

Meeting Minutes – WMS School Improvement Team

Location: WMS Library

Date: December 10, 2025

Time: 6:00pm

Present: Principal Derix, Assistant Principal Herlihy, Suzanne Machinski, James Stringer, Stephanie Troupe, Faith McDonald, Maliisa Evans, Bobby Troupe, Katlyn Gregory

Facilitator: Principal D, Co-Facilitator: Suzanne Machinski

1. Review of Agenda
2. Review of Norms
3. Review of Vision Statement
4. Good for the Order - anything that is on your mind that we can discuss and/or parking lot as needed.
5. Question on Peer Tutoring Program - 120 out for tutoring, 31 out for tutors
 - Brief details on how the program works.
6. ALEKS - week of Thanksgiving, some had no ALEKS to do, some had 4, some had all 10, 1 parent had to hire a tutor.
 - Math teacher stating "I can't help you, get it wrong for easier questions."
7. Adjusted Atlas protocol
 - Review of protocol
 - 10 minutes - review the data
 - 10 min - describe & interpret the data
 - 10 min - implications
 - Reflection on data
8. Notes of discussion
 - Family motivational classroom @36 and positive energy is @56%
 - Students and Families results all went up in results
 - Staff results all went down
 - Staff supporting initiatives @8%, positive attitude @12%
 - Review of admin changes over the past few years

Discussion

- Discussion on particularly hard grade to manage
- Schedule change during the year
- Last year felt like a survival year
- 82% of staff have been here for 16 years or more, very veteran staff - I've been teaching 16 years and I feel like I have been getting more miserable every year
- "What happens in the teachers lounge, stays in the teachers lounge."
- Teachers respect for children at your school, @68% - lower than almost all comps
- How enthusiastic are the students about being at school @34%
- How are behaviors compared to last year - night and day better.

Question: Do you just attribute that to the 8th graders leaving? We asked the teachers at a staff meeting and it was a split, some saying it is because they left, some because of the structures this year and consistency, and some have not made their mind up yet. With no change made this year, the consistency across the entire team.

Question: Will you reteach expectations in January, yes. The first meeting was about expectations and rules, the second one was adding on with what we missed, and the 3rd one we celebrate.

At the elementary level more of the fun extracurricular things tend to be run by PTO. Whoever pulled the dance off that was amazing. Every student went in excited and came out really excited. Principal Derix remarked that it felt like if you could have seen from the outside those kids walking out of the building, and all the children and friends talking about how much fun it was, it would impact it. - It was fun.

Question: Are those events typically run by PTO or admin? Principal Derix reported that this event was run by Admin, Guidance and Social Supports. It was interesting because a lot of the students didn't know what to do, how to interact at the dance.

Are those events typically run by PTO or admin? Principal Derix reported that this event was Are there a lot of opportunities for clubs? We had a grant a few years ago we were using for teachers to run clubs, that funding has gone. We need to find a grant to run some more after school stuff. The extra money we have from Covid is gone. We do have some teachers who want to do some clubs, we had 2 teachers who put out for 5th and 6th grade students but there were limited responses. Marketing is going to change for the Spring.

Conversation continued about having something for parents, something to help the community understand all the different options of what exist in the community. Y cares is out there, it offers support for students to become members and join the different programs. We have SMILE, Earth Optimist, Chorus and Band. The ideal would be to have programs run here so the students can take the late bus home. What else is out there that may come directly here.

Question: Can we work with Senior Projects to have the students help - tutoring, running clubs?

Stephanie Troup remarked that a friend of hers works out in Stonington, who did a book club, a parent and child book club. Positive way to bring reading, families and the school together in a positive way. We did it over the summer with limited interest. We ran it kind of like an escape room. Potentially to promote during the school year as an escape room at the end, with food.

Westerly Land Trust is also a possibility with potentially free programs and transportation

Question: Is it wrong to tie some to good grades? Our goal is to engage the students who are not engaged. As of 12/8 we were 15% better for attendance, and around 35-40% better on tardies.

Question: Do you have a lot of kids who are on vacation right now? We have so many that are on vacation right now.

Summary - We are looking for ways to bring in more ways to bring in opportunities for students. Potential Tech Safety presentation - teaching parents the ins and outs of parental controls and how to understand the technology better. School Dance no one is on their phone, has to be in the Yondr pouch. We have a quote out for Yondr pouches for specifically ISS and some of the students who are looking for help.