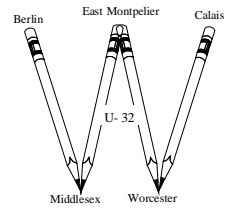


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 Minutes Unapproved 2.17.21 5:45 PM – 10:00 PM

Board Members: Flor Diaz Smith, Lindy Johnson, Scott Thompson, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Kari Bradley, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Jaiel Pulskamp, Karoline May, Townes DeGroot, Anna Farber, Jill Olson, Dorothy Naylor

Administrators: Superintendent, Bryan Olkowski, Interim Director of Technology, Jim Garrity, Business Administrator, Lori Bibeau, Curriculum Director, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Director of Special Services, Kelly Bushey, Associate Principal, Jody Emerson, Student Affairs Director, Amy Molina, Special Education Coordinator, Julia Pritchard, Principal, Alicia Lyford, Principal, Casey Provost, Principal, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Principal, Cat Fair, Student Services Director, Lisa LaPlante

Others/Public: ORCA Media, Elizabeth Wirth, Carla Messier, David Lawrence, David Powelson, Scott Hess, Linda Gray, Ellen Knoedler, Allen Gilbert, Matthew DeGroot, Erin Mullaney, Maria Melekos, L Hannah, Kelly MacMartin, David Delcore, Susan

- 1. Call to Order:** Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.
- 2. Budget Forum:** WCUUSD board members presented a slideshow to explain the budget development process, and the proposed 2021-22 budget. Flor Diaz Smith facilitated public feedback, guided by questions such as: what clarifying questions do you have? What additional information do you need to support this budget? What ideas might you have to help inform community members about this budget?
 - 2.1. Public Feedback**
 - Are there thoughts about how to address decreasing enrollment trends?
 - Thanks for serving on the school board.
 - Question about fund balance
 - Need for reliable high speed internet
 - Some discussion about using “one time money” to reduce the tax rate for this year’s budget
 - Possible future agenda discussion: topic - “Equity Scholar in Residence” program - since this is grant-funded, how will the program be sustained going forward?
 - Check in - how are the students doing? How are the teachers and our communities doing, in light of the pandemic?
 - One positive aspect: going into February Break, we have much less illness (flu, cold) than in previous years, due to all of the COVID19 safety measures in place.

Flor Diaz Smith shared that WCUUSD will host a Budget Information Meeting on March 1, 2021.

- 3. Executive Session for Legal, Negotiations, and Personnel:** Contracts, labor relations, confidential attorney-client relations. **At 6:01, Flor Diaz Smith moved to go into Executive Session for the above reasons. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming.** Lindy Johnson noted that someone had noted that in the previous meeting, the board had entered Executive Session accompanied by Jim Garrity, without invitation or explanation. It was decided that Jim Garrity would be on “stand by” but not included in the Executive Session, to help with technical issues if they arise. **This motion carried unanimously and the board went into Executive Session, joined by Superintendent Olkowski and Bernie Lambek, Esq. At 7:10, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to exit Executive Session. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.** During Executive Session, the Board discussed administrator contracts, negotiations, and a confidential attorney-client conversation. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet shared from the Negotiations Committee: We reached an agreement regarding payments for time spent on duties that extends beyond the limit of 90 minutes per week. Both sides agree that the negotiation process has been conducted with mutual respect, and an appreciation for the interests and goodwill of each side.
- 4. Welcome:**
 - 4.1. Reception of Guests:** Scott Thompson welcomed those present.
 - 4.2. Agenda Revisions:** Chris McVeigh would like to add discussion and vote regarding moving public comment to the beginning of the meeting agenda versus the end. If there is not time tonight, he would like to put this on a future agenda. Karoline May noted that the Superintendent Evaluation topic on tonight’s agenda will not take the amount of time initially planned - more like a 5 minute update. She would like to have this on the first available board meeting agenda, the first in March if possible.
- 5. Reports:**
 - 5.1. Student Reports:** Townes DeGroot shared that a virtual book group has begun. The book is The Hate You Give. Anna Farber provided an update on winter sports, which are currently underway.
 - 5.2. Superintendent:**
 - 5.2.1. COVID-19 Update:** Superintendent Olkowski shared that WCUUSD had received a mask donation from Another Way, Inc. out of Montpelier. He shared student attendance data. Elizabeth Wirth shared some updates around COVID-19; she shared appreciation for the overall support during this pandemic.
 - 5.2.2. Entry Plan:** Superintendent Olkowski shared that the site visit had been completed earlier this month for the curriculum management review. He thanked Jen Miller-Arsenault for her leadership. Superintendent Olkowski shared an update on his Superintendent Entry Plan. He noted that he has met individually with each board member. He had provided a document for the board’s consideration and feedback. Kari Bradley noted that this data is another resource for strategic planning.

5.2.3. Search Update for Administrators: Carla Messier shared that both administrator position searches are progressing. The search committees will meet in the next few weeks and are hoping that by March some decisions will be made. Jim Garrity noted that there will be updated information for the board at the next meeting regarding the IT Director. Karoline May asked for clarification about the Business Administrator search. Carla Messier noted that three of the seven applicants for the Business Administrator position are from outside of Vermont. Lindy Johnson asked for Carla Messier to email board members the names of those serving on the search committees for these positions.

5.3. Education Quality:

5.3.1. WCUUSD Mathematical Content and Practices Presentation: Kari Bradley provided an overview presentation which had been shared at the most recent Education Quality Committee meeting. Some discussion followed. Kari Bradley asked board members whether there is anything from this presentation that might guide the board going forward in strategic planning. Scott Thompson reiterated Jen Miller-Arsenault's point about changing the culture, broadly, around everyone being a mathematician. Karoline May stated that she would like to continue to hear updates about the topic of math at WCUUSD. Superintendent Olkowski indicated that he is looking forward to hearing what the curriculum management review indicates around math. He spoke briefly about the investment of coaching for improving instructional capacity. Superintendent Olkowski again thanked Jen Miller-Arsenault for her work on this. Kari Bradley invited the board and the public to join Education Quality Committee meetings which are held at 5 p.m. before the first board meeting of each month.

5.4. Finance Committee:

5.4.1. Cares Relief Grant Update: Lori Bibeau had shared a document updating Information about grant monies. Flor Diaz Smith provided an overview of this information.

5.4.2. FY 19-20 Audit and Fund Balance Update: Superintendent Olkowski and Lori Bibeau had provided a memo, *FY 19-20 Audit and Fund Balance Update*, dated February 11, 2021. Lori Bibeau reviewed this information.

5.4.3. Review and Recommend Capital Projects for FY 21-22: Flor Diaz Smith moved to authorize the Capital Project Budget of \$981,064 subject to a reduction in state and/or federal aid. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming. Flor Diaz Smith explained the need for this action. Lori Bibeau had shared a memo explaining the current status of the Capital Fund budget, dated February 11, 2021. **This motion carried unanimously.**
Flor Diaz Smith moved to authorize a Fund Balance transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Fund in the amount of \$1,500,000. Seconded by Kari Bradley. Chris McVeigh indicated that he would like to set aside enough from this amount, to hire three math coaches, to fund for the upcoming year. He moved to amend the motion to reflect this. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor. Some discussion followed. Lori Bibeau noted that 3.2 FTE coaches are in the budget for the upcoming year, as grant funded positions. She suggested not using local money until a pandemic-related million dollar grant is received as expected. Jen Miller-Arsenault indicated too that she thinks it is wise to see how the grant money fleshes out first. She noted her appreciation for the support for coaching positions. **A vote was called on the Amendment. The motion to amend the motion failed. A vote was called on the original motion. The original motion carried, with one vote *not* in favor.**

5.4.4. Hiring of Facilities Director: Flor Diaz Smith shared that this position had been approved by the board; however, the hiring process will begin sooner than anticipated.

5.4.5. Technology Equipment-Authorization to Proceed: Superintendent Olkowski and Jim Garrity had provided a memo, *Infrastructure Upgrades within the District*, dated February 11, 2021. Board members reviewed this update.

5.5. Policy Committee: Dorothy Naylor moved to approve for second reading and adoption of the following policies:

5.5.1. Second Reading and Adoption of Policies: F22 Data Retention and Storage; F25 Access Control; F41 Reasonable Care in Protecting Proprietary and/or Confidential Information. Seconded by Karoline May. Chris McVeigh reviewed these policies; there have been no changes since the previous board meeting. He invited comments from board members. Lindy Johnson noted a typo in the F22 policy “UBS” should be “USB.” She asked whether these were model policies and why the usual references to legal statutes were not listed. Chris McVeigh explained that Jim Garrity had drafted these policies. **This motion carried unanimously.**

6. Board Operations:

6.1. Letter to House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs: Flor Diaz Smith moved to authorize the superintendent, board chair and board vice chair to sign a letter on behalf of the board, as presented in the board packet, dated February 17, 2021. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Flor Diaz Smith noted that the bill is currently out of the House and will be moving to a committee. The letter will be sent to our local representatives. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked if the intent of H81 and H63 was to improve the chances on the school board side of the bargaining commission winning an arbitration decision, and what would be the financial benefit to the district? Some discussion followed around the bargaining process around health care costs. Lindy Johnson expressed concern about some of the verbiage in the letter, indicating that we are not able to fund programs, where the overall issue of health care is bigger and more complicated. **A vote was called. This motion carried, 8 yes, 3 no.**

6.2. Town Meeting Update: Flor Diaz Smith shared that the Budget Information Meeting is March 1, 2021. March 2 is Town Meeting Day. She asked board members to check in with town offices to be sure that the school budget and annual report information is on the town website; she reminded board members to outreach in the communities to support the budget. Lindy Johnson suggested that if people post in Front Porch Forum about write-in board candidates, we should share them in all of the towns’ forums. She will share what she has seen on FPF, with board members. Scott Thompson and Lindy Johnson will share with board members what they have written for their town’s FPF.

6.3. Superintendent Evaluation goals: Karoline May shared that there is a proposed plan; discussed surveys, input from staff, input from leadership team. Considered individual goals and targets. The draft document will be shared with board members via email and she asked board members to come to the next board meeting with comments or input. She would like to have a final evaluation plan by the next board meeting, when the full board is able to provide input. She asked board members to come to the meeting prepared for this work.

- 6.4. Negotiations Update:** As noted above, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet had shared: We reached an agreement regarding payments for time spent on duties that extends beyond the limit of 90 minutes per week. Both sides agree that the negotiation process has been conducted with mutual respect, and an appreciation for the interests and goodwill of each side.
- 7. Consent Agenda:**
- 7.1. Approve Minutes of 2.3.21:** Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the minutes of February 3, 2021. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.
- 7.2. Approve Board Orders:** Lindy Johnson moved to approve the board orders in the following amounts: \$287,894.57, and \$15,267.95. Seconded by Karoline May, this motion carried unanimously.
- 7.3. Approve job description for Speech Language Pathologist:** Jaiel Pulskamp moved to approve the job description for Speech Language Pathologist, as presented. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet. Discussion: Diane Nichols-Fleming asked whether preschool SLP is separate. Kelly Bushey noted that this job description is intended for all grades. Ms. Nichols-Fleming indicated that the supervision portion should include pre-K. **This motion carried, with noted edit.**
- 8. Personnel:**
- 8.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Retirements, Leave of Absence and Changes in FTE:** Karoline May moved to approve to convert the current unfilled Social Worker contract to an employee position for the remainder of the school year. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming. Kelly Bushey explained this proposal. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked how this proposal is consistent (or not) with action that the board had taken earlier in the year around a math position. Steven Dellinger-Pate explained the circumstances around this position. **This motion carried unanimously.**
- 9. Public Comments:** none
- 10. Future Agenda Items:**
- 10.1.** WCUUSD Name
 - 10.2.** Assessment Needs for Building Bright Futures
 - 10.3.** Diversifying Educator Work Force
 - 10.4.** Board Retreat
 - 10.5.** Net Metering Proposal
 - 10.6.** Strategic Planning
 - 10.7.** Discussion about Public Participation at Board Meeting (at beginning of agenda)
 - 10.8.** Superintendent Evaluation (30 minutes)
 - 10.9.** Equity Scholar in Residence
 - 10.10.** Board Governance Goals/ Retreat/ Reflection on the year
 - 10.11.** Superintendent Responsibilities/ Board Roles and Responsibilities
 - 10.12.** Staff Appreciation (mid-year appreciation/ acknowledgement to staff and to communities)
- 11. Board Reflection:** Jaiel Pulskamp said her goodbyes and expressed appreciation for the work of board colleagues, teachers and administrators. Scott Thompson thanked her for her role on the board.
- 12. Adjourn:** The board adjourned by consensus at 9:27.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary