, October 20, 2023, at the West40 Lexington Campus on 415 W. Lexington Street in Maywood, IL 60153 at 8:00 a.m.