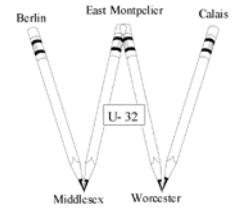


# Washington Central Unified Union School District

*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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Bryan Olkowski  
Superintendent



## WCUUSD Policy Committee Meeting Minutes Approved 5.12.21 4:30-6:30 PM

**Present:** Chris McVeigh (arrived at 5:04), Dorothy Naylor, Christina Pollard, Michelle Ksepka, James Garrity, Jody Emerson, Bryan Olkowski, Aaron Boynton

**Others:** Ellen Knoedler

1. **Call to Order:** Dorothy Naylor called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
2. **Approve Minutes of 4.27.21:** Dorothy Naylor moved to approve the minutes from April 27, 2021. Seconded by Christina Pollard, this motion carried unanimously.
3. **Review Technology Policies**
  - 3.1. **F49 Acceptable Use:** Jim Garrity shared that he had compared this policy draft with the existing Policy D3, as suggested at the previous meeting. He believes that it makes sense to have two separate stand-alone policies. (D3 = Take Home Device/ Personal Device) The policy D3 that the board is currently considering would replace the existing D3. Jim Garrity noted that the new D3 policy would be separate from this policy as discussed tonight, F49. This new version of F49 incorporates some of the key pieces from the older version of D3. Michelle Ksepka asked whether the F49 policy should actually be included in the “D” section of policies (related to instruction.) The policy will be renumbered to be included in “D” section (Michelle Ksepka will do this.)  
Jim Garrity invited questions, comments or concerns from the updates that he had proposed to this policy F49. He and Michelle will develop a “D” number for this policy. **Dorothy Naylor moved to bring policy F49 to the WCUUSD Board for first reading. Seconded by Christina Pollard, this motion carried.**
  - 3.2. **School Choice Policy:** Dorothy Naylor stated that she is happy we are addressing this. The one issue she has with this is that requiring parents to work out their own transportation for school choice is a disadvantage and creates inequity. She asked whether we can consider, for example, places where the buses “intersect.” She would like to include language in the policy that would have WCUUSD help with transportation and that it not be solely left to parents to work out. Catherine Pollard shared that in her experience school choice is influenced by the parents’ workplace. Ellen Knoedler asked whether the survey that had been created in the past will be sent out to communities. She asked whether the curriculum audit

review's goal around "consistency and congruency" - if all of the schools have consistency and equity then why would school choice be needed? She brought up the complication of after school events in other schools outside of a student's community. She fears that school choice may lead to closing of the smaller schools in the district. Each school is unique and has excellent qualities. She asked what the reason is to send a child to another school in another town, if all of the schools are offering equitable opportunities.

Superintendent Olkowski shared that some families live in one town but are closer to another's school. He also noted that there are sometimes peer group issues, in smaller schools. He shared that there are different offerings at schools within the district; for example in allied arts and in world languages. Dorothy Naylor stated that, before we get into a broader school choice policy discussion, we would need to talk about these issues as a large community. Superintendent Olkowski shared some of his experiences with school choice and the committee briefly discussed some of the related issues. Ellen Knoedler reiterated her concerns that there is not true equity in school choice and that it works for families who network and know how to work the system. She does not think that taking kids out of their community is a good idea. She spoke about it seeming like "semi-magnet schools." Chris McVeigh stated that any school choice policy should not result in any town school closing because of lack of numbers; we would have to build in some type of limitation to that effect. Will have to take into consideration a lot of factors. He spoke about the idea of being "one district" but not allowing students the option to attend schools within the one district. Would also need to build in transportation if it were to be a truly accessible school choice option. Christina Pollard spoke about the idea of "involuntary" school choice, for instance at Doty if a kindergarten class is too small then the children are required to attend a neighboring school. She stated that if we consider this we would have to build in a protocol for making the decision about whether school choice is an appropriate option, for example, children who might go from school to school, changing several times; this would not be to the benefit of the child. Dorothy Naylor agreed that if we are to consider this then we will need to put a great deal of thought into all of the aspects and how to "contain" a policy, with parameters. Chris McVeigh asked, as it stands now, do we have the option for a student who is truly unhappy at their current school, to request attendance at another? Superintendent Olkowski stated that this has been done on a case by case basis, by decision of the board. There is no set criteria for such a request.

Superintendent Olkowski spoke about the possibility, around "involuntary" school choice - for example, with social distancing guidelines due to the pandemic - if one of the schools has plenty of space while another does not. Aaron Boynton stated that if we are looking at this to solve a bigger issue, then we need to look at solving the issue in a different way, rather than "involuntarily" move students from their school to another. Chris McVeigh and Christina Pollard indicated that they are not in favor of "involuntary" school choice.

The committee agreed to explore a school choice policy, as a "limited" option. Chris McVeigh suggested listing "limitations"/ "options"/ "factors": He noted that not everyone will be happy with these factors. We need to consider what is best for our system as a whole.

Factors:

- Available space
- Class size (from both perspectives - sending school and receiving school)
- “Attendance zone” - if you live within a certain distance then you are guaranteed attendance at a certain school. (Is this an exclusivity or is this an option?) (e.g. within a mile to the school, or length of bus ride, some other criteria)
- Sibling: guaranteed admission
- Lottery, if necessary
- Transportation

Chris McVeigh asked whether there are basic minimums regarding class size.

Michelle Ksepka shared some of the numbers/ percentages which are considered at the high school, re: school choice. For example, 5% or 10 students, whichever is smaller? Discussion followed around class size. Christina Pollard suggested that it would be helpful to use a survey of the community in order to consider a school choice policy. Dorothy Naylor reiterated her belief that the policy must include some sort of support around transportation to families. Chris McVeigh stated that he is in favor of trying to fashion a transportation option if needed. Ellen Knoedler expressed her hope that in the fall we will be able to meet face to face, and she hopes that there will be a big effort to educate parents about this issue and to have a well fleshed out discussion. She feels that the community engagement of the new WCUUSD board is lacking.

Next steps for the committee re: this policy:

Dorothy Naylor suggested something on FPF explaining that we are considering this, and listing some of the factors as discussed tonight, and to ask for feedback.

Michelle Ksepka: thinks we are talking about a small number of students - might want to start with polling families and seeing if there is interest.

Chris McVeigh - the point of the policy though is to apply regardless of the numbers (e.g. this might gain momentum over time)

Dorothy Naylor - is it possible for principals to ask parents to reach out if they are interested in this option?

Aaron Boynton suggested that using “Google forms” is a simple way to get input from families. Jody Emerson shared that Michelle Ksepka has created a one-question prompt on Infinite Campus in the past - this might be a good resource.

#### **4. Future Agenda Items:**

**4.1.** Memorials Policy

**4.2.** Family Request to Remain in School at End of year

**Next Meeting: May 25, 2021 4:30-6:30**

#### **5. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned by consensus at 6:28p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Stoudt, Committee Recording Secretary