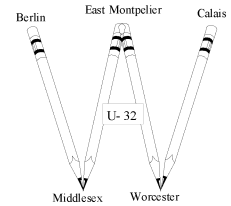


Washington Central Unified Union School District

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

Debra Taylor, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent



Washington Central Unified Union School District Board

Special Training Retreat

Approved Minutes

8.13.19 6:30PM

North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm Street, Montpelier

approved 8-21-19

Board Members Present: Scott Thompson, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Dorothy Naylor, Flor Diaz Smith, Lindy Johnson, Jaeil Pulskamp, Marylynne Strachan

Administrators Present: Superintendent Debra Taylor, Director of Special Services Kelly Bushey, Business Administrator Lori Bibeau, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Jen Miller-Arsenault, Technology Coordinator Keith MacMartin

Others Present: Susan Holson, VSBA Director of Education Services

1.0 Call to Order: Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. He thanked Flor Diaz Smith for taking on the planning of this evening.

Dorothy Naylor shared her concerns about addressing privacy and sensitive issues in open meeting. She referred to the Executive Session that the board had gone into at the previous meeting.

2.0 Board Training: Flor Diaz Smith introduced Susan Holson.

Characteristics of Successful Boards

- Respectful listening/ dialogue
- Good communication with each other and community
- Well-structured meetings where significant work occurs
- Clarity of role, purpose and responsibilities
- Board members come to meetings prepared

Characteristics of Challenging Boards

- Lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities

- Individuals with attachment to specific outcomes/ conflicting interests
- Individuals with problematic motives or behavior
- Lack of trust

The role of a district school board: The school board acts as trustees on behalf of the community to provide oversight of public education.

She brought to the board's attention to online toolkit for school boards on the VSBA website. When speaking about engaging communities, she noted: 78% of Vermont households do not have school age children.

She spoke about a vision statement - one or two sentences, clear, aspirational. Differentiation between mission statement and vision statement: mission statement is more grounded in the present; vision statement is looking into the future.

Roles: Board, Superintendent, Principal: Boards assure schools are well run - they do not run them.
 Board: Sets clear goals, assures good communication between board and administration, establishes and monitors clear system for accountability
 Superintendent: CEO, operations, educational leadership, accountable to Supervisory Union and District Boards
 Principal: Instructional leadership and day to day school building operation, accountable to the Superintendent

Discussion followed around board members recognizing the validity of board decisions even if they don't agree with them.

"The board has one voice."

She reviewed the parameters of Executive Session.

Effective and Ethical Operations: The board chair: builds strong board team, creates strong connection with administration, organizes and conducts productive meetings, promotes lawful/ ethical operations.

She noted that "board meetings are public meetings. They are not a meeting of the public." She spoke about the board aspiring to engage with the public in the public's space - meet them where they are, in the community.

Some discussion followed around this topic. Ms. Holson suggested that board meetings allow for public comment, and for clarifying questions from board members if needed, but not to have back and forth conversation. She spoke about other ways to communicate with the public, outside of board meetings, as this can derail board meetings.

Scott Thompson stated that the involvement of the public is part of the work of the board.

Ms. Holson discussed the image of a fire tower. The board needs to stay together atop the tower.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked board members to consider, regarding a vision statement, what is it we want students to be able to do? Ms. Holson suggested some common phrases:

life long learners
global citizens
21st century students

Mr. Eno-Van Fleet asked for a more specific answer from teachers and administrators.

Dorothy Naylor spoke about Thomas Jefferson's quote re: education, that we are preparing students to be educated and free-thinking, not that we are preparing them to be, for instance, factory workers.

Jen Miller-Arsenault referred to the Student Learning Outcomes.

Susan Holson invited board members to visit the website and to contact her: sholson@vtvsba.org

8:00 p.m.

Superintendent Taylor presented information to the board about work for the upcoming year. Central Office administrators shared a brief overview of work from the previous year, and work going forward. Kelly Bushey shared some information for new board members about the Zenith program, as well as other current and upcoming special education related issues and initiatives. Lori Bibeau reviewed accomplishments from the past year, and work going forward. Jen Miller-Arsenault reviewed similarly, through the lens of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. Keith MacMartin spoke about technology services.

Superintendent Taylor stated that the entire leadership team will be meeting twice per month this year.

Lori Bibeau provided a brief overview of the budget development process. She had provided a draft timeline for the budget process. Debra Taylor suggested that the board put budget process approval on the action agenda for the next board meeting.

Dorothy Naylor stated that she does not use Twitter or Facebook, and she believes that others do not either, so she noted that others do not use them either, and cautioned the board against using these outlets and assuming that everyone sees the information.

3.0 Adjourn: The board adjourned by consensus at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary