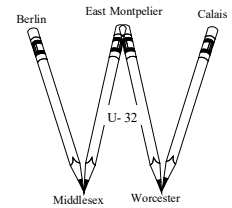


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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

Meagan Roy, Ed.D.
Superintendent



WCUUSD Policy Committee Meeting 1.11.23 4:45-6:00PM Central Office, 1130 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier Via Video Conference

Present: Superintendent Roy, Amy Molina, Chris McVeigh, Natasha Eckart Baning, Michelle Ksepka, Cat Fair

- 1. Call to Order: Chris McVeigh called the meeting to order at 4:47 p.m.** Chris McVeigh would like to add Equity Policy to the discussion.
- 2. Approve Minutes of 12.14.22: Natasha Eckart Baning moved to approve the minutes from December 14, 2022. Seconded by Chris McVeigh.** Discussion: Chris McVeigh asked for clarification: regarding the Drug and Alcohol Policy, were we going to get a revision regarding discipline (difference between possession and selling/ distributing/ sharing). He would like to include notification in the policy itself that first offense in the case of selling/ distributing/ sharing goes directly to expulsion hearing. He stated that it is clear in the handbook if you read closely, but would like it to be explicitly stated in the policy (about immediate expulsion). Amy Molina recalled that it was discussed that she would do that and edit the policy to reflect this. She will do that for the next meeting. **This motion carried unanimously.**
- 3. Review Policies**
 - 3.1. C5 Weapons and Firearms:** Superintendent Roy stated - for clarification about next steps with this policy: We will share out from the WCUUSD Board discussion around this policy. Also would like to update the committee on some new learning about this issue. This might not directly affect the policy language but will affect the implementation. Superintendent Roy shared that we have a policy that indicates we are not allowed to have firearms on the property. Most of Vermont education has operated under the assumption that this is Vermont law: no firearms on school property. However, we found out recently that law enforcement does not necessarily respond to the presence of firearms on the school property unless there is an intent to cause harm. The state police eventually came to the property but did not remove the firearm from the premises. She noted that we should be aware that when we call the police regarding firearm on our property, we might not get their direct support. She noted that Principal Dellinger-Pate has brought this issue to the VPA (VT Principals Association). Amy Molina stated that this impacts Part B of the policy. In order to enforce Part B, we might have to have signage very clearly posted at each of the school properties. Amy Molina also noted that one of the statutes quoted in the policy has been revised. Chris McVeigh stated that if the revised statute has the same number as its

earlier version then it should still be referenced in the policy; otherwise, the updated statute number should be referenced. Under Title 16, we call the police in the case of a firearm on school property. What we have learned is that the police won't necessarily come. It is still clearly illegal to have a firearm *on the school bus* or in *the school building*. The language around having a firearm *on the school property* includes an intent to harm. Is there a way to couple trespassing statute with having a weapon? If you are putting notice "no trespassing, including with a firearm" then you are clearly stating the rule. Chris McVeigh indicated that when we have notified the police, even if they don't come, then we have abided by our policy. He suggested that we confer with Heather Lynn about language related to how to display the rule that no firearms are allowed on campus. Amy Molina recalled that in the past, we were told that if we have a rule such as no dogs on campus, we should post it and not assume that people know it without having such notice. Natasha Eckart Baning asked - if only certain administrators know how to safely handle a gun, and none of them are there during the incident, what does that mean for the others that are on campus at the time? Meaghan Roy stated that this is the dilemma. She noted that the administrators had talked about this and would like to know that the law enforcement will come to the campus and help handle the situation. Superintendent Roy stated that Rob Mitchell of Community Care Network, advised that a Community of Care model would indicate that law enforcement will assist. Chris McVeigh wondered if we should explore a partnership with the Washington County Sheriff's Office. Superintendent Roy stated that a local police officer is going to be a participant in the District Safety Team. Natasha Eckart Baning shared discussion from the board meeting about the number of people who are involved in the decision making about some student discipline issues. Superintendent Roy stated that there was discussion about whether there would be a mechanism to notify the board, in cases where a hearing would not be held. She noted that since the board would like to examine student discipline data on a regular basis, this might be a built in way to notify the board. Natasha Eckart Baning recalled that the issue of discussion was less about the characteristic of the weapon and more about who - and how many - make(s) decisions about intent. (For example, if these issues are not brought to the board.) Some discussion followed about student discipline issues that can/ should be handled at the school level as opposed to those that should come to the board for a hearing. Chris McVeigh suggested, re: notification to the board, could the person who handles the situation fill out a form that will be collected and shared with the board on a regular basis. Superintendent Roy stated that we have mechanisms for collecting discipline data. Some discussion followed about different levels of discipline infractions and how to report to the board. Amy Molina stated that there is some nuance in many discipline offenses, such as weapons related or drug related. Amy Molina asked, for example, why is a student bringing a small knife that they don't realize or remember they have, an issue that comes to the board, and yet a student who brings drugs to school is not an issue that comes to the board? Superintendent Roy suggested that what we could offer for the second reading would be to add language that the superintendent or designee shall report annually, and this offers the transparency assurance that the board was asking for. Chris McVeigh agreed that adding this language to the policy and bringing it to the board for a second hearing would be appropriate.

Other language in the policy that Chris McVeigh questions:

- "dangerous weapon" - add "or" between each
- building intent into the action: "which in the manner it is used or is intended to be used..."

Amy Molina noted that the definition is the standard language that is in the model policy. Natasha Eckart Baning suggested inserting some clarification that if there is intent to do

harm, it is something that will come to the board for a hearing. Amy Molina stated that this is referenced in Policy C20. Some discussion followed around the possibility of breaking the definition into two parts regarding knife/ folding knife. Chris McVeigh questioned the use of the term “articles” - Can we use the word “items” instead? Some discussion followed about the verbiage in the policy that refers to firearms and destructive device: Does paragraph 2 conflict with PP 3? Amy Molina stated that they do not conflict; she provided an example for clarification. Chris McVeigh stated that his understanding is that for a destructive device there is some discretion. Amy Molina indicated that destructive device is treated the same as firearms. She provided examples: dangerous weapon: knife, destructive device: bomb, firearm: gun. Some discussion followed around referencing Policy C20 (Discipline) in the policy. Chris McVeigh suggested some language referencing mandatory sanctions but including the principal or designee’s discretion re: Policy C20. The committee agreed to bring this to the board for a reading.

3.2. E20 Building Use: Chris McVeigh stated that the feedback he got from town clerks was that when town meetings, governmental meetings etc. are scheduled, it is important they will not be “bumped” for any other events. He suggests inserting language into the policy to address this. Amy Molina and Superintendent Roy responded that inserting language that we will “never” cancel an event at the school seems too black and white, having no idea what types of extenuating circumstances might arise. Amy Molina suggested some grammatical corrections to the body of this policy. She will provide some suggested edits to this policy for consideration. The committee needs to take a look at building use waivers and fee structure. The committee will consider these aspects of the policy at the next policy committee meeting. Natasha Eckart Baning brought feedback from the board: add “maintaining confidentiality...”

3.3. A1 Board Conflict of Interest: (this was not addressed tonight)

3.4. Anti-Racism/ Equity Policy Update: Equity: Natasha Eckart Baning stated that the HJC had asked that the Policy Committee first draft a policy to begin the discussion. She had provided the committee with a first draft. Natasha Eckart Baning stated that the coalition would like something official indicating that the Policy Committee is asking/ charging the coalition with reviewing the Equity Policy. Chris McVeigh suggests a memo to that effect, and that we bring the memo to the board for its approval. Natasha Eckart Baning stated that something like a community forum (to consider a draft of this policy) might be too cumbersome at this time in the year, but are there already stakeholder groups that are currently functioning - We can bring a draft policy to these groups and ask for feedback (with some specific parameters for feedback.) Chris McVeigh and Natasha Eckart Baning will work out a memo to bring to the next board meeting for their review (regarding the above.) Superintendent Roy suggested embedding the Ed Quality Committee in the language in the policy about monitoring/ status report. Some discussion followed around applying the equity lens to other policies. The committee will start the discussion around the topic of implementation/ fleshing out each bullet point at the next meeting; Natasha Eckart Baning suggested also brainstorming the list of stakeholders. This policy is not ready for the board yet; Natasha Eckart Baning suggests that the stakeholders have an opportunity to provide feedback before it goes to the board for a first reading.

4. Future Agenda Items

4.1. Humanity and Justice Statement

5. Adjourn: The committee adjourned at 6:15 by consensus.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary