

**Community Listening Session**  
**July 11, 2018**  
**4:00pm**  
**Community Room 180**

The session began at 4:00pm with a welcome from District Administrator, Dan Kopp. Mr. Kopp explained that Wilmot hosted community listening sessions in the past and we hope to get into the routine of hosting them regularly again. The leadership team had no agenda for the meeting and the community members were welcome to ask any questions at this time.

**Q: When is registration?**

- Walk in Registration and Pictures are Monday, August 20 from 2-7pm
- Online registration will be opening Wednesday, July 18

**Q: What is the cost of registration?**

- \$75/student
- Athletic and Activity Registration is available online now.
- Athletic Fee is \$40/year

**Q: Why is there so much turnover? Specifically with the Associate Principals? It seems like we always have fresh blood?**

- Our last two associate principals (Mr. Blair and Mr. Braden) became principals which is a common transition/promotion for associate principals.
- Dr. Gugel was offered her dream job teaching at the collegiate level and could not pass that up
- We hope to have a team in place now that will remain for years to come
- The average term for an associate principal is 3-7 years (All schools, not just Wilmot)
- The associate principal role is very different than the principal role (Principal Torres described that she has done both and they require vastly different skill sets).
- Principal Torres and Associate Principal Bender explained their families are close by and they plan to stay at Wilmot and build a team; provide consistency for staff and students.
- The group discussed ACT 10 and how teachers are no longer “tied down” to one school. A healthy (average) turnover rate is 10%, Wilmot is currently experiencing a 2-5% turnover rate.

**Q: How are you trying to keep it consistent for the students?**

- We try to keep our systems consistent, some of our associate principals may connect with a student on a personal level, but that is more a job for the counselors. The counselors are broken down alphabetically and they have stayed consistent for the last 12 years.
- Our Director of Teaching and Learning, Tracy Stevenson-Olson, has been here two years.
  - During her first year she got a baseline of where everyone was (teaching/curriculum)
  - This year we worked to align with standards (state and national)
  - We are putting systems in place for all students to have the same experience no matter their level or style of learning

**Q: What about the scores? We understand that standardized tests are not everything, but what are we doing to improve?**

- We have seen growth in 9th graders and we have seen changes in the way we teach math work for our students.
- We were able to move students to a level of proficiency and will help them to continue to grow.
- We are looking at MAP scores (feeder schools), STAR data (our in house testing) and other data to help continue to move ALL students.

**Q: All of the math changes being made seem to revolve around incoming freshmen or last year's freshman class. Will upperclassmen be left out? It seems like you are focusing on 9th graders and 10th graders.**

- Our math teachers are working to restructure how Algebra 2 is taught. This will directly affect our upperclassmen.

**Q: How can parents get help for students when teachers are in meetings and say they cannot help, and peer tutors are unavailable?**

- We have two block days during the week where teachers have meetings after school. On those block days teachers and students have a 45 minute academic resource period (WARP). Students and parents can always reach out to a counselor or an administrator to help set up a tutoring program.
- We are going to work to "stop the train" - if students do not understand a concept in class, we will no longer be forcing them to move on to the next lesson.
- "If your student has a teacher who says that, please contact me." - Principal Torres

**Q: You talked about students who need support in class? But what about those who don't? How do you keep the train going for those who "get it"?**

- The new math program offers flexible learning and an extension to better understand the whole concept/big picture. This will offer a better variety for our students.

**Q: What is the new math?**

- CPM - College Preparatory Math (<http://cpm.org/>)

**Q: What is the math coach's role?**

- Because we knew we were making a large change in math, we knew we would need to support our teachers and our students. The math coach works closely with teachers and works with students as well, offering supplemental material and one-on-one time.

**Q: What about math? The Homework? The teaching? How can you teach a student two problems and make them do the rest on their own? How can you sit at your desk and not help them?**

- The new math program will help to facilitate different learners. In math, homework will be vastly different. The teachers will be explaining the bigger picture to the students, not just having them complete problems/worksheets.

**Q: Would you ever consider starting the day later? 8:30? Research shows that for mental health, physical health and better learning a teenager needs to get quality sleep. Is this something the school would look into?**

- We can definitely look into this. As with any change, some people may not like this because it will affect busing, work schedules, extracurriculars, etc.

**Q: Could a committee be formed to possibly look at this?**

- We will look into this more and we are not opposed to the idea.
- We do share our buses (we use Dousman) so we would need to discuss with them and also the feeder schools who use Dousman.

**Q: What type of resources do you have for parents who want to help their students with math? Do you have programs? Will you be offering support?**

- Yes to all of that. CPM comes with parent support (an online support). We understand it is going to be a big change. We plan to have a large parent night

to discuss CPM further. Outlets for assistance will be made available and shared at a later time.

**Q: My student had the math lab and it was not helpful. No strong math teaching over the four years. Teachers in the math lab were not even math teachers. How do we help advocate for our students without crossing a line and upsetting a teacher?**

- You can always go to Mr. Kopp or Mrs. Torres. We don't want this to happen. We appreciate that you want your student to advocate for themselves, but you can also advocate for them and talk with us.
- We hold our teachers able -- rather than accountable. We know they are able to do their job but we want to make sure they are meeting our standards also. Never be afraid to come and speak to one of us.

**Q: Why can't a student buy prom tickets if they have a fee? The fees are the parent's responsibility, not the students.**

- We require fees to be paid before prom tickets can be purchased or before a student graduates.
- We had \$46,000 in unpaid fees this school year as of June 30, 2018.
- For those students whose families cannot afford the fees, thus qualifying for free and reduced lunch, their fees are waived, which allows them to buy prom tickets.

**Q: The school I work at has a clothing bank, a food pantry, and a community fund to help students pay fees. Why doesn't Wilmot offer this?**

- We have Panthercrombie which offers clothing, shoes, accessories, personal hygiene items, and school supplies.
- We partner with The Sharing Center to provide food for our students and their families. We also offer food bags (non perishables/protein bars/snacks) for students to take home before long breaks (winter/spring).

**Q: How often are the teachers reminded of this?**

- We use our resources quite often. Almost weekly. Counselors are very aware of which students need assistance.
- We can look into a referral program that is more private rather than word of mouth.

**Q: Can students refer other students privately?**

- Students can always go to a counselor or teacher if they are concerned about a friend/classmate. We can work to develop a more private referral system to include staff and student referrals.

**Q: Why can't you offer more food in classrooms, not just student services?**

- This is something we can look into also. By offering the food in the student services office, we offer the student a level of privacy.

**Q: Do you have a PTO?**

- We have the Panther Backers Booster Club (PBBC). They support all student groups and help to fundraise throughout the year.

**Q: Could they fundraise to help pay the fees for students so we don't have to deny students who want to go to prom?**

- This is something we could discuss with them.
- Again, for those students who qualify for free and/or reduced lunch prices, their fees are waived and they can buy prom tickets.

**Q: Does Wilmot have an "Equity non-negotiables" group?**

- Wilmot does not, but this sounds very appealing to us. Do you have more information?
- This group is at Trevor-Wilmot and is lead by Jenny Loveless
- We plan to contact Ms. Loveless for more information

**Q: What do you do about Bullying?**

- We usually have someone come to us with information (screenshot, fight, complaint). Once we have the information we further investigate the situation. We work with the counselors and teaching staff to get all of the information we need to address and stop the situation.
- We also use the **StopIt** app which lets you anonymously report bullying. When we get a report from the app, we first go to the counselor and ask them to contact the student. Students feel more comfortable being called down to see their counselor, rather than being called to the associate principal's office.

**Q: What are you doing to be proactive and stop bullying before it starts?**

- We are constantly watching and observing; trying to be aware. We have people in the hallways, teachers in the classrooms always keeping an eye out for bullying.

- We offer clubs and activities for everyone. Students can also start their own club. Being a part of a group helps our students to feel included.
- We have our “Be the change” group that encourages a positive culture throughout the school.
- We are doing an all school assembly for Challenge Day this year so all students will be exposed to the information rather than just those who sign up for Challenge Day.

**Q: Do teachers intervene if bullying is occurring, or only counselors and associate principals?**

- Yes, teachers can call us, email us, or enter occurrences into Skyward.

**Q: Many people ignore this behavior. We shouldn't accept this, don't we need to protect them?**

- We also offer Link Crew which pairs our 9th graders with an upperclassman.
- We offer every sport and we've added 12 new clubs to meet the needs of our students.
- Keeping our students involved, lowers the threat

**Q: What about transparency and the lack thereof at Wilmot? Why are open sessions not recorded for board meetings? Why are the board minutes so short? People want to know what is going on. Teachers also need to be involved in a more collaborative way. There are misperceptions out there. People think administration rules with an iron fist.**

- We are working to improve our communication with the stakeholders
- We have never been asked to record our board meetings, but we can look into this.
- Legally, board minutes are supposed to be action items (motions/seconds/votes) only. They are not to include lengthy descriptions or full conversations.
- The board agendas and minutes are posted online and throughout our building for the public to view.
- The board meetings are also open to the public
- Teacher listening sessions are held throughout the year for teachers to discuss their questions/concerns with administration, also teachers are welcome to attend the community listening sessions.
- Principal Torres has worked hard to build her team this past school year. She and her team are moving Wilmot (students and staff) in the right direction. We are in a good place and in good hands.

**Q: Have you ever considered standards based grading? Soft skills? It would be nice to see improvement on where your child is at in terms of soft skills, not just academic grades.**

- No, that is not something we are currently working on. We are not ready as a school. Principal Torres believes in Standards Based Grading when it is done correctly. She does not believe we are ready at this time. This is something that we can address later down the line.
- Mr. Bender discussed that his previous school had this (Life Skills Course/Grade) and his concern is that not everyone took it seriously.

**Q: The issue is the remediation aspect - how do we improve the soft skills of students?**

- We are not ready to grade on soft skills right now, but ideally that would be something we address if we incorporate standards based grading. There has to be a better way of assessing students and their soft skills than what we are doing right now.

**Closing statements from Wilmot Staff:**

“I can say as an educator we are in good hands. We had a few bumps in the road, but we are good now.”

“Shifts in education have been huge the past few years. We are working so hard on improving and continuing the shifts for the positive here at Wilmot.”

“Great questions tonight. We will work to address the issues discussed as soon as possible. Standards based grading will be the furthest away at this time, but we will look into it. Thank you all for coming and we look forward to continuing these listening sessions with your help.”

[End of Listening Session]