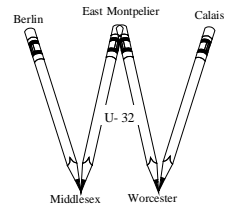


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 6.23.21 5:00-9:00 PM

Board Members: Flor Diaz-Smith, Lindy Johnson, Scott Thompson, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Kari Bradley, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Dorothy Naylor, Christopher McVeigh, Jill Olson, Jonathan Goddard, Stephen Looke, Vera Frazier

Administrators: Superintendent Bryan Olkowski, 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 Jennifer Miller-Arsenault, Associate Principal Jody Emerson, Special Education Coordinator Julia Pritchard, Director of Special Services, Kelly Bushey, Director of Student Services, Lisa LaPlante, Business Administrator Lori Bibeau, Director of Student Affairs Amy Molina

Others/Public: ORCA Media, Amy Young, Ellen Dorsey, Madeleine Dougherty, Sonya Rhodes, Cathy G, Daniel Diddlemeyer, Danielle Laquerre, Erika, Erin Mooney, Kara Rosenberg, Karen Lieberman, Beatrice David, Mary Bove, Michael Sherwin, Nicole Schaeffer, Anne Carter, Danielle LaFleur Brooks, Jennifer Campbell, Kathryn Biggam, Susanne Gann, Krista Dy, Kristine Chartrand, Latisha, Laura Giammusso, Lisa Hanna, Lisa Wilson, Lori Potvin, Maggie, Matt Pelkey, McKaylyn Leclerc, Meg Allison, Natasha Eckart Baning, Talitha Landis-Marinello, Ursula Stanley, Virginia Breer, Abigail Brown, Allison Fayle, Amy Accles, Amy Koenigbauer, April Davis, Christine Fitch, Christine Hertz Hausman, Adam Rosen, Brian Albee, Caitlyn Usticke, David Lawrence, Jenn Ingersoll, Jennifer Campbell, Jennifer Donovan, Jess Barewicz, Justin, Kelly MacMartin, Kyle Landis-Marinello, Lauren Melkonian, Lina Aster, Maggie Weiss, Shelley, Woden Teachout, Elsa Ingpen, Holly Lane, Jessica Kobb, Patrick Whelley, David Delcore, Hannah Brown

- 1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.**
She noted that there will be a slight change in the agenda, as the board will elect a Vice Chair before going into Executive Session, and she will need to leave shortly thereafter.
Scott Thompson moved to nominate Kari Bradley as Vice Chair. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Executive Session-Legal Matter, Negotiations, Superintendent Evaluation:**
Lindy Johnson moved to go into Executive Session at 5:04 for the purpose of discussing Legal Matters, Negotiations, and Superintendent Evaluation. The beginning of the Executive Session was for board members only. Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously. Flor Diaz-Smith left the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The board came out of Executive Session (6:00), and Kari Bradley facilitated the meeting, as Vice Chair, in Flor Diaz-Smith's absence.

Stephen Looke suggested that the board not take action regarding the Black Lives Matter request until providing opportunity for public comment.

Kari Bradley stated that agenda item 4.2.1: Black Lives Matter Flag Raising Request will be first on the agenda, as students are prepared to present at 6:00.

3. Welcome

3.1. Reception of Guests

3.2. Public Comments:

Kari Bradley asked for a reminder about parameters and expectations around public comments. Jill Olson explained that the guidelines for public comment will be strictly followed tonight in order to keep this portion of the meeting to 15 minutes. She invited those present to engage with the board in other ways, in addition to public comments at board meetings.

- Ellen Dorsey, teacher and coach at WCUUSD, spoke about her hopes for the district going forward. She urged the board to establish community forums to have necessary conversations.
- Amy Young, teacher at Berlin, expressed concerns about technology policies. She asked for more stakeholders to have input; she stated that the tech committee has not had input into these policies. She celebrated the work from the last three days of curriculum camp at WCUUSD.
- Anne Carter spoke about how she values collaboration in the district and asked the board to engage collaboratively regarding the curriculum review.
- Danielle LaFleur Brooks spoke in favor of the BLM flag. She reiterated the request to have public forums before making any decisions regarding the curriculum review.
- Daniel Diddlemeyer spoke about access to the internet as an equity issue, and about the need to provide access to the internet, as an educational entity. "Education is about access."
- Elsa Ingpen shared her concerns that the Superintendent had messaged parents encouraging them to come to this board meeting regarding the BLM flag. She asked why the issue of the BLM flag was different and unique from other issues that are raised at board meetings, including the curriculum review response. She expressed her support for the BLM flag.
- Kristine Chartrand shared that the change to the schedule at U-32 feels incomplete, and will most likely impact teachers who have children in childcare. She asked the board to consider the impact that the proposed changes in the schedule will have on families and staff. She asked the board to potentially wait another year to give teachers and families' time to prepare for these changes.
- Holly Lane expressed concerns about the relationship between the Superintendent and some of the teachers. She had sent an email to the board.
- Meg Allison expressed concerns about the technology policies without the input of a district technology committee, and under the guidance of an interim technology director. She stated that she has concerns about the process, and asked the board to pause on discussing and approving these policies to allow for more discussion with the committee and the new technology director.
- Jessica Kobb expressed concern about the technology policies, especially around teachers not being allowed to use technology for personal matters while at school. She stated that it feels like it is meant to be intimidating and does not feel like being treated as a professional.
- Kyle Landis-Marinello had spoken about the curriculum review at a past meeting. He expressed concerns that this is poorly timed, was not done well and did not take into account staff, teacher, community viewpoints. He noted that the Superintendent had already provided his viewpoint to the Time Argus; he feels that the board needs to be open to the viewpoints of teachers, staff and community.
- Adam Rosen encouraged the board to not accept the curriculum review as it took place during a pandemic. He encouraged the board to limit the power of the Superintendent to terminate programs. Each school has unique characteristics and should be able to preserve them. He suggested that the board mandate a committee approach to this. He invited the board to consider the literacy curriculum review which was completed in the past.
- Madeleine Dougherty spoke in solidarity for a forum to discuss the results from the curriculum review.

Kari Bradley thanked those present for providing public feedback for the board's consideration.

3.3. Agenda Revisions

Kari Bradley noted that the board will go into Executive Session at the end of the meeting to address Superintendent Evaluation. Chris McVeigh, Chair of the Policy Committee, stated that the committee had decided to provide an extended invitation to the public to join the committee at its next meeting. He will notify the public and invite their attendance and input to the committee.

4. Reports

4.1. Student Reports: (none) Kari Bradley congratulated Townes DeGroot on his graduation and thanked him for his work with the board.

4.2. Superintendent

4.2.1. Black Lives Matter Flag Raising Request: Superintendent Olkowski had prepared a memo for the board; he noted that he had checked with legal counsel and he stated that this request is appropriate and timely and within the guidelines of the policy.

- Krista Dy, advisor for BLAMM, spoke to the board.
- Latisha Montgomery spoke to the board on behalf of BLAMM.
- Gabi Calderon spoke in favor of continuing to fly the BLM flag.
- Meg Allison spoke to the board on behalf of some students at U-32, in favor of displaying the BLM flag.
- Kari Bradley thanked them for their input and invited questions from board members. No questions were heard.

Superintendent Olkowski thanked the students for attending the meeting to advocate and provide comments around this issue.

Scott Thompson moved to approve maintaining the flying of the BLM flag without interruption, understanding that there will be a re-raising ceremony in the fall of the upcoming school year. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet. Diane Nichols-Fleming suggested an amendment to not require the board to reconsider this again next year. Chris McVeigh suggested an amendment to note that the board's vote is an expression of the board's support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Board members spoke about not adding the friendly amendment about reconsidering this next year. Some expressed that it is useful to keep this issue at the forefront and address it every year; additionally, this would be consistent with the policy. Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that she feels requiring the group to come before the board each year to ask again is not in the spirit of equity. She stated that this is an onerous requirement for the student group. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet spoke in support of the spirit of Diane Nichols-Fleming's sentiment but also feels that revisiting this every year as a board keeps this issue at the forefront. Chris McVeigh explained the legal issue within the policy that the flag pole on the school grounds is not considered public speech but is considered representative of the board. Stephen Looke reviewed the document / statement and requested that a symbol not be tied with the beliefs of board members (i.e. "The Black Lives Matter flag is a symbol of our commitment to do more as a school district.") He explained his rationale for not accepting things such as flags or lapel pins as symbols that are required to show commitment. Scott Thompson spoke in response to an email that had been received, with the "All Lives Matter" sentiment. He spoke about the treatment of a certain population of people as a litmus test; he stated that the BLM flag does not indicate that we are disregarding others. Jonathan Goddard expressed his support of the BLM flag, and indicated his pride in having been on the board when this was first addressed. He believes it is important for the board to remain consistent in their support. Diane Nichols-Fleming reiterated that it is not the responsibility of "others" to educate, it is the responsibility of us to educate ourselves.

This motion carried unanimously, with the amendment noting the board's expression of support, but without the amendment to eliminate reconsideration year-by year.

4.2.2. Social Justice Statement: Superintendent Olkowski gave a brief overview of the work of the Social Justice group at WCUUSD, with the facilitation of Shelley Vermilya, Equity Scholar in Residence. He read the statement: *“The Washington Central Unified Union School District is dedicated to taking concrete actions that provide a safer and more supportive learning environment that is free of barriers; one that affirms the identity of each of us and acknowledges and celebrates differences to create a sense of belonging for each person connected to our schools. The school district is committed to creating inclusive educational opportunities that are relevant both historically and culturally, addressing the impacts of bias, prejudice, and discrimination while building more opportunity for us to thrive rather than merely survive. This statement represents a commitment within our school district to acknowledge and end oppression and oppressive systems, to center our full humanity of all in our community, and to keep broadening our perspectives. These identities — including and not limited to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, marital status, family composition, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, varying physical and mental abilities, and socioeconomic status — carry socially constructed meaning and value. Our commitment is to the development of cultural humility and personal growth that is best supported in a climate that respects differences and provides a sense of belonging and inclusion.”*

Scott Thompson moved to have the Policy Committee review this statement and consider putting this into policy form. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: Jill Olson stated that putting this sentiment into policy would create more of a living document. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked what would be the reason to not adopt the statement tonight. Scott Thompson stated that, because this is a statement from the board, we might want to change some of the language or approach to reflect the language of the board. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet responded that he does not believe this statement needs any editing before the board adopts it; we have taken such action in the past without sending to the policy committee for vetting. Stephen Looke indicated that he would like the board to have an opportunity to speak to this statement and discuss, before taking action on it. Jonathan Goddard expressed his support for the motion or for the statement as it stands; however, if sending it to the committee and then to the board for action leads to concrete action within the schools, then he is in support. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet agreed with Jonathan’s statement; he would like to ensure that this action does not indicate that the board does not support the sentiment in the statement.

This motion carried unanimously.

4.2.3.COVID -19 Update: Elizabeth Wirth had provided a memo to the board summarizing WCUUSD’s safety and effective functioning throughout the previous school year. Board members thanked Elizabeth Wirth and the staff at the schools for their successful efforts around safety. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet thanked Superintendent Olkowski for his leadership in keeping students and staff safe through this pandemic.

4.2.4. Curriculum Management Review Report: Superintendent Olkowski had provided the report to the board and asked the board to consider taking action to *RECEIVE* this document. The second action from the board would be to direct the Superintendent to provide a response to the report. He stated that it is his intent to engage teachers, staff and community in consideration of this report. **Scott Thompson moved that the board receive the report titled: CMSi Curriculum Review of WCUUSD. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor.** Discussion: Lindy Johnson asked why the board needed to take action to “receive” the document, as we already have it in our hands. Superintendent Olkowski indicated that this is mostly a formality, to acknowledge that the board has in fact received the report that resulted from the curriculum review. Stephen Looke indicated that this is action that the board has taken in the past. **This motion carried unanimously.** Diane Nichols-Fleming asked for more detail about the response, as indicated in the second motion. To whom will the response go? Why wouldn’t the Curriculum Director be involved in creating the response?

Superintendent Olkowski stated that the response would be to the board, and it would be one artifact of many in the strategic planning process going forward. Lindy Johnson stated that she believes the motion should direct a committee, which includes the Curriculum Director and other staff, as well as the Superintendent. Scott Thompson explained his understanding is that the board directs the Superintendent because he is the Administrator who is accountable to the board. Superintendent Olkowski stated that he intends for this to be a collaborative process, but that he feels it is important that the response comes from him, as the board's employee. Chris McVeigh stated that he believes the leadership team and teaching staff across the district should be included, as well as a committee that creates and attends community forums, at the front end of the process as opposed to the tail end of the process. He believes the board can create the basic parameters about which individuals should be involved in creating the response. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked how teachers will be engaged during the summer. Superintendent Olkowski stated that he intends to create office hours throughout the summer to invite teachers and staff to meet with him in response to this document. Kari Bradley stated that, as this is a lengthy document, he would like time to look it over before taking action directing the Superintendent's response. Chris McVeigh reiterated that this is indeed a lengthy document and he would like to not rush the response. Jill Olson suggested that we take action to direct the Superintendent to develop a process by which the response to the report be created. Board members expressed support for that idea. Lindy Johnson stated that we have paid thousands of dollars for this review and there is of course an expectation that there will be a response. **Stephen Looke moved to direct the Superintendent of schools to prepare a response to the Curriculum Review Report, to submit to the board at its October 2021 board meeting, identifying the areas needing attention, utilizing direct input from public forum, leadership team, and staff. Seconded by Scott**

Thompson. Discussion: Jonathan Goddard suggested using "demonstrates" or "includes" versus "utilizes." Chris McVeigh indicated that he opposes this motion, as it is not specific enough about how public, leadership and staff will be included in the process. He would like to insist on a committee process/ public forum process, and have a mechanism where those constituencies are included in the process before the resulting report is created. Scott Thompson expressed his concerns that we are being too "micro" in our approach. We could ask the Superintendent to report on the process that he has been following, so that we can consult or offer suggestions, in the course of regular board monitoring, on board agendas. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet agreed with Scott Thompson's statement that we may be getting too "micro."

A vote was called.

No: 6 votes

Yes: 5 votes

This motion failed.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to direct the Superintendent to present the board with a process for collecting public input, and input from stakeholders in the district that would lead to the preparation of a report including the following information:

a) Prioritize the areas needing attention

b) Identify which conditions most adversely affect students?

c) Identify which findings most adversely affect the system?

d) Develop a plan to address the recommendations, to be delivered by next regular board meeting (August 2021). Seconded by Jill Olson. This motion carried unanimously.

4.2.5.School Time Proposal: Steven Dellinger-Pate shared that we have been considering extending the student school day for several years; transportation has been a barrier. He had shared a proposal which allowed for extending the school day at U-32 by 20 minutes. He reviewed a June 20, 2021 memo explaining some of the specifics, including adding four buses to the end of day. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked how the concerns with child care that had been expressed earlier would be addressed. Principal Dellinger-Pate indicated that, if child care facilities are not fully open in the fall, then we will address this on a case by case basis.

Chris McVeigh asked what within the teaching day will change in order to accommodate the additional twenty minutes. He asked whether combining elementary age with middle/high school age students on buses will be a certainty or a likelihood. Principal Dellinger-Pate stated that over the summer we will be asking families to “opt in” to bussing and get some specifics on bus routes and ridership. He answered that teachers will be required to teach an additional twenty minutes, but this falls within the collective bargaining agreement. **Scott Thompson moved to approve spending up to \$241K for FY 21-22 from the fund balance, for additional busses to extend the school day at U-32 from 8-2:35 to 8-2:55. Seconded by Chris McVeigh.** Vera Frazier asked whether this proposal has the support of the leadership team at U-32. Principal Dellinger-Pate indicated that it does. Kari Bradley asked whether there has been feedback from families; Principal Dellinger-Pate stated that he has not heard feedback from families yet. **This motion carried unanimously.**

4.3. Finance Committee

4.3.1. Financial Update & ESSER Reports

4.3.2. Food Service Financial Reports

4.3.3. Comparative Information

4.3.3.1. Education Spending Per Equalized Pupil

4.3.3.2. Special Education Financial Information

Lori Bibeau shared some of the highlights from the written reports that she had provided. **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to authorize reserving Fund Balance for the Doty .86 Para educator position for a cost of \$31,368 less projected reimbursements of \$17,566 for a net amount of \$13,802. Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously. Jonas Eno-Van fleet moved to authorize a transfer to the Capital Fund in the amount of \$1,000,000. Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously.**

The board said goodbye, congratulations and thanks to Lori Bibeau, and welcomed Susanne Gann. Stephen Looke asked that the steering committee plan time for the board to consider the reports that Lori had prepared tonight, regarding per pupil spending and special education spending/ staffing.

4.4. Policy Committee: Tabled

4.4.1. Second Reading for policy to be adopted on 6.16.21: F44 Password Management, B8 Electronic Communication between Employees and Students, D40 Acceptable Use

4.4.2. Third Reading for Policy to be Adopted: F40 Change Management, F43 Backups D3 District Take Home Device & Personal Device, F47 Electronic Mail, F48 Incident Response Policy and Plan

5. Board Operations

5.1. Interviewing Potential New Board Members:

Ainsley Burroughs, Middlesex, spoke to the board about her interest in serving on the board.

Chris Cadorette, Calais, spoke to the board about his interest in serving on the board.

Maggie Weiss, Calais, spoke to the board about her interest in serving on the board.

McKaylyn Leclerc, Worcester, spoke to the board about her interest in serving on the board.

Ursula Stanley, Middlesex, spoke to the board about her interest in serving on the board.

Patrick Whelley spoke to the board about his interest in serving on the board.

Kari Bradley explained that the board will make a decision at the August board meeting.

5.2. Governance (Action to Elect Vice Chair): Done earlier in the meeting

5.3. Policy Committee Members: Chris McVeigh explained that as Dorothy Naylor is leaving the board, the Policy Committee is seeking membership. Scott Thompson offered to serve on the committee. Lindy Johnson offered to serve on the committee as well.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to appoint Scott Thompson to the Policy

Committee. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.

Chris McVeigh moved to appoint Lindy Johnson to the Policy Committee. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, this motion carried unanimously. Superintendent Olkowski indicated that at the August meeting we will need to consider committee members for a Transportation Committee.

6. Consent Agenda:

- 6.1. **Approve Minutes of 5.19.21, 6.2.21, 6.8.21, and 6.16.21:** Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the minutes of 5.19.21, 6.2.21, 6.8.21, and 6.16.21. Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously.
- 6.2. **Approve Board Orders:** Lindy Johnson moved to approve the board orders for a total amount of \$835,020.31. Seconded by Scott Thompson, this motion carried unanimously.

7. Personnel

- 7.1. **Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Retirements, Leave of Absence and Changes in FTE :**Lindy Johnson moved to approve the hiring of Jeremy Avoli, U-32 Physical Education & Health Teacher. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. Lindy Johnson moved to approve the hiring of Maxwell Segalla, U-32 English Long Term Substitute. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, this motion carried unanimously. Scott Thompson moved to authorize Superintendent Olkowski to offer a letter of agreement to Lori Bibeau. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. This motion carried. Three board members were opposed. Scott Thompson moved to authorize the Superintendent to hire new personnel within the budget, as well as school counselors covered by the ESSER plan, between now and the next board meeting. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Chris McVeigh asked how many positions are known at this time - Superintendent Olkowski indicated one or two at U-32 and one at Calais; as well as the school counselor positions. Lisa LaPlante shared some of the plans to increase these positions across the district. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked whether the board could plan a brief special meeting to approve hires. In light of timing and sense of urgency, the board agreed that authorizing the Superintendent is appropriate. Lindy Johnson asked whether the hiring process is the same as usual; Superintendent Olkowski indicated that it is. Lisa LaPlante explained that positions funded by ESSER funds are one year assignments. **This motion carried unanimously.**
- 7.2. **Approval of New Bargaining Agreements:** Jonas Eno-Van Fleet thanked Carla, Lori, Lisa and Melissa, Kelly Bushey, and members from both of the unions, for their work and commitment and partnership in this process. **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve both the Teachers and ESP collective bargaining agreements as provided tonight, pending ratification by unions. Seconded by Scott Thompson.** Discussion: Scott Thompson had found a typo (“statue” versus “statute”) Diane Nichols-Fleming indicated that being able to reach a two year agreement is a cause for celebration. **This motion carried unanimously.**

8. Future Agenda Items

- 8.1. WCUUSD Name
- 8.2. Assessment Needs for Building Bright Futures
- 8.3. Diversifying Educator Workforce
- 8.4. Net Metering Proposal
- 8.5. Strategic Planning
- 8.6. Superintendent Report for Curriculum Review Process
- 8.7. Exploration of Financial Reports as discussed
- 8.8. Review of Social Justice Statement, Discussion of BLM, climate check-ins (regarding worries of prejudice and bias in buildings)
- 8.9. Transportation Committee
- 8.10. Mode of future meetings (remote/in person)

9. Board Reflections

Jill Olson: Thank you, Kari - great job tonight filling in. She noted that she got more out of public comment tonight, with the time frame that we had instituted. She would like to continue with the time limit.

Chris McVeigh: would like to come up with a way to select members to comment when there are more raising hands than time allows - e.g. random selection. He also asked whether there is a way to give people forewarning when their time is running out so they are not abruptly cut off (by microphone silencing).

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet: indicated that it worked well tonight.

Diane Nichols-Fleming: stated that we will need to discuss as a board, the mode of future meetings (remote? In person?)

Stephen Looke: Would like to discuss how to prioritize when there is great interest in public comment but the time limit does not allow. Would like to prioritize community members having a voice, at board meetings.

Scott Thompson: said goodbye to Dorothy Naylor.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet: important to say goodbye to those who are leaving the district, like Lori Bibeau, Kelly Bushey, Jody Emerson, etc.; thank them for their valuable contributions.

10. Public Comments: None at this time (9:18 p.m.)

Chris Cadorette from Calais thanked Dorothy for her service on the board.

At 9:21 Scott Thompson moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Superintendent Evaluation, and to include Carla Messier and Bryan Olkowski. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.

At 10:29 Scott Thompson moved to leave Executive Session. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, the motion carried unanimously. During Executive Session, the Board discussed Superintendent Evaluation.

11. Adjourn:

Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to adjourn. Scott Thompson seconded, motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:31.

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