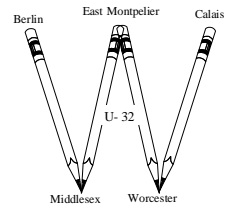


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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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Bryan Olkowski
Superintendent



Washington Central Unified Union School District Board Meeting Approved Minutes U-32 Cafeteria Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier 8.11.21 6:00-9:00 PM

Board Members: Flor Diaz Smith, Lindy Johnson, Scott Thompson, Kari Bradley, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Christopher McVeigh, Stephen Looke

Administrators: Human Resources Coordinator Carla Messier, Principal Steven Dellinger Pate, Interim Technology Director James Garrity, Principal Aaron Boynton, Principal Alicia Lyford, Principal Cat Fair, Principal Gillian Fuqua, Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction and Acting Superintendent Jennifer Miller-Arsenault, Assistant Principal Jes Wills, Director of Student Services Lisa LaPlante, Business Administrator Susanne Gann, Director of Student Affairs Amy Molina, Facilities Director Chris O'Brien, Principal Karoline May, Covid-19 Coordinator Maria Melekos

Others/Public: Ainsley Burroughs, Alden Bird, Aly, April Davis, Ben Larrow, Brad Bond, Brennan Lynch, Brian Fischer Caitlin, Honi Bean-Barrett, Bernie Lambeck, Jill Abair, , Kathryn Biggam, Kelly, LP, ORCA Media, Nicolle Schaeffer, Sonya Rhodes, Anna Farber, David Delcore, Danielle Laquerre, Mary Bove, Lisa Hanna, Lisa Wilson, Meg Allison, Ursula Stanley, Virginia Breer, Caitlyn Usticke

1. **Call to Order:** Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. **Welcome:** Flor Diaz Smith welcomed those present.
 - 2.1. **Reception of Guests**
 - 2.2. **Public Comments:** Flor Diaz Smith invited public comments; none were heard at this time.
 - 2.3. **Agenda Revisions:** none
3. **Board Operations**
 - 3.1. **New Board Members:**
 - 3.1.1. **Executive Session- Appoint members from the towns of Middlesex, Worcester, and Calais:** At 6:03, Chris McVeigh moved to go into Executive Session to appoint new board members. Seconded by Lindy Johnson, this motion carried. At 6:19 Scott Thompson moved to leave Executive Session. Seconded by Lindy Johnson, this motion carried unanimously. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to appoint Maggie Weiss, board representative from Calais. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to appoint McKalyn Leclerc, board representative from Worcester.

Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to appoint Ursula Stanley, board representative from Middlesex. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. Flor Diaz Smith thanked those who have joined the board and those who are willing to serve their communities. She invited all interested parties to stay engaged and to keep in mind that openings for school board representatives are ever-evolving.

3.2. Notice of Open Meeting Law Violation Public Response: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to deny the asserted violation of the Vermont Open Meeting Law, as the Board properly posted its agenda for the June 23 meeting in accordance with the requirements of 1 V.S.A. § 312(d), and the posted agenda specifically referenced the School Time Proposal set forth in detail on page 172 of the published Board Packet, thereby providing full notice to the public of the agenda item to be discussed. Seconded by Kari Bradley. Flor Diaz Smith invited discussion. She noted that legal counsel Bernie Lambeck is present at tonight's meeting. Scott Thompson asked what we have learned as a board by this incident and what steps we can take to avoid this kind of situation; how to identify issues of particular concern that are likely to cause public reaction, going forward? Stephen Looke suggested that we establish practice that when a proposal comes forward, that there is information included about what the discussion was leading to the proposal, what level of support and opposition was brought forward. He noted that this might require policy creation. Chris McVeigh suggested having more detail in the agenda, especially, for example, when there is a large financial impact - to be more clear on specifically what the board will be voting. A vote was called. **This motion carried. Chris McVeigh abstained from the vote.**

3.3. U-32 Student Dismissal Time – Community/Student Engagement Plan: September 1, 2021: Flor Diaz Smith reviewed the plan to have an overview and explanation on September 1st from U-32 Principal Steven Dellinger Pate as well as Jen Miller-Arsenault, followed by smaller groups facilitated by guiding questions, around change in school time. She would also like to have time to discuss COVID-19 questions and issues. The discussion protocol will ask:

- What excites you about this change?
- What concerns do you have about this change?
- What questions do you have about this change?

Flor Diaz-Smith expressed that we will need the community in order to make this change a success. She stated that she intends to use the September 1st meeting time for this discussion as well as board retreat. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet stated that he looks forward to this opportunity and others this year as agreed by the board, to engage the community. Flor Diaz-Smith reviewed that the board had indicated that it would like to use the first Wednesday of the month for opportunities for community engagement. She noted that the board retreat on September 1st will focus on taking stock of where we currently are, and taking a closer look at board goals. Stephen Looke stated that, with only 1.25 hours for the board retreat, he would like to make that time very focused and would like to have materials in advance of the meeting so board members can be ready and effectively engaged. Chris McVeigh asked, regarding the change in school time, it will be important to have specific information available, e.g. around transportation logistics and cost; to anticipate some of the questions and to be prepared to answer them in detail.

3.4. Meeting Schedules for FY 21-22: Flor Diaz Smith asked the Policy Committee to select a regular day and time for meetings so that the public and others can be aware and can plan to participate if desired. Lindy Johnson suggested, for example, if Wednesdays can be held aside as a whole (for example, Policy Committee meetings on Wednesday too), all month, this makes planning easier. Kari Bradley stated that he thinks the board should discuss this at the retreat via board goals, and consider what the capacity of staff and administrators is to attend and prepare for the various meetings. Chris McVeigh suggested that the board consider a position at the central office, part-time if appropriate, to support the administrative assistants in preparation and follow up for meetings.

At 6:43, Chris McVeigh moved to change the order of agenda and have #8 Executive Session for student matter; further, he moved to go into Executive Session and to include Jen Miller Arsenault, Steven Dellinger Pate, and the Bond family. Seconded by Stephen Looke, this motion carried unanimously and the board went into Executive Session. At 6:59, Chris McVeigh moved to leave Executive Session. Seconded by Lindy Johnson, the motion passed unanimously. During Executive Session the Board discussed a student matter. **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to accept the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent in a student matter. Seconded by Scott Thompson this motion carried unanimously.**

3.5. Board Retreat Date/Planning

4. Reports

4.1. Student Reports: Anna Farber, upcoming senior, reported to the board. Students' schedules for next year have been received! She is still unsure about how the coming school year will look, in light of COVID-19 restrictions and length of school day changes. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked Anna whether she has any feedback for the board about the discussion about change to the length of student school day. She stated that as a senior she is not exactly excited about the proposed change! But realizes it might be for the best. Steven Dellinger-Pate shared that there are some students interested in joining as board representatives; he will begin interviews (to include Anna) in the near future. He noted that students will be coming back in person, full-time; there will be no hybrid schedule.

4.2. Superintendent: Jen Miller-Arsenault shared that the Agency of Education had new guidance last week regarding COVID-19. The biggest change is that we will all be masked indoors until further notice. The buildings have begun this practice already, in response to this guidance.

4.2.1. COVID-19 Update: Maria Melekos provided a brief update about COVID-19; she noted that she is working closely with the Health Department and the Agency of Education; there are three vaccination clinics planned for the fall on WCUUSD campuses. Jen Miller-Arsenault shared that plans for COVID-19 safety precautions will be dynamic as the circumstances change and the guidance from the Health Department changes. She shared that everyone in school buildings will be masked until further notice, including visitors. She noted that overall we will be planning to have the same/ consistent protocols in place on each of the campuses, however, for example the lunch room safety protocols will have some degree of nuance depending on the individual school. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked how ongoing COVID-19 testing/ monitoring will take place - will this be "opt in"? Maria Melekos indicated that this will definitely be an "opt in" opportunity for data collection. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked what other COVID-19 coordinators were sharing around the state, for example, around the effort to increase vaccination rate among staff. Maria Melekos stated that right now the focus of the coordinators is how to keep 3 - 12 year olds protected.

A big question for the group is: What can we do to maximize participation in the under 12 year old age group? Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked, how much are we going to encourage outdoor learning while the weather permits? And is there a contingency plan in place, e.g. a “break glass in case of emergency” plan in case things change for the worse. Jen Miller-Arsenault responded to those questions briefly.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked, is there a scenario where the superintendent is prepared to take more extensive steps than is provided by the guidance? Jen Miller-Arsenault said there is no definitive “yes or no” to answer, however, the safety of students is the top priority.

Chris McVeigh asked for clarification from Maria Melekos around the fact that we are no longer in a “state of emergency.” She noted that because we are no longer in a state of emergency, the state is not providing “guidance;” they are providing a memo. She shared the theory that “if we have done everything right, it will look like we are over reacting... if we don’t do everything right, we will be in a mess.” She noted, for example, that Governor Scott indicated today that mask wearing is a personal choice. She as a nurse and COVID-19 coordinator, would appreciate more directive language. Chris McVeigh asked whether it would be helpful if the board took a very clear position to provide guidance. Jen Miller-Arsenault responded that the September 1st forum might provide more insight to help answer that offer. She has not heard enough from the community at this time to know how to answer. Scott Thompson stated, in the event that the state does not provide a more definitive statement around COVID-19 safety, he believes that it is the board’s place to do so.

4.2.2. Plans for the beginning of the school year: Jen Miller-Arsenault shared that we are excited to welcome students and staff back. Tomorrow, Restorative Practice training begins; she shared other staff trainings and in-service plans. She stated that we are still deciding whether to pivot to virtual meetings for in-service versus in-person. She invited board members to join on August 20th as we kick off the school year together. She shared that we have plans for an outdoor community celebration on August 23rd. Amy Molina shared briefly about these plans. She invited suggestions and volunteers for help with this endeavor. Jen Miller -Arsenault noted that we are planning again this year for the COVID-19 Coordinator to visit each school and answer questions/ concerns of staff.

4.3. ESSER Funds “Recovery” Plan: Jen Miller-Arsenault shared that on the district website there is a link that provides information about the ESSER funds plan. She stated that “community consultation” is a required component of the recovery plan. She invited those present to check the website and the information that is provided around the plan. This will be ongoing work.

4.4. Central Vermont Career Center Governance Study Committee Update: Flor Diaz-Smith had provided some written documents to update the board on this committee’s work. Scott Thompson stated that he would like to have CVCC a regular agenda item for WCUUSD Board meetings.

5. Finance Committee

5.1. Celebrations and Accomplishments: Susanne Gann had provided a memo to update the board. She congratulated Lori Bibeau on her retirement and she thanked her for helping with the transition. Susanne Gann thanked the fiscal staff for their hard work.

5.2. End of Year Fund Balance Report: Susanne Gann reviewed this written report.

5.3. Construction/Capitol Projects Update: Flor Diaz-Smith introduced Chris O’Brien, Director of Facilities. He had provided a memo which he reviewed briefly, regarding updates: Berlin storm water, Rumney Indoor Air Quality, and WCUUSD Central

Office Indoor Air Quality projects; Rumney gym floor; Replacement of sidewalk at U-32; U-32 storm water design and permitting; Berlin parking and drive replacement. Flor Diaz-Smith shared that the storm water pond at Berlin had required more tree removal than had been planned; however there are plans to plant trees in their stead.

5.4. ESSER III Update and Reserve Fund Balance: Susanne Gann provided a brief update; she had provided written reports.

Scott Thompson moved to reserve fund balance, subject to a reduction in grant funds, for the following one year Counselor positions: U-32 1.0 FTE, Calais .60 FTE, Berlin-Estimate 1.0(to be filled), and EMES .40 FTE, Doty .20 FTE, Rumney .20 FTE, Total Estimated Cost \$365,000. Seconded by Lindy Johnson. Discussion: Scott Thompson explained that these positions are expected to be grant funded; the purpose of this motion is to allow for the use of reserve fund if the grant monies do not come through. **This motion carried unanimously. Scott Thompson moved to reserve fund balance, subject to a reduction in grant funds, for the following one year Math Interventionist position: Calais .50 FTE Total Estimated Cost \$51,000. Seconded by Kari Bradley. This motion carried unanimously.**

5.5. VSBA Dues: Scott Thompson moved that the board approve the payment of invoice for membership to VSBA in the amount of \$7858, for 2021-22 dues. **Seconded by Kari Bradley.** Discussion: Scott Thompson indicated that he believes that VSBA is in need of reform; it epitomizes the model of “government by private club of insiders.” He does not intend to vote in favor of this motion. Flor Diaz Smith thanked him for his input and feedback and as vice president of the VSBA board, she will take this information back. **This motion carried with one vote of no. (Scott Thompson.)**

6. Consent Agenda:

6.1. Approve Minutes of 6.23.21 and 7.26.21: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the minutes of June 23 and July 26, 2021. **Seconded by Chris McVeigh. This motion carried unanimously.**

6.2. Approve Board Orders: Lindy Johnson moved to approve board orders in the total amounts: June 17 and May 17: \$157,363.69, and June 24: \$10,725,178.98, and July 1: \$524,307.94. **Seconded by Stephen Looke. This motion carried unanimously.**

7. Personnel:

7.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Retirements, Leave of Absence and Changes in FTE: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the following new teacher hires: Amadeus Dorfman - Special Education Teacher (WCUUSD), Jake Ploof - School Counselor – U-32 (ESSER Funds), Justin Liechty - School Counselor – Calais (ESSER Funds), Amber Larrabee - School Nurse – U-32, Holly Taylor – Calais K/1 Teacher. **Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously.** Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the following change in FTE: Mary Langevin – School Counselor - EMES- .4 FTE to 1.0 FTE (ESSER Funds), Sharon Spector –School Counselor – Rumney – .6 FTE to .8 FTE (ESSER Funds), Maureen McDermet- -School Counselor – Doty –.8 FTE to 1.0 FTE (ESSER Funds), Michael Close –Rumney Music Teacher 0.1 addition to .4 FTE total, Samantha Mishkin – Rumney Music Teacher 0.4 addition to 1.0 FTE total. **Seconded by Chris McVeigh.**

Discussion: Stephen Looke asked for clarification around the music teacher increase; Jen Miller-Arsenault explained how these positions are shared among two schools. **This motion carried unanimously.**

8. Executive Session-Student Matter : (earlier in the meeting)

9. Future Agenda Items:

- 9.1. WCUUSD Name
- 9.2. Assessment Needs for Building Bright Futures
- 9.3. Diversifying Educator Workforce
- 9.4. Net Metering Proposal
- 9.5. Strategic Planning
- 9.6. Superintendent Report for Curriculum Review Process
- 9.7. Exploration of Financial Reports as discussed
- 9.8. Discussion of BLM, climate check-ins(regarding worries of prejudice and bias in buildings)
- 9.9. Transportation Committee
- 9.10. Mode of future meetings (remote/in person)
- 9.11. Coalition for Vermont Student Equity Request for Funding
- 9.12. CVCC
- 9.13. Berlin New Town Center Request
- 9.14. Food Service

10. Board Reflection: Kari Bradley thanked Flor for facilitating the meeting and for providing a thorough board packet; he asked to have page numbers referenced on agenda items so they can be located easily. He also asked that the board consider providing a summary of each board meeting, starting tonight and going forward, for Front Porch Forum - he noted that the board has done this in the past. He offered to do it this first time. Chris McVeigh suggested that the board recording secretary might be able to provide a summary; he also stated that he would like to have the agenda shared on FPF. Flor Diaz Smith indicated that she does want to post the agenda and a summary on FPF. She would like the summary to come from a board member so that it has the voice of the board. Kari Bradley will summarize this meeting. Scott Thompson congratulated Middlesex members for having community gatherings and forums; he would like to do the same in Calais; he feels that it is very powerful to be together in person. He noted that COVID-19 has presented a challenge. Lindy Johnson stated that she believes each board member should take turns working on the summary; she suggested that the draft minutes be shared with whichever board member is doing it that month, as soon as possible after the meeting so that the summary can be created.

11. Public Comments: none

Chris McVeigh wished the staff and teachers the greatest of luck in the opening of school this year! He expressed the support of the board.

12. Adjourn: The board adjourned by consensus at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary
and Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Board Clerk