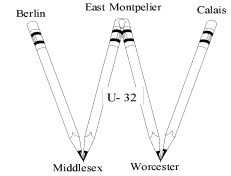


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 Minutes

1.15.20 6:30 – 9:30 PM

Berlin Elementary School, 372 Paine Turnpike North, Berlin VT

approved 2-5-20

Board Members Present: Scott Thompson, Jaiel Pulskamp, Marylynne Strachan, Flor Diaz Smith, George Gross, Vera Frazier, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Chris McVeigh, Lindy Johnson, Dorothy Naylor (arrived at 6:57 p.m.); Student Representative Townes DeGroot

Administrators Present: Superintendent Debra Taylor, Director of Special Services Kelly Bushey, EMES Principal Alicia Lyford, Berlin Principal Aaron Boynton, Business Administrator Lori Bibeau, Rumney Principal Casey Provost, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Jen Miller-Arsenault, U-32 Principal Steven Dellinger-Pate, Director of Technology Keith MacMartin, Calais Principal Cat Fair, U-32 Assistant Principal Jody Emerson, Doty Principal Gillian Fuqua

Others Present: ORCA videographer, David Delcore (Times Argus), Dave Lawrence, Matthew DeGroot, Anne Decker, Mike Close, Jonathan Goddard, Kari Bradley

1.0 Call to Order: Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

1.1 Reception of Guests: Scott Thompson thanked those who were present, and thanked Flor Diaz Smith, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet and Marylynne Strachan for presenting the budget earlier this evening.

1.2 Agenda Revisions: Townes DeGroot asked that the board move the policy discussions, regarding policy C27, and the Hate Symbols Resolution earlier on the agenda. The board agreed to this by consensus.

1.3 Public Comments: Jonathan Goddard reminded the board that a bill has been introduced to provide free breakfast and lunch to all Vermont students. He asked the board to support the bill. Flor Diaz Smith stated that the board had discussed this issue when developing the budget.

2.0 Finance (Discussion/Action)

2.1 Finance Committee Report: Vera Frazier reviewed the minutes from the Finance Committee meetings. She shared that the Finance Committee had discussed foreign language and the strings program in the elementary schools. Scott Thompson reminded those present that, earlier in the evening, discussion had taken place around these programs, from the perspective of budget development. He noted that a suggestion had been made to set aside some of the “windfall” after having paid off a bond, to support programs such as this.

Some discussion followed around the idea of “IOU” as discussed during the January 9

2020 Finance Committee meeting. Lori Bibeau had prepared a document: *WCUUSD Elementary Debt Allocation-Comparing Local (Separate) to Together*. Scott Thompson stated that, at the moment, this idea of “IOU” is theoretical. Some discussion followed. Lindy Johnson noted that, in the future, some of the other school will be needing building updates or upkeep.

- Financial Report: Superintendent Taylor shared that a quarterly Fund Balance Summary document is included for the board’s review.

2.2 Approve FY20-21 District Budget: **Lindy Johnson moved to approve the FY20-21 District Budget in the amount of \$35,430,502. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith.**

Discussion: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet stated that, even though this budget does not include, for instance, a strings program and foreign language program for the elementary schools, the board intends to continue to discuss this and to continue to consider this in future budget and program planning. Lindy Johnson shared that she hopes the schools have the culture that teachers are free to come to administrators to advocate for programs, and that the leadership team will share some of the “out of the box” thinking with the board. Dorothy Naylor asked, is there some way that a group of people in the district might work on grant writing for the strings program? She also noted that she disagrees that teachers should have to go to administrators with ideas or proposals; that they should be free to share these ideas with whomever they wish to share, whether it is the board or the finance committee. Dorothy Naylor stated that she would like to create a fund for something like “enterprise” or proposals such as these. Discussion continued around this topic. Mike Close and Anne Decker continued to advocate for a strings program in the elementary schools. Chris McVeigh suggested the idea of piloting a strings program.

Anne Decker spoke in more detail about the proposal for a strings program embedded in the elementary schools schedules. Marylynne Strachan suggested that the proposal be shared with the administrators so that conversation can follow. Discussion followed around prioritizing, for example, a strings program and/ or a foreign language program. Scott Thompson asked board members if the budget as presented is technically sound? and that it accords with the board’s priorities? Jaiel Pulskamp indicated that she believes the idea of board priorities is a bigger conversation that need to be incorporated over time during board meetings. Kari Bradley stated that he believes the board should be considering lowering the budget, and that he warned the board that, when using fund balance to get an initiative off the ground, to keep in mind that in future years the board will need to build the initiative into the budget and not continue to “kick the can.” **This motion carried unanimously.**

2.3 Approve District Warning: **Chris McVeigh moved to approve the District Warning as presented. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor, this motion carried unanimously.**

2.4 Approve Capital Recommendations: Debora Taylor stated that she recommends tabling the capital plan recommendations until the February meeting, as she would like the Finance Committee to provide some input into some of the items on the list. (The following items from the list, however, were approved tonight)

Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve the Rumney-Acoustic Project, the Doty-Building Envelope-Siding/ Windows, and the completion of the U-32 Track project, as well as approving hiring a Facilities Director to oversee the Capital Fund and Capital Projects. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.

2.5 Approve 2019 Audit Reports: **Dorothy Naylor moved to approve the 2019 Audit Reports. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** Discussion: Lori Bibeau noted that there are no findings in the reports, or no changes in the amounts. She explained that there are some

additional warrants for the board to approve tonight, to close the books. **This motion carried unanimously.**

Chris McVeigh moved to earmark \$60K from the fund balance, providing there is a fund balance, for the strings program, contingent upon scheduling details being worked out, and continuing a larger discussion including foreign language. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor. Discussion: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked Lori Bibeau about the wisdom of this, and how we would know if the contingency is met. Ms. Bibeau explained that the board asks the communities to take action on Town Meeting Day, about fund balance, so technically the board is not in a position to take action around the fund balance at this time. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet suggested that we not take action at this time; that further discussion is needed. **Flor Diaz Smith moved to table this motion. Seconded by Marylyne Strachan.** Discussion followed around the original motion and the motion to table. **A vote was called to table the motion. This motion did not pass. A vote was called on the original motion. This motion carried, with two opposed.**

3.0 Policy (Discussion/Action)

3.1 Policy Committee Report: Chris McVeigh shared that several policies are before the board for first readings. He shared that the Policy Committee has been considering each policy, based on whether it is recommended or required.

3.2 First Reading of A21 Public Participation at Board Meetings, (*Scott Thompson suggested adding the sentence: "The board serves the people." at the beginning of the policy, before "It is the policy of the board..."*) (*also suggested "assigned by the chair and acting chair". under Public Input, item 2*) A22 Notice of Non-Discrimination (*Townes DeGroot suggested changing the language from his or her to "their," or eliminating the pronoun, e.g. "Superintendent or designee"*), A23 Community Engagement and Vision, A24 Board/Superintendent Relationship (*suggestion to change "the board directs the superintendent" to "the board guides the superintendent"*), A31 Board Member Education (*State Department of Education should be changed to Agency of Education*), A32 Board Goal-Setting & Evaluation, A34 Board Relations with School Personnel (Jonas Eno-Van Fleet suggested *"when presented with citizen concerns about school staff or school operations,"*), B3 Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace (the Policy Committee would like to take another look at this policy), B4 Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing for Transportation Employees, B5 Prevention of Employee Harassment, C27 Student Self-Expression and Student Distribution of Literature Policies:

C27: Meg Allison, Librarian, shared that she had received a note from Representative Peter Welch, commending the Social Justice group's work around this work. She thanked the board for its work on these issues. Chris McVeigh explained that some of the language of the Hate Symbol resolution is included in the body of the policy C27: Student Self-Expression and Student. **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the changes to Policy C27. Seconded by Jaiel Pulskamp.** Discussion: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet thanked Meg Allison for addressing the board and he noted that just because the policy is approved, does not mean that dialogue around these issues will end. **This motion carried unanimously.**

Hate Symbols Resolution: **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to adopt the Hate Symbols Resolution as presented. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith. Discussion: Chris McVeigh read this resolution aloud. This motion carried unanimously.**

3.3 Second Reading of A2 Policies and Procedures, A20 Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution, F46 Flag Raising Policy:

A2: Dorothy Naylor moved to approve A2 Policies and Procedures. Seconded by Jaiel Pulskamp, this motion carried unanimously.

A20: Lindy Johnson moved to approve A20 Board Meetings. Seconded by George Gross, this motion carried unanimously.

F46: Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve F46 Flag Raising Policy. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor, this motion carried unanimously.

3.4 Second Reading of Hate Symbols Resolution (please see above)

4.0 Spotlight – Berlin Principal, Aaron Boynton: Aaron Boynton provided a brief overview about Berlin School.

Board members reviewed and discussed the School Board letter for the annual report. Some edits were suggested. Board members signed this document.

5.0 Book Reflection – Equity from the Board Room to the Classroom Chapter 8 (this item is tabled due to the late hour)

6.0 Consent Agenda (Action)

6.1 Approve Minutes of 12.4.19 & 1.8.19: **Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve the minutes from December 4th 2019 and January 8, 2020. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: one edit was suggested for December 4th minutes. This motion carried unanimously, with noted edit.**

6.2 Approve Board Orders: **Lindy Johnson moved to approve the board orders from FY19 in the amount of \$10,281,224.67. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith, this motion carried unanimously.**

Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve \$57,076.82, \$31,358.38, \$296,306.80, \$443,050.70, \$8,160.62, \$245,813.10, \$31,358.38. Seconded by George Gross. This motion carried unanimously.

7.0 Reports (Discussion): Superintendent and Leadership reports had been presented in writing. Scott Thompson invited questions or comments. Jen Miller-Arsenault shared the process of working on the Continuous Improvement Plan. She is preparing written information to share in newsletters and to recruit members for this work. The first meeting is on February 5th; she asked for interest from board members. Marylyne Strachan and Flor Diaz Smith indicated interest. Jaiel Pulskamp and Dorothy Naylor indicated interest as well. Lindy Johnson noted that the language in each school newsletter regarding Town Meeting Day and board member election was very clear and consistent and she appreciated sharing this widely. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet stated that he believes we should think about increasing the stipend for board members, to appeal to community members who might consider serving on the school board.

7.1 Superintendent

7.2 Leadership

7.3 Student: Townes DeGroot reported that the end of the semester is approaching. This week is exams week. He reported that Stage32 will be presenting Avenue Q at the end of the month. The Social Justice group is planning an event, “Rolling up our Sleeves,” at the end of the month as well. He spoke about the data from the Youth Risk Survey; he noted concerns around school culture for students of color or LGBT students.

7.4 Superintendent Search: Dorothy Naylor shared that the interview committee has met with Mark Andrews and prepared for sorting through information, including discussing confidentiality. The board will need an Executive Session tonight.

7.5 Negotiations: Jonas Eno-Van Fleet reported that: We clarified Open Meeting Law and agreed on Ground Rules; received an update from Contract Amendment subgroup; we used IBB procedure for the issue of Religious Leave, and we reached a tentative agreement. We began discussion of bus duty issues.

8.0 Approve High School Choice Openings for 20-21: Dorothy Naylor moved to approve the High School Choice Openings as presented. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith. Superintendent Taylor shared this annual practice and reviewed the document. **This motion carried unanimously.**

9.0 Personnel (Action)

9.1 Approve Hires, Retirements, Resignations: **Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve the retirements of Paula Crossett and Kathy (Topping) Wiese, with regard from the board for their many years of service. Seconded by Lindy Johnson, this motion carried unanimously.**

10.0 Future Agenda Items

11.0 Board Reflection and Summary of Meeting – Next Steps for Board Members

12.0 Executive Session for Personnel: Chris McVeigh moved to go into Executive Session at 10:00 for the purpose of discussing personnel. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor, this motion carried unanimously.

At 10:14 pm Flor Diaz Smith moved and Jaiel Pulskamp seconded to come out of Executive session. The motion carried unanimously.

Flor Diaz Smith moved and Chris McVeigh seconded to approve an extension of a leave request. The motion carried unanimously.

13.0 Adjournment: Jaiel Pulskamp moved and Lindy Johnson seconded to adjourn, the motion carried unanimously at 10:15 pm.

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