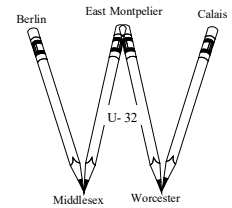


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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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Meagan Roy, Ed.D.
Superintendent



**WCUUSD Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes Approved
9.19.22 4:30-6:30 PM
Central Office, 1130 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier
Via Video Conference**

Present: Chris McVeigh, Meagan Roy, Jonathan Goddard, Amy Molina, Ellen Knoedler, Michelle Ksepka, Natasha Eckart Baning, Cat Fair, Nick Van Den Berg

- 1. Call to Order: Chris McVeigh called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.**
- 2. Approve Minutes of 8.9.22: Chris McVeigh moved to approve the minutes of August 9, 2022.** Cat Fair would like to clarify a few things from the minutes - she does not mean to single out Calais and Doty in her comments; she meant to convey stakeholders involved “across the district” - she was citing concerns about small schools such as Calais and Doty.... policy that considers “the challenges for smaller schools like Calais and Doty.” minimum and optimal class sizes - when you consider minimum and optimum class sizes, it forces smaller schools to create multi-age classrooms; this has implications for school choice and for student population and ultimately, possibly, school closure. Meagan suggested that a conversation about school choice touches the topic of class size and has implications for small schools such as Calais and Doty. **The minutes as amended were approved.**
- 3. Review Policies**
 - 3.1.School Access:** Chris McVeigh noted that this policy consideration has some implications on easement agreements for Calais and Middlesex. The easements create a minimum allowance for access; he stated that the discussion for school access policies will have to consider whether a uniform policy across WCUUSD will provide the level of easement that Calais and Middlesex allow, or will the policy vary based on each school? He spoke about the school access forms and the requirements that the forms delineate - for example, requiring liability insurance. He also noted that, based on legal counsel, if you are providing access to groups, you can't disallow access to groups based on the beliefs of the groups. He suggested that the policy might be able to indicate that the group

would need to display the same values that WCUUSD states; however, he thinks language around this would need to be very specific. He suggested, for example, using the language to require that groups comply with antidiscrimination laws and our antidiscrimination policies. He spoke again about the easement rights that two of the towns have in place. Meagan Roy stated that the topic of “school safety” will need to be considered in school access policy. She stated that the school safety audit results will be received soon and this will have an impact on building access. Cat Fair stated that we will need the staff capacity to be sure that the building is back to its needed degree of cleanliness and readiness for students on the next school day. Chris McVeigh indicated that this is alluded to in the building use form - the expectation that the building space will be left in the same condition in which it was found, after the group uses it. Amy Molina asked whether the policy draft is an existing policy or is this a new draft? Chris McVeigh had created this policy draft because the town of Middlesex had been raising concerns about having access to the Rumney building. For Calais and Middlesex, the school boards had conveyed easements to the towns when the Act 46 merger happened. She asked how this policy would be applicable to the whole district. Meagan Roy indicated that we don’t have a building use policy; we have building use forms; with differing forms/ criteria/ processes in each building. The reason we are considering a policy is to have consistency; however, the fact that there are easements in two of the towns creates some challenge to creating a uniform policy. Amy Molina stated that U-32 did have a school board approved building use policy. Chris McVeigh stated that this draft policy is an attempt to level the minimal “playing field” across the schools. There was some conversation about the verbiage in the first paragraph of the draft policy. The committee reviewed the draft policy that Chris had created. Meagan Roy asked whether the committee would be willing to start the policy draft from U-32’s existing policy, and work into that policy the easement concerns. Amy Molina suggested, could the easement issues be woven into the “priorities of use” part of the policy? She noted that U-32 has historically had a great deal of requests for use of the building and she would like to work out some clear parameters. Some discussion followed around the fee that U-32 requires. Michelle Ksepka indicated that all of the forms (for all of the schools) include fees; each school principal uses discretion based on the circumstances. Amy Molina recalled the discussions at U-32 about requiring custodial staff, for example, on weekends when the building is in use - this is the reason that the building is not available for use on Sunday. Chris McVeigh recalled that at Rumney School, custodians were not called in specifically, for example, on Wednesday evenings for basketball leagues. He does not recall Rumney School requiring fees; however, he recalls that groups were required to provide insurance. Michelle Ksepka stated that the building use forms had been reviewed by the insurance company - there has been the possibility for “hold harmless” agreements in the building use form. Some discussion followed around AAU - they have insurance for the use of the building; the school rec associations don’t have their own insurance; they fall under the schools’ (except at one elementary school.) Chris McVeigh reviewed that priorities for building use will be needed in the policy (for example, use on Town Meeting Day.)

Meagan Roy suggested that the school safety requirements will likely not be met if another group closes up the building at the end of an evening event. Safety audit: Meagan Roy explained that she will receive a first draft and will have the opportunity to look for inaccuracies in the document and will have the option of creating an executive summary. Ellen Knoedler reminded the committee of the uses of the buildings for events such as election day. Amy Molina suggested that we have legal counsel review the policy and provide insight. She also noted that, for example, the Boy Scouts - our local Boy Scouts have indicated that they do not discriminate based on sexuality- they are more "don't ask, don't tell..." but when the national organization expresses discrimination, how do we handle this? Chris McVeigh recalled Rumney School addressing this. We will have Bernie Lambeck review the policy through the legal lens, once we have it in draft form. Chris McVeigh asked, should we have a two-part policy? One for the elementary schools; one for U-32? Meagan Roy suggested starting with one policy and seeing how it fleshes out when we consider it across the district. She indicated that she likes the prioritization list in U-32's policy. Amy Molina stated that insurance should be carefully considered. She asked whether our insurance companies would be ok with the idea of a "hold harmless" agreement. Is there a way to get a rider on our insurance for some groups that do not have the financial wherewithal to purchase their own insurance? Michelle Ksepka noted that our insurance company would prefer that every group is covered, naturally. A "hold harmless" agreement is something that would hold up in court if it went to that, is her understanding. Chris McVeigh suggested that if we want our communities to be interested and invested in our buildings, we want to foster a mutually interdependent relationship; we want to figure out a way to make this work, or at least to not discourage the use of our buildings. Michelle Ksepka reminded the group that mainly what the insurance company will ask is "are we at fault?" when it comes to injuries at the schools. Chris McVeigh suggested that requiring insurance eliminates a significant portion of our community. He suggested that the waivers and "hold harmless" agreements do have some validity regarding liability; he suggested, too, having Bernie Lambeck review these documents. Natasha Eckart Banning followed up on the idea of, for example, a person slipping on icy walkways when attending an evening group event - how to address the liability issue. Chris McVeigh suggested starting with the existing policies and agreements (for example, the "key use" agreement that Calais uses.) Cat Fair indicated that she believes the key use agreement will be a finding in the security audit and that while the sentiment is great, the safety reality is no longer appropriate. Jonathan Goddard stated that there may be circumstances where we need to pay staff to work in the building; that is a cost that we may have to assume/ incur if we are making the buildings more accessible to the community. He reiterated the security/ safety element that is a real concern - for example, requiring a safety sweep after events.

3.2. Policy Review Cycle Draft: This template had been shared for committee members to consider - some policies have been plugged into the template for place holders, but Meagan Roy suggested that the committee will create a more specific plan. Michelle Ksepka and Amy Molina had created a google doc with color coded policies, indicating “required, suggested, optional” and the current status. Chris McVeigh suggested a three year policy review cycle. Amy Molina suggested that when the VSBA suggests an updated policy, we would need to override the planned review cycle. Meagan Roy suggested that at the end of the school year, the committee could look ahead to the next year and determine how to edit the planned review cycle. Meagan Roy will add policies to the template that had been created and shared. Chris McVeigh would like to create a poll of committee members to decide which policies should be included, in what order, in the “Selected Reviews” column. Natasha Eckart Baning reviewed the process to date around anti-racism policy, and the importance of looking at all of the policy work through the lens of humanity and justice. Equity Policy as a stand-alone policy: Natasha Eckart Baning will compile some information and sample policies for the committee to consider at the next meeting.

3.3. Meeting Date & Time: The committee decided on Wednesday nights for committee meetings, at 4:45- 6:30, on a Wednesday that is “off” from a board meeting. (second Wednesday)

4. Future Agenda Items

4.1. Next meeting, Wednesday, October 12, 2022 4:45 - 6:30 PM

4.2. School Choice

4.3. Anti-Racism

4.4. Humanity and Justice Statement

5. Adjourn: The committee adjourned by consensus at 6:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary