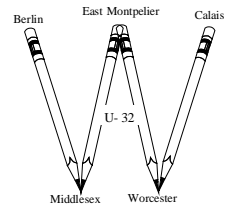


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 Approved 1.20.21 6:00 PM – 9:00 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, Stephen Looke, Jill Olson, George Gross

Administrators: Superintendent Bryan Olkowski, Technology Consultant Jim Garrity, Business Administrator Lori Bibeau, Principal Alicia Lyford, Curriculum Director Jen Miller-Arsenault, Student Services Director Kelly Bushey, Principal Cat Fair, Associate Principal Jody Emerson, Principal Steven Dellinger-Pate, Amy Molina, Special Services Director Julia Pritchard, Principal Aaron Boynton

Others/Public: ORCA Media, David Delcore, Ben Weiss, Elizabeth Wirth, Jes Wills, Lisa Hanna, Kelly MacMartin, Susan, Carla Messier

1. **Call to Order:** Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. **Executive Session for Negotiations and Personnel Matters**

At 6:02, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to go into Executive Session, and to invite the Superintendent, for the purpose of discussing contracts/ negotiations and/or evaluations. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith, this motion carried unanimously.

At 6:40 Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to come out of Executive Session; Lindy Johnson seconded, motion passed unanimously.

During Executive Session the Board discussed contracts, negotiations, and a personnel matter.
3. **Welcome**
 - 3.1. Reception of Guests
 - 3.2. Agenda Revisions
4. **Reports**
 - 4.1. **Student Reports:** Townes DeGroot shared that U-32 turns 50 this year, and that the *Chronicle* is planning some events around this milestone. Anna Farber shared that a new semester has begun; she shared that some of the winter sports have begun, with COVID-19 safety measures in place.
 - 4.2. **Superintendent**
 - 4.2.1. **COVID-19 Update:** Superintendent Olkowski reported that schools are doing well; there have been zero positive cases from the January screening. He shared

that winter sports are resuming this week; he applauded the leadership of the Athletic Director at U-32. He shared that the annual report is almost completed and ready to go to the printer. It will be mailed this year.

4.2.1.1. Staff Leave: Superintendent Olkowski had provided a memo, *January 14, 2021, regarding Staff Leave*. **Chris McVeigh moved to approve an extension of the 10 EPSL (Emergency Paid Sick Leave) days and EFML leave (EFML approved prior to 12/31/2020) to full time employees (pro-rated for part time employees) unable to work remotely for circumstances listed below through March 31, 2021, allowing for a total eligibility of 10 work days for the period April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith, this motion carried unanimously.**

4.2.2. Schools Response to January 6, 2021: Superintendent Olkowski shared that he had sent a letter home to families to provide information and assurance regarding the schools' responses to the January 6 events at the Capitol.

4.2.3. Calais Air Ventilation Project update: Cat Fair shared that Bill Ford and Lori Bibeau had provided a great deal of support to make the ventilation project come to fruition. She listed several people who deserved credit during this time, including teachers and families to make the remote learning period successful. She shared that she values in-person learning and hopes to continue to take the safety precautions to allow for in-person learning. She spoke about the challenge of internet access in regards to remote learning.

4.2.4. Berlin Town Center Information: Superintendent Olkowski had shared some information from the town of Berlin, requesting the board's consideration to gift back to the town approximately 7.4 acres of former town owned land. The town would like an opportunity to address the board directly about this issue. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked, has this ever been done in WCUUSD in the past? E.g., a "quit claim" related to property. Superintendent Olkowski will research this.

4.2.5. Curriculum Management Review: Superintendent Olkowski spoke about the plan for this endeavor. He shared the safety precautions that will be in place around COVID19, for these out-of-state visitors. Jen Miller-Arsenault shared that currently the work is around collecting documents and data for the review team to consider before they even arrive in Vermont. The site visit is expected in February and a report is expected in May. Superintendent Olkowski reiterated how this review process will help with strategic planning.

4.2.6. State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP): Kelly Bushey and Superintendent Olkowski had prepared a memo (January 14, 2021) reviewing the Annual Performance Report and State Systemic Improvement Plan. Kelly Bushey reviewed this document and shared that the SSIP will include access to: a systems level coach, math coach, AOE sponsored Ed Camps and other professional development. She explained the work with the systems level coach will support the district's ongoing work to ensure growth for all students.

4.2.7. Parenting in the time of Covid-19 Update: Kelly Bushey shared that she has worked with the WCUUSD School Social Worker who held a workshop around this topic. Fourteen parents from around WCUUSD attended. There will be more offerings around this topic going forward.

4.3. Finance Committee:

4.3.1. Budget Forum Update: Flor Diaz Smith shared that a budget forum meeting had taken place and was video recorded. It is available for viewing. She stated

that the Finance Committee would like to schedule one more informational meeting, rather than two, as the attendance for past meetings has been negligible. The board expressed support for having one versus two future budget informational meetings before Town Meeting Day.

4.3.2. Announced Tuition: Flor Diaz Smith moved to set the tuition for 2021-2021, at the following: Kindergarten \$20,265; Other Elementary \$20,265; Secondary \$20,647. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried unanimously.

4.4. Education Quality:

4.4.1. Presentation of WCUUSD Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP): Jen Miller-Arsenault presented to the board an overview of the Continuous Improvement Plan that she had discussed with the Education Quality Committee earlier this month. Kari Bradley asked board members to reflect: Does our CIP have the right focus and scope of achievement? How might our CIP work inform next year's strategic planning? He reminded the board that the next three meetings will look at math, reading and science, and he invited board members to join the Ed Quality meetings at any time. He will ask to have meeting link/ invitations sent to all board members should they choose to attend.

5. Board Operations:

5.1. Update on Election Considerations: Superintendent Olkowski asked the board to consider what uniform process to offer all voters. **Flor Diaz Smith moved to have each town mail ballots to all registered voters in all five towns that comprise WCUUSD, and that the district will cover the extra cost of mailing. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** Discussion: Lindy Johnson would like to be sure that the ballots are mailed together with the local town ballots, so as not to confuse voters. Kari Bradley asked whether ballots can be mailed back or dropped off at designated places. Some discussion followed about the fact that each town office is in charge of voting and polling procedures. **This motion carried unanimously.**

5.2. Diversifying Educator Work Force: Diane Nichols-Fleming suggested reviewing policies to consider the idea of racial bias and equity. Karoline May suggested that each hiring committee looked for implicit bias in the questions that are asked, and how the hiring committee is run. She also suggested creating a committee including the community, to consider these topics. Kari Bradley stated, if we are going to collect baseline data, he would be curious to see what is the diversity of the current work force; how does this compare to our student body; how does it compare to our community; how does it compare to other districts? From that we could create targets. Stephen Looke stated that he would like to consider what the board's responsibility is in diversifying the work force. He suggested that the board assume some of the responsibility in creating equitable practice, and also to ensure practice that makes it safe and work the risk to uproot and come to Vermont to work. He spoke about travel expenses being a factor. Flor Diaz Smith suggested that she will work with Carla Messier and Bryan Olkowski, to create a draft proposal to share with the board, around this topic of educator work force diversification. She suggested collaborating with Steven Dellinger-Pate and Jody Emerson at U-32 where work has been done around equity and restorative practice, and with student groups such as BLAM. Scott Thompson asked, is it possible, e.g. through VSBA, how other school districts might be addressing these issues and learn from others' experiences? Is there such a thing as exchange programs for teachers? Some discussion followed about the

hiring process and vetting applicants. Should all applications that are received be shared with the committee, or should there be a vetting process or a screening committee?

6. Consent Agenda:

6.1. Approve Minutes of 1.5.21 and 1.6.21: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the minutes of January 5, 2021, and January 6, 2021. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith, this motion carried unanimously.

6.2. Approve Board Orders: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the board orders in the amounts of \$260,987.58 and \$23,366.80. Seconded by Jill Olson, this motion carried unanimously.

7. Personnel:

7.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Retirements, Leave of Absence and Changes in FTE: Chris McVeigh moved to approve the hiring of Honi Bean Barrett, as presented in the board packet nomination form. Seconded by Kari Bradley, this motion carried unanimously. Chris McVeigh moved to approve the hiring of Caitlin Morgan, long term substitute, as presented in the board packet nomination form. Seconded by Karoline May, this motion carried unanimously. Chris McVeigh moved to approve the hiring of Kimberly Bolduc, Coordinator of Early Ed and Expanded Learning Opportunities. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, this motion carried unanimously.

8. Public Comments: Scott Thompson shared a letter from a community member about the social-emotional needs of our students and families especially during this pandemic. Chris McVeigh expressed concerns around scheduling in-service requirements on Martin Luther King holiday, as it should be a day of service to the community in the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. Superintendent Olkowski will bring this concern to the regional calendar planning team.

9. Future Agenda Items:

9.1. WCUUSD Name

9.2. Assessment Needs for Building Bright Futures

9.3. Board Retreat

9.4. Berlin Town Center Proposal

9.5. CVCC

9.6. Superintendent Evaluation (Karoline May requests 1 hour in open session)

Dorothy Naylor shared about H54 which addresses “weighting “for students regarding education funding; she will keep the board apprised.

10. Board Reflection: Lindy Johnson expressed gratitude that the meeting is wrapping up at 9:00.

11. Adjourn: The board adjourned by consensus at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary