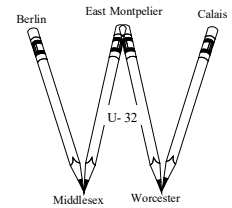


Washington Central Unified Union School District

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

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Meagan Roy Ed.D.
Superintendent



**Washington Central Unified Union School District
School Board Meeting /Retreat
(**In- Person with Virtual Option Available **)
U-32
930 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier, VT
Cafeteria
9.21.22 5:00-8:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Diane Nichols-Fleming, Ursula Stanley, Lindy Johnson, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, (by phone) Chris McVeigh, Daniel Keeney, Eric Andersen, Maggie Weiss, Kari Bradley (by phone), Flor Diaz Smith, Natasha Eckart Baning, Student Representatives: Maya Elliot (Senior), Willow Mashkuri (Junior), Jonathan Goddard

Administrators Present: Superintendent Meagan Roy, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Kerra Holden, Aaron Boynton, Karoline May, Susanne Gann, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Cat Fair, Alicia Lyford, Gillian Fuqua, Kerra Holden, Michelle Ksepka, Chris O'Brien, Mark Kline

Others Present: ORCA Media, David Lawrence, Shelley Vermilya, Jen Ingersoll, David Delcore (Times Argus), Michael Sherwin, Tyler, Brian

- 1. Call to Order:** Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 5:12 p.m. Meagan Roy explained that this board meeting is meant to be a board meeting as well as a board retreat.
- 2. Adjustments to the Agenda:** none
- 3. Welcome**
 - 3.1. Reception of Guests:** Flor Diaz Smith welcomed those present. She read aloud the message that the board had presented at in-service.
 - 3.2. Public Comments:** no public present at this time.
- 4. Student Data Presentation:** Jen Miller-Arsenault presented a slide deck: *WCUUSD Student Monitoring Report Presentation, September 21, 2022*. Kari Bradley, Chair of WCUUSD Education Quality Committee, introduced the presentation. He stated that the committee has

stated that in order to monitor student learning, we all have a great deal of learning to do. The purpose of this presentation is to introduce us to the terminology and the basic tenets of student monitoring. Some questions or input were invited after the presentation. Diane Nichols-Fleming: Is there a time frame for assessment? Re: Benchmarks from spring and fall, how is that data used? by overall leadership team or at the school level? Maggie Weiss: teacher voice and student voice is missing from the monitoring; she realizes this is qualitative but she believes it has great value, especially hearing from the students who are not meeting the standards: what is the barrier?

5. Board Operations

5.1. Board Education: Board Goals (Phil Gore, Facilitator): Meagan Roy introduced Phil Gore; he will be working with the board on how the board can function in order to have the greatest impact on student learning. The hope today is bringing the voices of the administrators into the question of how the board can work to have the greatest impact on student learning. Some of the points that Phil Gore brought up during his presentation:

- How are the students doing?
- What is the district doing to improve student outcomes?
- How will we measure this?
- What data do we need to see?
- What format do we need to see it in?
- Why?
- Whose interest does this serve? (the data)
- How do we think about data and the message it tells? (How do we see what is in the data?)

He spoke about the role of school boards re: student achievement; he shared some opinions of the Fordham Foundation (long-time critic of school boards). Phil Gore read some of the quotes from the Fordham Foundation, including potential negative effect of the school board on student achievement.) He reminded the board that the relationship between the board and the superintendent can affect everything that happens in the school classroom. He facilitated group discussion about values:

- Creativity
- Authenticity
- humor/ joy
- honesty
- empathy
- learning from experience

Discussion followed about how these values are related to how a board impacts student achievement. Phil Gore explained the importance of the board stepping back and seeing the whole picture - focus on the forest, not the trees. One of the challenges is how to find balance as a board and as a system? Diane Nichols-Fleming commented that, as we are growing from a supervisory union, to a district board, this is the 64-million-dollar question. Phil Gore asked the board to consider what do we want to bring forward (thinking about “muscle memory”) and what do we need to leave behind or change. A task: finding the balance between cheerleading successes and carefully considering data. What do the board and the administration need to balance? The “bilateralism” - how to bring in the voices of staff, community - are we hearing from everyone that we need to hear from? Are we hearing from the broader community, or are we only hearing from people who are upset about something? Phil Gore spoke about the stability of the system as a whole, and that board tenure is related to superintendent tenure. He asked the board to consider: It’s not only about student data, it’s about closing gaps. What does governance look like to improve overall student achievement as well as closing the gaps? How do we have the board meaningfully engage, and to what grain size? The board’s role: set high expectations and then monitor. He stated that boards need to understand what it takes to improve student learning/ achievement (e.g. the board knowing about professional development opportunities; knowing about new initiatives). The need for: equitable experiences, equitable opportunities, equitable outcomes. Flor Diaz Smith reviewed the three board goals from last year. She wondered whether the board cares to reaffirm these goals and in the future, create a SMART goal within those goals. **Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to reaffirm the board goals: (1) Educational and Academic Outcomes, (2) Broadening Communication with the Community, (3) Long Term Planning. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.**

5.2. Board Work Plan: Daniel Keeney suggested building into the work plan: times to review the upcoming work plan and adjust as appropriate. Could principals’ reports align with the board meetings at each school campus, and allow the principals the opportunity to bring to the attention of the board highlights about their building that they choose. Meagan Roy shared the intention that there will be a common focus that the principals will report on in the principals’ report; however, she invites the board to let her know if this proposed format does not work. Meagan Roy suggested that the agenda include “review board work plan” at every meeting. Board members reviewed the Board Work Plan document. Board members brought up the following that will be included in the board work: Humanity and Justice Coalition, Communications Committee. Daniel Keeney would like more information about the process of “Community Mapping” before the October 5th meeting. Phil Gore stated that there is a strong relationship between the way that the board engages its communities and the likelihood that the board will have an effect on improving student learning outcomes.

6. Action Matters:

6.1. Affirm Superintendent Evaluation Process & Timeline: Ursula Stanley moved to **affirm the Superintendent Evaluation Process and Timeline, as presented tonight. Seconded by Eric Andersen. Kari Bradley shared that the Steering Committee had prepared this for the board’s consideration. This motion carried unanimously.**

- 6.2. Appoint Student Board Member: Ursula Stanley moved to appoint Willow Mashkuri as student representative to the board. Seconded by Natasha Eckart Baning; this motion carried unanimously.** Maya and Willow provided an update, including that the bathrooms in the building have been upgraded, gender neutral bathrooms are available. Maya stated that many students from BLAM are thanking the school for taking this action. Dean of Students is JB Hilferty; the students respect him. Maya spoke about some challenges with using both Canvas and IC. Willow shared about lack of staff in the lunchroom; this creates fewer choices, including lack of options for vegetarian items. There is an idea circulating that students help out with lunch; there is a hope that this will improve the compliance with recycling, trash, composting. Maya shared that masks are not mandated at U-32; some students are continuing to wear masks; some students wear a mask when they are feeling sick with a seasonal cold but well enough to attend school. This continues to be a flexible option and students are accepting responsibility and showing respect for individual choice. Willow shared that sports participation is growing this year, coming out of COVID-19; she stated that girl sports participation is growing. Maya shared some of the clubs that are underway this year.
- 6.3. Accept Board Member Resignation: Ursula Stanley moved to accept Dennis Hill's resignation from the board. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.** Flor Diaz Smith thanked Mr. Hill for his service.
- 6.4. Process for Board Appointment for Vacancy:** Flor Diaz Smith reviewed a written document outlining this process.
- 6.5. Personnel: Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the hire of Rose Circelli. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried unanimously. Lindy Johnson moved to approve long term sub Kit Walker. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.**
- 6.6. Update on Vacancies:** Superintendent Roy shared the recurring vacancies, including special educator at Berlin School, Speech Language Therapist, and some Para educator positions. She shared that vacancies at U-32 in food service and in the maintenance staff are difficult for the staff that are continuing to try to keep things running smoothly. Lindy Johnson thanked Superintendent Roy for posting these positions on Front Porch Forum. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked whether there are any legal ramifications around the special education related vacancies. Superintendent Roy and Kerra Holden shared how the current staff are filling these responsibilities. Kerra Holden stated that Act 173 allows for some flexibility in providing services to students but that she continues to problem solve around persistent vacancies, for example elementary school Para educators.

7. Finance Committee

7.1. Informational Reports

- 7.1.1. Monthly Business Office Reflections:** Susanne Gann had provided a written report. She noted that Virginia Breer is doing a great job of entering information for employees or changes with existing employees and getting the start of the year underway.

7.1.2. Capital Improvement Project Update: Chris O'Brien invited questions or comments from his written update. He thanked Bill Ford for his role as project manager.

7.2. Discussion/Action

7.2.1. FY 24 Capital Improvement Project Budget: Ursula Stanley moved that the board authorize the Superintendent to engage Black River Design to develop the necessary bid documents and vendor prequalification for the Doty AHU damper replacement, U-32 Boiler Circulator Pump Replacement and the U-32 HVAC Energy Recovery Units (ERUs) 20-year upgrade, for an amount not to exceed \$1,278,750. Seconded by Eric Andersen, this motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent Roy shared that the cost of this project is coming in beyond what had originally been estimated; however, the hope is that ESSER funds can be used to compensate for the added expense. Daniel Keeney asked for specifics about some opportunities to find savings in completing more than one replacement at a time. Susanne Gann clarified.

7.2.2. Budget Timeline & Process: Diane Nichols-Fleming moved that the Board adopt the final version of the FY 2023-24 Washington Central Unified Union School District Budget Development Timeline, as updated September 8, 2022. Seconded by Eric Andersen. Discussion: Kari Bradley asked what is thought for when the board will establish budget parameters. Flor Diaz Smith is hoping for October. This motion carried unanimously.

8. Policy Committee (Discussion/Action): Flor Diaz Smith would like to table this, as Chris McVeigh is absent tonight. The board agreed to take action on the Substitute Teachers policy.

8.1. Policy Review Cycle

8.2. Second Reading for Policy to be Adopted: B1 Substitute Teachers: Ursula Stanley moved to adopt B1: Substitute Teachers, as written. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried unanimously.

9. Consent Agenda

9.1. Approve Minutes of 8.17.22, 9.7.22: Eric Andersen moved to approve the minutes of August 17 and September 7. Seconded by Ursula Stanley. Discussion: Daniel Keeney and Maggie Weiss were present at the September 7th meeting. This motion carried with noted edits.

9.2. Approve Board Orders: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the following board order: 8-18-22 \$1,857,954.59. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.

10. Future Agenda Items

10.1. Humanity & Justice Coalition Update

10.2. Central Vermont Career Center Report

10.3. VSBA Resolutions

Diane Nichols-Fleming suggested an update regarding universal school lunch programs as it will impact budget planning.

11. Board Reflection: Flor Diaz Smith invited board reflection. Diane Nichols-Fleming shared that the doors were locked to get into the building and she expressed concern that members of the public had shown up to attend the meeting but couldn't get into the building. Steven Dellinger-Pate had rectified the situation after discovering they were locked out. Daniel Keeney expressed that it was great to hear from a wider community than board members. Ursula Stanley expressed appreciation for the student representatives who had a report ready for the board tonight, and whose voice was valuable. Maggie Weiss thanked administrators for attending a long evening. Flor Diaz Smith expressed appreciation for the entire team, board members as well as administrators and staff.

12. Public Comments: none

13. Adjourn: Ursula Stanley moved to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried and the board adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary