

# Washington Central Unified Union School District

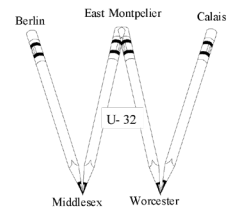
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*WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.*

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Jennifer Miller-Arsenault  
Interim Superintendent



**WCUUSD Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes Approved  
8.9.22 8:30-9:30 a.m.  
Central Office, 1130 Gallison Hill Rd., Montpelier  
Via Video Conference**

**Present:** Flor Diaz Smith, Susanne Gann, Ursula Stanley, Chris O'Brien, Meagan Roy, Eric Andersen, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Natasha Eckart Baning

- 1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.**
- 2. Approve Minutes of 6.7.22: Ursula Stanley motioned to approve the minutes of 6.7.22. Eric Andersen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **3. Informational Reports**

**3.1. Monthly Reflection:** Susanne advised the committee that Matt Kittredge left his position with WCUUSD. He took on a new position as the Facilities Director of Lake Region Union Elementary School. She highlighted his many contributions to the district over the years and she thanked him for his 12 years of service. She advised that a review of Central Office job descriptions is underway to ensure that roles and responsibilities are well distributed among support staff to maximize efficiency. She advised once this is done the position will be posted. The financials were successful with payroll and accounts payable closing at the end of June, and the general ledger closing at the end of July. She recognized Penny, Virginia, and Matt for completing this annual milestone. Susanne advised that the audit began and that RHR Smith is on site. Susanne thanked Virginia, Penny, Melissa, Michelle, and Shannon for their work in preparing for the audit. Lesley Fitch and Melissa have worked feverishly this summer to advertise open positions and schedule interviews. Virginia has met with new employees to go over their benefits and get them enrolled so that our new hires are all set when they come on board. She has diligently maintained our HR and Payroll software completing terminations for outgoing employees and setting up new employees in the system. Michelle reviewed and approved job postings, updated the HR system, prepared transfers to payroll, contracts and new hire letters and sent out benefit packets. An enormous thank you goes out to the entire Team for maintaining such a high level of output this summer.

The bids for propane, wood chips and wood pellets were completed in June and the oil bids were completed in July. The outcomes are estimated to result in a total increase beyond last year's actuals of \$65,132 and an estimated budget overage of \$64,481. She provided a table for additional details to the committee. The District may complete the FY 2023-24 Heating Fuel bid in November 2022 to take advantage of discounts available with the 6-month futures market, which will also provide us with better estimates to prepare the budget with.

**3.2. Quarterly Financial Update:** Susanne asked for questions regarding the memo she had provided to the committee. Eric noted there were overages and underage's and asked if it was a good generalization that we spent less. Susanne advised that it is and that The Regular Instruction line was underspent, resulting in a positive impact of \$568,602 on the fund balance. Unfortunately, this positive impact on the bottom line was directly related to the difficulty of filling positions and hiring substitute personnel, which translated into challenges keeping schools open. Teachers gave up planning time and office personnel were pulled away from their work to cover for absences, creating a domino effect of strain on the entire system, especially the humans in the buildings. The other significant area of savings in the budget was Special Education expenditures, which were \$871,699 less than budget. These services are always difficult to plan for, but the pandemic increased the transitioning nature of families, greatly changing the need for services. There were also difficulties backfilling positions for psychologists, special educators and para educators this year, requiring Administrators to get very creative with the delivery of services. Eric also asked if there were any concerns that we underspent. Meagan advised that is always a concern and that it is directly related to vacancies that have not been able to be filled. Eric asked if all the positions had been filled would we be over or under budget. Susanne advised she would want to do an analysis. Ursula asked what the line item HRA/FSA/MSA referred to. Susanne advised it is connected to our health insurance plans and is the amount allotted at the beginning of the budget season. Flor asked how we are doing this year, what has been the impact on student outcomes and will we need to spend more money? Meagan advised it is too early to be able to tie student outcomes to those vacancies. She advised it is putting more pressure on the rest of the system.

**3.3. Capital Improvement Project Updates:** Chris O'Brien provided a memo in the packet and asked for questions regarding the capital projects happening in the district over the summer. Chris advised the contractors have been struggling to get materials but are hoping to get things completed by August 16, 2022. Chris stated that if anyone is interested in doing a tour of the projects let him know. Susanne advised that Bill Ford cautioned the committee about the dates on the memo as they could vary.

#### 4. Discussion/Action

**4.1. Calais, East Montpelier, and U-32 Boiler Projects:** Chris O'Brien advised the current assessment is that the boiler in Calais needs to be replaced, while the boilers at East Montpelier and U-32 can be upgraded to improve energy efficiency and extend the life of the boilers. Ursula noted that in the memo it stated that there is uncertainty about whether the replacement at Calais could meet the deadline, she asked if that affects the cost. Chris advised they have till the end of July 2023 to utilize the grant funds if they are available as other districts have been utilizing them as well. Susanne advised we need to apply for the grant and that has not been done as of yet. **Ursula motioned Board authorize moving \$250,000 from the FY 2024-25 boiler replacement at Calais Elementary School to FY 2022-23 and authorize the use of capital reserve funds to develop the scope and budget and proceed with the design development and bid documents for the project. Natasha seconded. The motion passed. Ursula motioned that the Board authorize moving \$250,000 from the FY 2024-25 boiler replacement at East Montpelier Elementary School to FY 2022-23 for the boiler upgrades at East Montpelier Elementary School and U-32 Middle and High School. Eric Andersen seconded. The motion passed. Ursula motioned that the Board authorize the Superintendent to sign contracts with Messersmith Manufacturing for the boiler system upgrades at East Montpelier and U-32, not to exceed a total of \$250,000, contingent upon the state providing a bid waiver due to a sole source for proprietary equipment. Eric seconded and the motion passed.** Flor asked for the amount we save by not burning oil be provided for the Board.

**4.2. Operating Budget Policy & Planning:** The Board and Leadership Team have embarked on the budget planning process for FY 2023-24, it is important to develop a planning document that will lead us into future budget planning. She advised the plan document should do the following:

- Identify the advantages to developing a budget plan.
- Identify the stakeholders of the budget planning process.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders.
- Involve and promote effective communication with stakeholders.
- Create common language, direction and alignment.
- Outline the budget development timeline.
- Create transparency regarding policies and procedures.

The leadership team has had discussions surrounding budget development priorities for FY 2023-24 and they are:

- Understand Unified Arts needs across the district.
- Understand Health Education needs across the district.
- Consider the impact of grant staffing.
- Begin conversations around nursing and school counselor needs for FY 2024-25.

The Board Perspective for Budget development priorities:

- In May, the Board approved an, “initiative to achieve significant improvement in math and/or literacy proficiency for students in an Individualized Education Program and/or who receive Free and Reduced Price School Meals. The Board wants the Leadership Team to identify an appropriate scope for the initiative given current circumstances and consider what resources will be needed for success.”
- Identify any other priorities or parameters for the Leadership Team to consider during the budget development process

Questions to consider as we move forward:

- What goals do you have for this planning process?
- What tools do we need to develop this plan?
- What questions does this raise?
- What stands out?
- What else?

Susanne asked for feedback. There was some discussion.

## **5. Next Meeting Date and Future Agenda Items**

**5.1.** Next Regular Meeting: September 13, 2022

**5.2.** Capital Improvement Project Updates

**5.3.** Operating Budget Policy & Planning

**5.4.** Review and Approve Budget Timeline and Process

## **6. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted by,  
Melissa Tuller  
Administrative Assistant**