

## **WCS Parent Meeting: Second Update**

**11/29/07**

**Dear Parents: At our recent Parent Meeting we promised to keep you informed about future changes at WCS. Below you will find our second status report. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. – Bill Williams**

1. WCS will retain outside experts to conduct a thorough review of the school's hiring practices, staff evaluations, grievance procedures, harassment policies, and any other area that the agency believes to be appropriate.

**Update:** WCS has retained the Columbus, Ohio law firm of Kegler, Brown, Hill and Ritter to review the policies and procedures of WCS as to hiring, staff evaluations, grievance, harassment, records retention and other related areas, and to review the process followed by WCS in connection with one or more past claims. Kegler Brown was chosen because of its particular expertise in assisting schools and other organizations in drafting and implementing policies designed to protect students. Dan Ritter will be the principal attorney heading up the team that will be working with WCS. In addition to the above firm, Dr. Kaye Manson Jeter will be consulting with WCS on the same matters. Dr. Jeter is the Executive Director of the Institute of Urban Education at Central State University. She has extensive experience regarding employment policies and procedures. She will be consulting on her own time. This team has already begun some of the preliminary work. We think they will be a valuable resource and asset to WCS.

2. Implementation of guidelines to clearly govern what is appropriate faculty-student relationships.

**Update:** The committee to draft the new Staff-Student Relationship Guidelines met for the first time on Monday, November 26. The committee is comprised of 19 members with representation from administration, faculty, parents, alumni, and students. The work centered on broadly defining what a healthy and biblical staff-student relationship should look like and then defining what appropriate boundaries should be within that relationship. An initial rough draft was shaped and will continue to be refined. We plan to have the draft completed in time for our outside legal and educational consultants to review. The next meeting is scheduled for December 4.

3. Background checks on faculty and staff:

**Update:** To date, 96% of all WCS teachers and administrators have submitted background checks. We are also obtaining background checks on noninstructional staff members. To date 65% of those staff employees have complied. Presently, all checks have come back as "completely clean." We will continue this process until all school employees have complied.

4. Appointment of two faculty ombudsmen, one male and one female, to whom students will be able to report concerns /incidents in a safe confidential manner.

**Update:** Chris Berestecky and Tom Burns have agreed to serve as the faculty ombudsmen. Chris is a high school counselor and Tom is a high school Bible teacher. Plans are in process for these two to receive training through Franklin County Children services.

5. We will immediately begin to operate under the, “WCS will not hire nor continue to employ anyone who has admitted to, or been convicted of, sexual misconduct toward a student”, rule.

**Update:** WCS is presently operating under the above stated policy, and as part of the review/evaluation with the consultants, a formal policy will be adopted by the WCS Advisory Team.