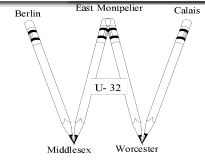


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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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Debra Taylor, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent



Washington Central Unified Union School District Board Approved Meeting Minutes

3.18.20 6:00 PM

Via Video Conference

Public Welcome to Attend at WCUUSD Central Office
1130 Gallison Hill Rd, Montpelier
or Dial 425-436-6200 & Enter Access Code 526013#

approved 4-1-2020

Present: Superintendent Debra Taylor, Business Administrator Lori Bibeau, Technology Director Keith MacMartin, Berlin Principal Aaron Boynton, Kelly Bushey, Jen Miller-Arsenault

Teleconference: Flor Diaz Smith, Lindy Johnson, Scott Thompson, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Dorothy Naylor, Stephen Looke, Chris McVeigh, Marylynn Strachan, Kari Bradley, Jaiel Pulskamp, Jill Olson, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, George Gross, Townes DeGroot

Others: Corinne Stridsberg, ORCA videographer, Dave Delcore (Times Argus) several members of the public were present via Zoom

1.0 Call to Order: Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2.0 Welcome

2.1 Reception of Guests: Scott Thompson welcomed Corinne Stridsberg. Marylynn Strachan noted that she is getting messages from people who are trying to dial in to the meeting but aren't able. Keith MacMartin checked that the link is working; Corinne was able to join.

2.2 Agenda Revisions: An Executive Session is planned tonight; Scott Thompson stated that he would like to keep the coronavirus discussion to 45 minutes.

2.3 Public Comments: Corinne Stridsberg stated that she hopes the board will be sure to keep the website and online documents current, especially during this period.

3.0 Response to Coronavirus: Superintendent Taylor noted that today is the first day that schools are closed for students. The leadership team has been meeting several times over the past ten days to prepare for the eventual likelihood of school dismissal.

The focus is on remote learning; support for families outside of school. The plan is to

resume school on April 6th unless a decision is made otherwise in the meantime. She shared that a response plan has been created. Debra Taylor shared the document: *School Board COVID-19 Update*. Brief discussion followed about the meals delivery plan which involves the same bus stop locations where students are picked up and dropped off. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked if there is a possibility of considering adjusting the route so that some families don't have to leave their homes to go to the pick up/ drop off. Superintendent Taylor will follow up on that possibility with Jody Emerson and Michelle Ksepka.

Superintendent Taylor noted that Jen Miller-Arsenault is leading the instruction component of the Response to Coronavirus plan. Chris McVeigh asked what are the expectations for teachers. Superintendent Taylor will include a summary in the answers on this ongoing document from tonight's live/ online meeting. Some discussion followed around emotional supports for teachers and families, and around technology support. Scott Thompson asked whether this document can be kept current so that board members can continue to ask questions, as an ongoing resource. She spoke about the deep cleaning plans for each school building. She also shared the plan to provide childcare, using the Community Connections program, at Berlin School and possibly at East Montpelier, depending on the need and demand. The requirement for childcare is for children of medical personnel and first responders. Essential school district staff may also be able to access childcare.

Lori Bibeau indicated that payroll is completed online and that staff is prepared to work remotely if needed. She clarified some issues around hourly employees. She stated that everyone that has a contract is getting paid. She shared that payroll is being planned for six weeks out.

Marylynne Strachan asked for some clarification about Community Connections. Lori Bibeau explained briefly.

Lori Bibeau spoke about the "blanket agreement" that the board has granted, for when payroll occurs off cycle of board meetings.

The board invited questions from the community that were present on the teleconference.

Corinne Stridsberg asked, how comfortable is everyone if the April 6th date is extended? Superintendent Taylor indicated that we are responding daily to recommendations from the CDC, AOE and governor. She asked, for instance, what if a great number of staff is not available as time goes on and more people become ill (e.g., bus drivers providing meals). Superintendent Taylor stated that we are doing our best to plan for every possible eventuality and change plans along the way as needed.

A question was asked about common spaces in the buildings - will they be cleaned daily? Superintendent Taylor responded that a deep cleaning will begin at U-32 and daily cleaning will continue in common areas. She also explained the protocol that group gatherings of larger than ten have been eliminated.

A question was posed from Rumney Staff about social/ emotional well being: how are staff going to be able to curb the anxiety of being exposed to the virus while we are being required to carry out duties? She expressed that this is a widely shared concern.

Board members each weighed in the issue to date.

George Gross: pleased with how things have been going, but expressed concerns about teachers' health and safety as they are required to go into the buildings to prepare materials.

Diane Nichole-Fleming: Thanked the board and administration for openness to input and feedback.

Kari Bradley: asked Superintendent Taylor to reach out for support or for assistance in keeping communication effective.

Dorothy Naylor: this new technology is challenging, however she is learning to participate via zoom - she asked for a hard copy of the current document.

Flor Diaz Smith: expressed support to the administration. We are here to support you.

Lindy Johnson: sees that other school districts are handling this in similar ways. She thanked the administration for the hard work.

Stephen Looke: no concerns; thank you for the work.

Chris McVeigh: would like to follow up on the prospect of buses extending meals deliveries to house-to-house. he asked if there is a community go-to-person/ resource; he noted that Middlesex has a designated person.

Jill Olson: thanked the administration for doing a great job.

Marylynn Strachan: asked the administration to be sure to take care of themselves as well, because staff and families will be looking to the administration for support.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet: expressed gratitude for the administration; he noted the strain and anxiety that everyone is under; make sure to make self-care a priority.

Jaiel Pulskamp stated that this is a clear plan and she is reassured that teachers are given the option to work from home.

At 7:03 p.m Chris McVeigh moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Seconded by Marylynn Strachan, this motion carried unanimously.

At 7:54 p.m. the board came out of Executive Session. Flor Diaz Smith made the motion; Dorothy Naylor seconded; passed unanimously.

Flor Diaz Smith moved to not renew Marc Chamberlain's contract for just and sufficient cause effective June 30, 2020. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor. A roll call vote was called: This motion carried with 3 abstentions.

4.0 Board Operations (Discussion/Action)

Flor Diaz Smith moved, if a board quorum is not available due to COVID-19, to authorize Scott Thompson, chair, or if not available, Flor Diaz Smith, vice-chair, or if not available, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, clerk, to sign on behalf of the board, warrants as needed. Board members are not clear on this issue. This motion was not seconded; this issue is tabled until a future meeting.

Flor Diaz Smith moved to authorize payment to First Student, without a reduction due to school closure, conditioned on assurance from First Student that their bus drivers will be paid whether or not they are driving buses. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: Some suggestions for clarification to the language: A friendly amendment: This was seconded by Chris McVeigh. The motion as amended follows.

Flor Diaz Smith moved to honor the First Student contract through the remainder of this existing school year, conditioned on assurance from First Student that their bus drivers will be paid whether or not they are driving buses. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: Chris McVeigh asked, does that language include assurances

that First Student is going to continue to provide the services that we expect. Board members are comfortable with this motion as it is stated. This motion carried unanimously.

4.1 Appointment of New Board Members :

Flor Diaz Smith moved to appoint Jonathan Goddard of Berlin to the WCUUSD board, for the balance of this year through February 2021. Seconded by Kari Bradley, this motion carried unanimously.

Jonas Eno- Van Fleet indicated that the Worcester Selectboard appointed Will Baker but he declined. He noted that the town of Worcester is still in need of a school board member.

5.0 Consent Agenda (Action)

5.1 Approve Minutes of 3.4.20 & 3.11.20: Chris McVeigh moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Lindy Johnson, this motion carried unanimously.

5.2 Approve Board Orders: Board members had approved board orders by proxy before the meeting had begun.

6.0 Personnel (Action)

6.1 Approve Hires, Resignations, Retirements: Lindy Johnson moved to approve Jennifer Britel, School Nurse. Seconded by Jaiel Pulskamp, this motion carried unanimously.

7.0 Future Agenda Items: Scott Thompson stated that Zoom allows breakout meetings so the board can break into committees at a future meeting if needed or appropriate. Marylynne Strachan asked that Principals are given an opportunity to join by Zoom so we can check in with them. She also asked to double check that the phone-in option is working. Marylynne Strachan noted that staff are always welcome to join our board meetings. The board agreed that more frequent check ins might be needed as we move forward for the next few months. Diane Nichols-Fleming indicated that more frequent meetings will need to stay with a time limit. Board members agreed to save Wednesday evenings for check-ins as needed. Kari Bradley noted that we need to be cognizant of the added burden we are asking of staff with additional meetings. Jill Olsen suggested holding Wednesday evenings at 6, as needed, but to plan on the schedule as it is. Stephen Looke suggested that the board address this at the next board meeting; he wants to be careful to not add administrative work (e.g. warning meetings, notifying people, etc.)

8.0 Executive Session for Personnel (an Executive Session was held earlier in the meeting)

9.0 Adjournment: The board adjourned by consensus at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary